

Happy 45th Birthday, Beachhead!

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2013
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Beachheads Write on the Beachhead

CJ Gronner

Every town needs a newspaper, and The Free Venice Beachhead has been the one for Venice, California since 1968. I joined the collective staff in 2009, after writing a story about my beloved bike getting stolen ... and then getting it back! The fact that Beachhead readers cared enough - first to read, and then to ACT and get my bike returned to me - let me know that this was a paper by and for the special place that we've all chosen to make our home. Shortly after that, the Beachhead Collective asked me to join them, and I happily did.

45 years later, The Free Venice Beachhead has not only kept the original masthead and motto ("This paper is a poem!"), but the same fighting, community and celebratory spirit of Venice that the founders of the paper intended it to be about. As one of the nation's oldest free presses, surviving on only donations and local ads, I believe the Beachhead provides an important service to everyone who lives or visits here. As a community paper, I'd like to see the community get more involved. EVERYONE is welcome to submit articles, photos, cartoons, letters, and yes, poems. Each item submitted is read aloud and voted on by the Collective staff. There are so many talented people living in Venice, and we'd love to hear from all of you. I've heard "I LOVE the Beachhead!" so many times, and we'd love to see that love in action. In addition to submitting content, we can always use help distributing the papers, volunteering at events, and of course, any financial support is always welcome - because as creative people all, the money stuff to keep it going is by far everyone's least favorite part of the deal.

I've only ever wanted to write and tell stories. To have a home for these tales of our people and goings on in the paper of the town I love so much is a wonderful privilege, and one I take very seriously. I've had hate mail for calling things out, and I've had love mail for the same. In a time of so much change for Venice, it's important to hear from all sides of every issue. We're a lefty paper, started by Beat poets, and we're proud of it. But that doesn't mean that a Republican Tea Party member that hates hippies and weed

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Greta Cobar

I remember when I was just a Beachhead reader: I thought the paper was so smart. I remember going through the articles and thinking: "these guys are geniuses." Then I saw Jim Smith and Karl Abrams sitting at the Beachhead table, at some event. I wanted the 40th Anniversary poster, designed by Earl Newman, but didn't have money on me. So I called the number on the front page of the paper a few days later, and was instructed to go to 533 Rialto in half an hour.

I thought I was headed to some office to talk to some secretary, but instead I found myself in Jim's house, with orange walls and a big, bright chandelier from Murano. His demeanor was so calm, and the house was so colorful and inviting, that I told him that I wanted to volunteer. And so I did.

Now five years later, we're celebrating the 45th Anniversary with a new poster designed by Earl Newman. Everything else around the paper has changed, though. Jim and Karl have moved to Oregon, I progressed from doing just distribution to also doing lay-out, web design, lots of writing, and still doing most of the distribution. I just wish it paid the rent. My unemployment just ran out and I need to go back to the other kind of work, the work that pays money. I'm not sure how I'll be able to still do all the work that the paper requires.

I started working when I was fifteen years old and later taught 9th grade Health for ten years, but the last year and a half of working on the Beachhead has been the toughest job I've ever had. I learned a lot of computer stuff and also learned how difficult it is to work with a group of volunteers.

The Beachhead is bigger than any one of us and it continues on. The most remarkable thing about the Beachhead is how much the community cherishes and supports it. The month-long efforts of putting the paper together and the sleepless nights spent doing lay-out are all well worth it when the paper comes out. I get on my fuzzy yellow bike with 300 papers at a time, and people grab the Beachhead out of my hands before I even get a chance to put it out. Later on in the month, when I do second, third, fourth or fifth rounds of distribution, people come up with a sparkle in their

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Mary Getlein

The day I was asked to join The Beachhead was amazing to me. I had been sending in poems and was really happy when they would publish one. Seeing your name in print is a definite "rush". It's validation and recognition and I've had many people ride by me on their bikes and shout out - "Hey, I liked your poem!" That is what's really great about Venice - people read your poems.

Being on The Beachhead staff gives you imaginary status - "Yeah, I'm on The Beachhead staff - I'm one of the writers." This bumps you up in some peoples' eyes.

Besides all that, it is fun. I've gotten to know and care about a lot of people I wouldn't have known otherwise. There is a lot of humor and empathy at meetings. We don't always agree, but most of us have a pro-underdog bias and an anti-corporation point of view. We have watched, with horror, great old buildings being torn down and ugly new ones put in their place. And watched people we know get displaced.

We're in a time of great change for Venice and we're here to tell you about it. I'm proud to be a member.

I handle the mailing and it makes me feel good to send The Beachhead to people in prison. The way our laws are now, with mandatory sentencing laws, a lot of people are unjustly behind bars. It's such a waste of time and peoples' lives, being stuck behind prison's walls, instead of leading productive lives. I imagine them reading The Beachhead and feeling like somebody cares. We do. We care a lot.

The Beachhead has a tradition of speaking "truth to power." We have joined many groups fighting the police state the powers that be would like Venice to be. We are still fighting the illegal law closing Venice Beach from 12:00 a.m. to 5:00 a.m. We fought the OPD movement three times and three times we have won. People move away from Venice and still feel like Venetians, because the love of the place never goes away. It has meant many things to many people, but mostly it has meant HOME.

Above: Venice Pier
Photo: Cary Lopiccolo



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Karl Abrams, Anne Alvarez, Anthony Castillo, Greta Cobar, Don Geagan,, Mary Getlein, CJ Gronner, Ronald McKinley, Alice Stek.

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.

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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 Jim Smith,

I've lived in Venice since 1980. You and I spoke when I was covering the Venice Neighborhood Council for AOL's Venice Patch. I've also written for The Argonaut.

I have to commend you for your lead piece on the Kennedy Assassination. I was a kid when he was killed. As a Boston Catholic he was the epitome of our aspirations. My dad owed his justice department job as a prosecutor to the Kennedys. His career advancement died that day. Without knowing all of the ramifications, I was devastated, crying all the way home from early dismissal at St. Brendan's School.

I was skeptical, but bought into the Warren Commission report. It wasn't until years later when I worked as a field producer on "Cops" that I can realize how wrong I had been.

I have four solid reasons to believe Oswald didn't kill Kennedy:

On my day off from working in Ft. Worth, I stood in the Dallas book depository, and at the grassy knoll. I'm a good cameraman and a decent shot with a rifle. There is no way that I would have chosen the book depository as my site for the shooting. The target was moving down and away making the second shot more difficult. Years later when I shot Pope John Paul II in Poland I flashed back to Dallas. With my Nikon on a motor drive I got three good frames, the last images bigger than the first one. I had chosen a spot in Krakow akin to the location at Dealy Plaza, where the motorcade slowed and I had a bigger target.

Secondly, according to the Zapruder film, Kennedy's head snapped back. Try this right now. Slap your own forehead with the heel of your palm. Which direction does your skull move? It's one of the laws of physics. People don't get shot from behind then move in the direction of the shot.

Thirdly, what did John Wilkes Booth say after he killed Lincoln, "Sic semper tyrannes", so always to tyrants. He had a point to make. In contrast, Oswald denied any involvement in the crime, he most famous quote was, "I'm a patsy."

Finally, the case never went to trial. Jack Ruby silenced Oswald, so we'd never know the truth.

Like you, I'm convinced that the assassination was more than the work of a deranged, solo gunman. Thank you again, Jim, for an insightful article.

Best regards,

Paul M. J. Suchecki

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and a few hours to spare,
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Please help sustain
the Free Venice Beachhead

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Thanks for your generous donations!

Bill Rosendahl
Earl Newman
Emily Winters
Lauren Smith and Thomas Paris
Ethan Lipton and Janet Lent
Jim Talbot
Hoagies
Anonymous

Dear Beachhead:

Thank you for printing Jim Smith's fine article in your November issue regarding President John Kennedy. As so many of us remember, it was fifty years ago that JFK died in Dallas. This is a profound time of remembrance, so I especially appreciated Jim's article.

Besides print media, television has also been in on JFK's remembrance recently with a wealth of programming. Twenty-five years ago we had (of course) the "25th JFK remembrance" with a number of great TV specials. These programs revisited the circumstances of the assassination as well as general retrospectives on the JFK presidency. Twenty-five years ago, I tearfully sat before the TV and wept watching old JFK footage. I was working a job back then for two guys who owned a business and it turned out they had been sitting in front of the TV, weeping a lot also. They had been watching the same JFK "specials" and it came out in conversation that we had all been crying. It took us by surprise that we still had emotional scars about the assassination. Now, twenty-five years later I still sit in front of the TV with a lump in my throat. Sure, there's joy in remembering JFK, but I knew that the 50th "remembrance" which has been going on (as I write) for over a week now, was also going to be tearful by the TV. (The new TV "retros" have been *most interesting*, as I knew they would be ... but also sad.)

I have never accepted the loss of JFK. I was ten years old when our school teachers called us kids in early from the school playground to tell us the President was dead. I didn't want to believe it. I have never accepted it. I could be more accepting if we really knew what happened that day in Dallas. I can't accept the "official" finding that Oswald was a lone killer. It seems clear in the Zapruder Film that Kennedy's head wound was inflicted by a bullet from the front (in the general direction of the infamous grassy knoll, not from the rear). What do you make of the denial about that? There are some who might ask, "How in the world could something as notorious as a second gunman be covered up and 'swept under the rug'?" To those, I say, "Hey, Daniel Ellsberg was ALMOST 'squelched' in his successful effort exposing the Pentagon Papers." Once the machine of government cover-up gets going, it can be damn fierce. As to that day in Dallas, someone out there still "knows something."

Twenty five years from now (on the 75th anniversary of Kennedy's "passing") I expect we will have another major television retrospective on JFK. If I live to be 85, then I see myself, an old man, hanky in hand, sitting before the TV watching this event, my chin trembling. There will never be another JFK.

Thank you again for sharing Jim Smith's uplifting (and thought provoking) tribute to Kennedy.

Charles Thomas

November 22, 2013
Venice



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Murder and Mourning in Venice

By CJ Gronner

Venice lost one of our own on the night of November 17th when Guillermo Carmona-Perez was brutally stabbed and left to die in the intersection at Washington Boulevard and Pacific Avenue. Carmona-Perez, an employee of both Mercede's Grille and Baja Cantina, had just gotten off work at Mercede's, stopped off to pick up some beers, and was walking to his home a few blocks away. He never made it.

Without a suspect in custody, everyone is piecing together what happened, but it seems that as Carmona-Perez was walking through the dark alley on Anchorage, he was attacked with a blunt instrument and stabbed twice behind the Yoga Nest. It must have happened so fast that he didn't even realize how bad it was for him to try to keep walking, as he was found collapsed on Washington. He still had his paycheck, his own kitchen knife wrapped up, and even his beers on him, so robbery does not appear to be the motive. Just straight up sick, pointless evil.

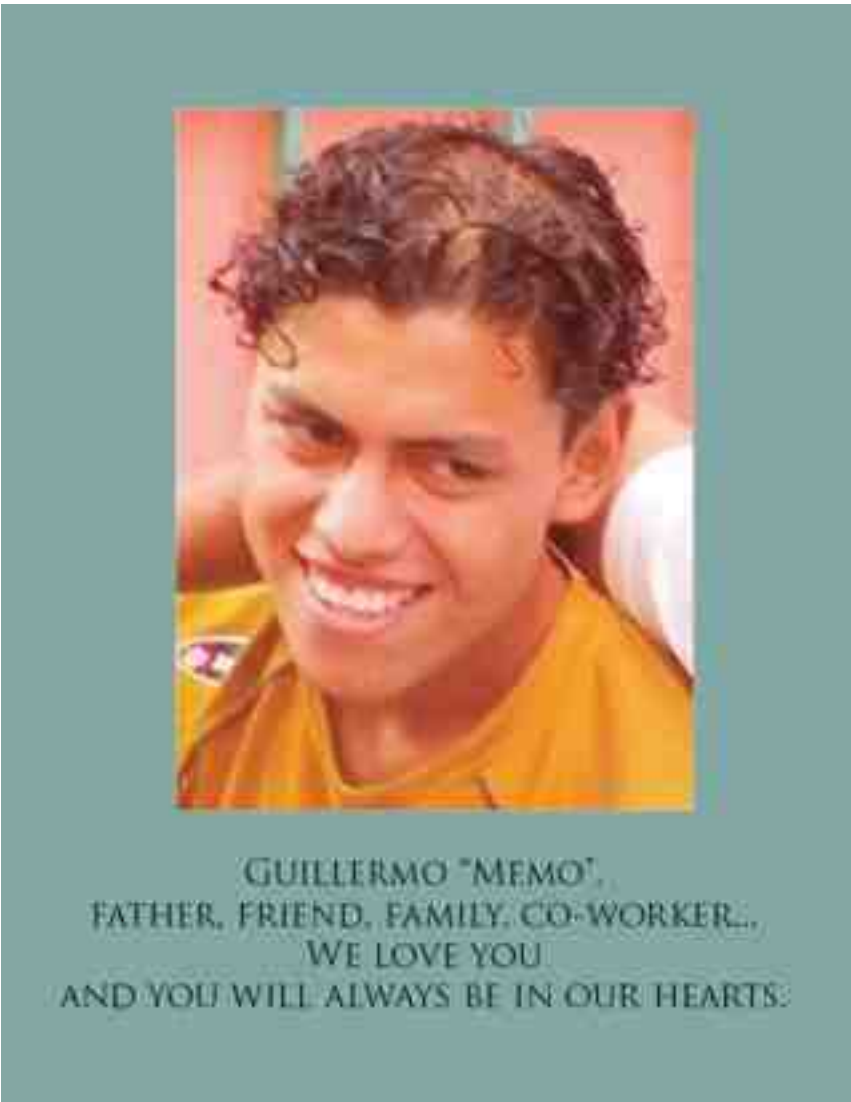
I spoke to lifelong Venice resident, and Carmona-Perez's boss, Mercede Ahrablou about this nightmare. "Memo (as they called him) was ALL about his wife and baby son. He was incredibly shy, and so non-confrontational, he's the kind of guy that would just keep walking if someone said something ... A life has been lost, but the way I feel is it's also a loss of community. The freedom of safety is gone when stuff like this happens. We NEED to pay attention. We NEED to protect each other." Absolutely. Some people heard screams that night, and ignored it ... Do we dismiss things because we live here, and "that's just Venice"? No. With all the change going down in town, we have a responsibility to each other to be there, to try and help. THAT is - or should be - just Venice.

