

FREE VENICE SINCE 1968 BEACHHEAD

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December
2014
#398

Photo: Vivianne Robinson

Happy 46th Birthday, Beachhead! Chee Wah-Wah!!!

This Paper is a Moebius Loop!

By Erica Snowlake

The Beachhead is celebrating its 46th birthday this December, and a party for its 400th issue will take place at Beyond Baroque the first of February. I am fortunate to have written for the paper from 2006 - 2010, and consider that experience one of the highlights of my life. I've since become an ideological refugee, and organic gardener, in Canada (the Govt. squeezes the same, only Nature and Idle No More are gaining!).

Retaining ties to the Beachhead Collective, I recently spent 11 sun-blessed days in the Fair City, which passed bittersweetly, as the Spirit of Venice's vibrancy and authenticity seemed to me, sorely set upon, by the same forces, throughout the years, that so many have actively engaged to resist : an unprecedented run-for-the-money. As I walked down Abbot Kinney, in shock at all the high-end clothing stores, a woman, accessorized-in-gold and sporting an immaculate tan, shot a victorious smile in my wake. On Rose Avenue, remnants of the dispossessed silently commiserated. Two sides of the same coin - ever-entangled - the haves and have-nots, existing in their prospective, peaking whammies of Rise and Fall; disproportional extremes, and sad follies of a system based on competition, greed, and cruelty. Where do you and I, and freedom, fit in?.... expressing ways out! swaying with the Venice Drum Orchestra, and the Drum Circle, watching sunsets on the beach, glorying in creative realities nobody can own. Does our comfort burn so brightly?!!!!...that we are loathe to share?

Thank Heavens! the Beachhead's still at the forefront, fighting the good fight, for social justice and equality (The Lady, as the Beat Poets affirmed, still exists!). In service of *This Paper Is A Poem*, former Beachhead collectivist Jim Smith and I are curating a project to record each issue in the on-line archives (www.freevenice.org). A totality of

– Continued on page 11

Invasion of the Afflu-Hip

*This is a reprint from the December 1974 edition
Washington Blvd. was renamed Abbot Kinney Blvd.
in 1990*

By Carol Fondiller

About a year ago at a meeting between the affluent residents of the peninsula and the not-so-affluent residents of North Beach, a resident of the Peninsula looked at me with wide eyes. Walter Keane hurt, and after hearing our fears of the poor and not-so-poor being squeezed out of Venice by the Condo-Conspiracy, she reached out her well-manicured hand and timidly touched my nicotine-stained fingernails and said: “but don’t the rich have the right to live here too?” She had been reproaching me earlier for not being able to appreciate the simple values of the Waltons, i.e. Money isn’t everything, goodness of heart shall win the day over shrewdness or brain.

Several months ago I stopped in a boutique on Washington Blvd. It had a small restaurant in the back and I ordered a cup of coffee. The boutique had the quaint homey atmosphere that costs the customers an arm and a leg. There are no second-hand stores anymore. It is Memorabilia Lane – re-cycled clothes – nostalgia. It is chic to be second-hand. The man behind the counter was “creating a stew.” He told me this with a straight face ... his earnest eyes looking at me with admiration and friendliness from under his carefully tousled locks.

“I used to be in Aero-Space, but I chunked it all, I was tired of selling out. So I bought some property – and now I have time to be creative. The arts are wonderful. It’s great to be creative ... it’s groovy.” I liked the man, because – well, he liked me, so I bit back the reply that creativity was as much fun as a cancer experiment. But, because I liked him, we just kept mumbling creative shit at one another – just living can be an art, living art was a living and ah, la vie Boheme.

I tasted his stew. It was picturesque and exotic, lots of flair, a real fun stew.

I walked down Washington Blvd. Though some of the more necessary, scruffy shops still remained, a market, a plumbing shop and one of the few remaining junk shops, most of it had been turned into quaintiques selling things that used to be sold to the poor and imaginative for second hand necessities were now selling these same things as Metataxis for the fun set. For some reason, though, I love these shops, I began to feel hostile towards them.

A clothes store that sells imported clothes is on this street. When I first went in to buy I was told where things came from and what they were called – the last time I went in I waited and waited though I was first, while a young woman pulled out her designers discount card and proceeded to turn that nice little place into Beverly Hills by her uncenciously arrogant attitude.

A friend told me of a conversation he had with a french artist. The artist predicted that Venice would become a watering place for the Jet Set. “Venice will be gone. When the Jet Set comes into a place they ruin it. Look what they did to Saint Tropez and Puerto Valarta. Venice is being talked about in Cannes and Niece and Majorca. I give Venice two more years.”

I read an article about Venice in L.A. Magazine, “Venice Opens Up.” It bumbled to its upwardly mobile chic-in readership about the boutiques in Venice, the quaint houses and hotels being refurbished, and renovating and evicting of the quaint but not so clean or creative tenants so that Venice could become a center for the arts.

Now, I have nothing against restoration and preservation of old buildings. I am glad that Windward might be saved from condemnation and that the arches and gargoyles of Venice will remain. But I think a case might be made for preserving the present inhabitants of Venice no matter how uncreative they may be. In a way I think we should all stop “being creative” for a while just so the word doesn’t strangle on macrame plant holders. And perhaps a choice will have to be made

– Continued on page 8



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The FREE VENICE BEACHHEAD is published monthly by the Beachhead Collective as a vehicle for the people of Venice to communicate their ideas and opinions to the community at large. The Beachhead encourages anyone to submit news stories, articles, letters, photos, poetry or graphics of interest to the Venice community.

The staff reserves the right to make all decisions collectively on material published. There is no editor on the Beachhead. The printing is financed by ads, sustainers and donations.

The articles, poetry and art work express the opinions of the individual contributors and are not necessarily the views of the Beachhead Collective.

The Beachhead is printed on recycled paper with soy-based ink.



To submit material, include your name and telephone number. Anonymous material will not be printed, but your name will be withheld on request. No payment is made for material used.

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Dear Beachhead,

Free Bags - 100 sleeping bags were distributed on Saturday, November 22nd free to anyone who needed them as a part of a broader outreach campaign by Venice Community Housing, Occupy Venice, Los Angeles Community Action Network, Vets for Peace, the Venice Justice Committee, the Venice Family Clinic, POWER, and other regional groups working to create lasting solutions for the unhoused and homeless. Held at the Free Safe Storage site by the paddleball courts, the give-away was made possible through donations coordinated by VCH and featured info on the Homeless Bill of Rights and free local ticket clinics. Another 100 bags will be given out in mid December. For more on the Free Safe Storage program or to volunteer call 310-399-4100.

OPEN LETTER TO THE PEOPLE OF VENICE

This is a reprint from the May 1969 edition of the Beachhead

Dear people of Venice,

I am watching what the police are doing on your beach. I have seen this before. Do you remember, do any of you remember, when Jews were beaten to death on the streets of Warsaw and Berlin, and Poles and Germans stood by and did nothing? The Nazis wanted to eliminate the undesirable Jews so that "better people" could live in our place. The arians. The Poles and the Russians were undesirables too, but first the Nazis made their victims enemies of each other before they eliminated them...

The American police on the beach are not yet Nazis but the story is the same. They want to eliminate undesirables so that "better people" can live in their place. First they will turn you against the young people, and when the young people are gone you will be next. If you could afford to live on Miami Beach you would be there and not in Venice. You will have to pack all your things and move away from your friends, to live in the smog, to where you will have to travel for miles on the bus to get back to your beach. Do you think these anti-semitic cops care about you? Don't sign their petition to get rid of the young people. Better you should sign a petition that the police behave like Americans and stop acting like the Nazi beasts of Europe. The lessons of Warsaw should not be so soon forgotten.

— Yitzak Gershman

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Above and below: Sleeping bag give-away, November 22



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VNC President Mike Newhouse, Dictator of Time

By Krista Schwimmer

Once a month, the Venice Neighborhood Council (VNC) holds a public board meeting at Westminster Elementary School. According to their own website, one of their purposes is “to promote Stakeholder participation and advocacy in Los Angeles City government decision-making processes.” Their website also goes on to say that a member has the right “to comment on an action, policy, or position.” At the most recent meeting of the VNC, this right to comment was selectively directed by President Mike Newhouse.

After Captain Johnson gave his monthly crime report, Community Officer Tommy Walker brought up a recent police incident that outraged the Oakwood Community. Two weeks earlier, a repass at Oakwood Recreational Community center drew 10 or 12 police officers. A repass, explained Tommy, is “when an individual in the community dies, they have food and they come to the park and hang out.” Police thought 400 gang members would be attending this particular repass. “There were 10, 12 police officers there on a continual basis,” Walker said. “There were individuals escorted out of the park for smoking cigarettes.” Tommy then asked the Captain to address the community there tonight.

In his statement to the community, Captain Johnson apologized several times. “In this instance, we didn't get it right. We were overbearing. We were overly deployed, in my opinion. Unfortunately, I wasn't there, so I didn't get to see it first hand. But as soon as I got a call from Pastor Allen, I put things in motion to fix it.” Captain Johnson ended his comments by stating, “I don't suspect this will happen again, certainly not while I'm in charge,” as well as offering to stay and to speak with anyone privately outside about the incident.

President Mike Newhouse then told the public that even though comments were not normally allowed during announcements, he would permit one minute of comment per person. At the same time, he

kept directing community members to meet privately with Captain Johnson, saying, “I would think it might be more productive to take Captain Johnson up on his offer.” If they met with Captain Johnson privately, how would the rest of the community hear their stories?

Karen, an older, African-American Oakwood resident, spoke first. She said she was insulted by how the people at the repass were characterized as gang members. She also stated that “this didn't just happen on that particular day” but on other days, during birthdays, showers – whenever African-Americans gathered at Oakwood. When the timer buzzed, Karen was still speaking when Newhouse jumped in and tried to cut her off. What followed was a verbal tug of war between the two, with Newhouse insisting Karen stop, despite others in the community saying they would cede their time to her. “It's because you don't want to hear the truth,” Karen stated. “It's about the truth. It's about the disgrace that is placed upon our people. And you're going to give me a minute?”

Later that same night, when Gail Rogers, a Caucasian woman, was speaking against the Free Shuttle motion, her one minute time ran out. Rather than stop her, Newhouse immediately gave her the go ahead for a second minute, which she went on to fully use.

Whatever the motive for Newhouse's overzealous control of Karen's single minute, how he handled her set a precedent for the African-Americans who spoke after her. Considering what they were there to speak up against – the heavy-handedness of LAPD in the Oakwood Community – this tactic was equivalent to a choke hold.

In the beginning of his term as President, Newhouse even resorted to restricting public comments to 30 seconds. Hearing complaints from community members, Mark Kleiman, a member of the Land Use and Planning Committee, wrote Newhouse a letter in which he urged “the Board to adopt a rule allowing, at

minimum, 60 seconds for each person commenting on any matter on the VNC's agenda.”

During the September VNC Board meeting, Kleiman's motion appeared on the agenda under “New Business” as “Motion to Establish a Minimum Comment Period of Sixty Seconds for Each Individual Commenter.” Part of this motion included the stipulation that “limits on the amount of time each commenter is allowed shall be uniform for each Board meeting.” The motion, itself, was never even made by the Board, leaving the allocation of time once more in the hands of President Newhouse.

Neighborhood Councils exist to encourage more participation in the creation and sustaining of communities. How is this possible, however, when stakeholders who diligently attend these long meetings have no voice there? Whether it is 30 seconds or one minute, this is not always enough time to make meaningful comments. Not every person is even comfortable with public speaking. As a result, it can take a few seconds to simply organize one's thoughts.

Besides, shouldn't the VNC listen more to the community than themselves? Last year, City Attorney Mike Feuer spoke at the April VNC Board meeting. During his address, he emphasized listening to the community, saying “speaking skills are tremendously overvalued in public service and the law. Listening skills are typically WAY undervalued.” Newhouse exacerbates the matter with his continual “hurrying” of people along – despite the frequency with which he interjects himself throughout the night.

