



Masthead above by: Eric Ahlberg

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Above: Poetry reading at Venice West, 1960

Artist: Robert Huffstutter

THE BEAT GOES ON

By Marty Liboff

YOU ARE ALL UNDER ARREST!! John Haag started our beloved Beachhead newspaper in 1968. He had run the legendary Venice West Cafe at 7 Dudley Ave. in Venice from 1962 to 1966 with his wonderful wife Anna. Believe it or not, you could be arrested back then just for reading a poem with a 4 letter word or displaying a painting with a naked woman! No matter that our museums are full of naked Roman statues and Ruben's paintings of large nude women – back then the moral police could harass and arrest you for this!

In the mid 1950s the North Beach in San Francisco and Greenwich Village in New York had like a crazy new movement called the Beats. Man, like people would like write poetry and sometimes beat like cool bongo drums. Jazz music, beards, drugs, sandals, and sex were all part of the beatnik counter-culture. They believed that each of us has his/her inner artist that can come out in painting, poetry, dance, music, ceramics, photography, writing and sculpture. They invented their own hip lingo. Dig it man, it's far out! Many had come from affluent families and had good educations but had rebelled against the excess consumerism that Americans were sold into after WWII and the Korean wars. They thought of themselves as cool hip cats and everyone else wearing suits and slaving for the almighty dollar were squares.

The Venice West Cafe Espresso was started in 1957 by the bearded and man like crazy Beat poet Stuart Perkoff. Another older writer and poet, Lawrence Lipton had moved to Venice and had successful poetry readings at his house and other homes around Venice. Alan Ginsberg, Anais Nin and other famous poets of the day had come there. Lawrence had become the shaman of the new Venice West Beats and a mentor to the younger Stuart. Lawrence thought maybe he could start a Beat movement in our like cool town by the sea. Venice was a nice, but run down mostly Jewish neighborhood. The rents were cheap and a few artists already lived in the many turn of the century cottages and cheap hotels, some that were built by our town's founder Abbot Kinney. Stuart Perkoff saw how successful Lawrence Lipton's Beat poetry sessions were and thought a coffee shop with poetry and maybe some jazz and paintings by new Beat artists would be fun. He borrowed some “bread” otherwise known as a few bucks from his parents and rented the little store at 7 Dudley Ave. and turned it into a coffee shop. Little did he know such a seemingly innocent venture would cause a moral fire storm!

Stuart proclaimed, “Men & women of Venice, lovers, children, holy citizens of the heavenly city, all around you there is the sweet air of love!” The cafe opened and became a family hangout for the artists of Venice and Perkoff's kids and pals. It had bare brick walls that were decorated with new art and poetic sayings. A mixed lot of old tables and chairs filled the room. There was an old fridge and stove behind a counter and you felt you were sitting in Stuart's living room or his pad. There was a chess set and usually a conga drum. Splattered on one wall was the saying, “Art is love is God”. There were only a couple dozen or so regular Beats around Venice and how could they drink enough coffee and sandwiches to keep it going? Many of the Venice regulars like had no bread or were broke anyway. Right away the city came down on these beatniks

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Left: OFW houses slated for demolition

Photo by: Pegarty Long

HISTORICAL VENICE OFW HOMES DESTINED TO BE AXED

By Pegarty Long

Two of Venice's oldest houses are about to make way for a new mixed-use project which will include a fine dining glass-enclosed restaurant and two apartments on the building's second level.

The now boarded-up homes are located at 811-815 Ocean Front Walk (OFW). They were built circa 1905 and represent two of the few remaining original houses on Venice's OFW. The owners of the property, Vera and Gary Sutter, have submitted an application to the city for a "new mixed-use project consisting of two residential units and a ground floor restaurant with full alcohol bar." There will be subterranean parking with mechanical lifts and tandem parking with parking attendant.

The owners say that the project fully complies with the Venice Coastal Zone Specific Plan.

A community meeting, hosted by the architect, John Reed, was held on January 19 to present the plans and renderings for the project.

Long-time residents from the surrounding area attended. A large percentage of the attendees were from Park

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

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Dear Mr. Liboff,

I just read with interest and not a little bit of nostalgia your article about William Boyd.

I recently spent the afternoon with family wondering up and down Abbot Kinney Blvd. I was amazed at the changes 60 years have wrought. You see I lived at 1306 Washington Blvd. from about 1952 to 1956.

The cute one-bedroom house of course is long gone, replaced with a boring 2-story structure built up against the south wall of the Peacock Bar. The bar was there when I was a child and that south wall served as a fence of sorts for our front yard, the house being set on the back of the lot. I lived there with my younger sister, older brother and both parents. We were renting the home from my mother's aunt. My sister was in love with horses from a very young age and had quite a collection of horse statuettes by the time she was three. Hoppyland of course was a necessary excursion for my horse-loving sister and my parents accommodated her and I got to tag along. One of my earliest memories is riding the ponies and later the "big" horses on the trails. The workers in the big corral even accommodated Chris by letting her ride standing up on one of the big horses. What a sight!

I have a cute story relating to the pony rides. My husband grew up on Green Avenue near Alla Road about two miles East of Hoppyland. He is eight years older than me so he was about 14 when he got a job working at Hoppyland, lifting the small children up onto the ponies. Of course the space in between was essentially farmland or vacant. He sometimes was allowed to ride a pony home and back again the next day to work. Of course we like to believe that I was one of the little girls he assisted on the ponies. He likes to joke that he gave me a dime and told me to call him when I grew up!

I remember seeing the rides in the park, but no memory of actually riding on any of them. The horses, for us, were the best part. I really enjoyed reading your well-researched article. I read the entire story to my husband. So thank you for sharing your memories and providing us a walk down memory lane.

*Yours truly,
Ann Giroux-Ochoa*

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Tina Catalina Corcoran

Wants Sacred Space/Tiny Place

"... a hot bath, a warm bed, and time..."

FOR A SPELL

Call 707-273-8792

Dear Von Paul and Courtney,

By law artists need to be notified 90 days before their mural is painted over or otherwise changed or destroyed.

Considered the grand-daddy of the current mural movement, Kent Twitchell did sue the city of L.A. when his 3-story high Ed Ruscha (1987) mural disappeared in 2006. He got a million dollars.

More recently, Victor Henderson's 15¢ wash and 5¢ dry mural at Brooks and Pacific, which has been a part of Venice since 1969 and was made famous when the Doors took a picture in front of it, was re-painted by Clinton Bopp at the instructions of Ralph Ziman, the owner of the building. Henderson is currently in a lawsuit against Ziman.

All artists can and should sue when their work is illegally destroyed.

— The Beachhead

Right: Von Paul's mural at 405 Rose Ave. that was recently painted over

Venice Is
It's still
My Favorite Place
In the world!
I still
Can see your face
In the world!
It's still my Favorite Place,
I still can see your face,
It's still my favorite Place
In the world!

Love,
Tina Catalina Corcoran

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Thanks for your generous donations!

Hoagies

Occupy Venice

Irene Bajasarowycz

Pete Savino

Carol Beck

Hi Beachhead,

My name is Courtney. I'm an artist. Mostly I can be seen creating black and white doodles, sitting on milk crates on the sidewalk of Abbot Kinney Blvd. My doodling teacher, life partner, and veteran Venice artist, Von Paul, is generally seen creating art right next to me. Von Paul has been selling his art on Abbot Kinney on and off for over 5 years now and has become somewhat of a spectacle as such.

Von Paul and I have just completed a mural on Venice and Strong's Drive. And earlier last year, we painted one together on Santa Monica Blvd. in Hollywood. My intention in informing you of this is clarifying that Von Paul is in fact a prolific, professional, beloved artist. He's been supporting himself entirely as an artist for the past 5 and a half years and has managed to produce and sell/gift over 4,000 drawings in this time. In 2013, Von painted a joyously powerful, colorful mandala creation with brush. People around the world complimented him and thanked him for this work. The mural was on a purple building on Wicked hair salon, a popular part of Rose Ave. (405 Rose Ave), and thus enjoyed by many eyes.

Von Paul's mural was photographed and viewed by thousands of people. If you hashtag Von Paul's name, #VonPaul, on instagram you can see many pictures of his work taken by fans, including this mural. It uplifted people from all parts and gave them something to meditate on in the middle of Rose Ave.

Recently, this mural was painted over by another artist.

Because Von Paul has never used a computer in his life, and composing an email would be difficult, I adduce and quote these words from Von Paul on his behalf:

"Recently a mural I created was painted over by another artist in Venice. He signed his spray-painted, stenciled atrocity "Beautifyearth.org". When I approached the owner of the Wicked Hair Salon about my mural being painted over, WITHOUT MY NOTICE, and she told me she was the building owner and she could do whatever she wanted. I was devastated."

Venice murals are an important part of the community, and Von Paul's was destroyed without cause or care. The artist who painted over Von's mural, can be identified as "Wise Two" and has a website <http://www.artofwisetwo.com/>. He's done some small projects on Abbot Kinney.

I sincerely hope this message reaches you in good health and high spirits,

Courtney Lynne



Tree Massacre at Oxford Lagoon

By Charlotte Purein

On December 31, 2014, 650 trees were sawed to the ground at the Oxford Lagoon.

The 94-space city parking lot that borders the Oxford Lagoon is slated as the building site for 114 units (none of them affordable), and 3600 sq. ft. of ground floor retail. The style is 'Bernie Madoff meets Jersey Shore', with a water (lagoon) view. The location of the tree massacre is to become a cement, rectangle sidewalk that will enclose the lagoon and serve as the defacto promenade to 'Madoff Shores'. Its construction is slated to be financed by taxpayer money.

Marina del Rey's state-certified land use plan requires tree-for-tree replacement. The 80-foot eucalyptus trees were planted in 1963 to attract wildlife, and they did: 51 bird species. They also grew to become L.A. county's 6th largest monarch roosting site. Monarchs are much needed pollinators and may soon be on the endangered species list. The current plan is to replace those 52-year-old eucalyptus trees with 12-foot native plants that will provide less shade and much less wildlife habitat.

