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September  
2011  
#359

# Big Wheel Coming to the Beach?

## 20-Story Tall Observation Wheel Proposed

By Jim Smith

Don't tell anyone, but a proposal has been made to erect a 20-story-tall "Observation Wheel" on the beach at the end of Windward Avenue.

Great City Attractions, a company from Britain which specializes in big wheels (they don't like to call them Ferris Wheels) says it could build the structure in ten days.

The company has several "transportable" wheels which they erect in a city for a period of time. The proposal for the Venice wheel is for two years. Whether the wheel would be new or one that had already been used at other locations was unclear.

A representative of Great City Attractions made an unannounced presentation to the July meeting of the Venice Chamber of Commerce. Reaction at that meeting was mixed, one of the participants told the Beachhead. Another said the company was trying to be "stealthy."

But, according to Alex Rosales, President of the Venice Chamber, the company is simply considering us as one of several likely locations for a big wheel. He said at the officers meeting held Aug. 30, it ap-

peared there was a consensus in favor of the wheel. Rosales said he believes the wheel would be beneficial to local businesses. He added that he would rather see the wheel further south near or in the Venice Blvd. parking lot on the beach.

Carol Tantau, Treasurer of the Venice Chamber, told the Beachhead that there has been no vote by her organization on the wheel. She said she told Nigel Ward from Great Cities Attractions that they would have to go "by the book" in getting permits from the City and from the Coastal Commission. She said the wheel looks safe and ecological.

Rosales said there was once a Ferris Wheel on the Windward Pier before it was torn down in 1949-50.

The wheel could be here for more or less than two years, according to Rosales. He said that Great Cities Attractions would be willing to add a clause in the contract that if the entire community was against it, they would disassemble it. On the other hand, if the community wanted it to stay after two years, the company would allow it.

—continued on page 12

LIBYA:

7,800 Bombing Casualties

AFGHANISTAN:

1,754 U.S. Dead

74 this month

IRAQ:

4,474 U.S. Dead - 0 this month

33,139 U.S. Wounded

Iraqi Dead: Up to 1.4+ million

Cost of wars: \$1.24+ trillion

Sources: [wikipedia.org](http://wikipedia.org) • [antiwar.com](http://antiwar.com)  
[icasualties.org](http://icasualties.org) • [costofwar.com](http://costofwar.com)





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**On the Boardwalk**

Dear Beachhead,  
The rain has started. Big pregnant drops are falling to the pavement. The dark threatening clouds, earlier set above the Pacific, had moved to shore proclaiming the end of summer. On the Santa Monica pier, the carousel with its thousands of brilliant lights flashing with a multitude of colors attracted its last customer. The few remaining tourists are rushing toward their hotels. Designer bags sit on the women’s shoulders; princess cut diamonds sparkle on their ring fingers. Canon cameras rest against the men’s well-fed stomachs; and with iPhones in hand; their eyes anxiously glance at the latest figures on the stock market.

I don’t move. No hotel room is waiting for me, not even a modest small apartment. The homeless has no place to go. We are objects, sitting on separate beach benches, like a twenty-first century art piece. Next to me is my pushcart filled with my possessions. Dozens of plastic bags full of useless stuff. There is a big plastic trash bag somewhere in there that could protect me from the rain, but I am too tired to look for it. I have not eaten a real meal for days. Stomach is empty, yet not hungry. Soul is torn away from body. Hope is left behind an empty cage. My life is not mine. Looking back into the past, I see a life that is familiar: husband whispering sweet promises into my ear, dark haired children sitting on the couch watching TV waiting for their supper, the aroma of the pot-roast from the hot oven filling up the house, my supervisor announcing the closing of the store where I received the best employee of the year placard year after year, and the eviction notice on the front door of my house. One thing I know for sure-- the explosive device that blew up my life was made in the USA. The blast blinded me. When I look into the future, I see nothing.

What do these rushing tourists see and think? They are passing so close to me, yet they don’t see me. Selective vision allows them to enjoy their life-style without guilt. The checks they write to the homeless shelter at Christmastime buy their tickets to heaven. Maybe they’re deciding what to order for their dinner-- steak or lobster? For an instant the sweet buttery taste of the lobster fills my mouth. The meat on my tongue firm yet easily melting. The memory weakens me. It allows me to consider calling out to the tourists. To beg them to buy me a sandwich. To hold up a cup so they could put a few coins in it. Giving me a single dollar could ease their conscience, but what would it do to me? Begging for a piece of bread from the people who took it away from me would cost me dearly. I hold on to the last shred of my dignity. I don’t ask for nothing. I’d rather starve. I am a no good defiant homeless. They call me a bum. But I know the truth. I take out the bottle of Southern Comfort from my handbag, take a drink and I start to feel like I am a woman, the same as the one who is rushing by me, holding the rhinestone studded leash of her designer pooch.

*Juditte Erki*



**Imperial Wars**

Dear Beachhead,  
There are imperial wars of aggression and their fraudulent pretext and false flag psyops; but in the case of Libya, there was not even a pretext, just the decision to attack, and that is good enough for mercenaries and the constantly compliant anyhow.

Motives exist in the form of oil and gold in Libya. It is the richest country in resources and is highly developed; therefore, the destruction and depleted uranium use for genocidal depopulation is “by the book.” It’s the book that Brzezinski read Obama in the closet or stream room back at Columbia when he was his professor teaching a course on disarmament of the Soviet Union. That was the ultimate issue and goal for both of them. All these smaller invasions are diversions.

We are conditioned to accept more use of military force here and there and anywhere for any or no reason necessary. It is just policy, and top secret, so end of discussion! For discussion of motives would lead to those most benefiting and their track records, which would mean it is all lies, it is all about armed robbery and mass murder by any other name, would not justify nor disguise the truth, so we have to tell it at all times on all aspects of The War on Terror, which means 9/11 raw and unrestrained as best we can analyze it.

*Bill Mitchell*



**Big Blue Bus Shrinks in Venice**

As of August 28, the #2 Big Blue Bus no longer runs through Venice, but will end its run at Main and Hill Sts. in Santa Monica.

The #1 Bus's route has been extended to cover the part of the #2 route from the Circle to Venice High School with the following changes.

The most noticeable change comes on the northbound (Venice to UCLA) run, which will begin at Main at Market Sts., the first intersection north of the circle. It will NOT leave from from beside the post office. Those busses that follow the old #2 route starting at Venice High will approach the circle on Windward and turn directly north onto Main. Only the southbound (UCLA to Venice) now stops next to the post office.

The southbound (UCLA to Venice) #1 only continues on to Venice High on weekdays, and the earliest run will leave its usual pick-up spot next to the post office at 6:44 am, and will run approximately every twenty minutes until 8:30 am and then every half hour after that. On the weekends the bus ends it run at Lincoln and California. It loops around behind the Ralph's market complex and goes back up California.

The new schedule is available on the busses, at the Big Blue Bus Store on Broadway near the Promenade and at the Venice - Abbot Kinney Library. It is also posted at stops along the route and at bigbluebus.com.

—Roger Linnett





# Charter Schools Fight It Out Over Walgrove Campus

By Greta Cobar

The neighborhood around Walgrove Elementary school is furious about Green Dot's intent to build a school for 500 middle-school students on the Walgrove Elementary School campus. The main concerns involve increased traffic, less parking, loitering and vandalism in the residential area.

For the last six years 200 Ocean Charter School students in fourth through eighth grades have been collocating with the students of Walgrove Elementary in temporary classrooms that have to be removed, by state law, at the end of the 2011-2012 school year.

The Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) issued a notice of intent to lease two acres of land on the Walgrove campus, opening the door to all charter schools to submit their proposals to build the new building, which could be financed with Measure K, R and Y bond funds if the charter is eligible. These funds were originally meant to be spent on repair and modernization of existing schools, such as a new cafeteria or gym for Walgrove students. If the charter is not eligible for the bond funds, it will be responsible for the costs of construction.

Green Dot is continuing its efforts of locating its Animo Westside Middle School in Venice, after its undertaking to co-locate at Westminster Elementary failed earlier this year because of strong community

opposition (see People Win: Westminster Gets to Keep Its Classrooms, April *Beachhead*.) It had to instead accept the space it was allocated at Cowan Elementary in Playa Vista. They also have a high school, Animo Venice, located at Broadway Elementary School in Venice, in a new building that they constructed to seemingly look like a box of steel.

Both Ocean Charter and Green Dot will apply to lease the land and build on the Walgrove campus, and LAUSD will pick the winner. Walgrove neighbors and parents spoke against charter school presence in general, but Green Dot in particular, as it would add an additional 300 middle school students to the campus. It is unclear whether Ocean Charter will have any advantage for having been there first.

According to Kristy Mack-Fett, director of the Ocean Charter school on the Walgrove campus, Green Dot is a charter management organization with tens of schools, while Ocean Charter is more like a mom and pop business without any other branches. She stated that her school offers alternatives to families that are not well-suited by LAUSD.

The new building is expected to be ready for occupancy in about three and a half years. Ocean Charter students will continue their attendance during construction in the existing bungalows or in new, temporary bungalows, depending on LAUSD's decision.

A motion was approved at the August 16 Venice Neighborhood Council (VNC) meeting that recommends that "LAUSD focus on charter applicants' capacity and ability to address middle school needs – without excluding elementary or high schools – in its upcoming Request for Proposal (RFP) for the Walgrove Campus."

A second motion, seeking the VNC's support of the continuation of Ocean Charter School's co-location at the Walgrove campus, did not receive a second and died. The issue will likely be considered again once the RFP is published.