What IS Venice is the outpouring of support, emotion and financial help that has flooded in. Ahrablou said, "I could sit and use every positive, kind word there is, but words can't even describe it." Contributions have POURED in, from some over 100 local businesses and artists wanting to help in any way they can. Fundraisers have been held at both Mercede's Grille and Baja Cantina, with the goal of \$10,000 (to help pay for funeral and life expenses for

Carmona-Perez's wife, Miriam and their baby son) met, above and beyond. Complete strangers packed in to Mercede's Grille for a silent auction to help out yet another little boy who will not know his father. One teenaged boy brought a book that he said he was so inspired by, he wanted the baby to grow up having it. The owners of the former 12 Washington restaurant came back and donated \$1,000. The Dodgers donated a ball signed by the team, and The Lakers donated tickets. So many items and services were offered up for the family of Carmona-Perez that some still remain, and may become an online silent auction. As Ahrablou said, "Some positive has to come out of this, and I've been just blown away. People take it very seriously, and people CARE."

Amid all the bad that people complain about, Venice and its people are intrinsically GOOD. Let us work together to improve things, so this kind of heinous crime is harder to commit. Places need to be better lit. There needs to be an easier working communication with the LAPD so that people will want to call and offer help, instead of not wanting to get involved. The city is offering a \$50,000 reward to anyone who can offer information leading to the capture of the poisonous individual responsible for this awful murder. Anyone knowing anything needs to call (213) 382-9470 and get - and keep - this person off our streets.

Anytime anything like this happens, everyone talks about it and comes out to help right away, but we need the caring to LAST. Watch out for each other. Help each other. Care.



Cruel, Unnecessary, Illegal and Immoral Harassment of the Houseless by LAPD

By Brian Connely

On the streets between Venice and Santa Monica, the LAPD handed out twenty \$160 tickets to homeless individuals the other night. Their crime? Where they're going to sleep that night. It's against the law to place a sleeping bag, etc., down on a Los Angeles sidewalk before 9:00 p.m. No camping. A few nights before, just down the block, a police car rode up on me as I lay on the sidewalk. A cop yelled at me to, "Pick my shit up!" it was 7:45ish p.m. Disappear, Nowhere Man.

Even just propping up all that you have left and standing up wasn't enough to stop the citations. The cops were "sending a message." Society doesn't want to see you. WE don't want to see you. The tickets were issued just minutes before 9 p.m. And if you can't pay? For example--you don't have a job--the ticket may double, community service may be required, a warrant might follow...

And we'll be waiting at 6 a.m., to make sure you're "out-of-sight" for the rest of the day. Horns, sirens, beeps...beams of white light sweeping across bodies and cardboard on the sidewalk. You recognize the thuggish nature of it all when you see it with your own eyes. Welcome to the 1%'s police state.

Center stage: The police. In the wake of the crimes of the banks, it's impossible to ignore the reality of the cops being used as tools to suppress the truth. Not one banker of import went to jail, but the homeless are scapegoated--almost every other person in America marginalized in some way. Now the 1%-controlled media are saying that bankers did go to jail as if it's 1984. The past has been rectified. All is well. Nothing to see here. Move along. And if you don't move along, the police will be there. Occupy!



Above: Moby Dick reading, by the breakwater, November 23 and 24. Organized by Venice Oceanarium. Photo: Joe Stanford



Above: Anti-fracking rally, OFW, November 9. Organized by Occupy Venice. Photo: Greta Cobar

GQ OR NOT GQ

By Eric Ahlberg

The Gentleman’s Quarterly “Coolest Block in Los Angeles” event on Abbot Kinney boulevard was met with a sizeable contingent of counter protesters.

Many Venice locals are upset that some of their favorite local businesses are being forced out by the higher rents and an influx of suburban mall-like chain stores. Even some landowners are concerned that this is a bubble economy, an unsustainable conflation of marketing and money to drive up commercial rents, land values, and then cash out, leaving a moribund business district behind, examples being Main Street Santa Monica, SM 3rd Street Mall, Melrose, Westwood. Higher rents may be coolest thing for landlords, realtors, and banks, but rent inflation is the number one reason artists leave Venice. There have been many doomsayers over the years, yet Venice has been a strong fighter for the rights of renters. With the Coastal Commission, and the Venice Specific Plan, developers have been prevented from mowing down our neighborhoods and replacing them with high rises, and further congesting our streets and Lincoln Boulevard.

Venice has authentic cool. It is known for its extended and international community of artists. We have our own internationally recognized Poetry and Mural centers. We have a lively and tumultuous



Above: Anti-GQ rally
Photo: Eric Ahlberg

beach boardwalk, with an extended history of street artists and street performers. We have outstanding social missions like VCHC, VFC, VNC, AKFA, A Place Called Home, Venice Skills Center, the Vera Davis Center, The Electric Lodge, PRT, LA Theatre Works and more. This community has remained remarkably resilient over the years. Venice has authentic artist cool.

Venice demographics aren’t really changing that much. Seventy-one percent of the households make less than \$70,000, and seventy-two percent of households are renters, while forty-five percent of houses date before 1950. Venice is often tired and rundown, parking sucks, traffic sucks, your neighbors may suck, and you probably suck at times too. Venice Sucks! Everybody sucks. Here’s a Venice Welcome Mat! Now there’s a nice marketing slogan. Yeah, I used to live in the canals, next door to the cruelest man in Venice.

So again, we have an upscale lifestyle magazine glamorizing our neighborhood. They work the businesses on the street for paid ads and dangle feature story possibilities. They fund some civic improvement projects (tree trimming). They provide employment to writers and photographers. Money making the world go round.

Cooler? Surely this tips the quite clumsy hand of marketing, because cool does not need superlatives. Is this just a lack of imagination, a transparent abuse of a marketing quality that must must be earned, not proclaimed? The LA Weekly calls AKB “the douchiest block in Los Angeles”. During the ’60s, corporate marketing found that “cool” could be incredibly profitable. Corporations started raiding the counterculture for language to brand, to use in marketing campaigns. Cool became central to the way capitalism presented itself. Marketing constructed cultural machines that transform despair and alienation into consent. Cool is a heavily manipulative corporate ethos most aggressively mined by brandmasters as a source of borrowed ‘meaning’ and identity. The ‘got to be cool’ rhetoric of the global brands is borrowed from Black American Culture.

Cool is exploited as a manufactured and empty idea imposed on the culture at large through a top-down process by the advertisers. An artificial cycle of “cooling” and “uncooling” creates false needs in consumers, and stimulates the economy. Some large companies outsource their “cool” marketing. They hire other “smaller, more-limber, closer-to-the-ground outsider” companies to keep up with rapidly changing customer tastes and demands.

“Start generating authentic cool from the bottom up again. The rest will follow.” - Hipster: The Dead End of Western Civilization - Adbusters.

Most of the value of land has nothing to do with the landlord. A \$2,000,000 lot in Venice may be a teardown. The value of the land is created by the community, but almost all of it is “owned” by the fabled 1 percent. And they suck a lot of money out of it. By far the most valuable asset form in the U.S. is real estate, and the majority of that is the value of the land, as distinct from the value of the human-made buildings. It is simply bought when it was cheap, sold when it was dear, and waited for the check. “They” are the Finance, Insurance and Real Estate (FIRE) sector, and they capture forty percent of the United States’ profits, despite the complete passivity of their profit-accumulation method. There is no reason to let a small group of rich landlords extract its value, when what created the value are parks, subways, local restaurants and other things the landlords didn’t provide.

If this sounds like it’s a little too far outside the box, the solution is to think outside the box. Capitalism requires pretending that individuals’ private ownership of the land, minerals, gases and oils that nature provided is not a completely ludicrous idea.

On the day of the GQ event and the counter protest, we interviewed several participants. You can see the interviews here: <http://goo.gl/xopZwO>.



Above: Alette's hilarious Hipster Lemonade Stand, in GQ's face! Hipster lemonade: \$40; Biggest sale of the year: 50% off. Sold 4, all proceeds were donated to the Philippines. Stay Venice!

ventures on the way

by bETO

“I’ve laid around and played
around this old town to long.
summer all most gone
and winters moving on.” by Bill Monroe

I love Southern California but Venice, my lovely Venice: the last refuge of innocence, is home

A few months ago as the crow fly’s, the friends next door had their house sold out from over and under them. Family members/co-owners wanted to strike while the iron is hot. (RealState’ prices are up) and before it rusts away, the house was in shit shape.

Not knowing what they had the out of towners sold low (east of Lincoln by the park) for under 800,000. The RealState flippers put some chump change in and sold for over a mmmmillion dollars (still they were pissed they didn’t snatch more).

The new owner (pissed that the work on the house had been done so poorly) are planning to rent the house out weekly and monthly like a hotel 4 Mucho bucks. There goes the neighborhood.

But not in a Hells Angels, meth lab, frat boys kinda way. The RealState hoards have descended offering pie in the sky fore you die (that’s a lie) up to that million everyone lusts 4, or is it 5.

When I was asked “Why do you care?”

I tried not to wax poetic as I am wont to do.

Said “When we landed indigents (the homeless or soon 2be) see a family dethroned 2 have their home flipped for a fortune, I am sorry for them but I am sadly enraged for my beloved Venice. There goes my neighborhood.

As the richer and still richer buy up the housing where will the artist, poet, the musician go. When \$800.00 dollar rooms are no more even just dreamers will have to retreat Eastward and down.

Just in case I’m sounding like Chicken Little (“the sky is falling, the sky is falling, the sky is falling.”) My landlord roommate recently informed me that “Now that they are ’making offers that he can’t refuse’, I should start thinking about moving by February”.

There goes my home!
Not the first time.

New York’s East Village became Tribeca with table’s and chair’s in front of every coffee house, restaurant and bar (humbug).

In Gloucester Mass: torn down was an unbelievably lovely Old home 4 Fisherman, to make a parking lot, much of the fishing village that the tourists came to see has been torn down 2 make a spa

hotel where they could stay when they came 2 see the fishing village most of which is gone 2 make room for the place 2...

In Isla Vista they doubled the student enrollment leaving no place for we Outside Agitators 2 live.

On 2 Venice where anyone can become an artist if they have a million or so 2 buy an Artist loft. I was living 100 yards from The Venice Beach in rent controlled sober apartment building. The legendary Venice musician Slavin’ David held weekly AA meetings in his livin’ room.

Venice Suites turned it into a high priced hotel.

Now if you allow me a few more lines and a little more of your time tell you about a new project being proposed for Main street. A developer wants to take a whole block and put in multiple story’s of condos with lots of stores at street level. It will happen but I hope not soon. Slow down.

There goes our Venice.

“Sad to say I’m on my way
won’t be back for many a day.
My heart is down
my head is spinnin’ round”
may have to leave my lovely
Venice town.

(after) Harry Belafonte

PS The Chair of Venice planning told me "it's not the whole block. Just 2 stores, but 3 or 4 stories high. Almost nothing. Slow down. bETO”

Get to Know: Chuck's Briefs

By Greta Cobar

As the Beachhead is turning 45 this month, I spiraled back in time to the late 70s and early 80s, when the Beachhead was just becoming a teenager. And I got to meet someone of days past: an impeccably dressed mathematician, avid historian, reader, astronomer, jazz aficionado and former Beachhead Collective member: Chuck Bloomquist.