As stakeholders, we elect the President, as well as keep him or her there. Even VNC calls us “the ultimate authority and the controlling force of the Venice Neighborhood Council.” If the community continues to be stifled by the current President, stakeholders can voice their concern another way: through a recall election. As Leonardo da Vinci said, “Nothing strengthens authority so much as silence.”

First Venice Street Store for the Homeless Smashing Success

By Michael Wamback

The spirit of Venice was alive and strong at the first annual Street Store, held on Saturday November 22nd at the First Baptist Church. Venice's homeless population was given the opportunity to receive a hot shower and meal, a haircut, some clothing and the opportunity to be part of an event that treated them like human beings, rather than “undesirable” to be swept out of sight.

The Street Store project was the inspiration of Sylvia Dell Andersen of getzentv.com. Sylvia had seen a video of a Street Store held in South Africa, and thought there was no reason it couldn't work here in Venice. She approached several charities, who were reluctant to embrace the concept. Sylvia finally hooked up with Alison Hurst of Safe Place for Youth (SPY) and Bishop Designate Horace Allen of First Baptist Church in Venice. They immediately embraced the idea, which quickly blossomed.

Homeless persons began lining up for the event two hours before the door opened. Once inside, they found an army of volunteers offering many different services. They were each given tickets for a meal and shower, as well as an item of clothing and pair of gently used shoes. There was a DJ and other musicians to provide a festive atmosphere to the event. They could



get a haircut if desired. The Venice Family Clinic was on hand to administer flu shots, and Animal Wellness Centers provided vaccines for their pets. San Fernando Valley Rescue Mission was on hand with their portable showers. Other event sponsors included The Animal Advocacy Museum, Toni R. Price – Lash Factor Inc., Crown Plaza Hotel, The Beauty Bus Foundation, UCLA's Creative Minds Project, REMO Recreational Music Center, Hav a Soul, Dog for Dog, Unleashed by Petco, Drippin' Nectar Body Products, Badan Aromatherapy, Veggie Grill, Green Peas Casual Food, Hunter Best Cleaning, Momentum Biosciences, Dream Sweets Banking Co., discountmugs.com and Tofurky.

In addition to these organizations, support for the event was given by professionals from the entertainment industry, including model and television personality Bonnie-Jill Laflin, actress Alexandra Paul, actress Debra Wilson, author Laurel House, actor Billy McNamara, celebrity chef Rawsheed and actress Christina DeRosa, who all appeared and participated in the event.

Homeless youth is a big issue in our communities – but one that often goes unrecognized. Deneisha, from Safe Place for Youth, explained that homeless youth tend to do a better job of blending into the crowd, and are often considered the “invisible homeless.” She indicated that there are as many as one to

two million homeless youth in America. A recent Los Angeles survey indicated the number of homeless youth (18 – 25) in Los Angeles to be approximately 4,700 on any given night. Last year, Safe Place for Youth provided services for 784 homeless youth in Venice.

Pastor Allen and SPY have been working tirelessly on this issue for the last three years. SPY operates a drop in center for homeless youth out of First Baptist Church. Here, the youth are able to get a hot meal, medical services, counseling services, clothing and other much needed support. SPY, with five staff and approximately fifty volunteers, provides case workers who assist the youth in everything from getting an ID to finding permanent housing or a GED. Spy also operates a street outreach program, that goes into our neighborhood three times each week – connecting with the homeless to make sure they are safe and to direct them toward services.

Thanks to Safe Place for Youth, a substantial number of homeless youth have been able to transition to permanent housing.

SPY operates on private funding, and has just recently obtained their first foundation grant. The Street Store is being planned as an annual event each November, which is National Homeless Youth Awareness Month and California Run-away & Homeless Youth Month.

While SPY is having success in reaching our local homeless youth and assisting them in transitioning to education and permanent housing, homelessness in general is a problem which continues to grow. And it's a problem which can't be solved by simply pushing the homeless around from street to street. America continues to profess to be a “Christian Nation”, and as such, must work to take care of our most vulnerable members. Proverbs 29:7 says “The righteous is concerned for the rights of the poor, the wicked does not understand such concern.” In days where the news runs stories of Hawaii State Rep. Tom Brower smashing the belongings of homeless people with a sledgehammer while dressed in an Armani Exchange cap and gloves, and then running for office on “Christian values”, it's easy to think that we've lost our way as a country. Stopping by First Baptist Church to participate in and be witness to the great work that Safe Place for Youth and Street Store are doing, truly reaffirmed the good that lies within the hearts of many Venetians.

For more information, please visit the Safe Place for Youth website at <http://safeplaceforyouth.org> and <http://getzentv.com>

Photos: Krista Schwimmer





Above: Ad reprints from 1972

Do Not Co-operate With Organized Crime

This is a reprint from the May 1969 edition

By John Haag

On Sunday, April 20, the Los Angeles Police Department commanded locally by Captain Robert Sillings and Lt. Allen Archbold planned and executed a vicious attack on the Venice Ocean Front community. Scores of men and women, young and old, were beaten by L.A. police because of a peaceable assembly on our own public beach, which the police declared illegal without cause. Many of the victims of police violence were arrested solely to justify their injuries.

For a week after, 16 "units" of the notorious Metro Squad occupied our community. Unprovoked beatings and arrests occurred daily. Eight officers in plain clothes fought crime by intimidating elderly residents to obtain signatures on statements to "get rid of Free Press types and hippies."

The police attacks against our community are the most brutal form of a campaign by the entire L.A. City government to eliminate low-income residents from the Venice area. The motivation is the profit to be made by land speculators, real estate brokers, contractors and politicians by turning Venice into a high-income tourist-oriented development.

The police are engaged in criminal conspiracy to eliminate the poor by force and violence. Under these conditions, anyone who cooperates in any way with the Los

Angeles police is aiding and abetting organized crime.

The Venice Peace and Freedom Party on April 23, 1969, resolved to call upon all Venice residents to stop cooperating with L.A. police until Capt. Sillings and Lt. Archbold are removed from the Venice Divi-

sion, LAPD, and a community board is established to control the Venice Division, or until the LAPD is withdrawn from our community. The PFP has posted notices advising all residents to:

1) Carry paper and pencil at all times to record dates, times, places and details of police harassment and brutality.

2) Carry cameras at all times to photograph police activities.

3) Give documentation of police activities to the Venice Survival Committee. Call 399-7681 or write to 1727 W. Washington Blvd.

4) Try to have a witness with you at all times when you walk on Venice streets.

5) Refuse to cooperate with L.A. police except when absolutely necessary to avoid injury or arrest.

The police will not control themselves. Politicians agree with the police. Commercial newspaper print only police reports. Only we, the people of Venice, can stop police crime in our community. Do not cooperate.



No Help for Jean – Life on the Streets

This is a reprint from the August 1984 edition

I know a woman who lives in Ocean Park who isn't much different from the rest of us. About 5 foot 3, she's a bit overweight, but not considering her years and what she's lived through. She's white, maybe even Irish with that sort of ruddy skin that doesn't tan. She's lived here a couple of years now. She likes Ocean Park, and she knows it well.

More than that I don't know much about her. Except for one thing: she screams a lot. She just stands mid-block and screams. Sometimes she scream obscenities, but usually just a raw, high pitched screech. Sometimes she screams at particular people who don't appear to be there. Sometimes she screams at whoever walks by.

But recently she's been screaming about something very specific. She stands on the Community Center steps and screams that she has a right to a place to sleep, a right to be where she won't get beat up or raped, where she can be clean and warm and dry. Not too much to ask, even if you're out of your mind part of the time because the voices won't stop.

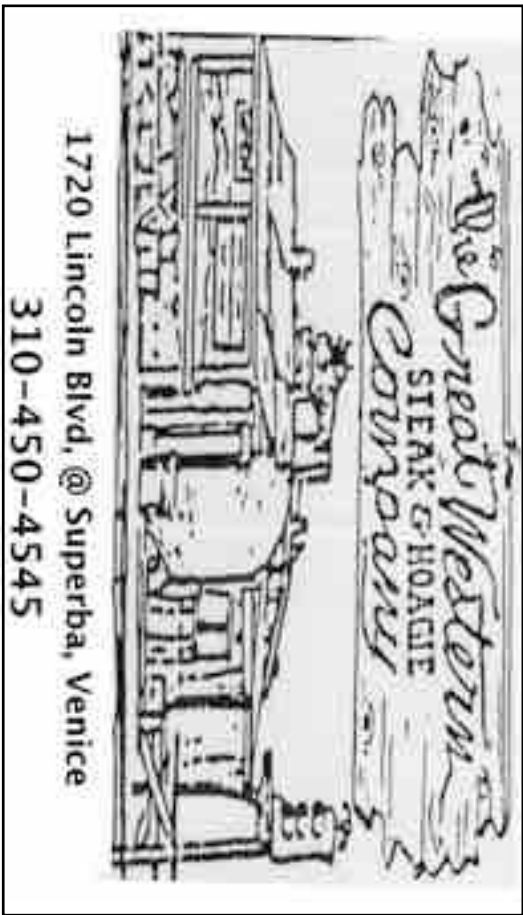
But no one will take her. When things used to get too rough, the Santa Monica Police would send an officer out who took her to the County facility on Euclid Street. But 24 hours later and drugged sick they put her back on the street. Now they won't even do that. Harbor General used to take her now and then. They would feed her and clean her up and get her well again, drug her real good, and set her on the street again. But they won't do that anymore either. So even the police won't pick her up now because they have no place to take her.

She needs care because sometimes she can't care for herself. But the State facilities won't keep the semi-capable. The County doesn't have the facilities for the walking wounded. And no one pays. So the Community Center feeds her and tries to keep her alive. But when things get out of hand, there's no where to go.

Probably 10,000 people like Jean walk the streets of this state. They're there because the governor who is now President slashed programs and cut hospitals. And because Proposition 13 left no money for anything different. And because the sitting governor keeps it this way. Only the people who sit on the curb and scream their souls out want it to be different.

– Jim Conn

Right: Reprint of an ad from December 1974 edition



“Art Tiles at Venice Beach: A Graphic History: 1904 - 2001”

Noel Osheroff, Tami Smith and the Venice Arts Council
(Helicon Nine Edition)

The reproduction of these handmade art tiles, designed by local artists in book form is meant to retain the concept and creative ideas of Venice in perpetuity.

May be purchased at: Small World of Books, Beyond Baroque, SPARC, Venice Vintage, Skylight Books or www.veniceartscouncil.org
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All proceeds support the preservation of these tiles and the benches that house them

A perfect gift for the holidays

VENICE STORIES



Jim Smith

Activist and Poet

Abbot Kinney was **very** aware he was up against **big odds** to build Venice.



...and it's gone through tremendous **ups and downs**, but Venice has excelled in **all kinds** of ways.



The cultural ideas that have come out of here have **circled the world!**



It wouldn't have turned out as **unique** if you hadn't had this train of **contrarians** that influenced the people around them.



You can't repress people here, there's always **somebody** that will do just the **opposite** of what the establishment wants!



The political side of Venice really came from the **coffee houses**...



John Haag, who ran Venice West started a new political party in '68 called the **Peace & Freedom Party**.



It was formed around the idea of a **free Venice** and they established the **Free Venice Beachhead**.



They called John Haag the **'People's Doge of Venice'** – he was really the mastermind of Venice culture and politics up until 1990.



The **funny thing** is that the founders of most cities are **pretty square!**



But in **Venice**, from Abbot Kinney to the **Beats** to the **Free Venice** people – they're all **cool people** you'd want to hang out with!



You really know if you **belong** here. Your **brain** will tell you, your **body** will tell you...