Although our tax dollars should support public education exclusively, charter schools were allowed to move onto traditional school campuses where classrooms are underutilized or vacant by Proposition 39, which passed in 2000. It is not probable that Walgrove will be able to take back the space already allocated to a charter school. However, it does seem in the best interests of the students for Ocean Charter to continue operating at its current location as opposed to being forcefully moved to another neighborhood. Although the neighbors would be happiest accommodating Walgrove Elementary students only, their traffic and congestion woes will worsen if Green Dot is allowed to replace Ocean Charter and bring in an additional 300 students. ☺



Junuen Garcia

## Sewing Club! In Venice!

By Roger Linnett

Five members of the Venice Boys & Girls Club's Sewing Club were invited to exhibit their creations for the 700 plus attendees of the annual conference of the American Sewing Guild on Friday, August 19 at the Bonaventure Hotel in downtown L.A.

They were there as special guests of the ASG as a demonstration of the wonderful results of mentoring young students in the sewing

arts, and to encourage the members of the audience to go back and start sewing programs in their own communities. The five created outfits in line with the ASG's theme of "Hollywood's Golden Age of Glitz and Glamour."

For most it was the first major sewing project they had ever undertaken, having first crafted purses, messenger bags and the like.

Esteyn Diaz, 17, the group's only male, who has been awarded a scholarship to the pres-

tigious Fashion Institute for Design and Merchandising, designed and made a dark-blue, long-sleeve linen shirt. "It's a perfect summer beach look."

Ivette Flores, 16, who will also be attending FIDM next year, chose a short, summer dress in black with tiny red roses and red buttons down the side. "I chose the pattern from McCall's, and the fabric because floral prints are trendy."

Christina Garcia, 18, showed off her chic, black taffeta gown. "I imagined it would be something Grace Kelly would wear."

Junuen Garcia, 16, matched a short black dress with a leopard-print top. "I wanted something I could wear for more than one occasion."

Somone Glenn, 17, crafted a beautiful, black silk, sequined blouse. "This look Rocks! especially with vintage accessories."

In 2007 the VB&GC received a donation of two sewing machines and three boxes of fabric. But it wasn't until a new volunteer, who goes by "Rose," but could be a mistaken for Laura Dern, said "Yes, I can sew," in answer to Art Director Lalo Marquez's question. "Great," he said, "you're the new sewing teacher." A small office was converted to accommodate sewing machines and work tables. When the adjoining art room is in use the noise makes it hard to talk without closing the door, which makes the little room hot and stuffy. The club is hoping to move to a larger space soon.

The club really took off when the Singer Company donated a couple more machines, and VNC council member Chalis McPherson, herself a member of the South Bay chapter of ASG, was able to get the VNC to grant funds to open accounts for material and notions at Fabric Planet, Lincoln Fabrics and JoAnn's. She also put out the word with the ASG for more volunteers to help mentor the eager students.



Somone Glenn



Esteyn Diaz

The very popular club, dubbed "The Sew What? Club" has far fewer mentors than the many aspiring fashionistas clamoring to join. There are currently a half-dozen women, not all ASG members, who for the most part work one-on-one to teach the teenagers all aspects of sewing. While most are individual projects ranging from purses and messenger bags to pillows and pajamas, a group led by Barbara McDowell is learning to make quilts as a collective endeavor. The Sew What? Club meets Tuesday afternoons from Noon 'til 6 pm on the second floor of the Venice Boys & Girls Club.

☺



Christina Garcia



Ivette Flores



# Roadmap to Housing turns into a Lonesome Highway

By Greta Cobar

In what could be viewed as a publicity stunt at best or another slap in the face, councilperson Bill Rosendahl made headlines this week as he ceremoniously handed Alfred Adkins the keys to an apartment in Venice. This is the so-called success story of People Assisting the Homeless (PATH), an organization that Rosendahl gave \$650,000 of Venice funds, that were to be used only in Venice, but are now spread out in the entire eleventh council district. No wonder the first Venice person to receive housing, in Koreatown, did not make the headlines.

The Venice Vehicle Census, conducted by St. Joseph's and the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority, counted 254 "vehicles used as dwelling spaces in Venice" on the morning of July 13, 2010. Then Rosendahl called the September 23, 2010 Town Hall Meeting, where he stood in front of hundreds of Venetians and said loud and clear: "jails exist for those of you who choose not to be part of my program." Concurrently a police task force was created, and "the mission of the task force is to effect arrests of individuals who are violating local and state codes." Most specifically, 85.02, which makes it a crime to sleep in a vehicle.

To make a long story short, during the fall and winter months of 2010 the police chased out of Venice as many people living in vehicles as they possibly could in a military, Nazi-reminiscent fashion. The terror, the fear, the arrests, the tows, the tears, the nightmares and then the cold nights on the cement once the vehicles were gone. The people are still here.

Rosendahl surely did deliver on his pledge to put people in jail. He did not deliver on coming up with his program though. Here we are, a year later, and two people have been put into housing. After dozens were arrested, thousands of dollars were spent on towing costs, and years were shaved off people's existence by the stress of having their shelter either in peril or gone. The initial plan of providing parking lots for those living in vehicles is now out the door.

What happened was Rosendahl used his political power and elbowed his way into the Hous-

ing Authority and the Veterans Administration to snatch housing vouchers. He did not create the housing that he is providing, just took it from someone else and is planning on giving it to the 115 people on his "list." Jeremy Sidell, spokesperson for PATH, could not estimate how many of those 115 people are actually from Venice.

Notice that while 245 people were counted as living in vehicles in Venice alone, only 115 people are on the "list," which now covers the entire eleventh district. And after bragging about personally giving Atkins the keys to the apartment and half a dozen fresh eggs Rosendahl went on to say: "the others: we have a law that gives us the ability to deal with them if they choose to illegally live in a vehicle." I guess the other half dozen eggs will be thrown at the rest of us.

As many of you might recall, the "let's get rid of RVs" hysteria was started on August 17, 2010 by an allegation of an RV dumping sewage made by members of the local Neighborhood Watch. The validity of those allegations has been questioned in the past, and the felonious background of the person making the allegations was exposed by the *Beachhead* in June (Who's Watching the Neighborhood Watch) and was validated three months later by an August 25 article in the *LA Weekly* (Clamor Over Venice311).

The authority cannot make it illegal for people to exist and the affluent cannot eliminate the "undesirables." But today, when everyone is out looking for a dollar, it seems unusually cruel to target those with the least. I suppose the authority expects us to be grateful that the law still allows sleeping on the sidewalk. ☸



# Save The Post Office

By Greta Cobar

The Post Office headquarters in Washington DC is currently considering the appeals they received to stop the sale of the historic Venice post office. Linda Lucks, President of the Venice Neighborhood Council, Janice Hahn, our newly elected congressperson, the Venice Town Council and other concerned Venetians sent in appeals asking that postal services remain in the post office as opposed to moving them to what is now the post office annex.

According to Richard Maher, spokesperson for the postal service, there is no date set for reaching a decision and he would not comment on the criteria used to reach that decision.

The majority of the community is vehemently against the sale of the historic building, the only New Deal-era Works Projects Administration structure surviving in Venice. It also houses the "Story of Venice," a mural created by well-known California Modernist artist Edward Biberman.

The building is now for sale for 5 million under the excuse of loss of revenue from postal services. The postal service says the buyer would have to sign covenants protecting the property as a historical building, but those covenants have easily been broken in the past, as was the case with the historical hotels downtown.

Two Biberman murals were removed from the downtown post office and court house in the past. In the mid 80s, when Biberman himself wanted to see the removed murals, they were nowhere to be found.

Most likely they were destroyed. According to Suzanne Zada, Art Executor of the Biberman Estate, removing and moving a mural will inevitably cause significant damage to the art piece and possible loss.

Created in 1941, the mural in our post office depicts the view from that location at that point. Abbot Kinney is pictured between his idyllic Venice architecture and the oil wells that existed

in the Peninsula. Murals originated during a time when illiteracy was prevalent, and they served the function of educating the population. It was therefore imperative that they be in plain sight of the citizens, such as in a post office. Changing the building into something other than a public building would impede the public's access to the mural.

—continued on next page

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# Not Just The Rich Can Live At The Beach

By Carol Fondiller

Years ago, shortly after the earth cooled, I became interested in housing matters.

It was a matter of self-interest.

During the late '60s there was a real estate boom, and property owners in Venice, who derived profits from renting below-code sub-standard units at fairly low rents, saw the opportunity to make a killing.

The only obstacle standing in their way were the low-rent tenants and inhabitants that occupied their apartments and houses. I was one of the low rent parasites.

During the tumultuous Vietnam Watergate years, the owners of large portions of Ocean Front Walk and other members of the Venice Improvement Association began demonizing low-income people.

It didn't matter if you were paying low rent and working just enough to support your surfing habit, your poetry habit, or you just didn't have any ambition except to work just enough to pay the rent and get some duds from the used clothing (pre-collectible) stores that used to be in Ocean Park and Venice, and swim, you were the enemy of all things that made America great.

Every long-haired hippie, peacenik, pensioner, and women's libber who sat on the now extinct benches on the Last Working Class Beach (as titled in the L.A. Times article) was a barrier to the gazillions of bucks that they could make on their "property."

In collusion with the development happy ecologically ignorant City Council, who at that time met a piece of black top or office building it didn't like, the various business and developer groups such as the Venice Improvement Association, the Chamber of Commerce, etc., sicced the cops on people who questioned, who fought back when they were told to make way for more "desirable" inhabitants, i.e., more affluent residents.

Meanwhile, the "undesirables" fought the speculators to a standstill, a huge victory considering that the only resource we had against the well-heeled developers, city officials, and elected representatives were numbers, cunning, tenacity, and a sense of desperation.