Chuck and his wife Terry welcomed me and Emily Winters into their beautiful Venice house that they have lived in since 1966. I wanted to know how life was on the Beachhead Collective back in the day, and they joyfully shared their colorful experiences with me.

"We had a lot of fun and we liked putting out the paper. It's a good thing to have a local paper," Chuck said. He was part of the Collective from '77 to '81, and wrote "Chuck's Briefs," a column about interesting news that came about.

"I remember they were always entertaining," Emily said.

"Ya, to me they were," chuckled Chuck.

I said that I want to hear something funny, and Chuck told me the story of some guy from Toronto who ran an ad in the Beachhead for a few months, but didn't pay. They sent him letters, but he did not respond. Chuck, who was also the Treasury for the Collective at the time, just so happened to go on a business trip to Toronto. "So I took the bus and knocked on his door – he was quite impressed. He didn't give me any money, but we stopped running his ad," Chuck said.

Terry spoke of Chuck's time on the Collective as "quite admirable." "He believed in it and had the dedication to do it week after week after week. It takes commitment," Terry said.

Another funny story that Chuck shared with me was when they printed in the Beachhead a couple of graphics from another alternative paper. A letter threatening a lawsuit against the Beachhead came in the mail, and "we were really scared," said Emily.

"Steve Clare called them – he is quite a talker – and I think he might have even gotten a donation from the guy," Chuck said.

"We had a lot of camaraderie in our group and made it more of a joy than a chore," Emily said about her time on the Collective.

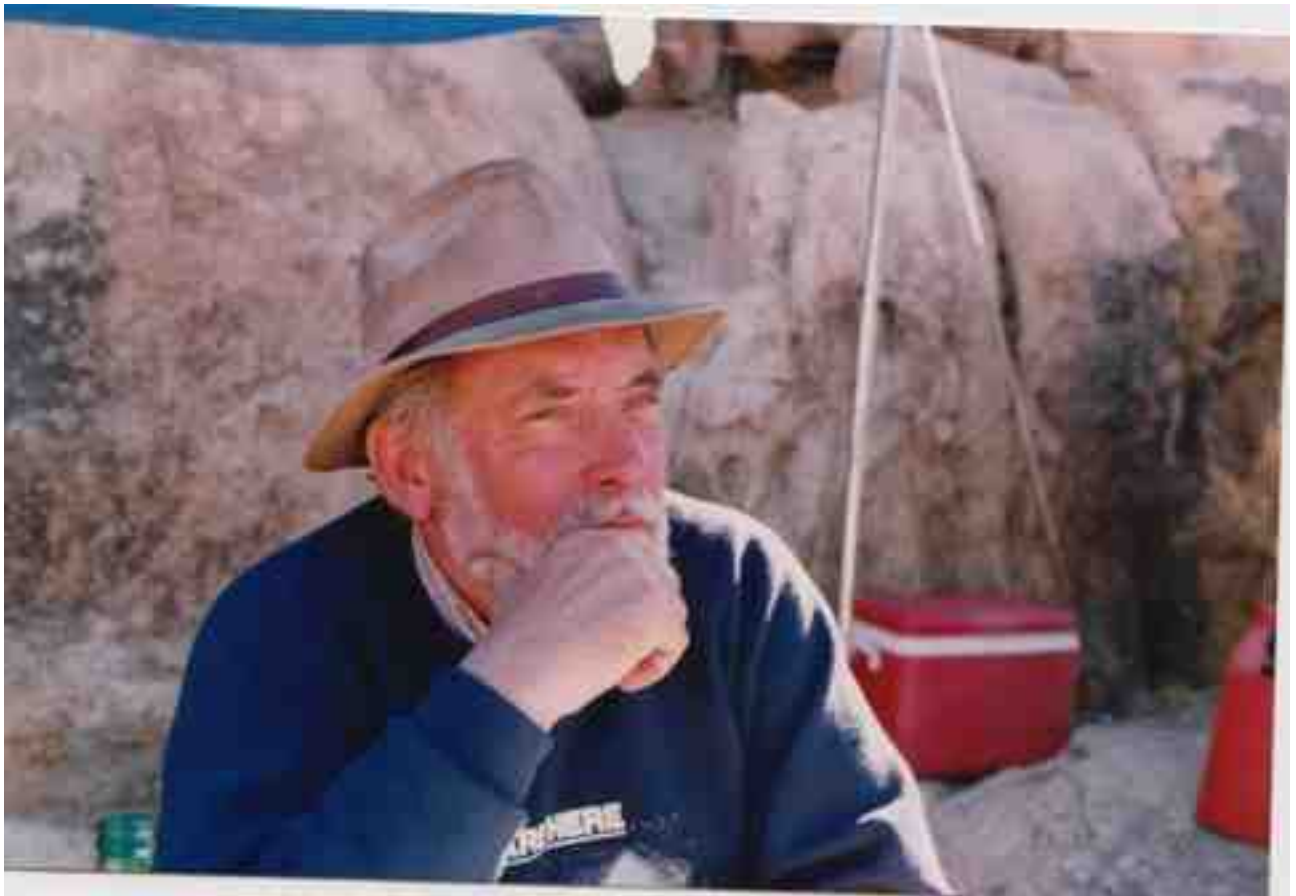
"We grew beyond the Beachhead," Chuck said.

One thing they did was make wine. And appropriately called it Free Venice Free Flow. "I took a bottle into work, and everyone said: 'that's good wine'," Chuck proudly exclaimed.

Another big adventure were the twice yearly camping trips that started in the late 70s and continued for the next thirty years. Chuck bought a big telescope and when his fellow Collective members found out he was going to Joshua Tree to look at the stars, they joined him. The Free Venice Astronomy Club was formed, and off they went to the desert, every spring and fall, during new moon, to see the stars.

"We went out as friends and our relationship grew besides the Beachhead. I don't know if that's true of other Collectives," Emily said.

When I asked Chuck what he thinks of the current Beachhead, he said: "Sometimes it's good, and sometimes it's not – it's really hard to put something



Above: Chuck Bloomquist camping in Joshua Tree, November 1991.

Photo: Emily Winters

good out all the time – the important thing is that it's put out." We're trying, that's for sure.

"I was 17, in the Marines, came to Venice and fell in love with it – wondered why people don't live here. As long as I've been here, there's always been the cry 'Venice is going to the dogs.' Every year it's a different place, but it's still Venice. It is still a unique community. Gentrification is taking over everywhere, but it's not all bad," according to Chuck. But when I asked him what he thinks about the development on Rose, which is just a block from his house, he said: "It's a pain in the ass."

Although Terry kept busy raising their seven children and working as a Registered Nurse, she managed to also find the time to be a Representative on the Venice Town Council for the Oakwood and Rose Area 4. Being a Mexican-American, she felt that her nationality should be represented on the Council.

"Everybody loves Chuck," Terry says after 52 years of marriage. "It's interesting living with him – he pursues many hobbies and is very knowledgeable," she said.

Chuck put his love of jazz at work for a good cause by founding, 21 years ago, Jazz at Palms Court, the annual fundraiser for the Venice Community Housing Corporation, which provides 195 units of affordable housing.

I found Chuck to be, as his wife described him: self-effacing. However, I was truly mesmerized by his charisma, wit and humor. Thank you, Chuck and Terry for inviting me into your home and allowing me a peak into your life together.



Nuclear Moratorium

A twice-spurned bill in the U.S. Congress is getting more favorable attention since the Three Mile Island incident. Authored by Hamilton Fish, Jr. (R-NY), the bill calls for a five-year study of nuclear energy during a moratorium on issuance of construction permits or operating licenses. Congress would review the entire nuclear power process – from mining of fissionable material through waste disposal or reprocessing. Only Congress could end the moratorium and would do so only if the safety of the process could be demonstrated to its satisfaction. Fish's bill now has 35 cosponsors including Rep. Vic Fazio (D-Calif.).

Prisons

Ed Salzman writing in the May issue of *California Journal* asks: "Remember how Ed Davis and other law-enforcement officials were screaming not long ago that the penal policies of the Brown Administration would produce an exodus of dangerous criminals from the state prisons into the cities of California? Remember how that appeal was translated into stiffening of the then-new determinate sentencing act even before it had a chance to go into effect?

The outcome: State penal institutions are now so full of felons that two prisoners are being housed in cells built for one.

Last year, some 8,750 convicted felons were sent to prison by the judges of California – about one out of three offenders. During the Reagan Administration the ratio was about one in ten.

The crisis came all right, but just the opposite of what was predicted. And those in government responsible for the unprecedented crackdown on criminals are Jerry Brown, the 1977-78 Legislature, the state's judges, and the community release board – the precise targets of those forecasting near-empty prisons in 1979.

Profits

A Citibank survey shows that the top 10 manufacturers made \$17.1 billion in profits in 1978, up 8 percent over 1977. The next ten had profits of \$6.8 billion, an increase of 19%. They are Shell Oil, Atlantic Richfield, Gulf, DuPont, Phillips Petroleum, ITT, Dow Chemical, Caterpillar, #M, and Proctor & Gamble. The top 20 contractors accounted for 37 percent of all profits. The 1463 other manufacturers surveyed by Citibank had profits of \$41.3 billion, an increase of 21% over 1977.

(This is a reprint from the June 1979 issue)



Above: Reprint from the X-tra December 1982 issue celebrating Chuck's 50th Birthday and his retirement from the Beachhead Collective. Headline: *Financial Wizard Retires – Bloomquist Body Survives Half Century.* Briefs graphic, used with *Chuck's Briefs* column, designed by Emily Winters.



And Further Out

(This is a re-print from the December 1983 Beachhead 15th Anniversary issue)

By Carol Fondiller

Write about the Free Venice Beachhead. Easy, I thought. Well, it hasn't been. Something inside me skitters toward the subject and then flits away.

"I felt as if everyone on the staff was fucking each other and I was the only one who wasn't getting fucked," said one ex-Collective member. And it is like that when one joins a small group of people who have been working together for a long time. I feel like that right now, having come back to the Beachhead after being away from it for a while. It's true! It's true!! It's always been true! I've always felt like that with one or two exceptions when I've been fucked and fucked over. And oh, the stories I could tell if I didn't want to live in this town any more! The little tensions and eruptions of ego! "Tell that paper that Werner Scharf is wrong," said Anna Haag. "I haven't changed. I still believe in what I believe. I wanted to make a living (at the Venice West) but he stopped me. He said I sold dope. Maybe I should have. I'd be as rich as he is."

Werner Scharf and Anna Haag. Werner and Anna have always been around in Venice. One time as Anna and I sat in Hinano's, she told me "I might love a man, but I love Venice more." My sentiments, exactly.

One night in 1968, we were at the Peace and Freedom office wondering how to get the news out about the Master Plan and Venice. As I remember it, every paper and media outlet either ignored us or they portrayed us as a band of hippies, or as if they listened to Curt Simon, Werner Sharf and other speculators, we were commies intent on destroying the American way of life.

Jane Gordon, myself, John Haag, Anna Haag, Jay Jamieson, and I think Rick Davidson and Phil Chamberlain were there. John Haag said, "Why don't we start a paper?" Anna Haag organized fund raisers and I helped. During the '60s and '70s, I learned how to witness police sweeps. The LAPD's crack team was called the Metro Squad. I found that some of the police thought the presence of a person with a pencil and paper more threatening than a person with a gun.

The Beachhead has always been a renters' paper. Always in search of a place with a large workspace. As rents rose, space grew more cramped. So, there's always been an air of suspense about the paper. Some people, looking at this gypsy paper, would say, "I can do better than that," and would proceed to show those uptight politicians how to do it right. For a while, their periodicals would show up beautifully printed and laid out on good stock, with color and lots of advertising. After a few months, despite the stylish print sock-'em-out layout, these papers would disappear and that ugly, flimsy rag whose pages turned yellow in the sun after one hour, would still be slogging along.

I set the record straight for Anna Haag, I might as well get something off my chest that's been bugging me for years. I know that this has nothing to do with the fifteenth anniversary of the Beachhead, but when has a lack of relevance ever stopped me? I'd been working on one collective for about five years when all of us decided we couldn't do it any more. We were getting rigid. We were taking longer and longer at paste-up. We couldn't stand the thought of taking the paper to the printer. So we wrote an editorial titled "Beachhead Up For Grabs" requesting that those who were interested come on over and take it on. And they did! Imagine our surprise when we read an article in the Los Angeles Times about alternative press on the

West Side, that stated that we broke up because of feminist issues. No way! At that point, the people working on the 'Head happened to be women. Most of us were and I believe are, feminists, but we put out a community newspaper. This funky, grubby paper chock-a-block with grumpy, idiosyncratic opinions, letters, poems, and reprints from other alternative presses, doesn't belong to a soul, and therefore, has a Soul bigger than all its pages put together. It belongs to no one, therefore to everyone. We have no editor, therefore, everyone's an editor. I feel that for all the



Above: Anna Haag, anti Vietnam War rally, Aug. 13, 1969. Photo: Bill Edelen

nitpicking, backbiting, snarling and insanity that goes on in the secret meeting place of the collective, that all the collectivites past and present feel they don't own the paper, they only take care of it. The community, and when I say "community," I mean those of us who don't have the ear of the media or the government. Those of us who are sleeping in cars or who are one step away from sleeping in our cars, which means anyone who makes less than \$30,000 a year and "owns" or rents their homes.