There is an inverse correlation between crime rate and number of trees in a community: the more trees, the less crime (<http://bit.ly/1C8ljSj>). The crime rate in MDR (242.1 per 10,000 persons, <http://bit.ly/1uZ7Ht3>) is currently higher than the crime rate in Venice (206.2 per 10,000 persons, <http://bit.ly/1uZ7Ht3>). Yet Councilperson Mike Bonin just wrote a public letter to Charlie Beck, LAPD Chief, asking for an increase of the police force in Venice. A more appropriate measure would have been to plant more trees (and cut none) in the Marina in order to address the higher-than-Venice crime rate in that area.

This rare wildlife gift was razed over the winter holidays without informing the public. Instead, the politicians and developers took advantage of the fact that the public was preoccupied and not paying attention. Some politicians must have gotten some serious extra holiday bonuses from some rich developers who plan on getting a whole lot richer as a result of this new development.

Even more trees in the Marina are 'on the chopping block' to make way for massive projects. Trees do a lot more than keep us happy. They are also nature's high-tech air scrubbers. They filter the air. With all the new traffic that will be generated by the proposed colossal projects in MDR, we're going to need a lot more trees to soak up particulates. Many more than the amount that were hacked down 'at the midnight hour'.

Contact those responsible for the destruction to let them know how unhappy you are about the loss of trees and wildlife. Ask them to implement Marina del Rey's land use plan by immediately replacing all of the 52-year-old eucalyptus trees with identical full-grown, 80-foot tall eucalyptus trees. LA county supervisors are 'limited' to three four-year terms. That's a possible 12 years of terror. Let's vote out all that reduce our quality of life as soon as possible.



Photo: Charlotte Purein

Contact:
Tom Ford: TFord@santamonibabay.org, 310-216-9827
Don Knabe: 213-974-4444 (Steve Napolitano, staff: 310-222-3015)
Sheila Kuehl: 213-974-3333 (ask to speak to Maria Chong-Castillo - her constituents live nearby in Venice)
Mark Ridley-Thomas: 213-974-2222 (ask to speak to Karly Katona - his constituents live directly across the street)
Hilda Solis: 213-974-4111
Mike Antonovich: 213-974-5555

Sewer Project Broken

By John Davis

City Councilperson Mike Bonin and County Supervisor Don Knabe should be greatly concerned about the proposed Sewer Main Project in Venice and Marina del Rey. Both the City and County ignored the federal interest. Both concealed known public safety issues that remain unaddressed.

The City authorized an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) in 2007. The last public comment was in 2006. It is over seven years old and is out of date. It does not reflect changed circumstances or even very important issues known at the time. The California Environmental Quality Act requires complete and current information. This EIR is like spoiled milk left on the shelf.

First, it failed to address important matters of federal jurisdiction. The U.S. Rivers and Harbors Act of 1947 established the lower reach of Ballona Creek as a federal project.

The U.S. Rivers and Harbors Act of 1954 established a second federal project, Marina del Rey. However, the EIR engaged in an omission error, it completely failed to identify the federal interest.

From a public safety standpoint, the City and County failed to fully address the issue of methane hazard. The gas is explosive in small concentrations and can accumulate in buildings, garages, and elevator shafts, reaching explosive levels. Hydrogen Sulfide, also a gas, is deadly and occurs throughout the Venice and Playa del Rey oil fields.

Sempra Energy also stores vast quantities of methane deep below the surface at the project site under high pressures. Leaks to the surface have occurred. Natural pockets of methane exist underground too, and at pressure.

Along Admiralty and Via Marina in MDR there are wildcat oil and gas pipelines that never received approval of the County Board of Supervisors, according to a response to a request for public records. The lines leaked in 2004, alerting the public to their existence when a Hazmat team swarmed the area.

The unapproved lines are old and rusty and have leaked. Oil and gas from the subsurface can contaminate such lines with dangerous materials, including low level radioactive waste associated with such works.

Given the lines are neither approved nor decommissioned or abandoned, they remain a clear threat to the environment and public safety. Tunneling under them could undermine the already fragile state and cause unknown environmental consequences such as toxic releases to the atmosphere, soil, and groundwater. Tunneling may also cause soil and groundwater

that has already been contaminated by the wildcat lines to spread to other areas.

Yet, the old 2006 EIR omits these issues, at the expense of public safety, to rush the project.

From a procedural aspect, the City is cheating.

The State Open Meetings Act requires a public body to approve permits like Coastal Development Permits (CDP)s. A public hearing is held in conformance with the Brown Act, public comment is taken on the final staff report, and then the public body takes action to either approve or disapprove. The public may sue at this point.

Here, the City has bent the rules for years. The City Engineer purported to hold a hearing on the CDP in January. The public was presented with a “*Draft Staff Report*”.

The City Department of Public Works claims that a “*Final Staff Report*” will be produced by the Department, but the public may not comment.

The City Engineer is not a public body authorized under the Brown Act to make a decision to issue or not issue a Coastal Development Permit. The City cannot disallow the people from commenting on a final staff report as with all other public hearings, but that is what has been going on for decades. City law does not trump State law in this respect.

Here the City has cheated the public for years. Mike Bonin could help could fix this, if he wanted to. This CDP should not be handled like this. The City Council should consider it, and as a public body, step up and be held accountable.

As soon as the City Engineer “*approves*” its own CDP, the public can appeal it to the California Coastal Commission. If anyone wishes to make an appeal, it should contact the City Engineer and keep track of the approval date. The appeal period is short, but may force a public hearing before the Coastal Commission.



The County has also applied for a CDP for its portion of the project.

The Regional Planning Commission, a public body, under the Brown Act, will hold a public hearing. Interested persons should contact Regional Planning to attend the hearing to comment verbally or in writing. That permit can also be appealed to the Coastal Commission if the County Department of Regional Planning approves it.

By comparing the unlawful City Engineer CDP process to the legitimate role of the County Regional Planning Commission it is obvious the City has cheated the public again. Only a public body can approve a CDP, not a single person. It is clear the City has disregarded the Brown Act for years.

This City claims this large sewer line would be bored remotely with little impact to the surface. However, there are dangers underground the planners have overtly omitted from the planning process.

Tunneling through old oil and gas fields next to wildcat lines that are leaky and dangerous, under a highly pressurized antiqued gas storage facility is a gamble at best. But it can be done, if proper planning is in place.

Every effort must be made to protect the public from environmental hazards and to ensure a superior project that benefits the public without placing it in harm’s way.

The Politics of Painting Pagodas

By Krista Schwimmer

There are many features on Ocean Front Walk that define its essence. Among the most noteworthy are the pagodas or pergolas, as they were first called. Clustered together like mini palm trees, these free structures welcome all against the elements. As a result, a variety of people congregate in and around them: tourists, locals, and unhoused community members.

Like many parts of Venice, these pagodas have appeared in Hollywood films. Two films from Jeffrey Stanton's research are "Falcon and the Snowman," starring Sean Penn and Timothy Hutton; and "Down and Out in Beverly Hills," starring Nick Nolte, Bette Midler, and Richard Dreyfuss. In the latter movie, Nolte's character is a bum. He and his homeless pals meet at the pagoda at Dudley Street and sing, "We are the bums! We are the homeless!" More recently, these same pagodas were the stars in the monthly Venice Neighborhood Council (VNC) meeting held Tuesday, January 20.

On that night, Melissa Diner, Chair of the Ocean Front Walk (OFW) Committee, presented a "Pagoda Beautification" motion. The motion recommended that VNC support the "formation of an 'Adopt-A-Pagoda' project and adjacent benches project." Approved local artists would take a pagoda, its mini wall, bench, and trashcan, and redo it. One of the eight pagodas on Sunset Avenue, however, would be a permanent installation dedicated to Alicia Gruppioni.

What followed next was a sometimes volatile, often confusing, and even comical discussion generated by series of motions to amend and to reconsider what was just amended. In total, it took two new motions to amend and one to reconsider a previous amendment to bring the original motion to a vote.

Who would have thought innocent pagodas could pull such a punch?

It all began when Amanda Seward stood up to make a public comment. Amanda Seward is a well-known attorney who helped the Lincoln Place tenants successfully fight Aimco. She is also an avid lover of modern architect.

She began by saying that she was the person who had contacted Melissa that day about the historical nature of the pagodas. This statement directly contradicted one made earlier by Shelly Gomez, a member of the OFW Committee. After first calling the pagodas ugly, Shelly stated that she had checked with the historic society and found out they were not historic. Gomez finished her comment by saying that color and sound are vibration. "So, those pagodas, if they are colorful, it's going to raise the vibration of that place. It will deter people from camping out."

Amanda said the pagodas were designed by Gregory Ain, a very important, modern architect, particularly in the Los Angeles area. "They are not designated," Seward continued, "but there are a lot of things in LA that are historic that are not yet designated." In Ain's case, however, there are other buildings he designed that are designated. One example Seward brought up is the Mar Vista Tract, consisting of 52 parcels designed by Ain. According to the Office of Historic Resources' website, these one-story, single family homes built in 1948, were "shaped by the Fair Housing Administration's desire to promote home ownership among modest-income families." The Mar Vista Tract was also the city's first post World War II Historic Preservation Overlay Zone.

As to the current color of the pagodas, according to Seward, this was carefully considered by the architect. "All I'm saying is that before you paint the pagodas, you need to look at that a little more carefully ... that should be considered in the design aspect and I don't think it was, because no one knew."

The Venice Heritage Museum's (VHM) website also has a brief history of the pagodas. According to them, the original ones were hand-tooled and elegant, with benches to sit under. They were believed to have been created as part of the Work Projects Administration Program that existed from 1935-1943. The older, Jewish population who frequented Ocean Front Walk in the days of yore really enjoyed them. In 2000, they were refurbished, with the benches being removed, but the overall pagoda structure maintained.