In the years that followed, many of the homeowners and owners of smaller pieces of property who



*Carol Fondiller was a founder of the Free Venice Beachhead in 1968. She continued to write and serve on the Collective until her death in 2010. This article has never appeared in the Beachhead. She wrote it in 2002 for the Venice Community Housing Corporation.*

sided with the owners of mega-properties were also "evicted" from their homes and businesses because of discriminatory code enforcement and taxes.

People became more aware of the value of the incomparable California coastline. The preservation of access to the beach for all Californians and the preservation of the delicate environment became even more important than – gasp! – "property" values.

In a great consciousness raising effort, it became a matter of interest to preserve and build low-income housing to ensure that access to the beach wouldn't only be for the affluent. Thus the Coastal act was passed.

Although Venice was a refuge for artists of various media of various incomes, in the '70s Venice was discovered by the Afflu-Hips. These were the people who wanted a roll in the ol' nostalgia de boue, but

also wanted a hot tub and parking for their three cars plus those of their friends.

In other words, they wanted San Marino in Greenwich Village. To paraphrase Tom Wolfe, when the artists start moving in the millionaires follow.

The strategies that the eco-freaks and community activists used to stall stop or alter huge developments with little or no parking zip low-income housing began to be used against them. Now when one attends a meeting for a proposed low-income housing project, someone is likely to speak out against it because the parking does not confirm to the coastal development requirements. Some of these people live in buildings whose owner/builders have bootlegged units through all the zoning requirements to the detriment of parking. They are P.O.'d because low-income housing projects are not required to have the same amount of parking as market-rate developments.

But some of the protestors simply do not like the thought of low-income residents living next to them. Perhaps they are afraid of catching the poor disease.

It's too bad they don't take the advice of Steve Clare, Executive Director of the Venice Community Housing Corporation, and look at complexes that the VCHC has put up.

VCHC doesn't squander its money. They use most of it for acquiring property and land to build and preserve housing units. Their buildings do not intrude on the neighborhood.

They grace it. The VCHC takes the space and enhances the environment not only physically with murals and tiles, but also with work plans and art groups. They give back to the neighborhood.

Would that some of the for-profit developers take a cue from the relatively impecunious VCHC and instead of wasting their money on public relations, would put their money into developing buildings of unassuming grace and beauty that used technology to implement solar energy, wind power, etc., instead of building those not-for-artist, grey, concrete bunkers on Electric Avenue.

And the newcomers should be reminded that the low-income folks who they want to eliminate were here first. ☺

# Save The Post Office

—continued from page 4

Venetians are against moving the postal services to the annex, as that would increase the traffic, decrease the number of parking spots, and have a negative environmental impact on the area surrounding the annex, all of which is residential.

Furthermore, according to a postal worker who chose to remain anonymous, currently there is no vacant space available in the annex. Moving the operations and remodeling the annex would carry an expense probably close to the price set on the post office building itself. According to Ruth Goldway, Chairperson of the Postal Regulatory Commission and a Venice resident, if such a move were to take place, the service, appearance and parking provided at the annex would have to measure up to the standards of the community.

It wasn't too long ago that the annex itself was for sale, first for 20 millions and then for 16. Although offers were made, the building was ultimately not sold because another building was not found to accommodate the sorting that now takes place in the annex. As Jim Smith pointed out at one of the Neighborhood Council meetings that took place concerning the fate of our beloved post office, it would make more sense to move the sorting operations for Venice to the current post office building, send all other sorting operations to their own neighborhoods, and sell the annex. It would generate a lot more money, it wouldn't carry the strong opposition of the community, and it would be an easier sale because the annex does not have historical status, which might deter buyers, especially with the strong demands that the community has for the preservation of the mural.

As opposed to some other issues such as RVs or homelessness, this issue has really united our community, as we all want to save our post office, which, as Don Geagan said, "is more than just a post office. It is the heart of our community." Indeed, all roads in Venice do lead to the post office. Hopefully it will stay that way. ☺



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Edward Biberman, a well-known artist was the creator of the Venice Post Office mural, which is now in jeopardy.

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Edward Biberman was an extraordinary artist, and also much more than that. I was totally captivated by this film. —Howard Zinn

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**turned**  
**away**



# Tom Freund's Edge of Venice

By CJ Gronner

Tom Freund has been a part of my Venice for as long as I can remember. His latest album, *The Edge Of Venice*, gave us a good excuse to sit down and talk about our Venice and his music inspired by this special part of the world.

Tom was born and raised in New York, where he self-taught himself the upright bass and piano at the age of 7, then picked up the guitar at 11. He was already getting jazz gigs in high school, and so began a musician's life that has never included any kind of



desk job. College was the Berklee School of Music and then Claremont College, when he decided to come West to check out the music scene. Once he got that degree in English Lit, it was off to the races, starting "the tour of life."

Tom was broken into the touring musician's life when he played as a member of alt-country band, The Silos. "It's a great way to see the world. When you play a show somewhere, you're in the scene you'd be in if you lived in that town, so you meet a lot of like people and the world gets smaller."

After a stint living in Austin, Texas, Tom bought a big dresser at the French 50/60's store when he was visiting Venice, and decided it was easier to move himself than the dresser, and has lived here ever since. Though he travels the world playing gigs (and just got back from opening for Ben Harper in Europe), it's always Venice he looks forward to coming back home to. Tom's daughter, Delilah, was born in Venice and through her, Tom has realized the phenomenal and tightly-knit community that Venice also is for parents and kids. He recorded a great kids album, *Hug Trees*, in honor of this, that every Venice kid (or every kid, period) should own.

We sat down at The French Market to catch up and talk about this place we love and his latest album. We agreed that it's getting harder to live in Venice as

an artist (though the artists made Venice what it is in the first place), and Tom said, "I'm hanging onto Lincoln for dear life." Hence his album title, the EDGE of Venice. But that title also has double meaning, as the EDGE that Venice has to it is also something worth clinging to. As it gets more homogenized around here, it's harder to see that edge, but it's there, and we're hanging onto it for dear life. Tom (and I) love the old school places, like the Abbot's Habit corner ("Legendary"), the French Market, Firefly, and The Roosterfish ("The dopest place left for a drink"), though Tom is not afraid to hit the Other Room for a Malbec on occasion. He misses The Stronghold music scene, which he was a big part of, and we're still trying to find the place that can be like that artistically, locally.

Perhaps it could be The Del Monte Speakeasy, where Tom had his cd release show for *The Edge Of Venice* the other night. Located in the basement of The Townhouse bar on Windward, the Del Monte is now open for business (stay tuned for the story on them soon) and hosted a slam-bang night of music to celebrate Freund's latest musical endeavor. The Del Monte really was a speakeasy in the Prohibition era, and is now completely refurbished and gorgeous, with great sound.

Australian indie darling Julia Stone opened the night up for Tom, in her first show without her brother, Angus. She has an angel voice, and can blast some great trumpet too. I loved her version of "You're The One That I Want" from *Grease* the most. Check her out.

Tom's friend introduced him by saying, "In this sacred, crazy, fucked up, tilted place called Venice, we can all relate to Tom Freund!" I loved that. In a night that featured many of the songs off the new album, and a bunch of classic ones, each and every number was one that had the crowd dancing and singing along ... many of whom have been Freund Fans from the beginning. As Tom said before launching into his song "Where Is The Love?", "This whole

night is about friends." So true. And many of Tom's musician friends were there to back him up: Chris Joyner, Gabriel Noel, Ben Peeler, Pete McNeil, David Ralicke, Brett Dennen, and Julia Stone returning to duet with Tom on his great, "Why Wyoming?" and "Sugar Don't Get No Sweeter Than This" and the excellent covers of The Who's "Let My Love Open The Door" and the Beatles' "Revolution". Good times.

"Wounded Surfer Boy" off the new album sounds a whole lot like a bunch of Venice people I've known, with its verse that goes:

*He's the Mayor of the neighborhood,  
He rides around on a skateboard made of*



*wood,  
He's got no car, no house to call his own,  
But that's alright, he'll find someplace to stay tonight,  
And that's alright by her*

Yep. We all know(and love) a few of them. "You've heard this one before in Venice," said Tom to introduce one of my favorites, "Truly Mellow". It features a chorus of "La da dah's" that the whole room sang along, especially when Tom said, "C'mon Venice, sing so they can hear about it in Marina del Rey!" And we did.

At night's end, everyone staggered back upstairs to cool off outside on Windward. Sweaty, smiling, happy and feeling truly mellow. A perfect night in and about Venice, California.

Add Tom Freund's *The Edge Of Venice* to your Venice Soundtrack ... It's not complete without it. It and all of Tom's discography are available at TomFreund.com, iTunes, CD Baby, Amazon, and at whatever record stores are still alive and kicking.

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Photos by  
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## Reapportionment Makes Poles Play Musical Chairs:

# Good Bye Janice, Hello Henry

By Jim Smith

One month and three days after she won our Congressional seat, Janice Hahn announced she was bailing out.

The reason was simple. Hahn's base in the San Pedro area had been cut out of the 36th district (now, the 33rd) by the California Citizens' Redistricting Commission. The Commission was approved by voters in 2008 with the intent of taking the every-decade redistricting away from the state legislature.

The maps issued by the Commission may appear, at first glance, to be as screwy as those created by the legislature in previous decades. One big difference is that the Commission has shown little regard for incumbents. In Hahn's case, she will have to defeat another incumbent, and fellow Democrat, Laura Richardson, if she is to stay in Congress.

The maps also show little regard for community integrity. In Venice's case, some of our neighborhoods have been sliced away. While most of Venice will be in the 33rd Congressional, that area south of Palms and east of Penmar, as well as everything east of Lincoln and south of Venice Blvd. will be in the 37th District. Neither the state Senate nor Assembly cut through Venice, according to information released thus far.