The problems that faced Venice in 1968, that brought the Beachhead into being, are still here.

As a matter of fact, the Beachhead speaks to everyone who doesn't own their own businesses, isn't white, is older than 40, younger than 21, isn't male, doesn't have adequate health insurance, is a single parent who is still living in Venice because "ambiance" hasn't been discovered on their street, and does not think life begins and ends with how many people you have the power of eviction over. The Beachhead is for people who believe that they have a right and an obligation to make decisions about their destiny in the community they choose to live in, even though they are thought of as expendable and undesirable by City Hall and speculators because they can't afford the outrageously inflated rents. They have chosen Venice as a place to live. Not a place to leave when things get rough and return to buy up the place when the Olympics are coming.

The Beachhead is YOURS. USE IT.
Che Wah Wah!

Anna Haag will stand trial on April 21 on a charge of providing live entertainment without a police permit at a private party to benefit BEACHHEAD. Anna is chairman of the FREE VENICE Art Festival Committee and a member of the Venice Health Council board of directors. Witnesses and supporters are urged to attend the trial at 8:30 am in Division 63, 1633 Purdue Ave., West L.A.

(This is a re-print from the April 1969 issue)

Beachhead -

(This is a re-print from the December 1983 Beachhead 15th Anniversary issue)

By Rick Davidson

"Write your feelings about the Beachhead," I was asked. "I've got mixed feelings," I said. They replied. "Write whatever you want," they replied.

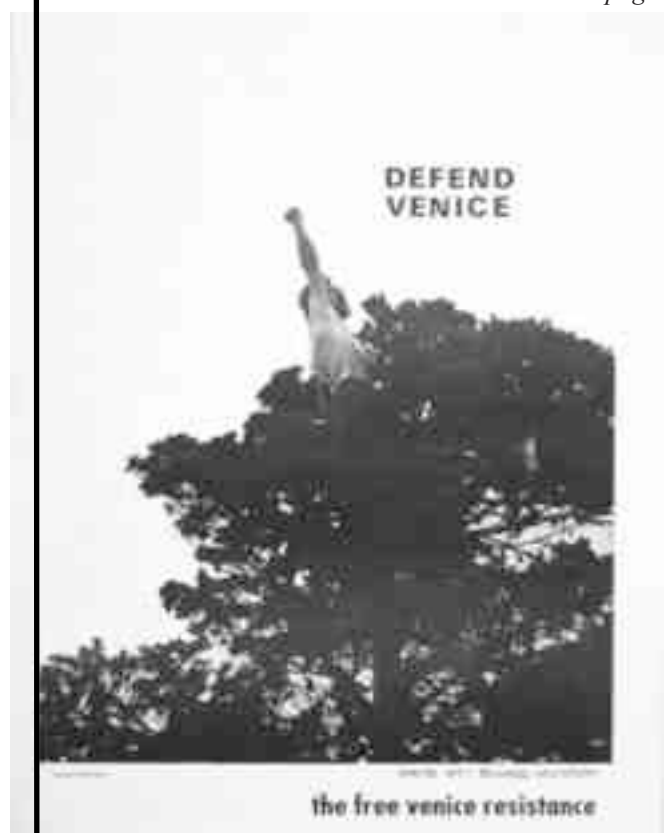
So how about a little history? The first issue of the paper was green; an appropriate color since when it came to putting out a community newspaper we were all as green as you could get. The "we" I'm talking about was a group of radicals who happened to be working together in the Peace & Freedom (PFP) - a new 3rd party dedicated to Peace in Vietnam and Freedom for minorities here at home. It also happened that we all lived in and loved Venice. We felt the best approach to building a new party was to build from the grassroots. Everyone knew that there had to be plenty of roots in Venice since there was so much grass around. (couldn't resist.)

Our most pressing need was to reach Venice residents. Sure we had meetings, I mean like every night, but you couldn't get all the forty thousand Venetians in the PFP office; we figured it would take about 2000 meetings to meet with all the forty thousand - we were just too impatient - there had to be a better way. Some wanted to put out a magazine; radio, one off-shore past the three mile limit; a film would be fun; but a newspaper was the obvious solution.

We conceived the paper as a poem. It had to be a political statement about our thoughts on Vietnam, racism, sexism, police brutality, land reform, etc., and since our politics included art, people's art, we wanted a paper that would express that too; and we wanted it to be free: rather than "sell" it to some of the people we would "give" it to all the people. It would also be a collective effort where decisions about the paper would be made by those doing the work - participation was open to anyone ... people's democracy in action.

We named it the Beachhead because we felt we were creating a beachhead in Venice from which to extend the struggle throughout LA, California, and the US of A... a struggle to transform America into a more humanistic society. Even though we were all in the Peace & Freedom Party, we did not all agree on how the transformation would have to take place.

— Continued on next page



Above: Poster design by Rick Davidson
Photo: Richard Mackson. Peace Press, 1975



Inside to Out

– Continued from page 6

Some of us felt it could only happen through socialism; some felt it would have to be an anarchistic society; and some felt, we found out the hard way, it should be a libertarian society ... later some of the libertarians suggested selling the beach to private enterprise because it would be more efficient and cut down on the costs to the public. NO, we were not of one mind. "Let a thousand flowers bloom" was expanded to include bushes, weeds, stones, you name it, it was growing in Venice. You can imagine, our editorial meetings were pure theater; theater of the absurd, more times than not.

The staff of the Beachhead has changed over the years. New people join as others leave - some leave Venice, others just left Beachhead work due to more pressing political work. Venice Peace & Freedom activists were running all over LA, California, and the US, including Hawaii.

There was always a struggle to balance and integrate the issues of the Vietnam War with the issues of Venice. We wore two hats: Peace & Freedom and Free Venice. TO most of us there was a direct connection between the policies waging the war in Vietnam and those trying to drive people out of Venice, but it was not always clear to everyone. More time was spent in political debate than the actual process of putting out the paper. When it happened simultaneously it really showed in the paste-up.

I continue to write and support the paper because I feel it is important to have a people's paper - the politics of the, what's its name ... the Evening Outrage, certainly aren't mine. And sometimes the politics of the Beachhead aren't either, but at least I feel I have some access (limited at times) to "our" Venice paper.

So I say thanks to those willing to spend their Saturdays writing, editing, pasting-up, printing and distributing, as well as trying to get funds to pay for it, but I do have a few criticisms I want to share:



(Of course, there is no page 28, since the issue only goes up to page 16)

L.A. police officers driving along Ocean Front Walk on June 8th were puzzled by the cheers of Venice beachgoers. Later they discovered that a FREE VENICE bumper strip had been attached to their car.

(This is a re-print from the June 1969 issue)

An Interview with John Haag

(This is a re-print from the November 2002 issue)

By Suzy Williams

John Haag – whose long career of fighting for the rights of Venetians has earned him the title of People's Doge of Venice.

He was the proprietor of the Venice West coffeehouse and led the fight for the right of poets to read their poetry at a time when it was illegal in Los Angeles without an entertainment license.

Haag was a founder, and a long-time leader, of the Venice Peace and Freedom Party and co-founder, along with Rick Davidson, of the Free Venice movement.

In addition, Haag "...served as founding president of the Venice Chapter of the ACLU, chairman of the Venice Forum, publicity chairman of the Venice/Santa Monica chapter of CORE, 'action chairman' of the Westside United Civil Rights Committee, rally chairman of the Congress of Unrepresented People (COUP), chairman of the International Days of Protest Committee, arrangements committee chairman of the Southern California Committee to End Police Malpractice..." (Venice West - The Beat Generation in Southern California, John Arthur Maynard, Rutgers University Press, 1991).

John Haag has been in the thick of every struggle to defend Venice for the past 40 years. He was instrumental in the successful opposition to a freeway through Venice, turning the canals into a yacht harbor, fighting police brutality in Oakwood and throughout Venice, upholding the rights of artists and poets to perform and sell their creations, and against commercial overdevelopment in Venice. He was interviewed by Beachhead Collectivist Suzy Williams in October.

Suzy Williams: Welcome Mr. John Haag! Say, how would you describe yourself?



Above: John Haag and Carol Fondiller

John Haag: Boy, I don't know whether I would try. I've been in retirement, in seclusion for so many years, but prior to that I would have described myself as a self-taught organizer. I started out not having the vaguest idea of where I was going. But, I found myself organizing a picket line down on the boardwalk protesting police harassment of the Venice West Coffeehouse.

SW: Right, I was just reading in Venice West, the book, and it said that you posted a sign on the door that said "NO MORE POETRY! The anti-intellectual yahoos at the LAPD want it to stop. Poets ARISE!"

JH: Well, I'm not very graceful...

SW: Au contraire! So that was your first organizing?

JH: Well, yes, except when I was working for CBS in New York City, I organized my work group to call for strike. I got a unanimous strike vote from that group of television news film technicians. The strike didn't have to take place-

– Continued on page 14



Above: Venice West Cafe, at 7 Dudley, 1960s

Photo: Charles Brittin

Abbot Kinney to be Christmas Host

By Laura Shepard Townsend

If you can spare a moment to contemplate Abbot Kinney's Venice when he hosted the annual and most splendid Christmas Parties at the Venice Dance Pavilion....The local papers described it this way: "Nowhere else in this country could be witnessed such a sight as was presented in the Venice Dance Pavilion. Had a page been torn from a book of fairy tales, enlarged and filled with animation, a similar picture may have been obtained, but no other way."

Venetians at that time, already knew that they were living in a very rare place as evidenced by the crowds who piled into Venice for each holiday and weekend to savor the resort and its offerings, but perhaps this was even more true during the Christmas holidays. Think of it ... starting in 1906, Abbot Kinney began his tradition of throwing what was to become the legendary Venice Christmas Party....this he continued until his death in 1920. Each year the tree got bigger, the attending children more numerous, and all were welcomed. To those in need, turkeys were given away for free, so that all Venetians could celebrate the holidays.

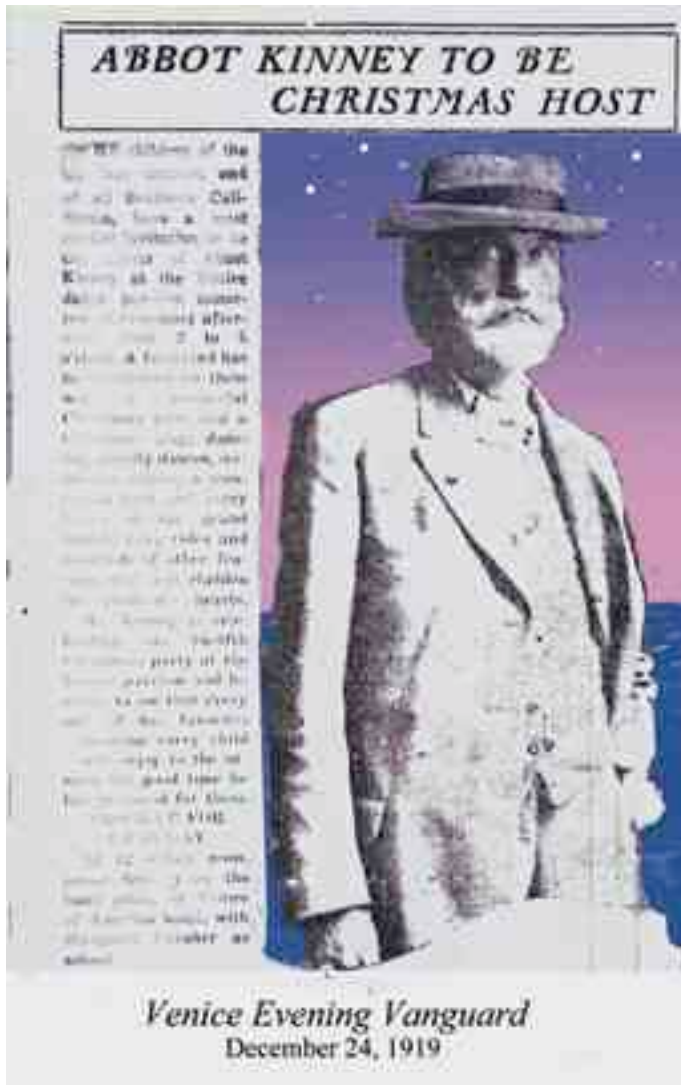
But of course, Abbot Kinney was no novice to generosity. From the start, his creation, Venice of America, a City of Canals, was built to not only enthrall the working man, but also the poet. Abbot Kinney would have it no other way, for though a rich man, he had once not been rich, and because of this, never viewed the poverty of a person as a crime. As Abbot Kinney explained his personal philosophy, "Why should a man want to die wealthy? It is far better that he build something that will be a pleasure and a benefit to mankind." So, simply, he did.