Melissa Diner, who had made the original motion, was agreeable to Seward's suggestions. And so, a first amendment was formed that stated the project follow the guidelines of the secretary of interior design on rehabilitation of historic buildings. This amendment passed readily 15-0-3.

But the pagodas were only just getting started! Or maybe it was the revenge of the pigeons and other seafaring birds, discouraged from landing on the pagodas by reflectors added in 2014.

The next motion to amend was made by Community Officer Mike Bravo. He suggested that rather than have one, permanent memorial pagoda to Alicia Gruppioni, that one pagoda be a revolving memorial pagoda that would include other Venice residents. This second amendment carried as well with a vote of 8-4-5.

Death often comes in threes. Evidently, VNC amendments do, too.

The third, and final motion, however, to amend was the most confusing and controversial motion. Vice President Mark Salzberg asked if the board members could remove Bravo's amendment, on the grounds that Board members did not get a chance to talk about whether there should be any dedication at all. According to the parliamentary, a motion could be made by someone on the prevailing side to reconsider the amendment only.

At this point, the public was roused somewhat; but President Mike Newhouse, aka the Dictator of Time, even more so. He wrongly chastised two women in the back for speaking when they were not. Then, he went on to threaten to adjourn the whole meeting, saying, "Folks are not up here to waste their time." Newhouse next said there was a lot of time wasting coming from both sides. Considering that public comment was still only one minute, and that there was very little that night, one wonders just how the public was wasting the Board's time. Telepathically?

To succeed, this third motion to reconsider a previous amendment needed a 2/3rds vote. It failed, 11-5-2, by one vote.

Finally, the entire motion to "Adopt-A-Pagoda" along with two amendments – one to follow guidelines on historical, restoration and the other to create a single, revolving, memorial pagoda – won easily by 14-2-2.

At first thought, one wonders why the idea of beautifying the pagodas on Ocean Front Walk created such heated discussion. They are, however, a perfect mirror of the battle going on here in Venice, a battle that skirts around the real issues of homelessness troubling our community.

In her public comment, Shelly Gomez spoke about how Salt Lake City, Utah is solving their homelessness by housing them. Later, however, she contradicted herself, saying that by painting the pagodas a bright color, it would deter people from camping



Above: OFW historic pagodas with comfortable benches
Below: Cement slabs that replaced the benches in 2000



there. Since she is part of the OFW committee who came up with the beautification project, what then is the real reason for wanting to paint the pagodas? To repel those deemed unfit for Ocean Front Walk?

In a strange twist of irony, the architect who designed these structures, Gregory Ain, was "best known for bringing elements of modern architect to lower-and-medium cost housing." (wikipedia)

Whatever the intention of the OFW committee, if it was not for the presence and the persuasion of Amanda Seward, we in Venice would have lost the chance to understand and preserve a part of Venice that is both interesting and educational. As Amanda said in her first comment, "When you have great art, you don't paint over it."

“Art Tiles at Venice Beach: A Graphic History: 1904 - 2001” Noel Osheroff, Tami Smith and the Venice Arts Council (Helicon Nine Edition)

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A perfect gift for the holidays

Je Suis Beachhead; Charlie Hebdo: Not So Much

By Jim Smith

This month, the Free Venice Beachhead celebrates the publication of its 400th issue and the opening of an on-line archive of every page and every issue we ever published.

Meanwhile, in Paris, an anti-Muslim publication, not much larger than the Beachhead, attracted worldwide attention when 10 of its editorial staff, and two police, were slaughtered by two gunmen, in apparent reaction to negative cartoon representations of Muhammad.

While these facts are well-known, what is curious is what happened next. The circulation of the magazine was raised from 30,000 copies to a reported seven million. That sort of publication run is more than any U.S. newspaper can manage, or afford.

The mass outpouring of indignation for the killings attracted leaders from throughout the world, except from the U.S. Among the grievors for free speech and a free press at a mass march on January 11 were “progressive” representatives of Saudi Arabia and the Emirates, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, and Egyptian Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry, who joined hundreds of other “democratic” leaders from around the world. Contrary to the impression left by the mass media, the world leaders only stood together for a “photo op” but did not participate in the actual march.

Instead of ushering in a new era of understanding, the aftermath of the Charlie Hebdo killings and world response resulted in more than 50 attacks in the following week on Muslims and mosques throughout France. The attacks on Muslims in Europe are part of escalating pattern of racial hatred not seen since the 1930s.

One might wonder who gains by a heightening of tensions between Muslims and the West. Probably only those people with an irrational fear of foreigners, in this case, those with a different religion, and national security agencies that would not exist without a perceived enemy that can pump fear into the average citizen. The rich and powerful feed on our tragedies like 9-11 and Charlie to take away our liberties, and give them free reign to kill and imprison without a trial.

On the other hand, nearly everyone gains when we work towards understanding between cultures and religions. We find one group, Islam, that has a strong sanction against depicting their Prophet as a man, or a cartoon. Wouldn't we all gain by accepting this prohibition and finding some other satirical reference that could be enjoyed by Christians, Jews, Muslims and atheists, alike? For the past 1,300 years, non-Muslims have admired the abstract art of Islam, without insisting on a visual representation of Muhammad. So why is this an issue, now?

And, let's not forget that the Islamic world preserved the learning and wisdom of the Greek and Roman west during the hundreds of years in which Europe suffered through a Dark Age that took no interest in this legacy. Muslims could have destroyed these rare texts, claiming that they were the works of infidels, but they didn't.

Meanwhile, back in Venice, a group of Peace and Freedom Party activists published the first edition of the Free Venice Beachhead on December 1, 1968. From the first issue, the Beachhead took a tongue-in-cheek attitude to the prevailing power structure, both in Los Angeles and in Washington, DC.

That gray eminence of the Beachhead, Carol Fondiller, decreed the watchwords, *Comfort the afflicted, and afflict the comfortable*, which became the guiding principle of the paper.

In addition to fighting a life and death (of our community) battle with the City of Los Angeles, the Beachhead had a foreign policy. It included a no-holds-barred opposition to the U.S. invasion of Viet Nam. An outstanding special issue, Number 22, in April 1971, was entirely devoted to ending the war.

In the midst of the Iran Hostage Crisis of 1979-80, the Venice Town Council voted unanimously to tell the U.S. government to end the hostage crisis by keeping its hands off Iran and removing all sanctions it had imposed. A further resolution to adopt Tehran, Iran, as a Venice sister city ended with an unseemly and undemocratic shutdown of the meeting by the Venice Fire Department.

For many years, the Beachhead was a strong advocate of the American Indian Movement (AIM). Nearly every issue contained news of the trials of Richard Mohawk and Paul Skyhorse, the Wounded Knee battle, and the trial of Leonard Peltier.

The beefs with U.S. Presidents from Nixon to Reagan to Bush and Bush are too many to enumerate. Suffice it to say, the Beachhead has never met a war it didn't find incredibly stupid. And it didn't matter

Political cartoon by Khalil Bendib



which political party initiated the obscene use of military technology. The Beachhead has never been a shill for the Democratic Party.

A recurring theme in the Beachhead's foreign policy has been the status of women around the world. That's why the Beachhead, to this day, celebrates International Women's Day with a special issue in March.

Each collective, including the one from 2002-2012, in which I was proud to serve, has its own unique approach to Venice news and international subjects. But each has been consistent for being on the side of the poor, the oppressed, the vilified, the homeless and the otherwise voiceless.

This is the difference between the Beachhead and Charlie. In satirizing an immigrant group, Muslims, and making fun of their Prophet, Charlie is siding with the rich and powerful. That, of course, is no reason to be violently attacked and killed, but it is also no reason to celebrate what the magazine published. In recent years, our society has condemned schoolyard bullies, and is conducting an educational campaign against adolescent bullies. Isn't it time we also apply peer pressure to those bullies in the media or government who can't resist bullying those unable to defend themselves? Isn't it time to turn away from violence on both sides and seek accommodation?

The Beachhead may never find anyone willing to print seven million issues when we satirize homeless haters or big developers, but that's ok. We've printed 400 issues of 8,000 to 10,000 circulation, and we can honestly say we're proud of every one of them. All together now: *Je Suis Beachhead!*

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UPDATE: Kim's Market, Gjelina's Gjusta, and Sauce (259 Hampton) Appeal Hearing

By Roxanne Brown

The Beachhead has been updating readers since April 2013 on some of the absurd developments that Mayor Eric Garcetti's administration and Councilman Mike Bonin's office seem to be approving and pushing through at the objection of residents.

600 Mildred (Kim's Market): Proposed change of use from market to restaurant with alcohol and late night hours, three feet from residents' homes with no on-site parking near coastal access route and intersection of Mildred, Ocean, and Venice. On pause.

320 Sunset (Gjelina's Gjusta): Zoning Administration (ZA) hearing was November 13. No decision was made as of end of January. In my view, it's because Garcetti's administration and Bonin's office are trying to push this project on resistant residents.

Hundreds of residents oppose the proposed change of use from "bakery" to restaurant with alcohol and late night hours, 12 feet 6 inches from residents' homes, providing limited parking, at a location where several streets and parking lots intersect.

A car accident at Gjusta occurred on January 9, Friday, at approximately 1 p.m. A woman driving a Mercedes sports car convertible was entering Gjusta's lot. She thought the parking attendant was telling her to back up, so she backed up without looking and hit a parking enforcement vehicle. A police report was filed.

Residents brought this safety concern up at the ZA Hearing. The parking lot at Gjusta is dangerous. Drivers back out of the lot into oncoming traffic. This accident occurred in broad daylight under the influence of coffee. What might occur when drivers back out into traffic in the dark of night under the influence of alcohol?