Some people get **trapped** by Venice, it's so damn **beautiful** they can't go!



The **beauty** here is one of the things that makes people feel like they can **write poetry** or **paint pictures**...



Venice is **108 years** old, but like Janis Joplin said – "It's all the same day, man!" ...and in Venice it kinda is... and that's a **beautiful** day.



JASON HILL 2014

Big money wasted on airport Measure D

By Martin Rubin, Director, Concerned Residents Against Airport Pollution

Thank you Santa Monica voters for seeing your way through the thick smoke of deceit blown over the city by the aviation interests' lobby groups. With 60 percent to 40 percent voting against the pro-Santa Monica Airport (SMO) Measure D and in favor of the City's Measure LC, the only thing simmering in smoke now is the more than \$750,000 spent trying to fool Santa Monica voters.

As the smoke begins to settle, let us consider what the vote means and what should be done now.

The vote put to rest the pro-SMO argument that only a small minority is concerned about SMO impacts. Not put to rest is the question of the pro-SMO misrepresentations during their petition gathering; with only about 9,500 of the 15,000 who signed the petition actually voting for Measure D.

The passage of the City's Measure LC was a huge win for slow growth. Now, with the exception of parks and open space, any future development on the land that is now SMO will have to be voted on by the Santa Monica voters.

This will now be part of the City Charter.

On July 1, 2015 the Santa Monica Airport (1984) Agreement between the FAA and the City will expire. It is essential that the City takes action now while it still has the reserved proprietary powers within the 1984 Agreement. Afterward, the Airport Noise and Capacity Act of 1990 (ANCA) will begin to apply to SMO. Challenges under ANCA take years, are very expensive, and, so far, always lose.

The City should not be timid about addressing the most egregious impacts from SMO. Health and safety are at the top of the list.

The Santa Monica Airport Commission is working on a recommendation to City Council that will limit aircrafts' use of SMO by the amount of pollution an aircraft emits. That would be comparable to existing limits on noise pollution. Also needed is a Federal rule that would specify a minimum distance between the ground operations at an airport and homes.

In Los Angeles a gas leaf blower can't be operated within 500 feet of a residence, but SMO jets blast their toxic emissions across Bundy drive not even 300 feet from homes.

Minimum runoff safety areas need full, not partial, implementation at both ends and both sides of the runway. This is necessary for the safety of those in the aircraft as well as those on the ground. No more runway roulette.



Dealing with SMO at the Federal level, Santa Monica will have a fresh, vibrant Ted Lieu as its representative in Congress. As a California Assemblyman and state Senator Ted has been by far the most active California representative to address the concerns of SMO neighbors. He is also a Lieutenant Colonel in the United States Air Force JAG corps.

The time is definitely right for the City to dive fully into the waters to correct this deplorable situation. The voters have spoken and the community leaders will be watching and, as always, offering assistance. Don't let this right-time opportunity go by.

Women's Rights, Again

By Mary Getlein

It used to be legal to beat your wife. The stick you could use had to be no larger around than your thumb. So if your husband was a big guy, he could use a bigger stick to beat you with. Does that make any sense? How does beating your wife lead to domestic harmony? If anything, it set into motion women fleeing from their abusive husbands, going out west, maybe, dragging their kids behind them. Women had so little rights: it was impossible to have a bank account, own land, start a business, buy cattle or other livestock, etc., etc. Women were locked away in rooms, away from their families, as a way to treat their "mental illness" - which of course made you even crazier.

Along came the western movement, and a lot of women were now in a leadership position and bought land, (or got it for free from the government), bought animals, put up their own houses, and established ranching businesses, which turned out to be highly profitable enterprises. Women were allowed to do anything they wanted, which included riding along on cattle drives. Women traded in their skirts for scandalous "divided" garments and set to work roping cattle, shooting rustlers, and breaking colts. Women also participated in wild west shows, like Annie Oakley, who rode wild horses and shot guns. There were also daring bronc riders who were women, who did things women had never done before. Women in the west were given the vote long before the national date of 1920. Every time I vote I think of those years when women were not first class citizens.

The situation in the world against women is sickening. Republicans in this country want to shut down the freedom of reproductive rights. They want to go back to the days when women had to ask someone's permission to get an abortion. A medical procedure that takes place in their own body, no one else's body.

All the advances that came with Roe vs. Wade are being taken away by men. What is their problem? It is a personal decision made by the person who is most affected by this procedure.

Going back to the "beating your wife" thing. Today women are getting raped in universities, and no rape charges are filed. Today, women are getting beat up by their husbands, and charges are dropped to save the reputation of the male.

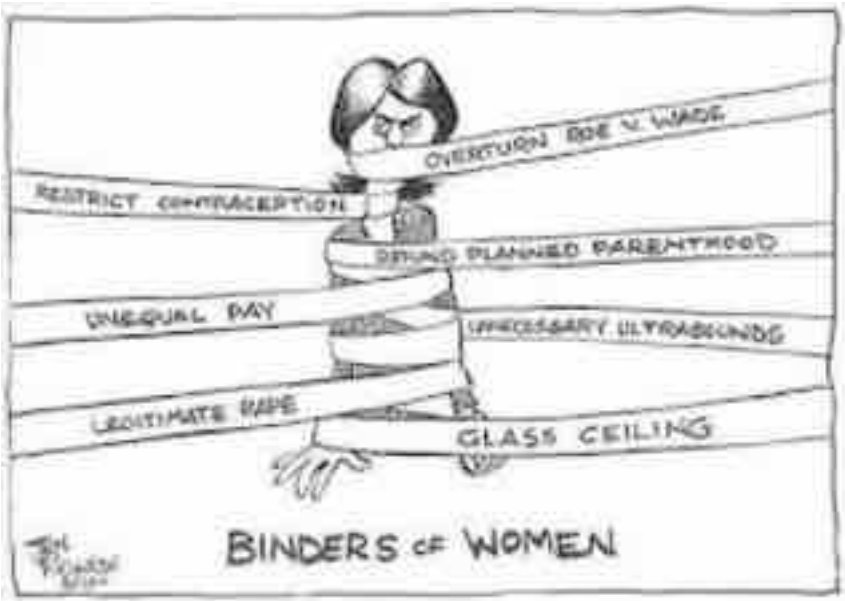
Today, in other countries, children are being married to grown men, and being raped, night after night by their husbands. Approximately 10 million girls worldwide are forced into marriage before the age of 18, often against their will. Child marriage makes children vulnerable to a wide range of problems: they are more likely to be illiterate, live in poverty, be subjected to domestic violence, die in childbirth and experience the death of their babies and children. Many families in developing countries experience pressure to

marry their daughters at an early age either to help the family escape poverty or to respect social traditions.

What can we do about it? We can push Congress to pass legislation to support the rights of women and girls to self-determination. One bill is the International Violence Against Women Act (IOWA), which was introduced in the House of Representatives in late November 2013. If made a law, IOWA would promote assistance to local groups and innovative, cost-effective programs in countries with high prevalence of child marriage. IOWA also includes specific language that would focus U.S. diplomatic and development resources on reducing child marriage and the violence that goes with it.

Join AJWS (American Jewish World Service) in advocating to end child marriage. Visit www.ajws.org/webelieve

What about our own country? What about the young girls in universities who are being raped by fraternity "brothers", or foot-ball players? We need to organize and demonstrate and insist on full punishment, according to the law. The men that are doing the raping (which is a violent act, not necessarily a sexual act) need to go to jail. Their crimes are often swept under the carpet, because they come from places of privilege, where a certain amount of money will make it all "go away". We need to protect the women in this country, the same as we want to protect the women in other countries. We can't let progress in women's rights be trampled on by base violence and money. The more money you have, the less the chance that a crime will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. We have to fight back, by "any means necessary". These are our children and we need to stand up and protect our women.



UPDATE - 320 SUNSET – GJELINA’S GJUSTA – FARCE and FAKERY

By Roxanne Brown - Member Concerned Neighbors of 320 Sunset

With a permit for BAKERY (Bakery equipment Only, Selling Baked Goods Only with No Seating and No Eating on premises), Fran Camaj, owner of Gjusta at 320 Sunset, has built a 5,000 square foot RESTAURANT with commercial Kitchen equipment. Thus was born the FAKERY.



The FAKERY opened Oct. 29 and Camaj began serving fish, beef and fowl, encouraging and allowing patrons to eat and sit on premises, including Gjusta’s dirty parking lot and construction area. Where, we wonder, is the Health Department? Camaj is also building a humongous wall for an outdoor patio. Camaj does NOT HAVE A PERMIT for any of this.



ZONING HEARING OVERVIEW – approximately 60 people in attendance

On November 13, the Zoning Department conducted a hearing to consider Camaj’s request for “change of use”, from “bakery” to restaurant.

Chris Robertson, Deputy Director of Land Use and Planning, represented Councilman Bonin’s office at the meeting. Ara Sargsyan, Office Manager, represented the Building and Safety Department. Residents were disappointed not to see department leaders at this important hearing. Gjusta is one of the most contentious development issues in Venice at the moment.

ZONING MEETING TESTIMONY

Camaj and his architect representative, Stephen Vitalich, told zoning staff they “forgot” to bring their parking plan. Robin Rudisill, Venice’s Land Use and Planning Committee (LUPC) Chair and member of the Venice Neighborhood Council (VNC), noted that it has been a year and Gjusta’s case file still isn’t complete. Really? And, there is NO PENALTY or late fee imposed?

LUPC and VNC representatives told Zoning Administrator Maya Zaitzevsky that they were recommending denial of any change of use. Robertson read Councilman Bonin’s letter recommending denial.

LAPD’s Captain Brian Johnson recommended denial of the liquor license, since this area of Venice is authorized for 5, and somehow has 14. Pacific Division Vice Unit Sgt. Robin Richards and Sarah Blanch of the Westside Impact Project also recommended denial.

Residents addressed the danger of bringing hundreds of people and their vehicles to Gjusta, where 5 streets converge – Sunset, 3rd Avenue, the entry/exit to Gold’s parking lot, the entry/exit to Gjusta’s parking lot, and the narrow alley connecting Sunset to Vernon, all bounded by the busy thoroughfares of 4th Avenue and Hampton Drive, one block south and parallel to congested Rose Avenue. Clearly this density of traffic congestion is a recipe for disaster. Add alcohol and the probability of a fatal accident increases greatly, as noted by Blanch, based on a 2011 study by the LA County Department of

Public Health.

Residents presented their many objections to the “proposed” restaurant. It is too close to residents’ homes (12 feet six inches), residents are already smelling cooking oil and smoke fumes, hearing loud noise, experiencing nuisance, pollution, increased traffic, and lack of parking. Since residents have seen with their eyes and experienced with their senses, they exhibited in testimony and photographic evidence that Camaj has flagrantly disregarded laws and regulations at Gjusta, the “Bakery”. Residents do not want to observe and experience what would occur with change of use to a “restaurant.”

Building and Safety confirmed that Gjusta with its present permit CAN NOT serve food other than BAKED GOODS, CAN NOT allow people to EAT and SIT on premises. “Bakery means baked goods... not sandwiches, not a coffee shop. You cannot eat in a parking lot. Parking means parking for vehicles,” said Sargsyan.



ZONING ADMINISTRATOR’S COMMENTS

Zoning Administrator Maya Zaitzevsky told Camaj, “I’m taking the case under advisement, but at this point I have no ability to approve the patio portion. Given that there is opposition to the patio, it might be your best option to just eliminate it and add interior seats.”



Flout the laws, and, yes, we may approve your change of use? Given all the testimony and evidence against approving, how is this even a consideration? Zaitzevsky’s statement makes the approval sound like a done deal. Is the law up for negotiation? When the original use as “BAKERY” is already operating OUTSIDE of the law and causing a nuisance, why reward the owner with a Change of Use and an Alcohol Permit? You’ve Gotta be kidding!