The state Senate district will remain the 26th, although it will withdraw from Long Beach and adjacent communities, and instead head up the road to Santa Monica, the Canyons, Beverly Hills, and West Hollywood. Definitely an upscale district.

The new Congressional district, the 33rd, takes in much of the same territory as the state Senate district. It runs along the coast from Malibu to Palos Verdes (home of the runner-up in the special election for Congress, Teabagger Craig Huey). It also takes in much of Beverly Hills. But it deftly skirts LAX, leaving the airport for another district. What sort of political deal was made to do that?

In contrast, it looks as if a different committee drew the lines of the new 62nd Assembly district. Instead of hugging the coast line as do the other districts, it goes south from Venice to El Segundo and east nearly to the Harbor Freeway. It also dips down to include Lawndale, another downscale community.

The incumbent Member of Congress in the 33rd, Henry Waxman, has announced that he will run in the new district. Even though he is new to much of the district, his fund raising skills will make him the candidate to beat. He has never received less than 63 percent of the vote.

Waxman, who will be 72 next year, has been in Congress since 1975, representing Beverly Hills, Santa Monica and parts of the Valley. He is known outside his district for stopping the Red Car "subway to the sea" for 21 years due to safety concerns about Methane explosions (see "The Solid Gold Subway," Oct. 2010 Beachhead, <http://bit.ly/dxINuT>).

The new districts are no problem for two incumbents: Assemblymember Betsy Butler and state Senator Ted Lieu. Both live in their new districts, Butler in the Marina and Lieu in the foothills of Palos Verdes.

What does all this mean for Venice? We are now sandwiched in between two of the richest areas of Southern California, Malibu, Pacific Palisades, the Canyons and Beverly Hills on the north and the Palos Verdes Peninsula on the south. Lil' Venice will have scant influence in this political system where money talks.

The Assembly district may well be an improvement for our influence in the state house. It'll be just the reverse of the other two districts. In the Assembly, Venice and the Marina will be the "wealthy" parts of the district. 🚲





# The Very Venice Art & Design Gallery

By Kathy Leonardo

It's an early foggy morning in Venice Beach, a small yellow house with an interesting piece of street art plastered across the front catches my attention. Nestled on the busy Abbot Kinney boulevard, I realize, I have arrived at the recently opened, Very Venice Art & Design Gallery. Greeted by one of the artists working in the front gallery, I am lead back to the office of the owner, curator and artist, Dary Rees. Though just meeting her, I am aware of her renowned reputation as an exceptional business woman. Having an incredibly successful import/export business in the late '90s already sets her apart from many artist/gallery owners. This woman knows how to get things done. Right brain, left brain, she does it all.

Rees takes me on a tour of the gallery. The Very Venice Art & Design Gallery is home to more than 50 artists. It's an eclectic array of visual art. In addition to framed paintings on the wall, the doorway is wrapped by a lovely mural by local artist Outi. Passing through another room, I recognize beautiful tile sculptures by another Venice local, Linda Fenster, more work from another Venice artist, Rachel Rubenstein, then finally into a back room where I stop and say "This must be the erotica room." Dary laughs.

Rees is at home here in Venice. Originally born in Israel, she came to America at a young age and lived all over the US. She explains that she has always been drawn to Venice. She loves being surrounded by people who are artists and want to make the world a better place, like she does.

Dary has been creating art, ever since she can remember. She was raised in a family of artists, her mom made sculptures and her sister was a painter. It is something she always looked at as a healing process. "My current project is illuminated sculptures made of eco-conscious material. My art celebrates hope, courage and survival by reaching out to celebrate our lives, relationships and the environment." "Illuminators of Hope", 2008, is a series of eco sculptural chandeliers and light fixtures.

"The motives resemble reaching arms & hands with elements of cocoons, flowers and butterflies. The colors are passionate and bright or calm and serene. The material is mainly local palm trees parts and aluminum. The dry parts of the palm remind me of confused and abused materials. I bring it to life by stopping the decay, organizing and shaping it, adding col-

ors and electrical light, turning it to a celebration of life. Using electricity has a great meaning to me, since electricity is power and energy. When I add it to the finished sculpture, it breathes life into it and acts as an illuminator that lets you shed light on the dark shadows in your life," said Rees

Located at 1629 Abbot Kinney Blvd., Very Venice Art & Design Gallery is a combination of a co-op, and a gallery together, with intensive marketing and monthly PR and events. Gallery hours are 10am-

7pm Sunday through Tuesday and 10am-10pm Wednesday through Saturday.

When asked what she sees for the future of the gallery, Dary replies very assuredly "Opening more locations, selling art all over the world, and bringing the average person closer to artists and the art world." see website, [www.veryveniceart.com](http://www.veryveniceart.com)

*Photo by Kristina Valentine.*



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Photo by Margaret Molloy



**A movie before bedtime.** The Aug. 6 sleep out at the old city hall sponsored by a host of organizations, including the Beachhead, attracted about 75 who slept out in support of the homeless. Unlike the usual night for homeless people, the event featured 24-hour bathrooms at Beyond Baroque and a few sleepers brought along their camping tents. The Sleep Out attracted a number of TV trucks who gave good pub-

licity. However, several participants/observers told the Beachhead that much was missing. No speakers laid out a plan for future protests, nor were there demands for government action to end homelessness. No sign-up sheet was circulated to keep in contact with the obviously motivated sleepers.



Photo by Pegarty Long

**Meanwhile a real struggle for survival** goes on every night on Ocean Front Walk as more and more victims of the economy sleep on cold concrete. A court order protects those sleeping on the sidewalk from police harassment. Federal judges have ruled that homeless people have the right to sleep out since there are not enough beds to house them.

On Ocean Front Walk, there are homeless people seeking out the protection of numbers and others who are paid by ven-

dors to spend the night staking out their selling space. Not shown in this photo is the general trashy condition of the west side of the Walk, which the city has been slow in cleaning up.



Juan's Hats  
#5

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# New Book: Nun on Fire by Philomene Long

Reviewed by Jim Smith

Have you ever wondered what goes on behind the walls of a convent? The answer might surprise you.

Now we have a day-to-day look, thanks to Pegarty Long’s publication of her late twin sister’s *Memoirs of a Nun On Fire*. Before becoming Venice’s poet laureate, Philomene Long spent five years as a novice and a full-fledged nun in a convent located in the Santa Monica mountains. She went over the wall one night, in part due to the allure of Venice of the Beats, and never looked back. She did leave us with this inspired description of her time on the inside.

Up until now, Long has been known mainly for her haunting poetry. We now know that she was an accomplished writer of prose. Her factual, and hilarious, description of nunnery reads like a novel. The 18 chapters are broken up into nun-sized morsels with titles like: “Last Passionate Kiss on the Convent Steps,” “I was Elvis Presley’s First Hound Dog,” “I Set the Convent on Fire,” “God’s Worm,” “I Am a Beat Nun,” “Hermann Goering in a Nun’s Habit,” “The Zen Slap.”

For the first time in print (is that true?), it is disclosed that nuns routinely self-flagellate. What the Da Vinci Code novel and film implied was an aberration, was actually common practice in at least one convent. Apparently, the Roman Catholic Church denies that it is part of its practice.

In a response to the portrayal of self-flagellation in the Da Vinci Code, an official of the Opus Dei Catholic sect had this to say: “The Da Vinci Code makes it appear that Opus Dei members practice bloody mortifications. In fact, though history indicates that some Catholic saints have done so, Opus Dei members do not do this.” By implication, this influential group is denying widespread use or endorsement of self-flagellation in the Church.

Long’s disclosure of required self-flagellation within the last 50 years ago in a typical nunnery, “The Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet’s Convent,” may have uncovered a secret akin to the downgrading of Mary Magdalene by the Church or the sexual abuse of alter boys.

At the least, it raises some questions. Is self-flagellation an approved, or required, practice for nuns, monks and priests? If not, when did it stop?

Long says the instrument is called the “discipline.” She describes it as “a very narrow steel chain, about a foot and a half long...at the bottom there is a knob with many little chains, each with a small ball at the tip.” In her convent, it is the “Saturday night spe-

cial,” to be used after prayers on that evening. This was no optional diversion for young nuns, but an integral and required part of convent life.

While Long devotes a good number of pages to this fearsome instrument, most of the book is much lighter. Philomene Long was not going to abandon her humorous way of dealing with the world simply because she had become a nun.

According to Pegarty Long, her sister began working on the book shortly after she left the convent. Parts of it have appeared in print through the years but this is the first unabridged and unexpurgated edition.

Philomene Long died in 2007 after a life spent as a Venice poet (except for this interlude as a nun). However, it remained for Pegarty Long to edit and publish much of her work. In August 2010, she published *The Collected Poems of Philomene Long*. This was followed last April by *The Selected Poems and Prose of John Thomas*. Thomas, a major poet in his own right, was Philomene Long’s husband until his death in 2002.

A book launching for *Memoirs of a Nun on Fire* was held Aug. 13 at Beyond Baroque. Members of the Beat Literati from throughout Southern California and beyond attended, and many of them read excerpts from the book. Readers included Hillary Kaye, Harry Northup, Jim Smith, Holly Prado, Virom Coppola, Pegarty Long, Mariana Dietl, S.A. Griffin and Michael C. Ford.

There is still a treasure trove of poetry and prose from Long and Thomas waiting to be mined and published. Pegarty Long can be encouraged in her editing and publishing work if everyone reading this review buys a copy of this thoroughly entertaining book, *Memoirs of a Nun on Fire*.

The book can be purchased at the Beyond Baroque bookstore or on-line from Raven Publications at: <http://bit.ly/qs33Vk> 



From bottom to top: Michael C. Ford, Harry Northup, Holly Prado, Pegarty Long, Virom Coppola, S.A. Griffin, Hillary Kaye, Jim Smith, Mariana Dietl. Photo by Margaret Molloy.