259 Hampton (Sauce) APPEAL HEARING – RESIDENTS WIN

Sauce at 259 Hampton has a permit for retail/take out, but has been operating as a sit down restaurant (with tables inside and outside on the sidewalk) for five years.

Without going through Venice's Land Use and Planning Committee (LUPC) or the Venice Neighborhood Council (VNC), the city approved "change of use" to restaurant with rooftop deck and liquor license. This was approved even though 259 Hampton is a mere fifteen feet from residents' homes on a block with churches, synagogue, pre-school, and St. Joseph's Center with religious services and day care. 259 Hampton would provide no parking, not even one handicapped space.

Ilana Marosi, appellant, Robin Rudisill, LUPC Chair, and I sat in the front row at the appeal hearing. Fran Camaj (owner of Gjelina, GTA, Gjusta and 1301 and 1305 Abbot Kinney) sat behind us with Stephen Vitalich (architect for 259 Hampton, 600 Mildred and 320 Sunset) and Sam Marshall (architect for 259 Hampton).

Chris Robertson, Director of Land Use and Planning in Bonin's office, came into the hearing room prior to the hearing and asked Marosi to meet privately with the architects, Kevin Jones from City Planning, and Theodore Irving from Zoning.

It seemed that Robertson, city planning, zoning, and 259 Hampton's architects were trying to coerce Marosi into not going forward with the hearing. The reason being they had two sets of plans and it was confusing. This "confusion" occurred with 320 Sunset and Gjelina's Gjusta as well.

Two unidentified people (a man and a woman) were hovering on the edges of the meeting. The man came toward Marosi – who was openly recording the meeting - she asked his name, he refused to give it, and as she moved away from him, he pushed Marosi. We later learned he was the owner of 259 Hampton, Richard Gottlieb. Fortunately the entire conversation and the alleged assault were videotaped. A police report was filed.

Garcetti's City Planning and Zoning employees began the hearing by confirming their approval of the project and urging that the hearing be delayed two weeks.

President of the Area Planning Commission (APC) Thomas Donovan noted that residents had waited more than three hours, and would be heard.

Commissioner Lisa Waltz Morocco began by stating the fact that 259 Hampton's tract has almost four times the allowed alcohol licenses and four times the crime of the citywide average. She also had a copy (evidence provided by Marosi) of the LAPD's letter stating that the LAPD did not want any more liquor licenses in the area. She asked, "How could the city approve this?"

Irving replied, "It's a tourist attraction... we still stand by that approval." Does that mean the city wants to add to the crime rate (which liquor licenses do) for residents and send tourists there?

Commissioner Esther Margulies asked, "How can you call for noise mitigation and then say it's only required if it's feasible?" The city's response was convoluted.

Commission President Donovan asked why the Conditional Use Permit – Beverage (CUB) for alcohol license was for five years as opposed to the normal two

years. Irving answered, "We don't want to be punitive at this stage." Do Bonin and Garcetti think it's OK for residents to endure a nuisance for five years before anything can be done?

Vitalich was then able to present and urged that, "Appeal should be denied as the planning department recommended." Marshall said, "The planning department, zoning department and council's office took us outside, told us that this would be continued. As a result the applicant has left along with a lot of people that were going to be here. We just want this on the record. We were told [by Garcetti's planning and zoning people and Bonin's office] this was not going to be happening this evening."

No worries: the hearing is on the city's audio recording and residents' videotapes contain the attempted coercion, alleged assault, and the hearing itself.

During the hearing, I pointed out an alarming discrepancy. On the CUB application, when asked whether 259 Hampton was within 1,000 feet of churches, schools, synagogues, someone had answered "No." Garcetti's administration and Bonin's office approved the project despite the fact that maps show a synagogue and churches are on the same block as 259 Hampton.

Lori Geller, who owns a fourplex directly across the street from 259 Hampton said, "This is insane."

The commissioners appeared appalled throughout the hearing. They unanimously voted for the appeal and denial of the project.

NOT ONLY DOES IT APPEAR MAYOR GARCETTI'S ADMINISTRATION AND COUNCILMAN BONIN'S OFFICE FAVOR SPECIAL INTERESTS, IT CERTAINLY SEEMS THEY ARE GREASING THE WHEELS FOR SPECIAL INTERESTS.

Some people in the Garcetti administration and in Councilman Bonin's office apparently have forgotten that they work for tax paying citizens. Mayor Garcetti and Councilman Bonin seem to have forgotten this as well.

A representative from Mike Bonin's office contacted the Beachhead and asked that we print a retraction to Roxanne Brown's January article. We were asked to mention that Bonin is against the development at Gjusta. Although Bonin did take a stand against the patio at Gjusta, the more important issue that he needs to stand against is the alcohol license that the establishment is seeking. Even the LAPD recommended that Gjusta not be given the alcohol license. As our elected representative, we expect Bonin to take more action against all developments operating illegally in Venice.

The Illusion of Crime and Enforcement of Poverty

By Mark Lipman

A lot has been said in the chat-rooms of Venice regarding "crime" in our community. It's no coincidence that every single incident of "crime" that is cherry-picked to report is about someone who is homeless. The comparison and subsequent demonization of an entire economic class of our society has become so prevalent that homelessness in people's minds has become synonymous with crime.

It is no mystery then, when we find that 80% of our police "work" and resources are spent on policing "crimes" of status and basic survival, such as sitting, eating and sleeping. The police in Venice are so busy with their "work" of enforcing poverty on the weakest among us that when they are actually needed they're never around.

We have housed residents in a literal panic, fearing every shadow, calling for more and more police to prop up some illusion of security, so they can feel safe at night. No doubt their fear is real. However, fear is easily manipulated and way too often leads to irrational decision making that exasperates the problems we wish to solve.

The false solution – the myth – that more police make us safe – must be exposed for the lie that it is.

Police violence is currently at an all time high. We have had over 500 deaths at the hands of the police in this country every year for the last ten years. That's over 5,000 people – Americans – killed by our police in just the last decade alone. So calling for more cops to prevent acts of crime and violence makes just about as much sense as does putting climate change denier Ted Cruz in charge of NASA.

The last time we got "more cops" in Venice they attacked Venice resident, Ron Weekley Jr., a 20 year old college student – breaking his jaw – for the "crime" of skateboarding while black. If our goal is to decrease crime – and may I remind everyone that the greatest crime there is, is poverty – the last thing we

need is more armed thugs with badges patrolling our streets, creating crime to fill quotas.

If, as is so often noted, the targets of all this frustration are those who live on the streets; if no one wants to see homelessness, then why not do something to directly solve the problem?

The only true solution to homelessness is housing. For a decade now, advocates around the country have been promoting the Housing First model, the same one that is currently being employed in Salt Lake City, Utah, which is on track to eliminate homelessness there – this year.

Now, the very first argument we hear from opponents of this plan is that they adamantly do not want to pay for those who are homeless to be housed. However, what is so difficult to get these people to understand is that they – and all of us – are already paying much more to keep people living destitute on the streets, than it does to simply provide the housing.

Many do not want to believe it; however, the fact is that Housing First costs less – a lot less.

In Salt Lake City, the city is currently saving upwards of \$12,000 per year for every person they move off the streets and into permanent supportive housing. Here in Los Angeles – the L.A. County version which is already underway is currently saving the county \$20,000 per person, per year.

Yet, here on the city side of the jurisdiction – for the last ten years – all we've received is more police.

Mike Bonin recently released a very well crafted letter, where he acknowledged the concerns of both sides on this issue, and then cast Housing First as something long-term that will take a long-time to happen, but today, he concluded, "we need more cops" – and that's the only policy he's pushing ... the exact policy his predecessor, Bill Rosenthal,

gave us with his "Vehicles to Housing" plan that gave us more police and not a single safe parking place for those sleeping in their vehicles, who just a few short years ago were the targets.

Something drastic needs to happen in the mindset of those who occupy Los Angeles City Hall.

Did you know that last year the City of Los Angeles spent \$1.2 BILLION on police and a paltry \$700,000 on housing ... and this year there's nothing – ZERO Dollars for housing in this year's budget? How do you expect to solve the serious economic and social problems we face, such as homelessness, when we invest all our resources into police to maintain and enforce the status quo of poverty, and nothing on the solutions?

Mike Bonin and Eric Garcetti are directly responsible for implementing the solutions. If that means opening up the city budget to properly fund proven solutions; if that means simply paying market rate in order to get people off the streets and into housing, so they can get back on their feet and start making a positive contribution to our society; and if that means defunding the LAPD to do it – then so be it – that's what they must do.



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Bird Totems of Venice: The Gull

By Krista Schwimmer

If there is one seabird that defines a shoreline, it is the gull. Prolific, noisy, pesky and personable, the gull appears in a variety of cultures as hero, trickster, or villain. Sailors say it is unlucky to kill a gull as it could be the soul of a dead sailor returned. Native Americans believe that a flight of gulls wheeling high in the sky indicates a storm is coming.

There are around 28 species of gulls, with at least 22 of them either residing in or visiting North America. Part of the family *Laridae*, these birds are most closely related to terns. Although known by many as seagulls, birders call them gulls, as most feed inland. They are medium to large, grey or white birds with black markings on their heads or wings. They range in size from the Little Gull, with a body length of 12 inches and wingspan of 24 inches to the Great Black-backed Gull with a body length of 30 inches, and wingspan in the mid-60s. Not surprising, these scavengers are the least specialized feeders of all seabirds, gathering their food through hunting in air, on water, or on land.

Gulls are long lived. One Herring Gull was documented as living 49 years. They are also, curiously, monogamous for life. Now and then, a pair may "divorce". This, however, is frowned upon by the pair's colony. The happy couple breeds once a year, with a breeding season of three to five months. The number of eggs range from one to three, depending on the species of gull. Both sexes incubate the eggs. Females even form bonds with other females to help raise the young.