Laws are being broken and residents oppose Gjusta the “bakery” as is. Give Camaj an inch and it appears



he hijacks a whole neighborhood. The proof is in the Gjelina (and now Gjusta) pudding. City agencies and city leaders are well aware of the 150-plus-page lawsuit filed by residents living near Gjelina. They are well aware that Camaj’s Gjelina continues to create a nuisance and has done so for seven years without penalty. Now Camaj is doing the same with Gjusta.

If our city leaders would lead and the law allowed, Gjusta’s “change of use” would be denied with no right of appeal and Gjusta would be shut down. The City should set an example, making clear to business owners and developers that disregarding and breaking the law will not be tolerated.



Residents are worried that the opposite example, a dangerous precedent, is being set by the City of LA.: that it’s OK to ignore permits and laws. In fact, we will look the other way, and there will be no penalty. It’s OK to destroy Los Angeles residential neighborhoods one block at a time.

THE DAY AFTER ZONING MEETING

Camaj returned to Gjusta at 320 Sunset on November 14 and continued with business “as usual.” He must have instructed his valet attendants (no permit for valet parking) to park cars in a U shape (see photo below). Peak over the cars and you will see Gjusta’s customers sitting and eating as usual. Is this the CAMAJOUFLAGE parking plan that Camaj “forgot” to bring to the city-planning meeting?



People may like Gjusta’s food, but when they hear the back-story, it doesn’t taste so good. In fact, it’s hard to swallow.

Many Venice residents believe that Mayor Garcetti’s administration and Councilman Bonin may have a back-room deal with Camaj. Venice residents and voters are watching what they do next.

This brings up the question of which side our city leaders are on: a business breaking the law or a government protecting the safety and welfare of Venice’s historic Oakwood community?

First photo by: Iliana Marosi
All other photos by: Roxanne Brown



NOVEMBER



Invasion of the Afflu-Hip

– Continued from page 1

between people who aren't so wonderful and cute chic houses.

I met a woman who thought the Vietnam war was ghastly. She taught school in Watts. And yet when presented with the problem of walking wounded that roll down from broken homes, marriages, wars, and dreams down to Venice, where at least they can look at the ocean and think "the shit stops here" and are forced to relate to people, not sit tranqued out in a "convalescent" home where no one ever convalesces. They have to go out and get groceries and pay rent. This piece of reality is all that some of them have. And I speak for myself at times in that last sentence. Well this comfortably well off woman, this sensitive articulate human looked at me and smiled sadly (maybe she'd read Chekov) and said "You can't stop progress."

I was leaning out my window one quiet night and I saw a young fun couple walk by my apartment house. They walked by and yanked some flower roots and all from the flower box. Now the box had been built by the landlord, but all the tenants in the building had contributed plants and time to making things grow. "Hey, don't do that!", I yelled. They turned their shiny mass-produced faces towards me. Ken and Barbie in funky drag. "Oh wow, take it back," they laughed and they threw the not so prize marguerite over the fence with easy contempt. I tried to replant it. The little shrub didn't cost much. It was just that easy way they destroyed it.

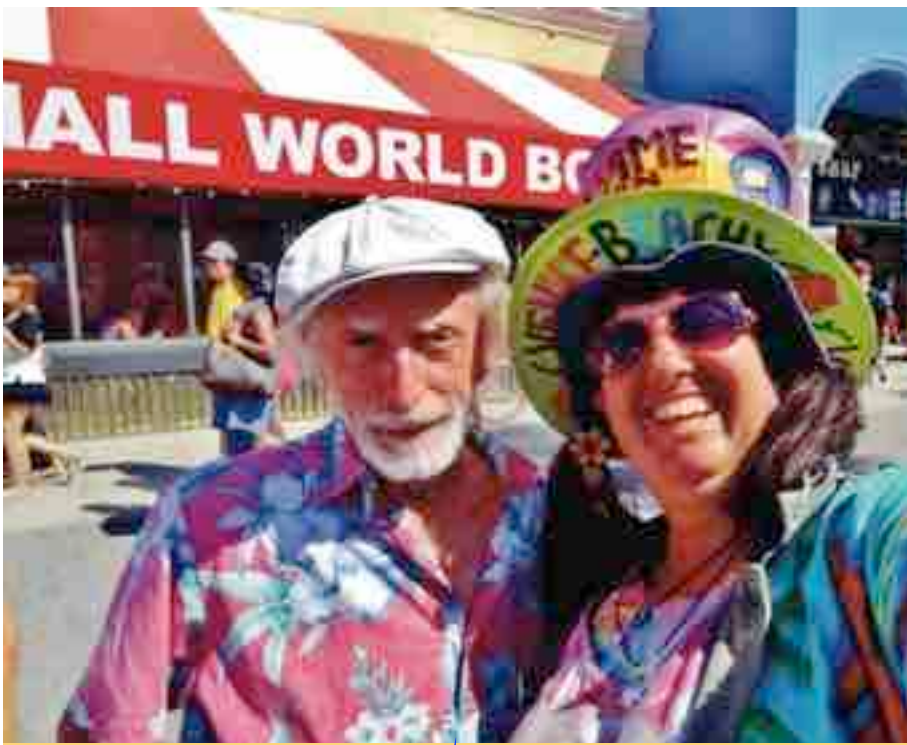
It then occurred to me. L.A. Magazine, whose style tries to be New Yorker, aims at a particular audience – they make on the average of \$29,000 a year, own at least two cars, eat out a lot, buy scotch by the case (and grass by the pound?).

They are the Afflu-Hip.

They like Venice because it's quaint, it's funky, it's groovy. Artists abound. They can be far-out and study astrology. But they feel uncomfortable when they see a literally dirty old man sit next to them at the "in" place where they eat. A vague resentment when they see someone pull out food stamps in J. Allan's Safeway.

Venice should be cleaned out and cleaned up. It should be sanitized, Bowelderized. It should be a Thousand Oaks barbecue where grass is smoked. And "creativity"? Well, isn't that what it's all about? But please, no troublesome art – just gentle mediocrity. Nothing to clash with the wall paper.

It's alright if a crazy sings and throws flowers. The Afflu-Hips can relate to that. But don't cry too often. And I like some of these people – the Afflu-Hips. Some of them are embarrassingly impressed when they find out I write. "Oh, how creative!" they moan. "I wish I could write." "Well, so do I," I answer. And they think I'm being falsely modest. But lemme tell ya, ya don't count for nothin' with them if you aren't creative or at least a character with an 'interesting face'.



IN VENICE



But the Afflu-Hip still come by the gross. And the quaint streets will be widened for their two or more cars and the craftsman artist living quarters will be filled with candle dippers, furniture makers and painters of white on white canvas, and oh God macrame and splotchy tie chics. And in time parties will abound and Venice will be Laguna-ized.

The article on Venice in the October '74 Beachhead issue says "Luxury apartments and condominiums fill every available beachfront lot ... It's still Venice though, the tenants all wear levis."

Ah yes, the people that ruined Greenwich Village are now camping in Venice – they want to live the life of an artist or the simple life the same way a family drives to a national park and complains about the lack of toilets and electrical outlets.

Yes, the rich have a right to live here, but so do the people who've made a choice not to be rich, or those who have no chance at all of making it – they have never had a choice of selling out – no one wanted to buy them. The not-so-rich, the non-affluent need the ocean also, and they don't need the gargoyles. Not only are the Afflu-Hips driving property values up, they are distorting mine. **The rich need more room than the poor.**

Another story. I was on Ocean Front Walk when I saw an exquisitely groomed middle age man focusing a camera on a "quaint old bum", who was sleeping one off. I was fascinated by the fact that both men were wearing levis. The middle age man's, however, were tailored, and he had a beautifully cut denim jacket. After shooting his shot the man walked by me.

All photos on pages 8 and 9 by: Vivianne Robinson

I nearly fell off the bench. Mr. Middle Age was not wearing simple denim. The suit was suede, dyed and cut to look like a levi outfit.

But you know what? He missed being funky by that much.

What the Afflu-Hips better realize is that they'd better keep all of us around – I mean who would they have to coopt ideas from if we were pushed out?

Venice might be saved from the Hell of High Rise, but the world is well lost when all we've gained after our struggles are refurbished historical monuments inhabited by people who could have afforded to live anywhere they wanted and yet chose to suck the sub-culture dry and throw out the husks.

Bird Totems of Venice: The Cormorant

By Krista Schwimmer

I first met the cormorant up close and personal on the same day the Space Shuttle Endeavor flew over Venice Beach. On September 21, 2012, my husband and I had gone out to watch its flight. While we were sitting in the sand beside the ocean, my husband noticed a large, blackish-brown bird with yellow cheeks and neck. With its wings stretched out fully, the standing bird looked like it had just stepped out of a Mother Goose Nursery Rhyme.

Of course, being the avid bird lover that I am, I immediately took out my Olympus camera to capture a few pictures. At first, I approached the bird carefully, afraid that I might startle it away. I soon found out that this lone fellow couldn't care less about me and my camera. At one point, I even sat beside it so my husband could snap a shot.

At home, I looked the bird up. It was a double-breasted cormorant.

Cormorants are medium to large seabirds. There are 40 species of them throughout the world, six species living in North America. They are coastal, rather than oceanic birds whose ancestors reach back to the time of the dinosaurs. They are also called shags due to some of them bearing crests. Many species have patches of bright blue, orange, red, or yellow skin on their faces, sometimes just during mating season. Largely fish eaters, they are wonderful divers. Cormorants have been caught in nets up to 100 feet below water. (i) Sometimes, they fish with White Pelicans. After fishing, cormorants are commonly seen with wings spread out, drying them in the sun. Researchers say this is because their plumage is made for buoyance and therefore, not waterproof.

Four months later, I ran into more double-breasted cormorants. One I found washed on the beach, dead. An hour later, when walking home through the Venice canals, I spotted three more cormorants grooming themselves on a small boat christened "Danny's Dingy."

On this second occasion, I did find myself considering the synchronicity of seeing both the dead and the living birds. Every January, I find myself thinking of three important people in my life who died in this month. The first is my brother, David, who was lost at sea in a kayaking accident off Baja California in 1978. His body was never found. The other two are my much loved English teacher, Mrs. Muriel Allison, and my mother. Not only were these people some of the closest relationships I have ever had – but they all knew each other and loved each other as well.

Birds are commonly associated with the soul or the afterlife. A Norwegian myth says that those who die at sea can visit former homes in the form of a cormorant. Not only that – but three cormorants flying together carry messages and warnings from the dead. Could the sighting of the three cormorants on "Danny's Dingy" represent the souls of my brother, my mother, and my English teacher?

For me that day, another odd synchronicity happened. The name, "Danny", is the name of a fictional character in a book my brother, David, never completed. Seeing first the dead and then the living cormorants gave my soul a sense of peace around the death of my brother. Seeing the three together also gave me a great sense of support and encouragement from three people who did that for me while alive.

At that time in my life, I had once more returned to writing more, both in my journal, through the Beachhead, and through a television script I was working on with my husband. I felt the message of the cormorants was one of encouragement in this area of my life, as all three people had deeply supported my path as a writer.

In his book, "Animal Speak," Ted Andrews states that when the cormorant "appears in our life there will come a teaching or a new opportunity that will enable us to accomplish what didn't seem possible." (ii) Although I cannot say that happened for me with writing at the time, it did happen for me in my practical world with matters that had been going on for years.