Abbot Kinney spent his millions of dollars to transform a swampland into an enchanted city, where the aroma of the sea blended with the earthy perfume of exotic flowerings. Parrot tribes had begun to thrive in his desert landscape of eucalyptus and palms, their raucous calls a syncopation to the tinkling of piano tunes and strums of gondoliers' mandolins. Venice was to be a Renaissance city that nurtured mankind's souls as well as their intellects.

Not one to stop there in his gifting, the Doge automatically gave \$50 to any child born in Venice, no matter what race, creed, color or religion. Abbot Kinney thought that just by being born in Venice justified a reward. Assuredly, there were fusses to be had, when an African-American child received the same amount as those seemingly more entitled.

It was in Venice, a city where there was "an air of constant excitement and the collection of gorgeous excesses", that annually thousands of kids and their parents would stand outside the door of the Venice Dance Pavilion, all dressed in gala holiday attire.

Each year, the festivities had become more and more fanciful until 1918, the wintering Barnes Circus brought elephants to the pier to entertain those waiting for the doors to the Pavilion to open. Just the sight of an elephant in those days was magical, but this year, the elephants handed bags of candy to each



child brave enough to receive it. The very chic Ship Café served free turkey dinners, never slighting those in need, and guaranteeing that all patrons would be finished in time for the main event of the day - Abbot Kinney's Christmas Party. When the doors of the Venice Dance Pavilion finally opened at two o'clock, thousands of kids crushed to be the first to get inside.

No matter what the year, the vast hall was converted to a veritable fairy land. To those entering, Arthur Reese, fanciful decorator of Venice, transformed the Pacific daylight to the darkness of night in snowy mountains. There, a small town gleamed warm light from each one of its windows. Icicles hung from the eaves, and snow blanketed the ground.

An impossibly tall tree stood in the middle of the town's square, decorated with colored lights and ornaments, candy canes, ribbons and pine cones. Garlands of popcorn circled the green boughs. Underneath, thousands of presents were piled, all wrapped in colored paper with satin bows. There were bags of penny candy, and stockings lumpy with goodies, topped by oranges. The cheer of red poinsettias was everywhere. From the stage, Lew Lewis' orchestra played holiday music.

The Barnes Circus brought ponies for pony rides to entertain the "kiddies" until it was time for the annual Christmas Play. To make room for the performance, the orchestra left the stage; the lights dimmed. Winged Angels in glitter costumes flew

above; a bright star appeared, and moved across the night sky to guide bejeweled Magi kings into the snowy village on real camels. It was a re-enactment of the birth of Jesus, the stable filled with live sheep and cows, which mooed and baaed throughout the production's entirety. All too soon, the play was over. As soon as the lights were turned back on, it was time for the annual Venice Christmas Parade.

While the presents were being gathered, children marched around the 20 foot Christmas tree, clad in paper hats, blowing horns as loudly as possible. Abbot Kinney always helped "Santa Claus" distribute bags of candy, gifts and stockings to every single child there until all the wrapped gifts were gone. Every child had equal rights; no favorites were made of anyone. For those Venetian children who were ill and could not attend the festivities, presents were put into reserve for them. No one was forgotten at Abbot Kinney's Christmas Party.

When the celebrants reluctantly emerged from the Dance Pavilion, it was night, the stars dancing twinkles in the black sky overhead. Three thunderous booms echoed, and fireworks began lighting up the sky. Flowers of light blasted into existence, blossomed, and then faded, only to be replaced by another flower. The spectacle ended with three booms of thunder. For the adults, this signified the beginning of the Yuletide Ball.

Christmas of 1919 was no different ... except the tree was 40 feet tall, the largest tree yet. After all the gifts: Russian dolls, Kewpie dolls, fairies, snowbirds, jack-in-the boxes, and poinsettias were distributed, Abbot Kinney rose to give his traditional Christmas greeting to Venice. It has been reported that there was a special gentleness in his eyes that year:

"I have the hope that each of you will be granted all the wishes that lay deep within your hearts. As for me, my wish this Christmas is that we discover the formula for eternal peace and the entire absence of discord in all matters. God bless each and every one of us."

No listener was aware that while he was making this poignant speech, Abbot Kinney knew he was dying. In fact, he did not make it to the next Christmas, dying on November 4th, 1920.

Venice mourned him by their exuberance of celebrations of the holiday season in 1920. Various periodicals wrote of Arthur Reese's remarkable strivings to ensure that Abbot Kinney would be proud of his Venice, and every light post, nook and cranny was ornamented. The people of Venice joined in, seemingly decorating their homes to the max, but they also kept their curtains open so their neighbors and passerbys could enjoy them as well as tribute to their beloved Doge.

The Venice Christmas party was such a beloved tradition, that Thornton Kinney, Abbot's son, announced

that the Christmas holiday of 1920 would be much the same as it always had been, under his father's care. However, on December 21st, a small stove caught fire, burning down not only the Venice Dance Pavilion, but the Venice pier and much of Windward Avenue close to the Pacific.

Reeling from the destruction, but determined to not let Abbot Kinney's tradition die, a holiday tree was hurriedly erected and decorated in front of the St. Mark's Hotel. For you see, the stockings had already been prepared, crammed full of goodies; presents were already wrapped, embellished with satin bows. Three thousand kids came and were not disappointed.

The presents were distributed, but it would never be the same without the presence of the kind and generous visionary human who had created Venice, the man who loved his city and its denizens so well.



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Beachheads Write on the Beachhead

Anthony Castillo

As the newest member of the Beachhead Collective (I've watched first-hand four issues come to life), I don't have any anecdotes, stories of power struggles or deep insights to share about the Collective and its workings. But what I can tell all the readers is that the Collective is made up of a small, talented, feisty group of hard working folks, committed to keeping this very important local, alternative, independent, progressive voice alive.

For me personally, it's knowing the importance of having as many independent progressive media outlets as possible that makes me feel good to be a part of this little giant of a newspaper. I've been a long time volunteer at KPFK 90.7 FM (the listener supported Pacifica radio station) here in LA. Since I've lived in Venice for now a decade, as well as work in Venice, I see the work of the Beachhead to be even more grassroots and vital. I was a fan of the paper long before I got involved with it.

If you're a fan of the Beachhead like I was/am and value its grassroots, progressive, community perspective, submit an article or a poem, become a sustainer, buy ad space, or help out with distribution. Get involved like I did. Because in the end, the Beachhead is your paper as much as it is that of the Collective that scrapes by to produce it each month. Do what you can to keep Venice weird. Happy 45th Birthday, Beachhead!

Ronald McKinley

This paper personifies Venice, the real in your face Venice. Being a part of the Beachhead Collective has broadened my world view. The Collective has anchored me and schooled me.

For forty-five years, since December 1968, the Beachhead is the oldest free newspaper still in circulation. The Beachhead has kept the leftist voice alive.

The Beachhead is always looking for new blood, young, and old, pissed off, loving, and enlightened. We need you, and your money, free to read not to print. Please donate your time, your ideas, your love and support to the Beachhead.

This paper, this community is ours to nurture. Represent how you want to live. More than words, deeds make us human. The Beachhead has backed the righteous, the just. This is why I love the Beachhead.

Come to Beyond Baroque December the first, music, poetry, I will read some of mine, drinks and fun.

Celebrate forty-five years of a paper that is a poem.

Greta Cobar

– Continued from page 1

eyes and ask me if I got a new Beachhead. I show them which one I got, and they usually say: "I already read that one."

It makes me happy when strangers say they read every issue. Often they say they read every article, cover to cover. I also get really excited when I visit people's houses and the Beachhead is laying around. And all the thank-yous that I get, and all the excitement that the Beachhead generates in Venice.

I am grateful for being given the opportunity to be part of the Beachhead, and I cherish the work that I do. That old ego thing sometimes gets out of the bag and puts a damper on the experience – but some things cannot be eliminated, only down-played.

So here's to a super brilliant and gorgeous 45th Anniversary, and to a whole lot more! Thank you, Venice, for supporting your local paper and for allowing me to be part of it.

CJ Gronner

– Continued from page 1

(and poems!) doesn't have an outlet with us too - you just have to submit your work and have it be interesting enough to print (It's a real bonus if you know the difference between you're and your/it's and its, and know how to spell-check. I personally also love it if you submit via email so I don't have to re-type your handwritten four-page, both sides story. But I still will - even if you voted for Bush. Ok, that's a maybe). I strongly feel that the more we know about the people and places of our community, the more we care. I want to tell the stories of the folks that live here, the cool things that they do, and the fun that we have ... and might also throw down the occasional "rant" if the need arises - and it does. As we hear a lot, never underestimate the power of the pen (or the keyboard, as it were).

The Collective staff is made up of a group of people that care deeply about Venice, and give of their own time, efforts, and selves freely. We discuss everything that goes in the paper, and there have been heated debates, but far more often, uproarious laughter, and even tears (that's usually me - usually because of Mary Getlein's poems). I didn't know any of the staff personally before I joined, our paths had never even crossed, strangely. I now consider every one of them true friends. It's an honor to work with and know them all - even during the lengthy busy work of proof-reading meetings.

It's hard work to keep a print newspaper going these days, for sure. But every time I'm in a coffee shop or somewhere, and see someone reading the paper, knowing what they're reading (every last comma of it), and getting to know the real Venice a little better, it makes it all more than worth it. I hope you readers feel the same way, and will contribute your own words and feelings whenever that Venice spirit moves you to. Thank you for reading for 45 years, and Happy Birthday to the Free Venice Beachhead!

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An Animal House For Our Zoo

By CJ Gronner

Animal House has been decking out Venetians for so long that owner, Ronny Kleyweg, can't remember exactly when he opened. "The '70s? The early 80s? I'm not that good at the math." Me neither, but I DO know that I've loved every time I've ever stepped through the door at 66 Windward Avenue, and it has been many.

Kleyweg's family came over on a boat from Holland in 1959, straight to Culver City (where his neighbor was Jeff Ho). A teenaged Kleyweg got a job working at Aardvark's Venice location, which he managed for 10 years. This stint taught him all the ropes of managing a vintage clothing business, and he opened his first shop of his own called A-Zoo ("Because Venice is a zoo") in the spot that is now Venice Originals. The current Animal House space used to be an ice cream manufacturing place, and when the owner tired of that, he sold it to Kleyweg, and Animal House has been there ever since ... over 30 years now.

Back in the 1970s, it was all about roller skating and skateboarding in Venice (see, SOME things never change!). Kleyweg and his friends, Daryl Hazen and Jeff Rosenberg, used to host big skate bashes, attended by all the celebrities of the day - Brooke Shields, Scott Baio, Patrick Swayze, etc... - and it was all about afros and spandex. Rosenberg had the idea to put the polyurethane wheels from skateboards on to roller skates, and then it all just blew up. Stores like Cheap Skates, and the United Skates of America kept everyone rolling, and Kleyweg even appeared in a movie called, *Skatetown USA* that showed off those disco times in Venice. (I'm urging him to screen it at the shop - stay tuned!)

Animal House has always been at the center of the action, a bedrock of the Windward neighborhood and must-stop year after year for loyal tourists that have found treasures there on their previous visits to Venice. Animal House is known world-wide for the remarkable selection of vintage pieces, rare and collectible, from concert tees to original Pucci dresses and Aloha shirts that sell for thousands of dollars. The biggest international customers are the Japanese, who will line up once a month, 40 deep sometimes, waiting for the doors to open, so eager are they to snap up the Americana items they love so much (especially vintage Levis). Kleyweg has already done a lot of the treasure hunting for you, so that when you go through the racks of things, they've already been edited to be just the very coolest pieces.

It's not just clothing either. Animal House is a great place to find vintage skateboards, books, bags, jewelry, art, ... all of it contributing to the laid back beach vibe felt inside the shop, and right outside the door just steps away from the sand, sun and show that is the Venice Boardwalk. The shop has expanded from vintage only to carrying new lines as well. Clark's Shoes, Havanas, Splendid, Diesel, Goorin Hats, Hanky Panky, Vans ... all compete in the contest of when was cooler, then or now? It's ALL cool, if you ask me.