Most species of gulls have black wingtips aiding in resistance to wear and tear. The Tsimshian of Alaska say the reason for these tips was that when a Raven caught the gulls eating all of his food, he threw them in the fire, singeing their feathers.

Because of their inter-breeding and change in plumage, gulls are not always easy to identify. Walking along the Pacific Ocean here in Venice, some of the species you may find are: the Black-legged Kittiwake, the California Gull, the Great Black-backed Gull, Heemann's Gull, the Herring Gull, the Mew Gull, Thayer's Gull, and the Western Gull.

Like other birds, gulls have great eyesight, due to an extra cone in their eyes that allows them to see in-infrared. A gull looking at a blue sky actually sees a violet one. They can drink seawater due to a special pair of glands right above their eyes that flushes the salt out through openings in their bills. Some people see them as pests – and they certainly will steal your picnic food if left unattended; but they serve an important role as scavengers, cleaning the environment of dead animals and litter. In many countries, too, they are protected by wildlife conservation laws.

Those of you who lived through the '70s most likely remember one of the most famous literary gulls of all times: Jonathon Livingston Seagull. In 1970, Richard Bach published "Jonathon Livingston Seagull." With fewer than 10,000 words, and black and white photographs by Russell Munson, Bach's allegory on death and the after life became a bestseller. Hardcover sales broke the record set in 1936 by "Gone With the Wind". The author had a unique background in flying, having served in the United States Navy Reserve, later in the New Jersey Air National Guard's 108th Fighter Wing, 141st Fighter Squadron as a F-84F pilot.

In this same decade, the Free Venice Beachhead's Masthead was redone by Brice Wood. His first rendition came out in April 1974, issue #54. A colorful Masthead with a central sun that remains the same today, his first drawing included a little house with a lighthouse behind it being struck by lightning, just to the right of the Masthead. Three issues later, in the July



1974 edition, Brice had taken out the lightning struck lighthouse (reminiscent of the Tower card in the tarot) and replaced it with the "Chee Wah Wah" squawking gull.

One of the more interesting tales associated with gulls is how the California Gull became the state bird for Utah. According to the Mormons, when the first Mormon settlers in Utah were experiencing a plague of katydids in the late spring of 1848, California Gulls mysteriously appeared and ate them all up. To this day, there is a monument to the California Gull located in front of the Salt Lake Assembly Hall on Temple Square. When gull appears in one's life in a significant way, Ted Andrews says this bird brings lessons or abilities in proper behavior, courtesy, and communication. Because they are often found along the shoreline, a place considered to be magical because the land meets the ocean, gull can teach a person how to communicate with the world of water sprites.

Whether it is a California Gull you see, or a Laughing Gull you hear, don't underestimate these seafaring birds. After all, legend says they even fooled Raven once. Instead, remember the Old British story of St. Kenneth who was said to be raised by Black-headed gulls. As a baby, these gulls found him floating off the coast of Wales in the year 550. They took him to their colony, where with the help of a doe and her milk, and an angel, they raised him. As a result, St. Kenneth became a kind and joyful man.

So go ahead. Mingle with the gulls. Or, like Venice's Poet Laureate, Philomene Long once did, put on a bright, pink raincoat and become their sunset. (Sources: <http://bit.ly/1CzBiKF> (Birds of NA); <http://bit.ly/1xNz6tw>; Rosemary Drisdell at <http://bit.ly/1EcY8cI>: Audobon.org; "Animal Speak"

by Ted Andrews; wikipedia)

COLD ELLISON VI

By Philomene Long

*"As for me, I delight in the everyday way,
Amidst wrapped vines and rocky caves.
Here in the wilderness I am completely free."
- Han Shan, Cold Mountain*

Silver days at the Ellison
Longest rainstorm in ten years
Beneath the slippery sky
The Ellison glistening
Dangling raindrops
Silver sounds

Sunset
I slip out to the sea
I am the only person
On Venice Beachhead
Grey sea, grey sky, grey sea gulls
I am wearing a bright pink raincoat
The seagulls believe I am the sunset
They turn their backs to the sea and face me
They assume their sunset viewing positions
Chests forward
Motionless. Except for
An occasional scratch of the ear
The flutter of a wing

We watch each other
I act like the sunset for them
I raise my glowing pink arms
I stand motionless for a long time
Kneel, then recline upon my heels
Alone on Venice Beachhead
It is all so slow, so simple
Being a sunset

Back at the Ellison.
Alone at the black iron gate
I look up
Soft rain sliding
Over the red bricks
Two red brick wings open
As if to embrace me
Two ghostly shimmering red wings

We watch each other
I look at the Ellison
As the sea gulls looked at me
I love this old building!
I love this old building!

Ah! yes, Kukai, the gulls and
Yes! Even these stones
Will become Buddhas

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Photo above: Seagull in Venice
Photo by: Krista Schwimmer



Bringing Home the Beachhead

By Brenda Harvey

This is a re-print from the April 1978 100th edition

It is 10:30 at night and we are exhausted and waiting to pick up a borrowed truck to drive out to Glendale.

“I can't find his keys!” my friend's friend moans. “Can you start it without keys?”

I sigh, knowing I'll never be able to hot-wire a pick-up. “Wait a minute – here they are.” She hands us an enormous ring full of keys, selecting one that looked right. “I think it's this one.”

Great. We can get started after all. We are on our way to pick up this month's Beachhead from the printer. All 10,000 copies of it. The printer is out in Glendale, and every month a good friend of the Beachhead volunteers her time to drive the box of pasted-up pages out to an old bricked industrial building off an alley in downtown Glendale. A few days later, someone from the collective goes out to pick up the bundles of printed papers.

Up to now this rather grubby job has fallen to one member of the collective who has a van and who has had access to a functional truck. The van isn't available this time and the truck is out of town – and this particular collective member is ready for the relief crew.

We are it. We've both gone before, as co-pilots, but we've never gone by ourselves.

We feel like we are soloing. I am pretty tall – but my friend is taller. The pedals are so far in front of me that I must extend my legs straight to make contact at all. And there's no adjusting the seat – it has long since rusted in place. So I scoot forward and struggle to find the accelerator.

The engine turns over three times before it catches, and it sounds downright reluctant. It dies at every stop sign as we head over to pick up the list of directions to the printer. I remember my friend's admonition when I'd asked if we could borrow the pick-up: “It drives like a truck,” he'd said, with an air of concern. I always expect a pickup to drive like a truck – as long as it drives.

We head for the San Diego Freeway.

“What's the gas gauge say?” Olga asks me.

“Quarter of a tank.”

“So we have half. Your friend said the gauge registers a quarter tank less than it has.”

“Hope that's right...”

I struggle to shift into third and realize that it is an automatic after all. That's OK, I need both hands on the wheel. At the on-ramp I can tell the steering is shot. To keep the thing straight in the lane I have to turn the wheel as if I were doing a slalom.

The rig shifts into high gear and the whole cab begins to vibrate. I can't see a thing in the rear-view mirror – it is a vibrating blur.

“How's it drive?”

Olga shouts. The off-road tires are making so much noise it's like being inside a blender.

“Just barely?” I shout back. I am concerned about the wild ride – there is a lot of traffic – I am nervous.

We get hysterical, and I am not sure if we should have volunteered to do this after all. That truck is downright dangerous, and neither of us is really sure where we are going.

Still, it is the first of the month, and the Beachhead has been waiting for us 24 hours already. And in Glendale, at that. We do at least feel we want to bring the Beachhead home.

When a Bekins truck roars up beside us, I pray there will be no stray hub cap in the lane ahead. The steering can't take a sudden swerve, and traffic surrounds us.

At cruising speed the sound of the off-road tires diminishes somewhat and we can communicate in a casual shout. So we shout and laugh and miss the turn onto the Ventura Freeway. With a bit of encouragement I make a U-turn and we are back on the Freeway – no cops in sight.

We roar along to where the directions say we should turn. “The directions are wrong,” Olga says with conviction. “Don't turn here.”

The gas gauge reads less than E.

We pass the turn-off and end up right where we want to be. The directions really were wrong – and we are really running on empty.

The directions say to go 7 lights to an Armenian restaurant and turn left on Broadway. We go 6 lights and it's Broadway and we never see the restaurant. We pass the alley where we are supposed to turn, and owing to the peculiar pattern of one-way streets in Glendale, we must go around two different blocks before we can take a pass by again.

Finally we're there. It has taken us a little more than an hour of pretty crazy driving, the gas gauge is below empty, it's the middle of the night, and no gas stations are in sight, much less open.

Inside the printers the presses are idle. Stacks of white-ribboned bundles are everywhere.

“We came for the Beachhead,” we say to someone looking as strung-out as we feel.

“Well, if it's done it'll be here, somewhere.”

“If it's done???” We look at each other. The truck keys jangle in my palm.

“I'm sure it's around here somewhere.”

An assortment of Valley papers and weekly LA throwaways were everywhere, stacked shoulder high on palettes and arranged around the presses in strict disorder. We search and hunt and read snatches of headlines above justified margins. Finally we find the Beachhead.

“Will your truck take the palette?”

“Sure,” I say, forgetting the metal frame over the truck bed.

An electric cart moves the palette, stacked six bundles high, to the truck. Clearly it is never going to fit. The top layer will have to be moved. We shift ten bundles off the stack into the truck bed. The forklift eases the palette over the center of the truck bed, then moves back.

The springs creak and groan and go all the way down, so that the fenders just clear the top of the rear tires. This is a half-ton pick-up?

Olga and I look at the stack of papers with satisfaction. We'd gotten them – and without moving them all

by hand. Loading the palette onto the truck was a great idea. We cop a couple of papers to read on the road, and are closing up the tailgate when one of the printer people points out that with the papers stacked that high, they'll be sure to fall off as we drive.