Photo by Pegarty Long

## Scott Wannberg

Feb. 20, 1953 - Aug. 19, 2011

Scott Wannberg, a graduate of Venice High School, became one of the best-known poets in Southern California prior to moving to Florence, Oregon, in 2008.

He was a founder of the poetic touring group, the carma bums, which also included S.A. Griffin and David Smith.

He was known to thousands of readers as the face of Dutton’s Bookstore. His job there allowed him to pursue his calling, which was a non-stop stream of poetry.

Rip Rense, a classmate at Venice High said, according to the Associated Press, that Wannberg was "speaking poetry." "You couldn't shut him up. It was a stream-of-consciousness kind of Chick Hearn-meets-Charles Bukowski narrative about friends and current events..." His prolific poetry ultimately filled 10 books.

A memorial will be held at Beyond Baroque on Sept. 17. See the Beachhead Calendar for details.

## Carma Bums

riding that old cadillac highway  
with captain griffin

By Scott Wannberg

we were so called poets  
dancers of some strange rhythm  
making ornery lovely noise in the vortex  
did your parents ever regale you with their vortex myths?  
we are definitely so called humans  
plying the cadillac highway trade  
unleashing our ooga booga upon an unsuspecting public  
under the stars of taos in 89  
we all went shirtless  
as the insurmountable bobbo staron led us  
we tried not to cringe  
we tried to lick the magic stamp and put it on the envelope of time and space  
i was shotgun mingo  
singing john prine with the howling flora and fauna  
no radio lived in the caddy  
our vocation was to make up our own play station  
before ipods came marching down the super technical byway  
we were on our own impressionistic continual random play  
long before the 2 jakes  
a very inferior sequel to a great film  
there were the 2 mikes  
and the 1 doug  
bruner mollett knott  
prospectors of verbal and visual gold  
bonzo sometimes rode in our hearts  
and sparky's grandfather houndstooth  
flamenco dancers exercised in our bone marrow  
i am a wayfaring wordsmith road  
heading in any direction you can handle  
anarchy's common-law intimate other  
raiding midnight ice boxes of consciousness  
we are so called art forms  
splashing peculiar colors  
across uneasy easels called the world  
a carma bum might be a toothless reprobate  
or a stunning virile used book written in magic  
in between, a lot of tunes made their precarious way  
onto the inner ear dancefloor of our time here  
which will only end when the proverbial fat lady  
loses the right to sing  
did your parents ever regale you with their proverbial fat ladies  
and their never ending biography?  
i rode shotgun with griffin  
the new world lay at our feet  
the rules of the road keep renaming themselves

the weather claims it can behave  
i am an active verb  
slumming with cantankerous adjectives  
i am the old soft shoe  
trying to remember which foot i supposedly call home  
we are poets and tinkers and mad men and mad women  
bank presidents grovel at our feet  
cops look the other way when we smoke metaphors  
we were much too animated for walt disney to manage  
riding that old cadillac highway with captain griffin  
is one exercise workout program  
that the whole family can endure together  
sometimes you get static in your reception  
sometimes the wheaties don't make you feel strong  
it's just another endless game of golf at times  
but then that last hole in one  
opens up an all night place for you to play  
and that poetry you swore you never really knew  
breaks out all over your skin  
the unknown world at your door  
claims it's going to be around a spell  
you're going to name it with your art,baby  
it might be brutal,it might be tender  
but your art will ride the killer wave  
without falling into the sea  
your art will be riding in a cadillac  
that never really runs out of gas  
it's the story of the world as i was told it  
by all talking dogs and their creative writing teachers  
and editors  
it's your own personal story  
behind the wheel  
i'm riding shotgun with you  
maybe i'll be singing john prine  
maybe i'll be singing you  
yeah,that's it for sure  
i'll be singing me  
through singing you  
this burst is for my brothers and sisters, fathers and mothers  
in the lingo process express  
we be mad, we be gentle  
we be broken, we stumble home whole  
we come with stories and poems and song  
we are your origin and your departure gate  
yeah, that's it, for sure  
i'm learning your tunes  
as i take sparky for a much needed walk  
through no man's land  
through armageddon  
through point of no return  
sparky pisses on lack of imagination  
he begins to sing john prine  
i hear a cadillac in the distance  
naming the new highway  
of our heart's ability to retain memory



The World Wave

By Jim Smith

There's a Tsunami comin'  
to shake up the whole wide world.  
You can't escape this big old wave  
hittin' every city where there's a slave.  
Gonna feel this human tidal wave.

Listen, rich man  
Your pockets got half of everything  
If you billionaires won't share the wealth,  
and the things we need  
Someone's gonna bleed.

You made us the wretched of the earth  
'cause you won't give us dignity and jobs  
So we'll do a little night work.  
And if we don't get a pay raise  
we'll get extra cash another way.

Rich man, you got your armies  
goin' around the world  
terrorizin' folk. That's gonna end.  
Hey, we got our army, too.  
25 million jobless comin' unglued.

So call out your army and The Fear  
Tear gas and water cannons by the ton  
Lots of us want justice even more than livin'  
Dyin' might be our pride and our fate  
But all you got is your hate.

You can knock us down once, twice  
maybe more, but we'll keep comin'  
got no where to go so we'll play your game  
'til your soldiers join us in our fun  
whatcha gonna do when they cut and run?

You seen it comin' rich man  
Hard-workin' folk fed up in North Africa,  
the Middle East, Greece, Spain,  
and hairy old England  
The World Wave keep on rollin'.

We're gonna make a better world  
Annihilate hunger, vaporize your greed.  
Egypt didn't need your pet dictator  
like them we're gonna put you in our past  
We'd like to take it slow, but it could be fast.

We know those talkin' heads will lie, lie, lie  
your punk politicians will try to make us die.  
Tsunami comin' this way can't be stopped  
Rich man, where you gonna hide?  
where you gonna hide?

dreams turn into now

did my dreams turn into NOW?  
is There now Here, without the "T", the cross,  
within the extraordinary, the jack spinning through  
eternity?  
looking into the eyes of the universe, the mystery,  
this Scorpio on the summer horizon, journeys OM  
- Deja Cross

14:21 Monday, August 29, 2011, behind the Talking  
Stick..... A sidewalk dandelion raised his head, And  
beamed his saffron skyward, but instead Of cursing his  
apparent low estate Began to tower upward. Was it fate  
For him to thus aspire, to arise, To aim toward the lofty  
azure skies? Or Nature? Was it just obedience To her  
silent commands? Was it pretense, To follow suit with  
others? Did he seize The day through gaining altitude,  
to please Some facet of his ego? To await Some pur-  
pose to be given? Potentate Of weeds, this sidewalk  
dandelion strayed Into some mindless boot heel, and  
lay dead..... Roger Houston

Just Asking

You are a pagan child  
born of woman but not of man  
sanctified without a church  
born in the light of the moon  
we ran, we fought, we struggled  
every new group came in here and tried to take our land  
but we're still here, underground angels  
we don't look like angels but we are  
we're watching the sky for the coming of the Lord -  
He's late, Man

We keep on watching  
we're guarding the portals, Lovecraft's portals  
where huge slimy creatures rise up from the sea  
to devour us -  
we are just feeder fish waiting to be eaten  
waiting for the alien spacecraft to come back  
and show us more miracles  
our technology is meant to enslave us  
and so far it's been doing a real good job

Cast off those tubes reaching into your brain,  
listen to the sound of a real live bird  
not a magnified image on the wall  
you're all tubed up, Man,  
just like when you're almost dead,  
but the cruel doctors keep you alive with their technology

It's not a mercy killing we're looking for -  
it's a mercy living  
have mercy -  
get off the consumer assembly line  
and step into reality  
not virtual reality -  
we're getting dumber and dumber and dumber -  
just what you would expect "feeder fish" to be  
then they can pluck you up with their net  
dress you up and send you to the next war -

The beginning of the end has already begun!  
The last drops of oil will be fought over  
again and again,  
until there is no more -  
we will destroy this environment until it is all gone  
and then we will mourn our selfishness

We won't leave anything for future generations -  
except more technology, cold empty technology  
Turn your back on the endless programming to fill  
your tiny brain -  
go back to the beach and let the sand sift through  
your fingers -  
go play, dance, get burned in the sun and  
cool yourself in the ocean's waves  
Take all your machines and toss them in the landfill:  
that's where they are headed anyway

Wars have always been fought -  
for what?  
Spoils of history, gold, religion, rape, pillage, politics -  
"a good time"  
When men and women can run around acting like demons,  
torching peoples' houses -  
from the air, turning entire cities into flames,  
killing millions of innocent civilians  
over and over and over -  
until death do us part?

When you spend most of your life hooked up to a  
machine - how does it feel, when it's over?  
Just asking -  
What exactly was accomplished?  
What was the purpose of that life?  
Just asking -  
When you take 19 year olds and throw them into battle  
and they die, over and over again -  
What exactly was accomplished?  
Just asking -  
Go to the obit section of any paper and you'll see:  
The deaths of young people far outnumber the deaths of the  
old -  
does this make sense to anyone?  
"Oh, say, can you see?"  
Because I can't.