The cormorant is both revered and demonized. In Japan, for over fourteen hundred years, fishermen have been using cormorants to hunt aya or sweetfish. Aya is a species of fish similar in taste to salmon and found largely in Eastern Asia. This fishing practice, called "Ukai", is especially prominent on the Nagara River in Gifu City. From May 11th through October 15th can witness the spectacle of these traditional fishermen in long wooden boats with cormorants leashed and swimming alongside the boats. Held at night, the boats are lit by lanterns. Snarers or rings around the cormorants' necks prevent them from swallowing the large fish. So, once the bird catches a fish, the fisherman can remove it quite

quickly. This occupation is inherited and passed down. It is also supported and protected by the Emperor himself. The first fish of the season is presented to the Emperor. (iii)

Although some consider the leashing of the cormorants cruel, the fishermen who inherit this occupation live and take care of their cormorants their whole lives. In some countries, no ring or leash is even used.

In other North American and European fishing communities, the cormorant is demonized for the exact same reason: its ability to dive and fish well. As a result, some fishermen see the cormorant as destroying their way of life. In his book, "The Devil's Cormorant: A Natural History," Richard King recounts the story of the large cormorant population on Little Galloo Island in eastern Lake Ontario. Captain Ron Ditch, founder of an organization called "Concerned Citizens for Cormorant Control," had been advocating managing the cormorant population for many years. No one heard or responded. To send a message, he and a few others went out one night in 1998 to Little Galloo Island and slaughtered thousands of cormorants, a bird protected under the Migratory Bird Act. They were eventually caught and prosecuted for the killing of two thousand cormorants. Captain Ditch, however, tells King that it was probably more likely twenty thousand. The penalty? \$100,000. (iv)

For me, the cormorant never once struck me as a representative of the darker side of life. Known at one time as the sea raven, I felt a magical presence around this bird. Perhaps, on the day of the Endeavor, this single cormorant was the spirit of not a relative of mine, but someone with a larger scope in history: "The Lone Woman of San Nicolas Island."

In 1853, this native woman was found living off the southern coast of California. She wore a green Cormorant dress sewn together with whale sinew. She had survived on this island by herself for 18 years. Discovered by George Nidever, he took her to live with him and his wife in Santa Barbara. No one alive spoke her language. She lived only for 7 weeks, dying of dysentery. (v)

So, as we leave the cormorant to dive and fish in the waters around the world, perhaps we can reflect on the complex reactions humans have to this species. Is it a demon or a friend? Seems to me that's up to each of us to decide. For me, I call the cormorant friend. And, if I could, I would have one of its kind over for tea and sweetfish any day.

i *Continuum Encyclopedia of Animal Symbolism in World Art*. Hope B. Werness, 2006, pg. 104. Retrieved from books.google.com/books?isbn=0826419135


ii Andrews, Ted. (2004 and 2009). *Animal-Wise, understanding the language of animal messengers & companions*. Jackson, TN: Dragonhawk Publishing.

iii For a great description with photos of Ukai, go to blog.gaijinpot.com/ancient-art-cormorant-fishing/
iv King, Richard J. (2013). *The Devil's Cormorant, a natural history*. Chapter 2: Henderson Harbor. University of New Hampshire Press.

v Timbrook, Jan. *The Lone Woman of San Nicolas Island*. Retrieved from www.sbnature.org/research/antrho/chumash/lowom.html



Above: Cormorants in Venice
Photos: Krista Schwimmer



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This Paper is a Moebius Loop!

– Continued from page 1

time-traveling fun! - scanning Beachheads of yore, page by page (some of the Seventies' issues were 24 pages!), marveling at the scope of human endeavor and decades of organization, coalition and co-operation, evident in articles, letters, and listings of happenings and events, by the diverse groups and individuals who have dedicated themselves to unite their community / home (a particularly unique beacon of hope). This little paper (distribution 8,000 a month) is testament to the creativity and ingenuity of Venetians, to resist the mainstream, political and capitalist dogma, and racial and gender inequality, of our times, with humor, spirituality, and courage! The Muse remains sacred to the task! The Word burns!

From 1974, forty years ago, the headline *"Should Venice Secede"* demonstrated one of the hotter issues of the day. It was reported that, in a secession "investigation" at the Venice Pavilion, involving 100 people, "50 per cent were vehemently supportive of separating from greater Los Angeles, 40 per cent were inquisitive about the possibilities, about 10 per cent wanted to secede from California and/or the U.S., and the other 10 per cent were looking for the bathroom or didn't know what secession meant." The Seventies' Beachheads featured *"Dr. Zane's Lobotomy Column"* by Jim Zane (*"A Monthly Column of Advice on All Subjects the Doctor Knows Absolutely Nothing About"*), updates from the Peace and Freedom Party (founded in Venice by John Haag in 1967), Coastal Commission hearings, and the timely articles and comical rants of BH staff writer, Carol Fondiller, (*"Invasion of the Afflu-Hip"*, *"Poop on Bike Path"*, *"Nude Beach : On Again Off Again"*). Carol's column *Harpy Droppings* was a staple of the paper for years. Antics of the people revolved around the canals, which were an undeveloped haven for hippies. The 5th Annual Venice Canal Festival, promised a "Saturnalia! of barges filled with drunken, stoned, and singing revelers, Hare Krishna food feasts, baroque music, and wares of all

description." Photos in the Beachhead express hedonistic, tribal pleasure; respite, perhaps, from impending evictions.

Portent of a sustained, loud cry against rampant development and burgeoning rents, the first VTC (Venice Town Council) meeting took place in November, 1974, at the Venice City Hall. A petition to Councilwoman Pat Russell stated that the residents of Venice "should not have to submit to their neighborhoods being remade according to the whims of the City of Los Angeles Engineers." This also foreshadowed the beginning of a long and ferocious battle, spearheaded by the Beachhead, to replace Councilwoman Russell!

In August 1974, the paper paid tribute to poet Stuart Z. Perkoff, filling the entire back page with his poetry. The Venice Chapter of The Temple of Man offered daily, 24 hr. religious and civil services, including legalizing common-law marriages. Food Co-ops, Civic Unions, and Free Clinics made their debuts. Advertisements, bringing in much-needed revenue to cover printing costs, highlighted the Fox Theater, the Meat-less Mess-hall, the Comeback Inn, the Midnight Special Bookstore, and the Feminist Wicca (see Krista Schwimmer's August 2014 interview with former owner Z. Budapest). My personal fave ad design, for the intrepid Sandalmaker, appears below.



Thirty years ago, January 1984, opened with the prophetic headline, *"God is Dead and the World is Corrupt"* by Alice Cramden. The Eighties' issues often featured two pages of poetry, and resounded with articles about homelessness; *"L.A. Shuns the*

Walking Wounded", *"The Homeless Economy"*, while denouncing its cause; *"The Resurgence of the Right"*, *"Venice Land-Rush Continues"*. Cartoon grotesqueries of President Ronald Reagan and still-in-power-but-going-down-hard Russell provided comic relief (the saga of her political demise culminated in a red-inked Beachhead cover, March 1987.) The Ballona Wetlands were an important local environmental concern. There's great interviews (I enjoyed one with Ken Kesey, who lived in Venice, 1960-61) and extensive coverage of news on the national and international level. Back pages of the Eighties issues featured a lifesize drawing of Thomas' World Famous Chili Burger, at 108 Washington, where breakfasts cost 99 cents! The Fox Theater was still cranking counter-culture films (and where the Beachhead meetings took place).

Do past Beachheads tell the Boardwalk's tale? Yes! it's a hoot, and spans, well, nearly a century, if you consider it an extension of Abbot Kinney's freakshow / circus carnival on Windward! I'd rightly call the Ocean Front Walk, Venice's most holy expression, and one of the most interesting places on Planet Earth; an epic, living theater of rebellion, desire, jive, performance art and musical manifestation, of psychic power and invention, a people's sanctuary-by-the-ever-changing-sea, a kaleidoscope trip into the subconscious, that twists and writhes with beatific and horrific dreams and nightmares; ultimately, a place to be free. The forces that have been methodically and brutally targeting its demise, by harassing the very soul of its artists and defenders, are not worthy of the ink on this paper, though they have been duly noted and recorded. More thrilling is the legacy of all-who-have-laid-their-hearts-bare.....in bringing the phenomena to life and sustaining it.

It is known that places change, and sometimes, not-for-the-better. We must ride this oppression out. In the Nineties, things plain got too weird and paranoia set in, resulting in a Beachhead hiatus from 1993 onwards, until resurrection redeemed the paper in 2002. One gets the feeling, perceiving the continuity of the magic, gleaned in the Beachhead's body of work since 1968, that Venice habitually pops open, like a psychedelic mushroom, to spread its irrepressible charm and message of communal, higher consciousness - Peace and Joy and Love. Don't forget this. Delight in this fact / fate, and see if it doesn't ring a bell. The Beachhead is a Moebius loop, a divine overview of history / herstory, that *we have lived and created and continue to create together*; reflecting an infinite crazy-eight of reality. Free Venice, symbol of a democratic republic, on land seeded by indigenous Gabrielino/Tongva visions, will find ways to endure. For now, as Jim Morrison sings in "The End": "Ride the Snake!".....*with its tale in its mouth!*

RIP: Sunshine Baker

Sunshine Baker was run over by a car while bike riding on South Venice Blvd., just East of Speedway. She was 39 years old. The tragic accident happened at 5:10pm on November 27, Thanksgiving day. The car was making a left turn from Speedway onto S. Venice and Sunshine was riding against traffic. It was reported that she fell off her bike before getting hit, but that is an un-provable speculation. As always, the victim is not able to give her side of the story.

Robert Munoz, the driver who ran over Sunshine, is a tourist visiting from Spain. His car dragged Sunshine for ten feet before stopping. The firefighters found Sunshine stuck under the wheel well of the car and she was not breathing when dislodged. She was transported to a hospital, where she was pronounced dead. Munoz was not charged or arrested because Sunshine was riding the wrong way. However, if he would have made a full stop at Speedway, before turning onto S. Venice, he would have seen her. It was reported that she did not have a light on the bike, but on November 27 at 5:10pm it was not dark outside yet.



Above: Sunshine at the Send Me A Penny Thanksgiving meal, November 27 - day she was killed Photo: AC Kane



Above: Ghost bike memorial for Sunshine, South Venice and Speedway Photo: Ray Rae

RIP: Dr. Geek



Dr. Geek, he'd ask your name and play his rapper game. All over the map people loved his rap. He made a rhyme every time. He had a huge hat and was kinda fat. With his big smile you could see him for a mile. His boom box he'd play with something funny to say. He'd rap all kinds of things with all the joy he brings. Venice will miss his cheerful hello, he was a jolly fellow. Goodbye Dr. Geek, you're gone, we'll miss your rap song... – Marty Liboff

Above: Dr. Geek and Vivianne Robinson Photo: Vivianne Robinson

Hoppy Holidays! A Tip Topper Christmas! And a Hoppy New Year!