His point is well taken. Olga and I flash on a trail of Beachheads being scattered from Glendale to the San Diego Freeway. Then we move half the bundles off the palette and into the truck bed. Our hands are black with printers ink, and the bundles are falling apart right and left. The tying machine hadn't worked properly., and the ribbon ties around the bundles come apart in our hands.

Finally we're ready to go.

I hadn't seen the paper at paste-up, and Olga begins reveling over this page and that I can't take it and suggest we stop for coffee. Great. We park on a side street, wondering how it would feel to come out and discover that Glendale had ripped off the Beachhead.

The coffee shop is almost empty, and we take a table large enough to accommodate two copies of the paper spread-eagled across it. We are on page three before the waitress brings coffee to our grubby hands, and we go through the paper twice, anticipating a second cup.

It doesn't come, so we take our papers and our tip and split.

Back on the freeway, we shudder into high gear and lean back to enjoy the vibrations. The roar isn't so bad the second time around, but the steering is worse. All that weight in back has created a new problem. The accelerator is working overtime. It has a life of its own now, pumping up and down under my foot whenever the hell it feels like it.

I steer for dear life, trying not to look at the gas gauge, which now reads about a quarter tank below empty. We'll either make it or we won't – so we keep on.

Usually the driver who picks up the paper does initial distribution, that is, drives a long route from Santa Monica through Ocean Park and into Venice, delivering bundles of papers here and there. The route takes at least an hour.

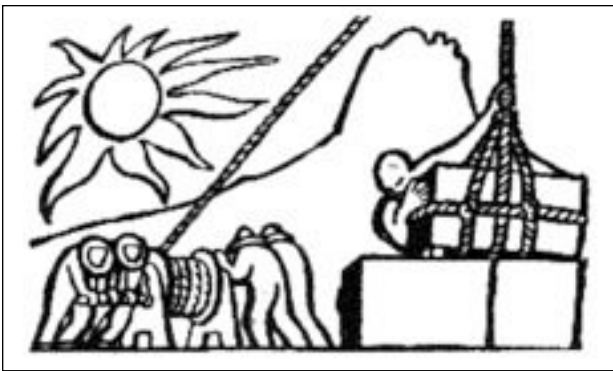
My driving nerves are long gone, we are definitely out of gas, so we make a collective decision to distribute tomorrow. We drive straight to the Beachhead office and unload the paper, bundle by falling-apart bundle. It is pretty late and the stars are out and we are glad to be back in Venice – in one piece.

When we get back to my house, my car is gone. My friend had insisted that I trade my key for his, so he wouldn't be without wheels. He isn't. He's out somewhere on mine.

I am concerned about his judgment – he drives this monster to work every day, and now he is out in my little car. When he reappears and I express my concerns about his truck and his safety, he says only, “Well, I told you it drives like a truck.”

Well, I've driven a lot of trucks in my day, and this one is a bomb. Thanks a lot, Kane, but next month we'll have to get another truck.

Anyone care to volunteer?





The Beachhead and Me

By Suzy Williams

September 11, 2011. Everyone I know had a big reaction to the falling of the World Trade Towers. Paranoia. One dear friend became completely unhinged. Heightened patriotism. A lot of people put two American flags on their SUVs. And renewed commitment to peace. Having been a New Yorker for 17 years, my heart broke when I learned of all the firemen who got taken out, trying to save the day. I knew a lot of those guys; they shopped at Jefferson Market on 6th, and would ask me for cooking advice. How handsome and strapping they were! The mustaches, the humorous twinkle in their eyes. They were so heroically upbeat! And they walked right into that white bomb, with the idea of saving lives as their last thought. I hurt hard about that. But what I felt most of all was that we as Americans should not blindly retaliate. That would mean the loss of more strapping firemen in other lands!

So here I was in Venice, looking for some kind of grassroots movement that I could join and en masse, (hopefully a very large masse), we could discourage the government from taking a warlike tack. Right about then I saw a flyer somewhere that addressed my soul: a gathering was invited to discuss what peacefully to do about the fall of the towers. After a brief meeting at 5 Rose (there was a public room on the ground floor then), there was an invitation to 533 Rialto, the home of Jim Smith and Yolanda Miranda. I walked in under a canopy of bougainvillea and past an Italian Zeus head fountain into a warm, brightly hued room with a big lit fireplace

and a long, sturdy wooden table. The table was laden with sumptuous Mexican dishes and it smelled wonderful. Seated around the table were a handful of all stripes of folks. They turned to smile upon me and suddenly I was in love! There was Dr. Alice Stek, a Dutch OBGYN, who specialized in delivering AIDS-free babies from AIDS-infected mothers. Short-haired and strong-bodied, she nevertheless had a vulnerability that I could instantly relate to. There was Jeff Hirsh, an artist who specialized in comic drawings published in *The Nation*, among other venerable right-on rags. Joe Gross, a fine playwright who writes about workers and their plights. There was the Kahlo-colorful Yolanda Miranda, long-time activist for the United Farm Workers and family friend of Cesar Chavez. And there was Jim Smith.

I should tell you that I have a pretty good lefty pedigree. My dad, Dr. David Paul Williams, is what I like to call the Zelig of the Left. He was washed down the steps of San Francisco's City Hall during the HUAC trials. His social work office in Contra Costa became headquarters for the Black Panthers. He knew Saul Alinsky, Cesar Chavez, Ralph Nader and "Bob" Scheer. He was in Selma. He organized the West Virginia coal miners. And, while he was a professor at Dalhousie in Halifax, he fought for equal pay for the women professors, his colleagues. He organized in Guyana and in Africa. My sister Jennie had Jesse Jackson rest in her home in Brooklyn between speeches, and worked for the Barry Commoner campaign and helped ban fracking in New York State.

But those east coast family members were far away and when I got to know Jim Smith even just a little, I realized I had a political home in 533 Rialto. Jim had been a labor union organizer most of his adult life. He could answer every question I had about who were our representatives, what was going on in Bosnia, and who read poetry at Venice West. His bookshelves were filled with political art books, Greek and world history and Venice history. He was fun and funny, and gave me a whole new, non-touristy perspective on my chosen town. I found myself joyously over at 533, sitting at that beautiful strong table till the candles burned very low, working to bring back the Free Venice Beachhead, which had lain fallow for a few years. We set up meetings with Beachhead founder John Haag and illustrious Beachhead writer Carol Fondiller to get their official blessing on the restart. Thus began a five-year Beachhead collective involvement and two or three years of marching on the boardwalk on Sundays to protest the war in Iraq. I had the pleasure of working with Carol Fondiller herself, homeless activist Peggy Lee Kennedy, and the charming and handsome Professor Karl Abrams.

For me, knowing the paper is still coming out every month with an entirely different set of collective members (Jim retired two and a half years ago) and that the spirit of the paper has retained the same injustice fighting, sunset loving vibe as it had at its inception is...well it's just very heartening. I wish to thank the current and all former Collective members. But, especially, thank you... Jim Smith.

A Reminiscence

By Jim Zane

I was part of the Beachhead collective for a 14 to 16 month period that spanned the end of 1972 through the first few months of 1974. I remember the Venice Pier, food buying clubs, the Canals before gentrification and the short-lived nude beach. I, of course, didn't live in Venice at the time. I lived in Brentwood, a couple hundred yards from a place where a condo would be built in which Nicole Simpson would meet her demise 20 years later.

It was a thrilling and vibrant time. It was a time when the fire of youth colored my world. It was a time of right and wrong and life and death. It was a time when we were going to change the world for the better.

I remember the Beachhead monthly meetings, the discussion about articles, dividing up the typesetting, getting ads, doing layout and paste-up, driving to the printer to drop off the layout boards and then returning to pick up the paper a few days later to distribute it.

I had come to the Beachhead via Gail Williamson. I had fallen in lust with her the moment my eyes first caught a glimpse of her walking down the boardwalk on a warm, sunny Summer afternoon. I would follow this goddess wherever she chose to go.

(Thankfully, stalker laws have been strengthened since those years.)

What my eyes couldn't tell, my head soon would. Gail was a very strong woman. And strong women are my weakness. In those years there were other strong women involved with the Beachhead: Linda Lucks, Dawn Rouda and Carol Fondiller. In fact, I suspect, that if it weren't for strong women, the Beachhead wouldn't have survived long enough to come anywhere close to celebrating 400 issues.

Beachhead meetings could be volatile. That came with the territory because this was Venice. And in those years, there was the possibility that you might encounter a lunatic or two in the community. That, coupled with a lack of a sense of humor, could prove to be lethal.

I remember one meeting where tempers flared and tensions were rising at an exponential rate between Carol and a photographer named Jerry. Something had gotten out of hand between the two. Voices were raised in anger as both stood, facing one another. Because we were in the process of cutting out and pasting up the monthly issue, we all had X-Acto knives. Carol's was in her hand and pointed at Jerry, and he clearly wasn't intimidated because he was making things worse.

I don't remember how things deescalated or how Jerry managed to get out of there with his balls intact. But he did. Somehow cooler heads would prevail and

another issue of the Beachhead was put to bed without having to phone 9-1-1 for the paramedics. I learned a very important lesson that day: no one should ever be allowed to be part of the Diplomatic Corps without first having to work on the Beachhead for six months.

I am grateful for my time with the Beachhead, my fellow staff members and the community we served. My memories of that time are dear to me. I try to hold onto as many as I can as they relentlessly seem to churn themselves into the fog of the past.

Although I live on the opposite end of the country and am unable to physically be at 400th edition celebration, I'm grateful that I've been able to participate in this small way with this short reminiscence. And for those of you who are there that I've known, I'm grateful to you for touching my life in the sweetest ways possible; and I wish you the very best as we travel this most auspicious of journeys into the all that is.

As for the glorious Free Venice Beachhead, here's to another 400 issues. Somehow, I have a sneaking suspicion I may miss that celebration as well. But if I still happen to be on the planet, I plan on being there. So please, save me a parking place and a seat.