That's pretty much Kleyweg's attitude about Venice too. It's ALL cool. When I asked him about how much things have been changing around town, he shrugged and said, "It's change, it's fine," in the easy-going way that has made him such a valued member of the neighborhood for so long. His two sons grew up coming to the store with Dad, and would stand on step-stools to help ring customers up. The merchants on Windward are friends. Kleyweg and his dear friend, Louie Ryan (Townhouse, Menotti's) and Danny Samakow and James Evans (James Beach, Danny's Deli, The Canal Club) are leading the charge for a Windward Revival, coming together and organizing FUN for the community. I saw Ryan and Kleyweg out on ladders hanging up Christmas lights along the arches the other day, out of their own pockets, out of their own time, because it's just more fun. Animal House has always thrown great parties, just for still more fun (the next one is December 13th, a holiday jam with live music from Tom Freund).

In talking about how much HAS changed, Kleyweg mentioned that often people are relieved when they visit Venice again, and find that Animal House is still here after all these years. "Money does talk, so it's important for people to remember what they love about Venice when deals are being made. Some people don't get it. WE care." Yes, we do.

With the rich and famous (Johnny Depp, Brian Setzer, Gwen Stefani, etc etc...) frequenting Venice,

the locals are still Kleyweg's favorite customers, creating friends and relationships that have stood the test of time. Gone now are his old favorite restaurants, the Meatless Mess Hall - a vegetarian spot on the Boardwalk that Kleyweg would take all his first dates to, and the Pelican's Catch - a seafood place where The Barnyard is now. He misses them, you can tell (especially the spinach nut burger at the Meatless Mess Hall). What remains is what made Kleyweg love it here in the first place, "The Beach vibe and the girls everywhere!" True enough, and as he added with a knowing smile, "I think it's going to stay special here for a long time."

It will if we can keep people like Kleyweg around. He still loves going to work every day. He loves the hunt for classic vintage finds. He loves how every day is different, and it's all ever-changing. He loves "hanging out with Louie," and seeing what's new around town. Most of all, he loves "the EXPERIENCE of Venice."

After showing me some excellent photos of himself in his own afro and spandex, and the various incarnations of the facade of the building, Kleyweg and I were standing in front of the shop in the sunshine, talking about the changes through the years. A friend of Kleyweg's passed by and said, "Whatever version of Animal House it is, it's always a landmark." There in the shadow of the Venice sign, standing next to one of the historic Windward columns, with people waving as they rode by on their bikes, that fact was never more true. Thank you, Animal House, for being there for Venice all these years ... and many more!



Photos: CJ Gronner



Venice Legend: Venice Street Legends

By Greta Cobar

It's always nice to interview people that I like, and it's an added bonus if it's a band whose music makes me get up and dance pretty much every time I hear them play.

I would like to introduce you to the Venice Street Legends, comprised of Gregg Cruz and Petr Hromadko. Having been playing together for the past eight years, mainly in Venice, Cruz and Petr are "the core" of the band, often joined by other musicians also.

"This is the best place to play – you got the sun, the tourists, you can play at what time you want. I don't have interest in going anywhere else," Petr said.

"I love playing guitar – I go into trances. And here we have the Venice Vortex – it channels the spirit of long-gone artists. Here in Venice, time slows down, ten years go by, and you don't even know it. And we don't age," Cruz told me. And I had to agree.

After escaping the communist Czech Republic and getting political asylum, Petr came out to Venice in the 80s and started playing with different people on the beach – whoever was available. He played keyboards for Inner Secrets, which was a regular participant in the anti-apartheid rallies and jam sessions on Brooks and a regular at Miami Spice, the club that used to be on Lincoln and Washington.

Cruz himself started playing blues guitar in the 80s, also here in Venice, with a gentleman from New Orleans. His resume includes gigs at Angelica Huston's wedding, the House of Blues, and touring in Tahiti.

It was on the fortunate day about eight years ago that Petr approached Cruz and said: "I'd like to play base for your kind of music." And so the Venice Street Legends came to be.

This year they were invited to platy at Ferarra Buskers, the biggest street festival in the world, which took place in Italy. "They loved our music – people were dancing and screaming in the streets," Cruz said.

Playing mostly Johnny Cash and other oldies blues/funk hits, the Venice Street Legends entertain the flowing crowd on Ocean Front Walk most sunny days, and play at the Venice Bistro every first friday of the month. I tend to find them throughout Venice at house parties, The Talking Stick, and festivals like the Venice Vintage Motorcycle Rally and the Venice Surf and Skate Festival.

"Music is very healing, and I like to play for Monae a lot," Petr said referring to their most dedicated fan, who is present at each and every one of their shows – Monae Hromadko, Petr's daughter, who suffers of cerebral palsy.

"Singing and playing the guitar is what makes me the happiest – it is my greatest joy," Cruz said.

Cruz and Petr often also play with Kathy Leonardo in another band, the Country Legends, and Mitch Montrose joins them on drums at the Venice



Above: Venice Street Legends

Photo: Greta Cobar

Bistro. But their fellow musicians have included many, spanning from a group of friends just popping into the bar to American Idol contestants.

The Beachhead is thrilled to have the Venice Street Legends play at our 45th Anniversary party, at Beyond Baroque on December 1.

"The Beachhead is the best newspaper on the planet. You can quote me on that," Petr said. "I don't

read any other paper. I like the Beachhead because you don't care what anyone things," he continued.

In the month of December the Venice Street Legends will also be playing at the Two-Wheeled toy drive, taking place December 5, 8pm, at Beyond Baroque. Bring a toy or \$20 for fun, food and drinks.

And I will see you all December 1!

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Wanda Coleman: 1946-2013

By Richard Modiano

Wanda Coleman was born and raised in Watts and was a lifelong Angeleno. Encouraged by her parents, Coleman began to write poetry when she was only five years old. She was published for the first time in a local newspaper when she was 13, but she made her writing bones in Venice. She was a denizen of Beyond Baroque's Wednesday Night Poetry Workshop from its beginnings in 1969, when the center was located on West Washington Blvd. (now known as Abbott Kinney Blvd.) Later, she gave readings at all of Beyond Baroque's venues with her last being held in October 2012. In July of that year, Coleman was the recipient of the Beyond Baroque George Drury Smith Award. The award is named after the founder of Beyond Baroque.

Wanda's poetry is characterized by its use of demotic speech and often drawn from her personal experiences. She wrote not just about the black experience in Los Angeles, but the whole configuration of Los Angeles, in terms of its politics and its social life. Wanda was a world-class poet. The range of her poetry and the voice she writes in is accessible to all sorts of people. Her work is both exuberantly performative and carefully crafted. Wanda also draws on the Blues and her work is marked by allusions to jazz and the lingo used by jazz performers re-imagined to highlight daily life. In fact, Wanda released a blues album, with both spoken word and music in 1990. She amassed an impressive collection of work over the course of her career, and she was nominated for the National Book Award in 2001 for *Mercurochrome* and was finalist for Poet Laureate of California for two years in 2005 and 2012, though she never won. Wanda was a writer for *Days of Our Lives* in the 1970s, and was the first African American to win an Emmy for writing in 1976. She was also a rigorous and adroit critic, writing a controversial review of Maya Angelou's *A Song Flung Up to Heaven*. This resulted in losing work, and some censoring, an experience she wrote about in *The Nation* in 2001.

Wanda fell ill in August 2012, shortly after she was honored with Amelie Frank at Beyond Baroque's awards dinner the previous July. She was suffering from a respiratory ailment that became progressively worse, causing her to cancel several readings. But she rallied for a previously scheduled reading in October 2012. This was her last reading at Beyond Baroque and her last visit to Venice. That same month in 2011,



she chose Beyond Baroque for the launch of her collection *The World Falls Away* and was joined by her husband, poet Austin Straus, and old friends Bill Mohr, Cecelia Wooloch, Pam Ward, and David Zasloff.

By spring of this year, Wanda seemed on the road to recovery. I had the honor of being on a panel with her, Bill Mohr and Julia Stein at UCLA during National Poetry Month. She lost weight but was in good spirits. During my last face to face conversation with her she held both my hands as we talked about a Wanda Coleman Day at Beyond Baroque for National Poetry Month 2014, in what we thought would be a complete recovery and return to the reading circuit. But by summer of this year, she was ill again. The week before she died, her husband told me that Wanda was to be hospitalized for surgery to remove a blood clot, but she died before the surgery took place. My final memory of Wanda is of looking into her luminous eyes and holding her hands in the Young Research Library. I felt her strength, her passion and her generosity. A memorial will be held for Wanda at the Church in Ocean Park on Sunday, January 19, 2014 at 2:00 PM.

About God & Things

By Wanda Coleman

1
i want to have your child
cuz upon losing you
i'll have more than memory
more than ache
more than greatness
i'll have laughter

i do not mean to be fatalistic
know the limits put on you black man
me, black woman

when you are killed or imprisoned
desert or separate from me
i'll continue
fill the void of your absence with
love between me and ours

gods

2
you love me
in your eyes. don't say it loud
pain
america will never let you

3
you're home. it's a surprise
you've made it thru another day
one more night in your arms
to fuck

merge our bodies merge
give
wealth/freedom
congress cannot legislate away

4
eyes wide as suns inquire
where's daddy?

he's gone away

i love my daddy

i smile
he's a good man

eyes wide as suns
burn my hand with a kiss
go outside to play in the streets

god
what god is about

Bedtime Story

By Wanda Coleman

bed calls. i sit in the dark in the living room
trying to ignore them

in the morning, especially Sunday mornings
it will not let me up. you must sleep
longer, it says

facing south
the bed makes me lay heavenward on my back
while i prefer a westerly fetal position
facing the wall

the bed sucks me sideways into it when i
sit down on it to put on my shoes. this
persistence on its part forces me to dress in
the bathroom where things are less subversive

the bed lumps up in anger springs popping out to
scratch my dusky thighs

my little office sits in the alcove adjacent to
the bed. it makes strange little sighs
which distract me from my work
sadistically i pull back the covers
put my typewriter on the sheet and turn it on

the bed complains that i'm difficult duty
its slats are collapsing. it bitches when i
blanket it with books and papers. it tells me
it's made for blood and bone

lately spiders ants and roaches
have invaded it searching for food

OBSERVATIONS ON THE COLOR BLACK

(Griffith's Observatory July, 1994)
For Wanda Coleman
By Philomene Long

In the shining
Black wound
Of night
Jupiter
Scarred wind
Blind red eye
And the comet
Flower of what
Broken sun?
Its long-drawn trail
Of frozen petals
Across the
Blazing black
This intimacy
Seed of ice
Spinning womb
Of winds
What immense Black Lover?



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For Luna Archer, 3 Months Old

We are all mothers and fathers
even those who have never had a child -
you can pick up a baby
and all these strange wonderful hormones are released
turning us to butter
melting us down to a crouched creature
holding and protecting this little human
with incredibly tiny fingers and toes
your instinct is to care for her or him
our freshest visitor to this planet
living in a cave or a magnificent palace
the instinct is the same:
to protect
we are all mothers and fathers of this planet
it's up to us if it survives
we've been here so long
but it's just a drop in the ocean
of earth's time -
we need to protect our earth
we are so busy killing each other off
we forget to notice how the earth is responding
to our inhabitation
we need to protect, cherish and be in awe of
all the new seedlings reaching out
the vines will grow and grow and cover us up
the earth go back to the earth
and cover all the ugly cement we left
all the styrofoam cartons and trash we left,
left to spin soundlessly in the ocean's gyres -
we are all mothers and fathers
we need our children to clean up our mess,
before it's too late

- Mary Getlein

Do You See?

By Emily Wood

I got the groceries
Without collapsing
Nobody asking
No please
No thank you
But I don't need that
I just need you
To look up
And see me
And maybe smile

Do you see me?

You face away in the night
Your hot back against mine
And I know
That you see
The backs of your eyelids
Visions of truth
We call dreams
Am I with you?
When we wake
And I ask
You say
"I don't dream"

Do you see?

Your footsteps
Rattle my bed
Voices
Rattle my head
From nowhere
To noplace
This whole world
But no space
For me to be
Children hurried along
When they stop to See
Directed
Toward a window scene
Twisted, turned around
To See the man
Who lives for free

Do YOU see me?

I ask
Cold teeth chattering
In the hot air
Steaming
Beaming light from my eyes
Hunting for a reflection
Another section
Of me
To lock eyes with
And maybe smile

Do YOU see?

How many times can I ask?

How many times can I plead?