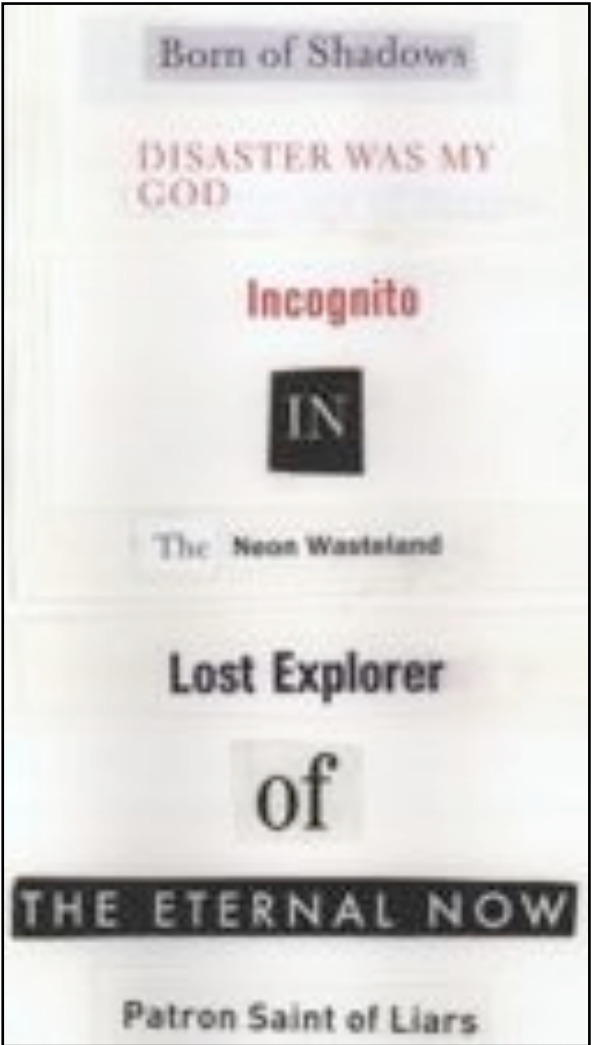
-Mary Getlein

Simple Truth

By Majid Naficy

As you see the flower  
You say "wow" and sit  
Near the terracotta pot  
And stare at new petals  
Like a humming bird.  
I tilt the pitcher  
And as the water  
Washes the dusty leaves  
I surrender to this simple truth  
That you see beauty everywhere  
And become mesmerized in the moment.

I am ashamed of myself.  
Everyday I put on  
The Same old jacket  
And carry the watering can  
To the patio.  
I open the door  
Like a sleepy prison guard,  
And pour the water like piddle  
Not ever noticing  
A single budding rose.

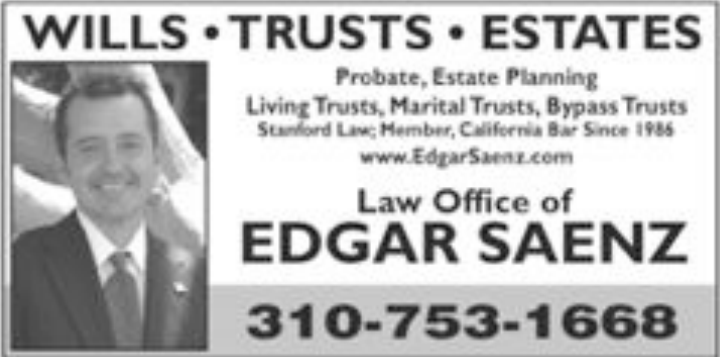
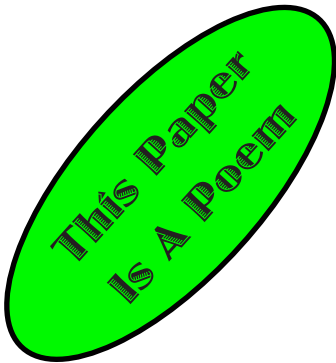


–B. Meade

Homage to Coleen Creedon

By Suzanne Verdal

Because we met at Ozone-park i sat in your Lazy  
Boy chair.  
Because of You, i found another devotee of cats.  
Because of You, i found another PEACE-NIK.  
Because of You, i’ve a new respect for spiders.  
Because of You, i get a hot shower in private.  
Because of You, i saw your bird sanctuary and  
viewed cats and squirrels in harmony.  
Because of You, i’m reminded of the value of vege-  
tarianism.  
Because of You, i know i shouldn’t gorge on potato  
chips.  
Because of You, i found a family member, and enjoy  
morning coffee even more...  
Because of You i’m newly inspired.  
Because of You, i found a safe haven,





## Two Barrie Plays

By Suzy Williams

Have you had a good cry lately? Have one at the Pacific Resident Theater: there are two gems by J.M. Barrie, and the second one'll getcha. Both of them are about older women, younger men, and deception, and they're both rife with witty Victorian English, as might be expected. The first, "Rosalind," is a delightful romp, addressing Barriesque explorations of "ever-youth," but from a completely different angle than "Peter Pan." I was lucky to catch the director, Dana Dewes, filling in for the leading lady Saturday night. She brilliantly met the challenge of the role of Mrs. Page, who goes through a remarkable transformation in this compact one-act. Like "Peter Pan," the story is a stretch for the imagination, but with such supple writing and remarkable performances, disbelief is suspendible. Kevin Railsback is charming as the handsome, baffled swain and at one point does a pantomime of frustration that is quite fun to see play out.



J.M. Barrie

Nick Santiago, the set designer, did a bang-up job of changing the different worlds of these plays with a whirling backdrop that could have been made into a show in itself.

But it is "The Old Lady Shows her Medals" that holds the tearjerker cards. Penny Safranek and Joe McGovern turn in ace performances in a story of the glory of human desire to create and maintain human relationships. Ms. Safranek is gamine and graceful as she comically displays her contrition and affection for a young Scottish soldier. Actor McGovern does the soldier to a T. He runs the gamut from macho bravado to ... well, you've got to see it.

One thing about going to Pacific Resident, besides the sheer convenience of world-class theatre right here on Oakwood and Venice, is that returning to catch another play, you're likely to see that actor who knocked you out two months ago doing something completely different, with a different hair color! It's just so damn rewarding.

"ROSALIND" and "THE OLD LADY SHOWS HER MEDALS" by J.M. Barrie  
Directed by Marilyn Fox and Dana Dewes  
Through October 2011  
For reservations, call 310-822-8392



George Ferris' Wheel, 1893

# 20-Story Tall Observation Wheel Proposed

—continued from page 1

According to Great Cities Attractions website, the company now has seven big wheels which range in height from 40 meters (the wheel proposed for Venice would be 60 meters) to 165 meters in Singapore. The latter is currently the largest wheel in the world, towering approximately 54 stories.

Several of their wheels are "transportable" and are moved from city to city. The wheel on the front page is one of these. It stood in York, England, until 2008, and may be the one that winds up in Venice.

How long has Venice been considered for a wheel? One of the documents distributed by Great Cities at the Chamber meeting is dated Jan. 10, 2011. Why have there been no community meetings for residents and others to give their opinions about the wheel?

The Venice Neighborhood Council has not discussed the wheel because no one has asked for it to be on the agenda, says Vice President Carolyn Rios. She said she had not heard of the proposal when contacted by the Beachhead.

Linda Lucks, President of the Council, said she had received an email from an aide to L.A. Councilmember Bill Rosendahl about two months ago saying that his office was sending her some material on a proposed beach attraction. Lucks said the material never arrived and she forgot about it until reminded by a call from the Beachhead.

"Where's the parking?" Lucks responded when this reporter described the wheel to her. "Where are they going to put the cars of everyone who comes to see the wheel?" she exclaimed. "There's already a Ferris Wheel on the Santa Monica Pier. Why do we need another one?"

Other community organizations that might have an interest in increased tourism and traffic have not known about the wheel proposal. In this activist-oriented community, the big wheel has truly been a stealth proposal.

Apparently no one has been aware of the proposal for a giant amusement attraction on the beach

except for the Venice Chamber of Commerce and Bill Rosendahl.

The Great Cities Attractions handout touts the following advantages of the wheel:

- Boosted tourism numbers to cities and regions
- Increased dwell-time - important for the local retail offering
- Secondary spend to local businesses
- Many new jobs, including construction, operation and management roles
- Regeneration and enhancement of familiar locations.

It may come as a surprise to the British entrepreneurs that Venice already has all the tourism it needs. While there is no official count, Venice tourism is either the largest or second largest in Southern California.

Whether tourists spend money with local businesses may depend on how much the tickets cost to ride the wheel. Rosales says he believes the ticket price would be about \$12.

The wheel in Manchester, England, also owned by Great Cities Attractions, charges £7.50, which converts to \$12.41. A child's ticket is \$8.27. It is also possible to rent an entire VIP capsule (seats 4) and a half bottle of champagne for the equivalent of \$124. Prices may vary in Venice.

Great Cities says about 40 jobs would be created locally and many of these would be filled locally.

The 200 foot (60 meters) tall wheel would not require a foundation and could easily be set up and dismantled. It would include 21 fully-enclosed, climate-controlled capsules for up to eight people.

None of the literature discusses how sturdy the wheel is when confronted with natural forces such as earthquakes or even gale-force winds that sometimes accompany winter storms out of the Pacific.

Power for the wheel could come from electric mains from DWP or with its own diesel generators on-site.

The proposal also claims quiet operation, with noise levels of 60 decibels at 10 meters.

The technology has come a long ways since George Washington Gale Ferris, Jr. constructed the first modern wheel for the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893.

Ferris' wheel was actually larger than the one proposed for Venice. His wheel was 240 feet tall compared with 200 for the Venice wheel. In addition, it could carry many more people, although perhaps not in the quiet comfort afforded today.

Today's wheels are actually Ferris Wheels, although promoters don't like to call them that. The best known of the recent giant Ferris Wheels is the London Eye, or Millennium Wheel, erected in 1999. It has become the most popular tourist attraction in the United Kingdom and is visited by 3.5 million people annually.

It is much larger than the Venice wheel which likely would not attract so many people. But increased tourism and congestion, including parking, are going to weigh heavily on Venetians in deciding if they want this wheel.