My Mom, Anna Haag-Ricci

Anna Haag-Ricci was born in Rome, Italy, on January 18, 1936. She grew up in Rome and spent the years during World War II in a small village called Agriano, Umbria, also known as the green heart of Italy.

My Mom was the middle child in a family of eight children, father Felice and mother Anonietta.

She often told me her brothers and dad were really strict, old-school Italian ... in other words, kick your ass when you get out of line!

In 1960 she met an American, Rhodes scholar studying in Rome. His name was John Haag. He was loved and accepted by her whole family immediately. They married in Rome, lived there for a while, and packed it up and moved to Venice...

Venice in the early '60s was a far cry from the small village in Umbria where she spent so much of her youth. In Agriano she had to walk miles to get water in buckets to drink, cook, bathe, and wash clothes with. "Tough" is the word that comes to mind when I think of my Mom. She was Mom to many, in Venice, where she raised me and my sister Duanna.

She had a heart of gold, too... But wouldn't take shit from anyone.

She and John did some really cool things together over their years in Venice. They were involved in local politics, and, eventually, national politics. In fact, John Haag ran for President on the Peace and Freedom Party ticket. They fought for people's rights, helped found the Peace and Freedom Party and the Free Venice Beachhead. They were a huge part of the political scene in Venice in the '60s & '70s...

They opened and operated a place at 7 Dudley called Venice West Cafe. It was a hangout for all the beatniks, poets and political activists. I remember hanging out there when I was young, checking out all the cool artwork by Earl Newman and other local Venice artists.

At some point my Mom started designing and making jewelry, and selling it on Ocean Front Walk. In fact, she was one of the first artists to set up and sell down there. She made earrings, chokers, necklaces, and rings. Many times she would be the only person selling anything on the whole Ocean Front Walk. She would also sell at the Canal Festival as well as many other events.

One time she was selling her turquoise jewelry and a cool-looking dude with a big fro, wearing lots of jewelry came over and bought a bunch of stuff from her. The next thing you know, she sold everything she had. The dude turned out to be Jimi Hendrix. She was always meeting cool people and she never made a big deal of it.

Over the years she stopped making things and started buying them in downtown LA and importing from Italy. Many times, as kids, we all traveled back from our yearly summer months in Italy covered in gold and silver bracelets, necklaces, chains and such, walking like mummys through the airports.

She would hang out and sell her jewelry wherever she was. At friends' houses, at restaurants, on the beach, or she'd throw parties and sell cool things to the Venice locals. I still have friends that tell me that they still wear things they bought from Anna. Ask Andy or Debi Nevil, Solo Scott, or any other long-time local. If you've been around Venice a long time



Above: Anna in front of Juergen's, Washington and Speedway, where she fed a lot of people through the years

you probably bought something from the feisty Italian lady with jet black hair.

In '64 she was hit by a car on Speedway, and bed-ridden for six months. She was pregnant with me, and gave birth while still in a cast. She had a steel rod inserted in her leg, so she walked with a heavy limp, from then on you could see her coming from a mile away, that crazy limp, and she always carried a big bag with all her jewelry. She'd always say she could feel if the weather was changing because she could feel it in her leg.

Over the years, if you ever ate at Lafayette Cafe, Hot, Juergen's, or New Par's, she probably fed you. Yes, she was the waitress that, if you took too long reading the newspaper (even if it was the Beachhead), she'd say, "Get up! I gotta make some money!" My Mom was never one to hold back! She also fed many people over the years, if you didn't have enough money, she'd pay out of her own pocket. When she worked at New Par's she often fed, and got to know people like Arnold, Ken Waller, and all the original Gold's Gym guys. She was the favorite waitress of many musicians and artists.

Dennis Wilson thanked her by bringing her a very special christmas gift: one of his framed gold records with a note to her on the back! He used to come to our apartment above Juergen's and play the piano for hours. The piano was on the opposite side of the wall from my bed and I remember screaming: "SHUT UP!". Now I look back at those times and realize what a cool Mom I had.

Just like with her jewelry, years later I still have people telling me that my Mom helped them through hard times by feeding them. She also cooked up some damn good Italian food at home! It seemed like my friends would smell the food from down the street and come running or skating down to our house at the end of Washington, above Juergen's or wherever else in Venice we were living at the time. She would feed them all, sometimes she'd serve up a big board of polenta and we would all eat off of it carving out the shape of the boot of Italy as we ate. She also made the best lasagna, pasta, chicken cacciatore, and some amazing split pea soup. In fact, every time she made it, my

friend Joel would show up. I don't know how he did it, but he would just show up in time to eat. Years later, she would make her cancer doctor and nurses huge pans of lasagna. If you were around our family, you never went hungry...



Above: Anna, Duanna and Thomas getting ready to travel to Italy for the summer

My son Jasen used to watch my Mom cooking all the time and now he's a chef. I also learned a thing or two, I love to cook for my friends and family. She taught us well.

Every year we would travel to that same village where my Mom spent so much time. We would leave Venice as soon as school let out in June, and not come back until September, when school started. In 1980 she decided to buy a piece of property and build a house on it. She busted her ass and little by little the house was built. I still go there as often as I can, I love the place and, love to share it with my friends and family, many of who have made the trek over there. Even Jay Adams came through on the way to a surf contest in France once... I take my kids there and I thank my lucky stars that my Mom was so determined to teach us about our Italian heritage because at the time, all I could think about was skating Marina Skate Park, or one of the many ramps we built around the hood, or at the Venice Pavilion, not traveling all the way to Italy with huge duffle bags full of gifts for our huge Italian famiglia. My Mom always thought of others first, making sure everyone around her was well taken care of. I always thought I was missing out, and maybe I was, but now I realize why she took us there...

And yes, I was the only long-haired boy for miles around ... maybe in all of Italy, and when people made fun of my hair she backed me up a 100%. I could always count on her...

Anna Haag-Ricci was, and is, another colorful thread in the fabric that we know as Venice.

Miss you and love you Mom!

Your son,

Thomas Duggan



Above: Anna making pizza for everybody

The People's Doge of Venice
By Jim Smith

It's a long time since I seen John Haag
He was a sweet talking man
and a genuine hero
Saved a lot of poor people
down in Venice.

When they sent the bulldozers
to wipe out the canals
John said "Don't worry,
it's not gonna happen."

Next morning, those dozers wouldn't move
the trucks couldn't start.
They had to tow them all away.
"What a pity," said John.
Looks like we're here to stay."

John never raised his voice
never cussed anyone out
He knew he could talk pleasantly
when the people had his back.

John Haag was a Harvard man
Specialized in Italian Lit
Went to Italy and put it to use
Married a Roman beauty named Anna
They came to Venice, on the California coast

They took over Stuart's coffee house
the Venice West Espresso Cafe
to let the bongos play and the poets read
from dusk to dawn.

When L.A. sent their bully boys to shut it down,
John stood his ground for peace and freedom.
That day he became the People's Doge
of Venice reborn to fulfill Kinney's dream
where life, not work, could reign supreme.

The Word became beauty incarnate
in the worn out bungalows and foggy brilliance
of our lonely slum by the sea,
and John Haag lives on in the summer breeze.



My Pain Is Never Borrowed
by krista schwimmer

"My Pain is Never Borrowed"
states the white chalk scrawled on the street
as i round the alley onto Market and Main.

For years now, i have meditated
on that message, left by an unknown sage.
Yes, my pain, too, is never borrowed.

It is the pain of seeing that lone person
huddled under a blue tarp one December rainy day
outside the Trading Post Liquor Mart.

It is the pain of recalling my friend, Andrew,
whenever i walk out my back door and see the stairs
to his old haunts, renovated since his disappearance & suicide.

It is the pain of witnessing the fierce battle for land
here, in my own Venice, that casts asides those souls
who, like the Oxford Lagoon monarchs, only seek sanctuary.

Yes, I tell myself, my pain is never borrowed.
And neither is your pain. It is there, right now,
to gather and to hold tightly until you, too,

feel its queer blessing -- until you, too, let it ignite
that inborn sun which illuminates a relentless truth
ready to hunt down the ruthless, the cruel, and the inane.

Centurion's Complaint
By John Haag
1957-58

I tell you Rome ain't what it used to be
The town has gotten fat
The boys don't want to fight
or want to fight for spoils
They've gotten sights on manor houses
& mansions by the sea
We don't know what we fight for anymore
Time was the farmers fought for their own farms
Now its noble slaves we keep down by arms
and lucky if we eat outside the core
We've planted the wide world with Roman graves
and still plow on
but can you tell me why the lordlings dance and banquet
while we die
The Jewish cult that claims even the slaves have souls
is being ground
and no surprise
You push a guy too far and he gets wise

Hybrids

to compare yourself to an animal:
a wolf-hybrid
a recovering alcoholic
who was trained and condemned to a life
of pain:
The pain never goes away
you're looked at as a monster!
so you drink & drink & drink
trying to drown out all the things
you had to do:
kill babies, kill mothers, kill families
kill the enemy
Five years later they are not our enemy
but everyone is dead, anyway
what they say is all lies
U.S. Army bullshit
takes young idealistic men
and turns them into monsters
who can't sleep at night
PT SD all the way
new war cries burble out from their throats
like what happens when you cut someones throat
wolf-hybrids are shot & killed
don't trust the mixing of wolf and dog
you can't treat them like a dog
or a wolf:
an unpredictable killer-dog
listening to the genetic code battling itself
both sides want to kill
no rehab can wipe away the tears
of hybrid dogs or ex-soldiers.

– Mary Getlein

You deserve to fight for you
By bETO et al

Don’t forget to set your clocks
back, back 60 years.
in the grave with Martin
is filling with tears
Even with our doors locked
we’re living in fear.
accidentally discharged,
6 bullets in the chest,
even lady liberty’s gasping
“can’t find my breathe!”