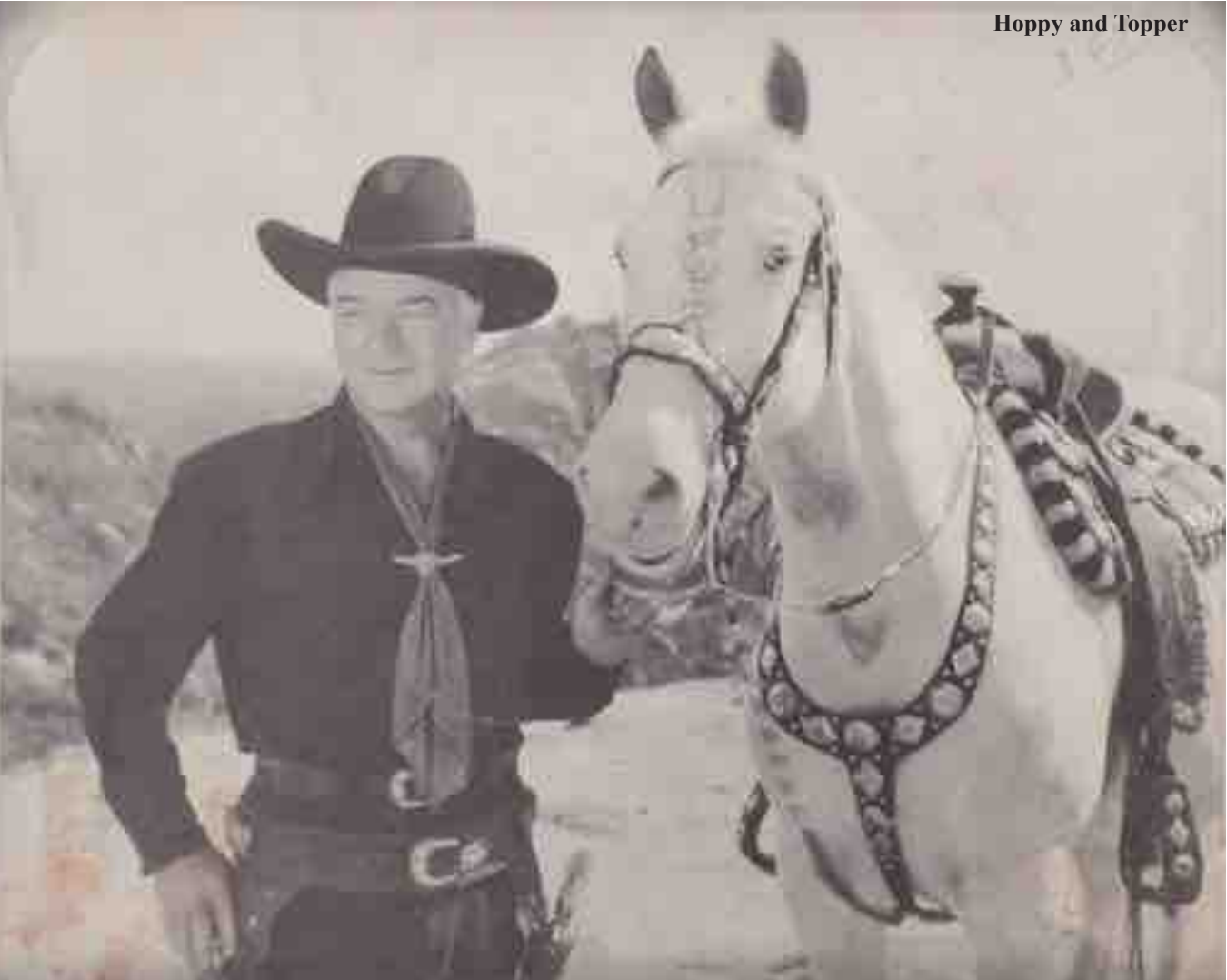
By Marty Liboff

Above the mural of Venus on roller skates on Windward Ave. it says, “History is Myth”. This is the story of one of the greatest mythical characters of all time, Hopalong Cassidy or “Hoppy”. He became the first big TV hero and was famous all over the world. His TV show started the making of TV westerns and pioneered much of later TV serials. This is a rags to riches story of William Boyd, who played Hoppy, and his short lived amusement park in Venice called Hoppyland.

William Boyd was born in 1895. He came to Hollywood in 1918 to try acting and got into a few films. The great director Cecil B. DeMile put him in a couple of his silent movies. By the end of the silent movie era he was having trouble getting roles. Unfortunately, in 1931 another actor with the same name got into a Hollywood scandal and they mistakenly printed his photo in the newspapers. His acting career was nearly ruined by the confusion. He was a struggling actor in the 1930s. In 1934 he got the part in a new cowboy series in the movies called Hopalong Cassidy from a series of books by Clarence E. Mulford. From 1934 to 1948, Boyd made 66 Hoppy cowboy movies. Hoppy dressed all in black and rode a beautiful white horse called Topper. He wore a large black cowboy hat that covered his premature gray hair. He ran the Bar 20 Ranch and was always cleaning up the wild west of outlaws of all kinds with his two six-guns. He was called Hopalong, or originally Hop-Along, because in the early stories he had been shot in the leg and had a limp. In the movies he could walk fine and could out-shoot and out-fight the bad guys. Several famous actors got parts in his movies. A young Robert Mitchum appeared in 7 Hoppy films early in his career, usually as a bad guy. Some early Hoppy movies had George “Gabby” Hayes as his funny sidekick. In later movies, another character actor, Andy Clyde played his comical sidekick, “California” and Rand Brooks played his young cowboy pal, “Lucky”. Topper the horse played himself.

William Boyd had been a hard drinking playboy until he started to change while playing Hopalong Cassidy. He had gone through 4 sour marriages. His 3rd wife gave them a son who only survived for 9 months. In 1937 he met the blonde, young, gorgeous movie actress and dancer Grace Bradley. She was 23 and he was 42. She had already appeared in several films, usually in some sexy role with many famous movie stars like W.C. Fields and Bob Hope. A mutual friend gave William her phone number. He called and made a date with Grace to go to a party at his Malibu home. She later said that she had a “mad crush” on him when she was a 12 year old girl after seeing him as a dashing hero in the silent movies. When he came over to pick her up she said he held out his arms, “and I walked right into them!” After 3 days he proposed and they were married 3 weeks later. She was his 5th and last wife. Many years later she recalled, “We were absolutely right for each other!” She had met her handsome prince on his white charger and she was in love forever. She made about 35 films and then her Paramount contract ended in 1943. Then she mostly toured with Hoppy. Sometimes she wore western attire identical to Hoppy. Although they never had children she used to say that all of Hoppy's little fans were like her children. She stayed by his side until his death and then continued to promote her husband's legacy for the rest of her life.

William Boyd took his entire savings in 1948 and bought the rights to Hopalong Cassidy for \$350,000. This made him so broke that he and Grace



Hoppy and Topper

had to sell their ranch home north of Malibu and even had to sell their car and move into a small apartment. That new crazy invention called TV was still in its beginnings and he went to TV producers and sold them the idea of taking his old movies and editing them down into a weekly TV show. In 1949 his TV show was an instant fantastic success. Hoppy was a sharp shootin' cowboy and also a sharp shootin' businessman. He was a marketing genius



Tie holder like Hoppy's

because never before had any character been endorsed on so many products. Suddenly there was Hoppy everything! There was Hoppy clothes and jeans, milk, bread, potato chips, cereal, ice cream, toys and games of all kinds, housewares, lamps, knives, watches, books, comics, records and lunch boxes. Kids wore Hoppy cowboy clothes and had Hoppy cap guns and drank Hoppy milk. Families would wait eagerly each week for the new episode to come out. Everyone loved him for his big smile and wonderful laugh. In 1950 he appeared on the covers of Time, Life, Look, TV Guide, Coronet and many other magazines. There was a Hoppy comic strip in the newspapers. They made a popular Hoppy weekly radio show. America went Hoppy happy! Hoppy became a millionaire! After a year Boyd started making new episodes made for TV. This was all new and innovative for early TV. He got the great character actor Edgar Buchanan to play his TV silly sidekick, “Red Connors”.

A young Louis L'Amour who is called the greatest western author of all time was roped into writing new Hopalong Cassidy novels. The TV show was so popular that there was a Hopalong Cassidy Western Magazine with new Hoppy novels and other western stories. It was a pulp magazine for 25 cents. Louis had many short stories printed before but never a novel. He wrote four Hoppy novels in 1950, his first to be published. They were published under the pseudonym Tex Burns because the publisher thought they may have other writers do Hoppy novels and they didn't want readers to only want

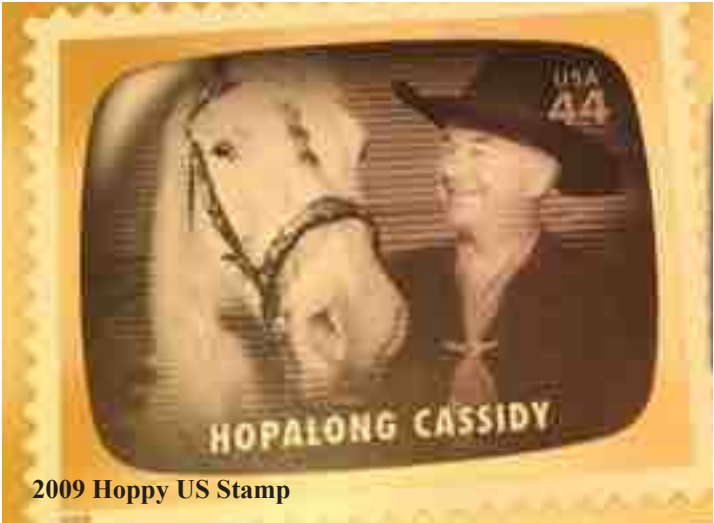
Louis L'Amour stories. Louis wrote them as they were in the original books with Hoppy being a rough, rugged, uncouth and unbecoming cowboy. The publisher wanted the new books to be more like the TV Hoppy, well-mannered, dressed in cool duds, well-spoken and drinking sarsaparilla and milk instead of booze. Louis had to revise his novels and was upset about it. He later denied writing them! After his death his son and wife said they were his novels and now they are being reprinted under Louis 'L'Amour.

Back here in Venice in 1947 the wonderful old Venice Pier was demolished. It was a great amusement pier first built by Abbot Kinney. A few investors thought another amusement park might do well, so a small amusement park was built a couple of blocks east of the beach. It was called the Venice Lake Park and it opened in 1950. It was at 400 West Washington Blvd., where Island Burgers is today, around Dell Street. There was a small lake there called Lake Los Angeles. It is hard to imagine today, but back then there was no Marina and there were empty lots, swampy land and lots of oil wells south of Washington Blvd. This is another story...

This little amusement park didn't do very well. It was nothing compared to the old Venice Pier. The Ocean Park Pier was still nearby with all its great rides and attractions. This little funky park in Venice couldn't compete with the rides on the Ocean Park Pier. In 1950 William Boyd was sold a share in this Venice amusement park for \$55,000. A few new rides were added. There was a large stables with corrals and horse riding tracks for both advanced riders and children. On May 26, 1951 Hoppyland opened with much fanfare. On opening day he invited many movie stars and their kids, like Richard Widmark, Susan Hayward and Pat O'Brian. A short film exists of opening day with Hoppy and other famous people. This was four



Metal Hoppy Sheriff badge from inside Post cereal box



2009 Hoppy US Stamp

years before Disneyland opened and it is said Hoppyland may have been the first theme amusement park.

I was a tiny kid when Hoppy came on TV. We had a huge 9 inch black and white TV with rabbit ears. For you younger ones out there, before cable and internet we had little boxes with two long copper arms above the TV that picked up TV reception called rabbit ears. You would have to keep moving them around to try and get a clear picture. Usually you never got a clear picture no matter how much you played with the rabbit ears. Even though reception was poor and TVs were small, TV with moving pictures in your own home became the entertainment for the masses.

I would wait all week for Hoppy to come on TV. I would sit a foot away from our TV and ride my white rocking horse like Hoppy's horse Topper. When Hoppy would fight with the bad guys I would gallop on my rocking horse with my toy cowboy guns and help him in the big shootout at the end of every episode. Somehow Hoppy could usually just shoot the gun out of the bad guy's hand with a fabulous shot, and then beat the bad guy's gang to a pulp with his fists with the help of his funny sidekick! Hoppy was awesome! So when Hoppyland opened and all the news was talking about it, I started to drive my parents nuts by begging all day asking, "When are we going to Hoppyland?!"