What would Abbot Kinney say? He would probably be in favor of the wheel, if he got his cut of the profits. Kinney wanted a wide-open town with few restrictions on businesses. But his views may be as outdated as is the term, "Ferris wheel."

Probably most of us would like to ride up 20 stories for the view. But how much neighborhood peace will we have to sacrifice if it brings hoards of new tourists?

In the final analysis, it may come down to "what's in it for Venice." Will all the revenue go downtown, or will some of it stay here in the community to deal with more auto and pedestrian congestion and trash? Or will it be up to the Chamber and Bill Rosendahl, leaving the rest of us out of the decision-making process? ☺





## Money Available for Worthy Causes

The Venice Neighborhood Council is pleased to announce that due to a change in the funding guidelines imposed by the City, we have additional money to spend this year for Community Improvement Projects. We are therefore inviting community organizations and individuals to apply for a second round of Community Improvement Projects, which will be funded to a maximum of \$3,000.

Applications are now available at <http://venicenc.org/> and also the Vera Davis Center and the Venice Public Library. Applications must be postmarked no later than October 3 in order to be considered. Projects may begin after Feb 1, 2012 and must be completed before April 15, 2012. Current recipients of Community Improvement funding are NOT eligible to apply during this cycle. All events must be FREE and open to the public.

Put your creative thinking caps on now. Previous year's projects have included gardens, murals, a sewing class, and concerts. For more information, contact [parliamentarian@venicenc.org](mailto:parliamentarian@venicenc.org)

—Carolyn Rios

**Labor Solidarity March**  
**Marcha Laboral Solidaridad**

**Marcha March**  
Broad & E Street,  
Wilmington  
Assembly begins 8 a.m.  
March departs 10 a.m.

**Monday**  
**Sept. 5**  
**Lunes**

Union/banners, signs and floats are welcome.  
**BRING THE WHOLE FAMILY!**

**Mitin Rally**  
Raining Park • Noon  
Speakers, Music,  
Shuttle Buses,  
Hot Dogs,  
Soft Drinks available.

**LABOR DAY PARADE, RALLY & PICNIC**  
For more information, Labor Day Committee, 3889 Church Avenue, Long Beach CA 90807 • 562/595-1391

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and more!!



# Growing Up Latino: How Cesar Chavez Inspired A Generation

By Yolanda Miranda

Latinos were once known as the “sleeping giant.” Not only did they wake up, but they have roared in disenchantment over the proposed policies of this government against them and their families.

¡Ya Basta! Enough is Enough! Although they cross the border to come work in this country illegally, the majority of these workers contribute to the economy, not take from it. They pay taxes, work the jobs that most Americans will not work, and which pay only the minimum wage or even less.

At one time the majority of farmworkers were U.S.-born, but as they left the fields to work in factories and other trades, they were replaced by undocumented workers. In the cities, many of the undocumented workers are “day workers,” doing construction work or any type of work while being paid low wages, and many are robbed of their wages since there aren’t any laws to protect them.

Many who are vilified as “illegal” are parents whose children are fighting and being wounded or dying in Iraq. More than 37,000 non-citizens serve in the military, mostly in Iraq.

Racism and injustice have not been eradicated in this country, but the civil rights movement has been given a breath of life and spirit this past Saturday. If undocumented workers can organize themselves, we need to support their efforts and learn from them to get rid of the Patriot Act and get out of Iraq now!

We can trace the roots of the current uprising back 84 years, to March 31, 1927, in the dusty agricultural town of Yuma, Arizona, where Cesar Chavez was born to Librado and Juana Chavez.

The family’s decision to move to California was made out of desperation due to a severe draught that drove them from the ranch they worked on. Thus started the Chavez family saga in becoming migrant farmworkers, living in government labor camps, following the crops that consisted of vegetables and fruit. Cesar, like many migrant children of farmworkers, dropped out of school while in the eighth grade to help his family work in the vineyards. Eventually, the family settled in San José, where Cesar joined the Navy and served in World War II.

After the war, Cesar met Fred Ross, who worked in the Community Service Organization (CSO) founded by Saul Alinsky. He registered Latinos to vote, travelling throughout California and becoming the Director of the CSO. Cesar never forgot his roots as he registered Latinos to vote. He left the CSO and formed the National Farmworker’s Association (NFA) in the mid-60s to organize for higher wages. Dolores Huerta, a former school teacher, joined the NFA also because she believed in his cause, fighting for farmworker’s rights.

I was raised in a migrant farmworker family of 14, married in the mid-60s, with two children and two more yet to be born. I always keep the memory of the elation I felt when I heard of Cesar and the work he was doing for the farmworkers in the San Joaquin Valley. The grape boycott was the beginning of my involvement in my community. I housed the union’s organizer, planned picketlines, marches, and rallies.



Labor Day

YARD, GARAGE, AND

EVERYTHING ELSE SALE

PALOMA AVENUE

Between Speedway & Pacific — 12pm-6pm.

My days revolved around caring for my four children, working and devoting any time left to organizing the community for the grape boycott which had targeted Safeway at that time. The union organizers were only paid \$15 per week, as the union had no contracts or members.

My husband at the time yanked us out from a small town, moving us to Napa County, then to Sonoma County. He hoped that by taking this drastic action that I would come back to my senses and leave all this political involvement behind. Little did he know the union was stronger in Napa and Sonoma because of the organizing of the wine grape pickers and the wineries.

How could I explain or describe the burning flame illuminating within me, of pride and hope about the light Cesar was shining on the plight of the farmworkers both nationally and world-wide. He was describing our family and others who faced poverty, lack of education, and worked long hours for little pay.

No matter how long and hard we worked, the winter months were feared. There was no food stamp program, no unemployment checks, and my father would have to go to work in Oregon in the sawmills to feed the family while my older brother worked in Arizona in the lettuce fields. It never failed, the electricity was always cut off in winter in our home. My mother had to choose between light or food.



So, kerosene lamps were always available in our house. With 14 children to feed and clothe, the only access my dear mother had to birth control was through breast feeding. My siblings are two to one-and-a-half years apart. Later, as we grew up, our mother shared with us that when she found out she was pregnant, she would jump off the kitchen table, over and over again, hoping to bring on a miscarriage. It never worked. She spent most of her growing up years pregnant, as she and my father were married when she was sixteen.

Although we were poor economically, we were taught that to be poor was no sin. But to be poor, not working and keep a dirty house was next to a mortal sin. My mothers’s life was not easy. Can you imagine having to wash clothes for these kids with a wash-board and hang them? The guilt she felt being pregnant meant more hardship for the family.

In 1994, I joined the United Farmworkers (UFW) as an organizer after the name was changed. Cesar’s low paid attorneys finally won the Agriculture Labor Relations Board Act in California. This Act oversaw the holding of fair union elections without the intimidation of the ranchers or their supervisors. It gave us the right to file unfair labor practice charges against ranchers who were violating the rights of farmworkers. There was no way I could not be part of this historical time, to do my part in preventing the injustice to my family. Farm workers had anguished for years about the control ranchers had over us and the conditions we were forced to work under.

Have you ever worked while the field next to you was being sprayed with pesticides? Crop dusters made our eyes water, leaving pesticide dust on our clothes. The planes gave us coughing spells as we inhaled the poisons. Many of us suffered from skin rashes brought on by the spray they used. Cesar knew all about it, he had experienced it, along with his family, and he never forgot. I wasn’t the only member of my family to answer “La Causa,” the call to help build the union. My first cousin, Luis Valdez, started El Teatro Campesino in the fields, using the story lines of the ranchers versus the union and

farmworkers. He went on to become a famous producer and film-maker. My cousin, Ramon Pasillas, another organizer who, like me, was rank-and-file, didn’t hold an official position, but was equally important in the organizing we did. We were trained by Fred Ross in organizing techniques.

After I left the UFW, two years later, I went on to work and gain more experience with other AFL-CIO unions. Yet, being in-



Enelia Garcia, Citlali, Acrylic on canvas, 2008

volved in the Farm Workers Unions was like nothing else in my life. When Nick Jones, the former National Boycott Director for the UFW visited me, we exchanged war stories as if they had just happened yesterday.

Granted, the UFW, the “movimiento,” the beam of the lighthouse, has dimmed since those years. I, like other organizers and some union officials, have seen the difference in what the UFW once was and what it is now. But it will never lose the legacy that Cesar left.

The farmworkers feed the nation and the world, but are given no respect, or a decent income, with the union.

The gains we made “way back when” will be lost unless organizing continues on. So, organize, organize and organize.

CESAR, HAPPY, HAPPY BIRTHDAY!  
HAPPY, HAPPY BIRTHDAY DOLORES HUERTA !

It was an honor to work with you both, to regain my dignity and pride as a farmworker family member. Because of the union, I was the first in my family to graduate from high school and go on to college. My younger brothers and sisters followed in my footsteps. My older siblings sacrificed their education to fulfill our parent’s dream. 🚲

A version of this article appeared in the April 2006 Beachhead.



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# Community Events – day by day

Free Venice Beachhead • September 2011 • 15

Calendar Compiled By Karl Abrams

### Thursday, September 1

- 7-9pm - **Twilight Dance Series Concert.** Americana: Dawes Band. SM Pier. Free.
- 7:30-9pm - **7 Dudley Cinema: Jesse Lerner documentary filmmaker,** host Gerry Fialka. Beyond Baroque. Donation.

### Friday, September 2

- 7-11pm - **First Friday** on Abbot Kinney Blvd., Lots of people and open shops. Free.

### Saturday, September 3

- 6-8pm - **Roots & Roll/Matt Moran** with Bill "The Wick" Wickham. Talking Stick. Free.