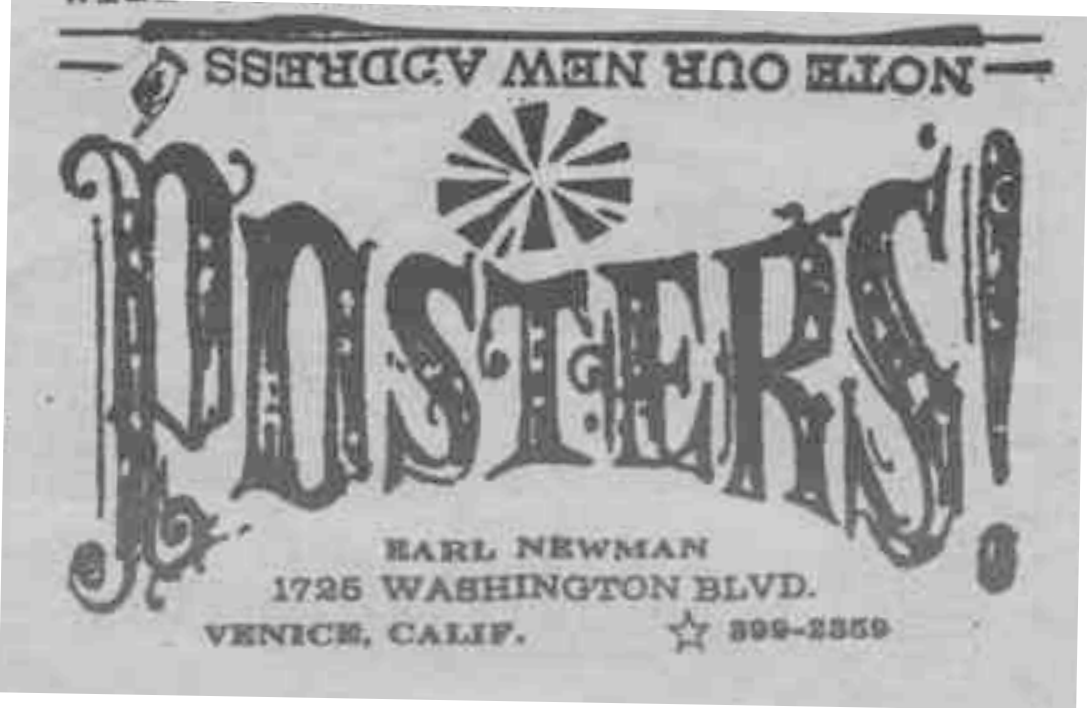
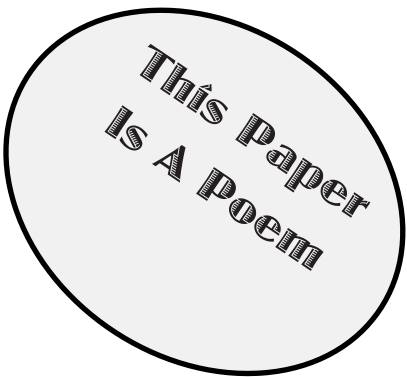
Maybe I'll stop asking you
And start asking me

Notes From Venice

Exaltations from the
Edge
Where the end
Meets a beginning
Where the stairway
Is sown with the
Stratosphere
Where the sun
Circles the halo
Where the skull
Sprouts a candle
And the sand sparks
Where the mind
Is a well
Within
Welcome!
Have a drink
This water
Is woven
With the
Universal
Where the breath
Is brewed
With incense
And the air
Is Pacific
Where the peaks
Point to the infinite
And the Ocean hums
An endless instrument
Where the Doors
Divide like oranges
The seeds
In the center
Where the darkness
Dreams
And the morning
Wakes
Where the bells
Are sunflowers
Blooming the brain
Where the confused
Are mentally poetic
And the drunkards
Are profound
Where the tides
Unfold like testaments
And the clouds
Are origami:
Where the moment
Is the message
And the insular
Moon illuminates
The passages
Where the waves
Tune
And the streams
Strum

Venice.

By Michael McCoon
New Richmond, Ohio



Earl Newman Posters Ad, published in the December 1, 1968 first issue of the Beachhead. Many thanks to Earl for supporting us for the past 45 years! See back page for more info.

13:47 Monday, November 25th, 2013, Adullam If I am not mistaken, forty-five Long years have passed since you were born alive. By my best calculation, way back when, Spoke truth to reason with your printed Zen. And I can but imagine such a stir That had been generated. Rising star, Aspiring; a beacon in the night, To guide around the rocks with beam of light. A kindness to poor sailors from afar. Your message, always ready to confer. Contributors, the women and the men. Pray tell, where are they now? For it has been Some five and forty years, and yet you thrive. If I am not mistaken, still alive Long live the Free Venice Beachhead, love, Roger Houston

Atomic Child

By Humberto Gómez Sequeira-HuGóS

I dedicate this poem to my daughter,
the poetess Roxanna Gómez Sequeira.

Fruit of the lotus child
descendant of the germs
disseminated by a luminous red nova.

Beautiful child
with heart made of blood
and oxygenated desire.

Sensational child
with hands that grew searching
for her spatial magnitudes.

Logical child
with head dilated by dreams
ignited by magic neurons.

Atomic child
with eyes of sparks
emitted by an electron cloud.

To live and die in capitalism...

By Roxanna Gómez Sequeira

For Winston Flores and his father Mr. Cirilo Flores, RIP

You work so hard
To sustain your family
Only to be crushed
By the weight of poverty

The frailty of your body
Gave way to deformity
Extinguishing your energy

It's crippling effects
Took your last breath
A cost is attached
One to be burdened
By your nearest of kin

You left this society
One of debt and slavery
The cruelty of economic depravity
The insanity
Of a capitalist reality

The hardship of a family
And
The monetary possibilities
For a funerary ceremony

Laboring
To live
And
Having no where
To die
This is the capitalist life...

— Continued from page 7:

An Interview with John Haag

SW: You mean you got the raise before you had to...
JH: Yes, right.

SW: But that was heartening for you and encouraging.
JH: It was startling, because when I started out working, I was relatively anti-union.

SW: You were! Why?
JH: I think it was the background I came from. My father was a machinist, which is really a craft, I don't know if that had anything to do with his bias, but he was virulently anti-union and I just picked it up.

SW: Was he a Republican?
JH: Oh, yes he was.

SW: Like James Brown is a Republican. Certain specialists are just conservative.
JH: Yes. So I had to join the union when I got this job, and I became friends with the shop steward.

SW: Do you think the roots of your political journey began with that friend?
JH: I don't know about that, because it wasn't out of an ideology, there was an unfairness on the part of the company. I think it happened just before I came to California. I spent a year in Italy and I spent quite a bit of time with a Communist official. It just so happened that he liked to take midnight walks. And I'm pretty much of a night person. So somehow, he lived in the same neighborhood where I was living with an Italian family. I think these midnight conversations with Marco gave me some theory, you know, economics and politics.

SW: I see; now, according to this book, Venice West, you became a Communist.
JH: That book is full of expletive deleted!

SW: So it's not true!
JH: Not only was I never a Communist, but I had many battles with the Communists. I worked with them in the anti-war movement, because my attitude was to work with anybody who agrees with me! I don't know why that guy printed that or where he got that. I worked as long as I could with them but then I broke, and I suffered the usual consequences, of being called a turncoat, and a Trotskyite. It was over the opposition to the war. For a time I was the Los Angeles Chairman of the W.E.B. Dubois Club, oh yes and The Evening Outlook did call that organization "Communist inspired".

SW: Who was W.E.B. Dubois? I forgot.
JH: He was a founder of the NAACP, born in the 1860's, from Great Barrington, Massachusetts, a scholar, Black historian, a great orator who called for change, and a Socialist most of his life and towards the end finally he became a Communist and moved to Africa.

SW: He was a leader and a gatherer of people.
JH: Yes, definitely.

SW: You were involved in civil rights, I see you were involved with C.O.R.E. What did that stand for?
JH: Congress of Racial Equality.

SW: Ah, but let's get back to Venice West, the coffeehouse. (At 7 Dudley, where Sponto's is now) When did you take ownership of it?
JH: Well, it was 1962 to 1966. I have to say that the coffeehouse was an enormous education to me, I learned so much from so many, you know 20 different varieties of Socialist!

SW: Even more than at Harvard!
JH: At Harvard I did get an education I wouldn't normally have had. I majored in English, and took several languages, and courses in Art: sculpture, drawing...

SW: And Poetry? Because you are such a sublime poet.
JH: No! I never took a literature course, because I didn't want to be told how to write.

SW: You rebel!
JH: One of my instructors made this assertion that you could never write a political sonnet in the English language. Two of the poems I sent to The Beachhead recently were political sonnets.

SW: So tell me, were you hassled a lot at Venice West?
JH: The LAPD tried a couple times to employ an ordinance having to do with entertainment, but the judge ruled that what was happening there was not entertainment in terms of the ordinance. Nobody was getting paid! The kind of harassment that happened was not usually violent, but certain people were asked day after day for their I.D; trying to wear you down. Sometimes the cops took you to the county line and told you " Don't come back ". Of course, this wasn't a legal procedure. I learned the law very quickly.

SW: It's so funny, we romanticize the sixties, especially in Venice, thinking of it as a freer time, but in fact life was harder to live then.
JH: I haven't been hassled about my long hair in twenty years!

SW: So what all went on in Venice West, besides poetry?
JH: I think that the coffeehouse was one of the only places on earth where you were encouraged to talk about anything, and talk turned political in 1964, especially. I'm pretty sure someone brought in a leaflet about a protest of the Vietnam War, so there we were at the Veteran's Cemetery on Sawtelle, about thirty of us. I don't think there was any hostility, I don't think anybody knew what we were talking about, no one knew about the war. I was living—I should say working at the coffeehouse where people were talking politics right and left - pardon the expression - and eventually there was a lot of talk that we ought to have a radical political party. I had a little stint where I ran for Assembly and I got a taste of the Democratic Party and not the worst part of it, either. I mean, the Santa Monica club was fairly liberal, you would think, until you get to talking to them! I mean the idea that you had a candidate that ran a coffeehouse! Scandal!

So then there came a time to get real about starting a party. I checked into the election code and found a way that seemed possible by registering sixty-seven thousand people, that would qualify you for the ballot – as opposed to the impossible petition that required six HUNDRED seventy thousand signatures! Then, what should we call the party? There were meetings of radicals of north and south California, and after much noisy discussion, we came up with the name, "Peace and Freedom Party."And so, with a dozen colleagues, we started registering people on June 23, 1967.

SW: John, can you tell me - how did the Beachhead begin?
JH: There you have one of my favorite stories. The first election that the Peace and Freedom Party was involved in was 1968. We had these three candidates running in Venice. And I had the fixation that we were not going to have this campaign disappear in November. We knew we were not going to get our candidates elected. So what were we doing with all this time and effort? There wasn't enough time to discuss it before the election, but when it was over, the campaign committee got together and started discussing it: "How about a community radio?" "How about this or that?" The decision was finally made to have a community newspaper. We went from campaign committee to Beachhead collective. And we had the first issue out in December of 1968.

SW: Was it well received right off the bat?
JH: Yes.

SW: Isn't that funny? It is today, too. Some things are just so consistent, ya know?
JH: And month by month people looked for it. Over a period of time, we got a whole lot of people distributing it on their own block or maybe two or three blocks. And they did it happily. At its peak we had 5,000 papers delivered door to door. The other thing was the structure of the Beachhead. I don't need to tell you, there's no editor, there's no publisher, there's no boss. It's truly a collective, each person having equal voice and vote and nobody getting paid for anything. And that went on for twenty-plus years. And I think that's some kind of a miracle.

SW: I know, it is astounding.
JH: I will say this: I feel I'm mostly responsible for that structure. Because by then, I had really thought about how to set things up and how to keep them going.

SW: Say, what does "Beachhead" mean, anyway?
JH: It's a military term describing the initial phase of an invasion. But of course, I had in mind that we were all beach heads. I mean, this paper is a poem and you get all sorts of ambiguity.

SW: Tell us about some of the characters who used to write for the Beachhead.
JH: There were people who got on the Beachhead who became writers. Jane Gordon comes to mind. She was part of the original collective and bit by bit she started writing about things and later she helped organize the feminist caucus in the Peace & Freedom Party. But I think the dynamic was that people joined the Beachhead and developed this talent, not that they necessarily had the talent and came to the Beachhead! Some did, like Arnie Springer, who's no amateur. He was a professor at Long Beach, but he was a mainstay of the Beachhead for years. Now, I didn't stay with the Beachhead very long.

SW: You didn't?
JH: No, and it wasn't that I didn't like the Beachhead, I love the Beachhead, but I had to go on to other things. I had the State Peace and Freedom Party to worry about, I had elections to worry about, I had getting on the ballot in other states to worry about. I had to do tours.

SW: But didn't you send back articles? Didn't you write that great article on John Muir? Oh, that might have been Rick Davidson.
JH: Oh, most likely.

SW: Was he like your brother?
JH: (Chuckles) Rick was as close to being a brother as anybody. We had a long history, we started out together in the coffeehouse, doing subversive things. We didn't always agree, but then brothers don't. We were always on the same side, but we had different ideas of strategies and tactics.

SW: You were a non-violent guy from the get-go, no?
JH: One of the things I am most proud and grateful for is that all the demonstrations I was responsible for, there was not a single arrest or injury. I don't know how many I'm talking about...I'm talking 1966 to 1970. On the beach, at the Federal Building, on the boardwalk, on Main St. (when the U.S. invaded Cambodia). They all related to my commitment to non-violence. It involved a dedication to avoiding arrest. And communicating with police. Many of whom I worked with were dead-set against dealing directly with the police, but I didn't look at it that way. The way to avoid trouble was to tell them what we were going to do and stick to it.