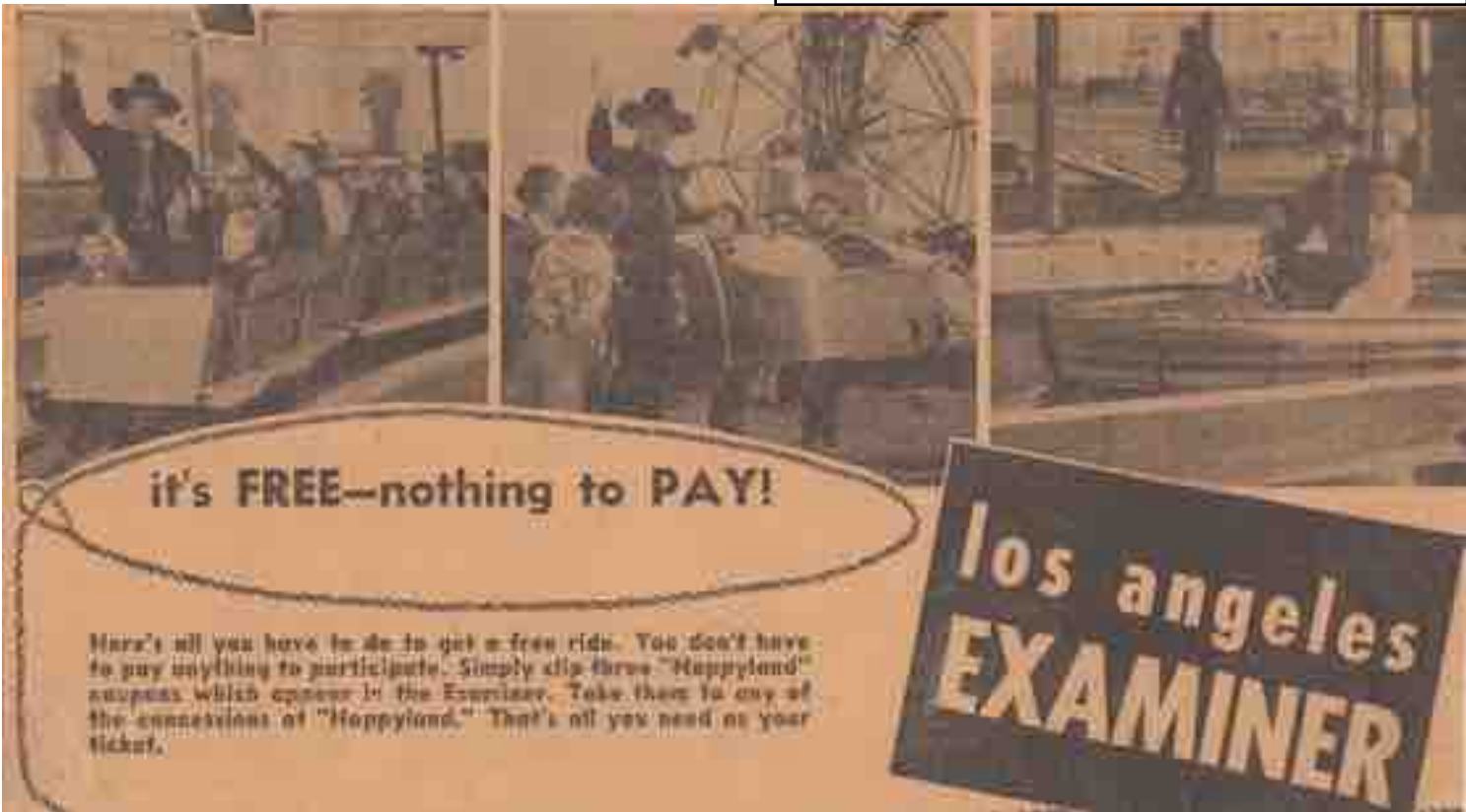
After what seemed like a hundred years, it was probably a month, we finally went to Hoppyland. My dear uncle Henry and aunt Elaine and my cousins Thelma and Renee and my brother Jerry and my parents all piled into our cars and went to Hoppyland in Venice. It was a nice clean amusement park with a smaller carousel, a Ferris wheel, a junior roller coaster and a miniature train. There was a dumb boat ride and other kiddie rides. The roller coaster was fun, but it was still nothing compared to the giant one on the Ocean Park Pier. There were 80 acres but only 15 acres of rides. They advertised 25 thrill rides and games, but there were only about 20 or so carnival type rides. I was expecting more of a cowboy theme park, but it was just mostly the old amusement park spruced up. Even as a little kid I thought the Ocean Park Pier was much better. Hoppyland had a nice merry-go round, but the one at Ocean Park and the one on the Santa Monica Pier were better. I was terribly disappointed. There was a nice picnic area, horse-shoe games, a baseball diamond and the old lake that would later be part of the Marina. There was a large corral and tracks for horseback riding. My dad Jess was from New York City and he only knew horses from the movies, so we didn't ride the horses. There didn't seem to be many people renting horses, either. Believe it or not, there were a couple of stables around where the Marina is today where you could go riding, and so horse lovers didn't have to go to Hoppyland to ride. Boyd may have dreamed of having rodeo shows also in his large corrals. I heard he had country music in the evenings for dancing, but we never went at night.

After a fun but somewhat disappointing day for me, my family was getting ready to go home. I was frantic because I thought the real reason we came to Hoppyland was to meet Hoppy! They told me that we weren't going to see Hoppy, and I was very sad buckaroo. I was watching someone ride a horse in the large corral. The stables were a few hundred feet away from me and suddenly I saw Hoppy walk out of the stables! I began screeching at the top of my lungs, "Hoppy, Hoppy, Hoppy!" My mom Ruthie was embarrassed and yelled at me: "Hoppy won't come over here!" I climbed up on the corral posts and kept yelling, "Hoppy, Hoppy, Hoppy!" My mom tried to pull me down from the corral and said, "We have to go home



Hoppy button

Below: Advertisement for Hoppyland, with attractions and Hoppy



The original inside record sleeve of the “American Pie” album, poem by Don McLean – 1971

NO MATTER HOW SCARY LIFE GOT I COULD DEPEND ON YOU
YOU HAD THAT EASY SMILE AND WHITE, WAVY HAIR.
YOU WERE MY FAVORITE FATHER FIGURE WITH TWO GUNS BLAZING
NOT EVEN VICTOR JORY COULD STAND UP TO THOSE 44-40'S YOU PACKED
AND THAT STALLION YOU RODE, I THINK HIS NAME WAS TOPPER
HE WAS SO BEAUTIFUL AND WHITE HE EVEN CAME WHEN YOU WHISTLED
I'VE ALWAYS LIKED BLACK AND I LOVED YOUR CLOTHES
BLACK HAT, BLACK PANTS AND SHIRT
SILVER SPURS AND TWO GUNS IN BLACK HOLSTERS WITH PEARLY-WHITE HANDLES
BLACK AND WHITE, THAT WAS YOU HOPPY
THE BAD MEN FELL THE GOOD GUYS LIVED ON
THE LADIES TOUCHED YOUR HAND BUT NEVER KISSED
WHENEVER JOHN CARRADINE ASKED A QUESTION YOU'D SAY
'THAT COMES UNDER THE HEADING OF MY BUSINESS'
THEN YOU'D CALL FOR ANOTHER SASPARILLA
I BELIEVED IN YOU SO MUCH THAT I'D TAKE MY STETSON
OFF AND PUT IT OVER MY HEART WHENEVER ANYBODY DIED
MY HAT'S OFF TO YOU, HOPPY
SAY GOODBYE TO ALL THE BOYS AT THE BAR-20
THE BLACK AND WHITE DAYS ARE OVER
SO LONG HOPALONG CASSIDY

now!” but I kept yelling to Hoppy. Hoppy heard my mad screaming and he walked all the way across the large corral a few hundred feet away to meet me! He came over and knelt down and put his arm around me and said, “Howdy little partner, be a good little cowboy and be good to your mother.” He talked with my mom for a minute and then strolled back to the stables. My mother was very happy and excited. Even after all these years and meeting many famous people and movie stars, I still remember this as one of the greatest moments of my life! Even today I still have his photo with his horse Topper on my wall. When asked about playing Hoppy, William Boyd said, “When you've got kids looking up to you, when you've got parents saying what a wonderful guy Hopalong is, what the hell do you do? You have to be a wonderful guy!” He was...

Within a year the other big movie cowboys decided to also jump into TV. Soon the great singing cowboys Gene Autry, and Roy Rogers with Dale Evans had TV shows. Hoppy couldn't sing. The Cisco Kid and the Lone Ranger cowboy shows soon followed. Hopalong Cassidy couldn't compete with all these new shows. He was already a middle-aged, silver-haired man when Hoppy came on TV. His popularity soon faded and his TV show went out to pasture. He quit making movies in 1953. Don't you think this would be a wonderful movie script?! Maybe call the movie Hoppy?

Hoppyland stayed around in Venice until 1954, when it closed. Hoppy would make occasional personal appearances, but for the most part retired. He built a home in Palm Desert, CA. that was painted black and white representing him and his horse. He rode off into his last sunset to cowboy heaven in 1972. Grace died in 2010 at 97. He is buried with his wife Grace at Forest Lawn. His horse Topper was buried at the L.A. Pet Memorial Park. He has a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame at 1734 Vine Street. There was a commemorative U.S. stamp issued in 2009 with Hopalong Cassidy and Topper. His old toys and memorabilia are still collected. His TV show recently came back on weekend morning



Hoppy and his wife Grace Bradley

TV. He will always be remembered in my heart. Here's Hoppy's TV theme song: “Here he comes, here he comes, there's the trumpets, there's the drums, here he comes. Hopalong Cassidy, here he comes! woo woo woo... There he goes, on his way, down the trail the cowboy way, Hopalong Cassidy, Hopalong Cassidy. He'll return, soon again, there's no use to say goodbye until then, Hopalong Cassidy, so long Hopalong!”

For more local history read; *Venice California 'Coney Island of the Pacific'* by Jeffrey Stanton

22:22 Tuesday, November 25th, 2014, Adullam Jim Crow's alive and well. In Ferguson. And just when you were thinking he was gone. Oh, no. In fact. He's very much alive. And not in any mood to shuck and jive. Jim Crow's a bit upset. And rightly so. He's tethered to the system. Don'tcha know? Jim Crow's been dogged around a bit too much. Give it some gas. And let up off the clutch. Jim Crow has let the rage ignite. To show. Disdain for being forced to more Jim Crow. He's not in any mood to shuck and jive. Oh, no. In fact. Got one foot in the grave. He's come for Darren Wilson. Whereupon. Jim Crow unleashes hell. In Ferguson Roger Houston, the ghost of Christmas Past

Blooms, Blossoms, and Blessings

I will Bloom – Where I, am planted!
I will Bloom – Where I, am found.
I will Bloom – WHEREVER I’m wanted –
I will Blossom, and Fall – to the ground.
I will Fall, and Rise – Like the Phoenix!
I will Fall, on my knees – and pray.
I will Fall asleep counting my Blessings –
I will wake, and Be Blessed – By the day!
I am Blessed, with my Life and my Pleasures!
I am Blessed FAR MORE than I can know.
I am Blessed – With Infinite Treasures –
My Blessings – that go, where I go...
My Blossoms – that blow, where they blow...
And My Blooms – that grow, where they grow...

With Love,
Tlna Catalina Corcoran

At the Laundromat Off Main & Market, Venice, 1999

by krista schwimmer

It's funny
what you hear
in public laundromats.

One time in particular
it was just me, the silent hindu
laundry attendant &
a family of three -
grandma, mom & her daughter.
i was sorting my socks
on the beat-up table there, praying
they would all be there.
The little 4 year old
started wailing hard, stopping all of us
simultaneously in mid-fold.
Mom squatted down & asked her
"what's wrong?"
The little girl yelled that
she wanted the sun to come back
NOW
(it was twilight then even
inside the laundromat.)
& the mother & the grandmother
& the silent hindu tried hard
to convince the girl that
of course, the sun was there
of course, the sun would return
the sun had not left forever.
But the little girl kept shaking and sobbing on.

Cursing silently myself over
a single missing sock, i bagged my clothes
to walk the one block home.
i left the laundromat thinking
this small being
amidst laundry, detergent, and coin machines
was already contemplating the cosmos
already crying about
something that truly could matter.