### Monday, September 5

- 11-7pm - **Labor Day Yard,** Garage and Everything Else Sale. Paloma Avenue (between Speedway & Pacific).

### Tuesday, September 6

- 7-7:30pm - **Mindful Meditation:** Take a refreshing 30 minute pause by sitting and paying attention. Abbot Kinney Library. Free.

### Wednesday, September 7

- 9pm - **Venice Underground Comedy.** The Townhouse. 52 Windward Ave. Free.
- 6:45-9pm - **VNC Land Use and Planning Committee Meeting.** Oakwood Rec. Center.

### Thursday, September 8

- 9am - **Cell Tower Hearing** to be held at 1645 Corinth Ave., W.L.A. concerning proposed tower on top of Holiday Inn Express at 737 Washington Blvd. Take Blue Bus #1.
- 6-11pm - **Bohemian Exchange's 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual sultry "Fashion Night Out"** shows, 8 and 10pm.1358 Abbot Kinney Blvd. Free.
- 7-9pm - **Twilight Dance Series Concert. New Orleans Funk & Blues.** SM Pier. Free.

### Friday, September 9

- 12-6pm - **Opening Reception: "Dig For Fire."** C.A.V.E. Gallery. 1108 AKB. Free.

### Sunday, September 11

- 10:15am - Vietnam Vet S. **Brian Willson** speaking on his journey as an American peace-maker. Church in Ocean Park, 235 Hill St. Free.
- 2- 4pm - **Mike Street's Dream Dust Art show.** Food and drink. Beyond Baroque. Free.
- 7-10pm - **Lisa Green hosts the heART of healing with singin' Suzy Williams.** Talking Stick. Free.

### Tuesday, September 13

- 6:30pm-10pm - **Women's Sailing Association.** Sailing in storms. Windjammers Yacht Club. 13589 Mindanao Way, MDR. Free.
- 7-10pm - **A Night of Festive Musical Goodness,** Hosted by Danny Moynahan. Talking Stick. Free.

### Wednesday, September 14

- 7-10pm - **Suzy Williams sings for "Virgo Vixen's Birthday"** at Danny's Deli. Truly amazing jazz/blues. Free.

### Thursday, September 15

- 6pm - Venice Art Crawl. Locations: www.veniceartcrawl.com or go to OFW and Windward. Free.

### Friday, September 16

- All Day - "Streets are for people!" **5<sup>th</sup> year rally for Park(ing) Day L.A.,** where metered curbside parking spaces are turned into mini-urban parks. www.parkingdayla.com

Another use for parking meters



### Saturday, September 17

- 3-6pm - **Celebrate the restoration of the Great Wall of Los Angeles Mural.** Venice's Social and Public Art Resource Center (SPARC) is presenting a three-hour celebration featuring keynote speakers, musicians and poets. Free.
- 3-10pm - **Memorial for Scott Wannberg.** Wild and wooly party to share memories, console, grieve, drink, dance, and raise the roof in memory of the poet. Beyond Baroque. See obit, page 10.
- 7-10pm - **The BackBoners** with **SUZY WILIAMS.** Talking Stick. \$10.

### Sunday, September 18

- 2-6pm – **19<sup>th</sup> Annual Palms Court Venice Music Festival fundraising celebration.** 733-743 Palms Blvd. \$10.
- 2pm - **The Great Beyond Sunday Open Reading.** Beyond Baroque. Free.
- 4:30-6:30pm - That Time of The Month:A Female **Comedy** Story telling show. Talking Stick. Free.
- 7-10pm - **It's Bluestime featuring Tom Gramlich & Mystic Miles.** Talking Stick. Free.

### Tuesday, September 20

- 7-9:30pm - **VNC Board Meeting.** Westminster School Auditorium. www.venicenc.org

### Wednesday, September 21

- 4pm - **Music Concert Performance for Kids.** Melissa Green shares songs, dance and stories and rock n' roll. Ages 7 & under. Venice Library. Free.

### Friday, September 23

- 9pm - **Film: The Red Poet** Film about Jack Hirschman as poet/troubadour. Beyond Baroque. Free.

### Saturday, September 24

- 4pm -6pm - **Bob Foster's Afternoon Poetry Workshop Showcase.** Beyond Baroque. \$8, students, seniors, children \$5, members free.
- 9pm – **Dustbowl Revival:** DJ Boss Harmony.Townhouse, 52 Windward. \$5.

### Sunday, September 25

- 7:15-9am - **Triathlon** - Venice Blvd. at the beach to downtown L.A. Venice Blvd. will be closed to traffic until at least 9am.
- 10am-7pm - 27th Annual **Abbot Kinney Festival.** Music, Food, and Booths. AKB. Free.
- 7-10pm - **World Music Night.** Hosted by Stefani Valadez. Blue Nile X-Press opening: Marla Leigh. Talking Stick. \$10.
- 5pm - **Hitched: Latino L.A. celebrates Latino Heritage Month.** Beyond Baroque. \$8, students, seniors, children \$5, members free.

### Tuesday, September 27

- 3pm - **Movie screening of recently-released and old favorite movies.** Venice Library. Free.
- 6:30pm-7:30pm - **The Venice Book Club** meets for their selection of the month. Please call 310-821-1769 for title. Light refreshments. Venice Library. Free.

### Friday, September 30

- 7:30-10pm – **Subversive Cinema:** Chomsky's take on survival. 212 Pier. Free.

## Location Guide

- Abbot Kinney Public Library, 501 S. Venice Blvd, 310-821-1769.
- Beyond Baroque, 681 Venice Blvd. 310-822-3006.
- Burton Chace Park, 13650 Mindanao Way, marinadelrey.lacounty.gov
- Danny's Deli, 23 Windward Ave.
- Electric Lodge, 1416 Electric Ave, 310-306-1854 - electriclodge.org
- G2 Gallery, 1503 Abbot Kinney Blvd 310-452-2842.
- Hal's Bar and Grill, 1349 Abbot Kinney Blvd., 310-396-3105 - halsbarandgrill.com
- Oakwood Recreation Center, 757 California Ave.
- Pacific Resident Theatre, 703½ Venice Blvd. 822-8392 pacificresidenttheatre.com
- SPARC - Social and Public Art Resource Center, 685 Venice Blvd. 822-9560 x15.
- Talking Stick Coffee Lounge, 1411c Lincoln Blvd. 450-6052 - thetalkingstick.net
- Vera Davis Center, 610 California Ave. 310-305-1865.
- Westminster Elementary School, 1010 Abbot Kinney Blvd. (enter auditorium from Westminster Ave.) 310-606-2015.

## Ongoing Events

### Music

- 8pm-12am - **Hal's Bar and Grill** features Live Jazz, Sunday and Monday nights. Free.
- 8:30pm - **TKO Comedy's "Open Mic"** for comics, musicians. 212 Pier. Free. Every Thursday.
- 12-2pm - Saturday & Sunday; **Music at Uncle Darrow's.** 2560 Lincoln Blvd. Free.
- 5-9pm – **Venice Street Legends.** Venice Bistro, OFW & Dudley. Every Thursday. Free.
- 6-10pm - 2nd Thursday - **Psychedelic Surf Rock.** Mollusk, 1600 Pacific Ave. Free.

### Movies

- 5:30pm - **Abbot Kinney Public Library** Thursday Movie Night. Call 310-821-1769 for title.

### Kids

- 6:30pm -Abbot Kinney Public Library Children's **Pajama Storytime.** Second, fourth Tuesday evenings. Free.

### Miscellaneous

- 7-10pm - MOM: **Meditations On Media.** 3rd Wednesdays. Beyond Baroque. Free.
- 6-10pm - **7 Dudley Cinema** - First Thursdays at Beyond Baroque. Free.
- 11:30am-2:30pm – **The Venice Oceanarium** (a museum without walls). Venice Pier. Every Sunday, weather permitting. Free.
- 6-8pm - **McLuhan-Finnegans Wake Reading Club.** Lloyd Taber - Marina Del Rey Library, 4533 Admiralty Way. First Tuesday of the month. Free.

### Computers

- Venice Library offers a variety of **Free Computer Classes.** 310-821-1769.
- Vera Davis Center offers **free computer use:** M-Th 10am-Noon and 1pm-3pm; Fri 1-3pm.

### Food

- Vera Davis Center. 12:30pm - 2nd and 4th Thursdays - **Free Food Distribution.**
- Vera Davis Center - **Sign up for Food Stamps (EBT Cards).** Call for date and time. 310-305-1865.
- 1st Baptist Church: 5-7pm Mondays - **Hot Meals; Pre-packs:** 2-3:30pm Saturdays, Westminster & 7th St.

## Get Your Local Event Listed

Email your time, date and a brief description to Calendar@freevenice.org by the 20th of the month. If you charge for your event, please consider taking out a \$25 or larger advertisement.



AKFA PRESENTS  
THE 27<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL

# ABBOT KINNEY

10AM-6PM SUNDAY SEPT 25 2011

VENICE CA

ADMISSION IS FREE



INTEREST FESTIVAL DAY POINTS OF INTEREST

- STELLA ARTOIS BEER GARDEN
- BRONX STAGE (PRODUCED BY DOBLAR & LA RECORD)
- WHOLE FOODS MARKET GREEN SCENE
- BKE VARIETY
- KOSQUAD BULL/SAMUEL/UTTM/IDEALS
- THE BRD BEER GARDEN/ PRUNES STAGE AT THE BRD
- ANDALUSIA STAGE (PRODUCED BY MILKMADE)
- FOODTRUCKS
- WIDMER BROTHERS BEER GARDEN

➔ GET ALL THE DETAILS @ [WWW.ABBOTKINNEY.ORG](http://WWW.ABBOTKINNEY.ORG)

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1045

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STELLA ARTOIS

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SEP 25, 2011

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