SW: You treated the cops like human beings.
JH: To the extent that I could bear it, yes. I remember we had a demonstration at the Rand Corp. in Santa Monica, and I saw a Police Lieutenant striding towards me. I felt worried. But it turned out that he was just reminding me to take some flyers I had forgotten with me!

SW: So how do you feel about Venice Cityhood?
JH: No question that I'm in favor of that. On principal, if nothing else. Venice was basically blackmailed into joining Los Angeles.

SW: Blackmailed! What do you mean?
JH: Well, they said they would cut our water off.

SW: That's mean!
JH: But you see, they gobbled up most of the county that way. No wonder the valley wants to secede!

SW: Well, John this has been a great start, a wonderful insight into you, and a pleasure talking with a man that so many of my friends speak of with hushed, respectful tones.
JH: Thank you.

Venice as Mecca or Jerusalem

By John Haag

I sit here on the sand,
a holy place on sacred land,
remembering the tribes and clans
that gathered here, took counsel
and dispersed; foreseeing all
the ones that will arrive,
drink our blessed water and survive,
only to disperse in turn
to spread the word
amongst a disbelieving world.

Take heart, my heart,
for here is never lost
anything forever (but the soul
at times sent wandering
along some other plane).

It too returns home safely
found like a cache of nuts
the squirrel lays by against
a cold day in hell, forgets,
then comes upon in time
of need.
Rejoice!
The promised land is here;
The time is near at hand.

This Paper
Is A Poem

Community Events – day by day

By Greta Cobar

Sunday, December 1

• 6:30pm – **Beachhead’s 45th Birthday Celebration** - music, poetry, drinks and fun. Beyond Baroque. Free.

Monday, December 2

• 7:30pm – **max10 Performance Laboratory** - uncurated event, each piece can be no longer than 10 minutes, 10 performers per night. Reception after the show. If you want to perform write to: max10@electriclodge.org. Electric Lodge, 1416 Electric Ave. \$10.

Thursday, December 5

• 8pm – Venice Vintage Motorcycle Club presents the **Two-Wheeled Toy Drive**. Free food and drinks. Music by the Venice Street Legends. Bring a toy or \$20 donation.

Friday, December 6

• 6pm – **Venice Sign Holiday Lighting and Windward Holiday Crawl**. Photos with Santa, music, art, holiday shopping, drink and food specials. Performance by Venice Symphony Orchestra. Windward and Pacific.
• 7-10pm – **First Fridays on Abbot Kinney**. Food trucks, out-of-town crowd, holiday shopping.
• 7:15-9:15 – **Angi Neff & Friends** - original folk and indie songs with acoustic. Talking Stick.
• 8pm – **Mason’s Noise Parlour** - quarterly presentation of L.A.’s best young singers and writers - produced by local singer-songwriter MASON SUMMIT, who hand-picks the performers. Beyond Baroque. Admission \$10; Students/seniors/children \$6; Members free.

Saturday, December 7

• 6am-11am – **Santa Monica-Venice Christmas Run** - 10k, 5k, kids fun run. Register at christmasrun.com
• 9am-3pm – **Venice Library Used Book Sale**. Abbot Kinney Library.
• 10am-2pm – **Great Venice Toy Drive and Holiday Festival** - toy giveaway, photos with Santa, moon bounce, arts and crafts and snow. Oakwood Rec Ctr.
• 11am-4pm – **ARTBLOCK Pop-Up Shop**: Unique, handmade holiday gifts. Sunset and 4th.
• 2-6pm – **The 2nd annual Venice Pub Crawl**. Santas, superheroes, villains and vixens, drink specials, contents and karaoke. Windward Circle. Buy your wristband at venicepubcrawl.com
• 5-7pm – **12th Annual Twilight Bridge Lighting and Holiday Party**. Sherman Canal footbridge.
• 6-9pm – **Main Street Holiday Party**: Tree-lighting event and Candlelight Walk. **Jingle Bell Rockers** performing throughout. Main St., S.M.
• 7-11pm – **A Taste of Liverpool & more** - presented by Music Magique. Talking Stick.

Sunday, December 8

• 11am-5pm – **Snow fun for the kids**. Santa making an appearance 11-2. The Brig, 1515 A.K. Blvd.
• 11am-4pm – **ARTBLOCK Pop-Up Shop**: Unique, handmade holiday gifts. Sunset and 4th.
• 7pm – **Coastlines Magazine Retrospective** - MEL WEISBURD, the only surviving founding editor of Coastlines, gives a first hand account of writers, artists and events, many of whom were greatly influenced by the poet teacher Tom McGrath. Coastlines published the first literary accounts of an LSD experience, the legendary Ginsberg Full Monty, debates with Lawrence Lipton and anti-nuclear war and peace marches. A slide show of contributors and art work will be presented. Beyond Baroque. Admission \$10; Students/seniors/children \$6; Members free.

Monday, December 9

• 6-10pm – **PXL THIS 23** toy camera film festival. With Gerry Fialka. Unurban, 3301 Pico Blvd., SM.

Wednesday, December 11

• 7-10pm – **Suzy Williams** sings and dances. Truly amazing. Danny’s Deli, 23 Windward. No cover.

Thursday, December 12

• 7-10pm – **Mikal Sandoval’s Speakeasy** - early jazz, dancing. Talking Stick. \$10.

Saturday, December 14

• 7am-1pm – 20th Annual **Venice Surf-A-Thon**, Venice Breakwater
• 5:55-8pm – **Marina Del Rey 51st Boat Parade and fireworks**. Burton Chase Park, 13650 Mindanao Way, Marina del Rey.
6-10pm – **Grassroots Acoustica** - Great artists, busking for great charitable causes. Talking Stick.
• 8pm – **A Celebration of Jewish Stories and Humor** - compiled and directed by Robert Shampain. Pacific Resident Theater, 703 Venice Boulevard. \$20

Sunday, December 15

• 3pm – **A Celebration of Jewish Stories and Humor** - compiled and directed by Robert Shampain. Pacific Resident Theater, 703 Venice Boulevard. \$20
• 4:30pm – **32nd Venice Canals Holiday Boat Parade** - this year’s theme is “It’s a Wonderful Life”. Parade begins at Eastern and Sherman Canals.
• 5pm – **Poets Birthday Celebration: Kenneth Patchen & Kenneth Rexroth**. Hosted by Carlye Archibeque. Beyond Baroque. Admission \$10; Students/seniors/children \$6; Members free.
• 7-10pm – **Blues Time with Tom Gramlich and Mystic Miles**. Talking Stick.

Tuesday, December 17

• 7pm – **Venice Neighborhood Council Board Meeting** - Westminster School auditorium. Free and open to the public.
• 7:30-10pm – **Folk-Rock ‘n’ Blues Nite with Stefani Valdez and Steve Moos**. Talking Stick.

Thursday, December 19

• 7-10pm – **Venice Art Crawl** - Theme is: December Lights and Venice murals. Art and treats throughout Venice. Performance by Venice Symphony Orchestra at 1410 Main St. Pick up a map at Windward and Speedway.
• 7:30pm – **Metaphor as Memory** – Gerry Fialka probes McLuhan and Chris Marker. Beyond Baroque. Free

Friday, December 20

• 8pm – **La Poesia Festival Migracion del Canto** - A performance and publication party. Anthology published by Caza de Poesia. Bring original poetry, prose and songs in Spanish to share. Beyond Baroque. Admission \$10; Students/seniors/children \$6; Members free.

Sunday, December 22

• 7pm – **7 Dudley Cinema: Gospel Music Films** - the evening traces the evolution of Gospel music, the integration of blues and swing into Gospel, the emergence of Soul, and the blending of Rap and Hip Hop elements. Hosted by Gerry Fialka. Beyond Baroque. Free.
• 7-10pm – **Solage and Jim’s Comedy Show**. Talking Stick.



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Location Guide

- Abbot Kinney Public Library, 501 S. Venice Blvd. 310-821-1769, fovl.org
- Beyond Baroque, 681 Venice Blvd. 310-822-3006, www.beyondbaroque.org
- Electric Lodge, 1416 Electric Ave. 310-306-1854, electriclodge.org
- Oakwood Recreation Center, 767 California
- SPARC - Social and Public Art Resource Center, 685 Venice Blvd. sparcemurals.org
- Talking Stick Coffee Lounge, 1411c Lincoln Blvd. 310-450-6052. talkingstick.net
- Vera Davis Center, 610 California Ave. 310-305-1865. veradaviscenter.info
- Westminster Elementary School, 1010 Abbot Kinney Blvd. 310-606-2015

Free Venice Beachhead • December 2013 • 15

Ongoing Events

COMPUTERS

- 2:30pm, Mon-Fri. **Student/Homework Zone**. Computers, iPads, homework resources and a trained computer aide to assist students grade 4-12. **Free Printing**. Abbot Kinney Public Library.
- Tues/Weds 8:30-6pm, Thurs/Friday 8:30-5pm. **Free Computer Use**. Vera Davis Center.

FOOD

- 12-3pm December 3, 10, 17 and 24: **Free salad**. Vera Davis Center.
- 10am Tuesdays, 12:30pm Thursdays, 1pm Fridays. **Free Food Distribution**. Vera Davis Center.
- **Sign up for Food Stamps (EBT Cards)**. Vera Davis Center. Call for date and time. 310-305-1865.
- 4pm Saturdays through Wednesdays. **Free Vegetarian Food**. OFW & Dudley.
- 1:30pm, Thursdays. **Free Vegetarian Food**. OFW & Sunset.

KIDS

- 11:30am-noon Wednesdays. **Toddler Storytime**. Abbot Kinney Public Library. Free.
- 11am every Saturday in December – **The Pied Piper of Hamelin**. Pacific Resident Theater, 703 Venice Blvd. \$20; children 14 and under \$10.

FILMS

- 7-10pm, fourth Sundays. **7 Dudley Cinema**. Dialogue on films, art culture and politics. Beyond Baroque. Free.
- 3:00pm, Fridays. Abbot Kinney Library.
- 3:00pm, Tuesdays, Kids Movie. Abbot Kinney Library.

MUSIC

- 8pm-12am, Sunday and Monday nights. **Hal’s Bar and Grill** features live jazz. No cover.
- 6-10pm, First Fridays. **Venice Street Legends**. Venice Bistro, OFW & Dudley. No Cover.
- 8-10pm Saturdays – **Brad Kay’s Regressive Jazz** (ragtime, early jazz. Townhouse, 52 Windward. No cover.
- 11pm Wednesdays – Red Light Wednesdays: **Burlesque Dancing**. Townhouse. No cover.
- 8-10pm Fridays – **Live Jazz**. Townhouse. No cover.

MISCELLANEOUS

- 9-4pm, 2nd Saturdays: **Venice High School Flea Market**. Antiques, crafts, collectibles, toys, jewelry, clothes. 13000 Venice Blvd.
- 7-11am, Fridays: **Venice Farmers Market**. Fruits, vegetables, flowers and coffee. **Free Electronic Recycling Solutions Truck** always present. 500 N. Venice Blvd.
- 4:15pm, Thursdays – **Chess Club**. Ages 6-15. All levels welcome. Abbot Kinney Library.
- 11:30am-2:30pm, Sundays, weather permitting. **The Venice Oceanarium** (a museum without walls). Venice Pier. Free.
- 8:30am, 2nd Fridays. **Bus Token Distribution**. First 40 people in line will receive a free bus token. Vera Davis Center.
- 7-10pm, 3rd Wednesdays. **MOM: Meditations On Media**. Beyond Baroque. Free.
- 10:15am, every Wednesday – **Free Yoga**. Abbot Kinney Library.
- 8am-9am Mondays - **Community Yoga**. Electric Lodge. Free.
- 5-6pm Sundays - **Sahaja Meditation**. Electric Lodge. Free.

POETRY

- 2pm, 2nd Sundays. **Soap Box Open Mic**. Bring your words, sign up begins at 1:45pm, six-minute limit. Beyond Baroque. Free.

POLITICAL AWARENESS

- 7:30pm, Mondays - **Occupy Venice General Assembly Meetings**. Beyond Baroque

OPEN MIC

- 8:30-11:00pm Mondays – **Moxie Monday Open Mic**. Talking Stick. Free.
- 6:30pm Wednesdays – **Open Mic**. Talking Stick. Free.
- 8pm First Tuesdays - **Word Salad**. Talking Stick. \$5 donation.
- 5:30pm, Sundays. **Open Mic Night**. Twentieth Church of Christ, Scientist. 132 Brooks Ave. Free.

Get Your Local Event Listed

Email your time, date and a brief description to Calendar@venicebeachhead.org