Frankly, i empathized
with the little girl's position.

PHILOSOPHER FOR HIRE

How foolish one should be
That he go to school
Only to study Philosophy
As if to learn a rule

Only to work
To pay off the loans
Homeless he lurks
Down to the bone

"Philosopher for hire"
He analyzes to death
At night he tires
With nothing left

~Levi Giafaglione

She hears birds
blesses a world with
her feet
he listens to news
curses greed blood
conquests his fist
raised
a perfect conjunction
without him she would
be head in the clouds -
without her his feet
would sink in the soil.

– Alan Rodman

I Too Bled

By Ronald Keith Mc Kinley

Checked by law and ignorance
Held down by the Dow
My soul can’t soar
My ancestors scream through my blood
Words are not enough
I have ideals
What are they to a gun
In an unenlightened hand
I cry
Am angered
Because I only cried
Worse than dying
Is not living
Fear binds my intellect
Molds me for the next assault
The incursion into my actuality
Pigmentation predicament
Lynched by nine-millimeter
I too bled America
My talent used
My body vilified

I Can’t Breathe

By Majid Naficy

In Memory of Eric Garner

“I can’t breathe!
I can’t breathe!”
What a painful statement!
For the first time
I heard it from my own tongue.
I jumped from my asleep in panic
And ran toward my dad’s bedroom
He put my head
On his chest,
Caressed my face
And said: “Majid!
Be calm!
Be calm.”

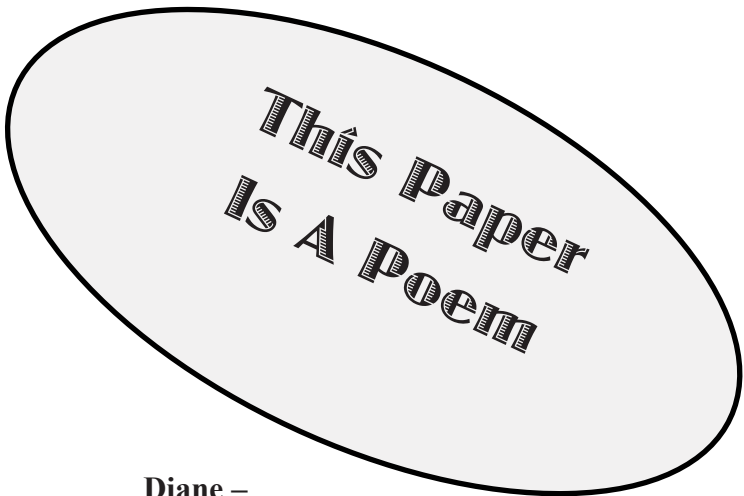
Today I hear that statement
From the tongue of a black man on YouTube
Who is being choked
Held by a white policeman.
No one puts the black man’s head
On his chest,
Caresses his face
And says: “Eric!
Be calm
Be calm.”

Hundred years of slavery,
Hundred years of brutality
Press on the black man’s throat
And do not let White America
Hear his voice:
“I can’t breathe!
I can’t breathe!”

A Sunset with Mary, Patty & Greta

By Marty Liboff

Sunset in Venice
we're blessed.
Beaming down your power & love
sunshine and warmth from above.
Angels painting the sky
while birds fly by.
Rainbow of colors, yellow, orange, purple, red
another day till we're dead.
Another beautiful day done
another wonderful day till we're gone.
Everyday the sun moves a little north
then turns around & goes south.
Our sun smiles & shines different everyday
whether its sunny, cloudy or gray.
Cotton candy clouds in pink & blue
holding my honey so true.
Seagulls & pelicans flyin’ home
a long day’s journey they roam.
Over the sea they fly
knowing some of us will soon die.
Down falls the sun into the sea
a blessing to be free.
The waters extinguish the light
what an amazing sight.
Without the gleaming jewel
the air gets cool.
The darkness slowly creeps over our city
another day gone, what a pity.
Far across the sea
the sun rises to grow a rose & a tree.
Mother Earth turns her face to kiss Helios
to the moon & stars we say adios.
The morning sun awakens the Ocean Front Walk
People begin to hawk & talk.
A new day is here
put away yesterday’s pain & fear.
New dreams with a new sun
a bright beautiful ray of hope & fun.
Birds sing their thanks for morning
let's give thanks with dancing & singing.
All we are is sunshine & love
a gift & blessing from above...



Diane –

i didn't believe you were gone
were really gone
i thought you would be back on the next wave
you waved your hands and laughed
and clapped your hands
and skipped on down to the wading pool
we sang together
and our voices melted in the air
and I was you
and you were me
and we were we
we were happy singers – singing in the sun
we were sisters, always
always happy to see you
didn't have to see you every day
i would disappear on a regular basis
but i would always come back
for the rhythm and the shake
shake your booty, baby
you were dancing and got me to dance too
and saw the child inside the woman
a child who made sure to stay on the outside
a quick and easy “get away”
The last days on the beach
there were so many birds –
flocks and flocks of seagulls and pigeons
They were your babies –
They are already calling you a living saint,
Diane how you would laugh at that
you are all around me
i will dance with you
all the days left me
i will dance with you
you are my angel-child
i will dance with you
i will dance with you
i will dance with you

– love, Mary

21:12 Sunday, November 23rd, 2014, Adullam A distant siren wails. Dogs are for hire. And so. A canine chorus does inspire. Tonight's thoughts turn to Venice Beach. And love. Ante gentrification. I think of. Developers and money. Funneled in. The last remaining artisans begin. To taste the bitter exile that I've known. For three years now. A residential zone. Re-drawn. For building condos. It's a sin. But real estate takes precedence again. Big money does the howling. Soon to prove. That it has the last word. Soon it will shove. The last embers of Bohemia's fire. Into a dust bin. Light a funeral pyre Roger Houston, post-beat romantic

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The Talking Stick Closes

By Eric Ahlberg

The For Lease sign is up on 1411 Lincoln Blvd. The Talking Stick is closed. Bottom Line: I blame rents. The start of its demise began when Rich and Sherry Braaksma, the original owners, were forced back to Canada by the Immigration Department. Rich and Sherri were just absolutely sweet people. They had run the Talking Stick Coffeehouse up in Santa Monica for several years, and had developed a great relationship with local musicians and producers. They would have music seven nights a week and have the Venice Fellowship meetings on Sunday morning. Their kids helped in the shop.

I started hanging out there when they moved to California and Lincoln. First time I walked in I found my old buddy Nickie Black behind the counter. He was having these Mozaic events and inviting in Poets from Leimert Park, Watts, Mike The Poet, mixing the radical hip-hop with DJ Noj, and playing those soul grooves. I started investing time on minor upgrades like track lights for the stage. I ended up doing the sound for some awesome local bands and musicians.

Mark Islam would organize Grassroots Acoustica concerts there with very talented and hit songwriters and their bands. Alfred Johnson had a birthday where I heard Michael Sherwood sing "If you don't love me, Fuck You!" and I heard Eric Schwartz sing "Who's Gonna (Fuck the Singer)". So many moments of musical bliss on my mind. So many astounding bands. My friend Lauri Reimer started producing some of my favorite LA bands there: Superbroke, Conjunto Jardin, Ron Meza, Greg Cruz, Stefani Valadez, Steve Moos, Paul (Dutch) Newman, Tracy Newman, Mikal Sandoval, Brad Kay, Suzy Williams and her Solid Senders. Many of the musicians that played there one week



would be on tour with major bands next week. The list goes on and on, I must have been to 100 shows there over its life, I lived a block away. It was funky, and funky Venice loved it.

When we knew that Rich and Sheri were going to have to leave, Nickie Black worked hard to make it work financially, while Rich And Sheri looked for buy-out offers. Brandon came up with an investor, and they bought the business.

Brandon's mistake #1 was in not respecting the community of producers and performers that had grown up around the Talking Stick. Mistake #2: causing Nickie to quit. Nickie has lots of food management experience. Mistake #3: Brandon faced big challenges in bringing the place up to code. He executed a remodel that disrupted operations for months. The remodel left the space covered with grit, requiring hours of pre-show cleanup. The grit destroyed one of my sound mixers. Mistake #4: once the remodel was done, it became

clear that Brandon did not know how to start up an independent food business. He drove off many of the popular show producers, and he signed a lease for 10 years at \$7000/month. He did not have the entrepreneurship required, nor the bank, his major investor pulled out at a 5 figure loss, letting Brandon down.

In 2010 the rent was \$6000. \$4000 was paid by Venice Fellowship and \$2000 from the Talking Stick Coffeehouse Business. They were attempting to get the Coffeehouse to pay all the rent. It would need to show \$200 per day in profits. It seemed to me that the rent subsidy the Fellowship paid, was coming from a foundation derived from the Christian Card Counters, the movie of which is called "Holy Rollers." That makes me want to say, "God Bless Rich and Sheri!"

If you want to make a small fortune in art, start with a large fortune. And so this is the lesson for you: support the arts, attend, donate, buy local artists' work. All you inheritors and surviving spouses, give that money away to artists and take home your soul. Venice

has many lovely arts organizations. The Talking Stick was our own living room radical coffee house. But because the rent is too damn high, private clubs like this will struggle, unless an angel picks up the bill.

All venues and structures will fall eventually, the song goes on. Cheetah, Azz Izz, Taurus, Comeback Inn, long time gone.

We have all moved on, moving our shows to the Unurban, Beyond Baroque, Wit-zend, any funky space with a PA, because we are a Sound System.



I honestly don't remember the first time I walked into the Talking Stick. Nothing would give me more pleasure than to boast about how I immediately fell in love. I think I first heard about her from my brother poet Mark Lipman. He mentioned that readings were done there. I seem to recall being impressed with the genuine Bohemian flavor of the "Stick." The stage was small but huge. The audio equipment was first rate. Once I became a regular, I lent my Fender Bassman amps to the backline. The Braaksmas were in charge. They were initially hesitant. Nickie Black made the move from the original Santa Monica Stick. We became serious siblings after I entered. We remain close to this day. Through Nickie, I became the bassist for the Venice Beach Fellowship worship team. I still am. We inevitably returned to the Venice Skills Center, 5th & Sunset, and the Stick stopped being a non-profit. It was wise of the Braaksmas to delegate Nickie to keep the Stick going. But a year later Nickie was usurped overnight.

I fostered some serious resentment for the underhanded way Nickie was replaced with the Stick's most recent "management." Nickie was the heart and soul of the Talking Stick, damn it. He drove home the "community" that began with Venice West and the Gas House in the '50s. I joined Nickie in the kitchen as a dish washer and floor mopper for several years, and I was glad to do it.

When the most recent "owners" took over, they stupidly suspended business operations and smothered the Stick into oblivion with an idiotic barrage of ridiculous renovations that would be the coup-de-grace in the life of a beautiful venue. In the end, all the hard work and sweat that the baristas contributed would fall prey to the almighty dollar. I've left out the part of how I had my guitar collection stored upstairs, and how I parked my Ford E-150 in the lot for several years. It bothers me that the Talking Stick was there for me, but I was helpless to come to her aid when she needed me.

— Roger Houston

L to R: Roger Houston, Stefani Valadez and Nickie Black



***"I Don't See an American Dream,
I See an American Nightmare"***

Malcolm X



**Stop Racism!
Stop Police Violence!**

Fireworks Graphics/Prairie Fire Organizing Committee (415) 330-5310

Above: Scott Braley
Fireworks Graphics
Prairie Fire Organizing Committee
Offset, 1992
Berkley, CA

Image and text courtesy of the Center for the Study of Political Graphics
www.politicalgraphics.org



You Are Invited!
Beachhead's 400th Edition Celebration
With poetry and music
Sunday, February 1, 2015
Beyond Baroque, 6pm
Free!!!