Television people are
just lying clowns
Calling out the police
as they keep us down.

This is how we shoot back:
I hear our brother crying
“I can’t breathe”
our sisters crying
“I can’t breathe”
our fathers our sons crying
“I can’t breathe”
our mothers our daughter
“I can’t breathe”
we’re all being choked
“and we can’t breathe”
till all people are freed.

television People are
just lying clowns
calling out the police
as they keep us down.

We have d’right to be killed
please don’t shoot
Us-murdered by Policeman
please don’t shoot
When the laws break in,
please don’t shoot
will ya be lying on d’sstreets
crying please don’t shoot

I still hear my Brother crying “I can’t breathe”
so now I’m in the struggle and I can’t leave
we’re calling out the violence of racist Police
we aint gonna stop(clap, clap) till people are free (2x)

Two Thousand to Twelve
By Ronald Keith Mc Kinley

What does it take to feel
When are twelve more than two thousand
Bodies’ bodies everywhere
France for the French the world sees responds
Nigeria bleeds and all I hear is underinflated footballs
The Earth soaks up the pain and fear
Two Thousand dreams transcend
No suffering is less because of tribe and place
This music is so sad
To be calm and not of earth, how so
My skin is just my skin
How do I process this
What I taste is more than bile
Three hundred and sixty degrees back to apathy
I cannot live in anger or fear
The human condition seen and not loved
All my senses engaged create a kind of psychosis
Reality becomes less real
A covered wound will not heal
It will fester and rot fall away
While the odor of political positioning remains

whole world eye

living jewel
life source orb
growing chi pulsation
electric magnetic kinetic
water protein mineral matrix
primordial stew that made you
energy ocean surfer, fer sure
you forgot Her
like this meat blood bone
came together on its own
while you were busy on the phone
instead of the sacred temporary loan
she makes us

we wander your surface
altering the crust
till it no longer supports us
changing your skin on a whim
arbitrary borders fences and boundaries
we picture you with bad tattoos
we’re ants with explosives
clumsily spilling corrosives
fracking hacking attacking
anything that moves
separate desperate tricked into
dancing to death grooves

your rich damp dark
fragrant grainy squeezey through my fingers
she who is all we see
we feast on your radiance
lust after your luminescence
absence of force connects us to the source
she gladly feeds us when
we ignore them that bleeds us
the cycle continues within us
and without us

– Rex Butters

Homeless I ?

The Sand is my Pillow,
The Sun is my Blanket,
The Moon is my Gaurdian,
The Earth is my Home,
I am not homeless

– John Davis

A PHILOSOPHER’S MEMORIES
OF VENICE APARTMENT

That was one bad and
buggy place, Snorky.
Cockroaches all over
the house and into
everything.
Kid, what would you
do if just after the
first fine mouthful of
morning coffee, you
realized that you had
swallowed a half –
grown roach?
I’ll tell you what I did.
It wasn’t easy, but I
convinced myself that
I had swallowed not a
cockroach but a small
brown moth. That
idea I could live with.
I haven’t always lived
in splendor, as I do
now at the Ellison,
Snorky, but I have
always been master
of my mind.

– John Thomas



05:50 Thursday, January 29th, 2015, Adullam Got up too early. Tried to lie
back down. My troubled soul would not let me disown. I'm worried for the world.
Disintegrate. Can sense the misery. I contemplate. The end game of the nations.
Drawing near. If anyone has ears. Then let them hear. The peace that we've been
promised. Won't arrive. Except to individuals. Who live. To find it on their
doorstep. So prepare. To measure out some peace. Not to declare. It on your
income tax. The Fed or State. This peace. Referred. An item on a plate? Not
something one can barter or to pawn. It's earned the day one learns to stand
alone Roger Houston, post-beat romantic

THE BEAT GOES ON - Continued from page 1

with any health violation they could think of. Poor Stuart was disillusioned by a lack of paying customers and the city's harassment and sold the business in 1959 for \$200 to John Kenevan.

Lawrence Lipton and others of the hip Beat movement had gone on radio and TV. Lawrence declared that, "Venice West is to Los Angeles what the Left Bank once was to Paris!" Books were being written about the Beats like Lipton's very popular book, "The Holy Barbarians". His book and talks sometimes mentioned the Venice West Cafe. Soon the cafe was booming with tourists and would-be beatniks. Tourists came with cameras. Tourists walked the Ocean Front Walk searching for someone that might look like "Maynard G. Krebs", the funny beatnik on the "Many Loves of Dobie Gillis" TV show, so they could take their picture. TV and radio reporters came to show these wild "barbarians". Beatniks were suddenly so popular that Stuart Perkoff even got on the Groucho Marx TV show, "You Bet Your Life"!

Down near Windward Ave. Eric "Big Daddy" Nord rented an old Abbot Kinney building on the Ocean Front and called it the Gas House. "But it's alright now, in fact it's a gas!" It was a haven for the beatniks and their art and music. "Big Daddy" was a bearded giant daddy-o at 6 foot 8 inches and up to 400 pounds! He left the San Francisco beatnik scene after failing with a Beat joint there and tried his luck in Venice. Suddenly there were two cool Beat hangouts in Venice.



Left: Venice West poster created in 1963 by Earl Newman

Almost immediately some local realtors and developers tried to rally the square community to close them down and throw these worthless bums out. They got our local bureaucrats and the LAPD to join in the harassment. They complained about weird people, drugs and noisy music. They screamed that beatniks were lowering property values on the beach. Sound familiar today? They had undercover agents hang out at the cafe and Gas House and they reported nudity and drinking. Some ranted about immorality like Black men kissing White women! The police declared that you needed an entertainment license to read a poem and closed them down. The health department came up with any excuse to shut them down. Lawyers for the Beats kept the Gas House open for a while but they couldn't have poetry shows or allow the beatniks to live there anymore. In 1963 the city forced the closure and demolition of the Gas House and the beautiful old Saint Marks Hotel next door. The city began condemning many of the old buildings around Windward Ave. They figured if they demolish the cheap housing then these "undesirables" will have to go away. "Big Daddy" returned to San Francisco.

In around 1960 a young, good looking John Haag and his beautiful wife Anna came to Venice. He wanted to be a Venice West poet. John was born in 1930 in N.Y. He was a well educated Harvard man. Anna was born in 1937 in Italy. In the early 1960s they rented a small space next door to the cafe and called it the Venice Music and Arts Center. They figured this tiny spot would have music, art and poetry. They became activists in several civil rights groups. In 1962 they took over the Venice West Cafe next door from John Kenevan. Kenevan, like Perkoff, had been constantly picked on by the police, the health department, city hall and some prudish neighbors. Kenevan was happy to turn the cafe over to John and Anna Haag.

In 1964 John Haag sounded a cowbell in the cafe and a poet came up and read a poem. Immediately four plain-clothed vice officers planted in the audience and at least four more regular cops arrested John for entertainment without a police permit. Soon after our Venice city councilman tried to outlaw playing drums along the public beach. Mayor Yorty talked about bulldozing all of Venice and starting over!

John and Anna didn't go down without a fight. They got lawyers and kept having poetry. The city council went ahead and outlawed drums on the beach at that time and continued to harass John and other beatniks. My mother ran a bakery in the Cadillac Hotel a few feet away and I hung out by the cafe often. I remember well one incident where John was arrested and his wife Anna began screeching like a mad lioness at the cops! She and John were both awesome people. We thought of them as the King and Queen of Venice! John began orchestrating demonstrations at city hall. He got radio and TV to cover some of the proceedings.

I used to go and hang out sometimes at the cafe. John and Anna were good friends with my mom, Ruthie in the bakery. I was 14 ½ when they took over the cafe. After they opened I liked to go and read the magazines and books. They put some free newspapers by the door and there were reading copies of books and magazines by the window. There were new books and magazines by the counter. I loved to look through them for cartoons but John would get mad at me for

soiling his new books. “Go read the free books!” he would tell me. I would always tell him I had already looked at all the free stuff. He knew I wasn't going to buy anything! Maybe once I bought a magazine? A cheap one...

Anna ran the cafe. She took food orders, made coffee and sandwiches, served the food and ran the cash register. When it was busy she had another worker help. John would shmooz with the Beats and customers. Sometimes he would get up and read his newest poem. They would often have jazz playing on their stereo or radio in the back while you sat on a junky chair or old couch writing your newest poem. The music of John Coltrane, Miles Davis, Charlie “Bird” and Mingus were playing in the background while people with berets and goatees sat and sipped coffee. John and Anna and many of the Beats smoked cigarettes in those days and smoke wafted about the room. Most smoked the sacred herb but they usually did that outside in a pagoda or on the sand for fear of the cops. Back then pot was a serious offense. Usually they were opened from dusk to morning. When the sun began to fall the Beat were-wolves with bushy beards would begin to like howl their poems to the moon. Usually you would go up to Anna or John and tell them you had a poem and they would ring a bell and you would “blow” your thing. I really loved Anna like a second mom. John and Anna knew me as “Ruthie's son”. I'd love to go back there now...



Some summer weekend nights when I went to the cafe the place was packed. There were wild eyed bearded men and dancing women even outside. There was the smell of funny cigarettes in the air. Sometimes it was so crowded you couldn't get in. I remember a couple nights I just stood by the door to try and listen to the poets or a folk singer. I heard that a young unknown poet by the name of Jim Morrison used to come there and listen to poetry. Many times there was someone playing a drum with the poetry. Tamboo the conga drummer had used to be a regular.

In 1966 the owner of the property who hated commies tried to evict John and Anna. Once again they tried to rally support for their cafe. John and Anna had been battling in the courts and from jail and at city hall since they opened the first day! After a dirty battle in court by the owner, the judge gave the Venice West Cafe a temporary stay. However, John and Anna had enough. John had originally come to Venice to be a poet, not to be involved in courts, demonstrations and jail. Sadly, soon after the court battle they gave it up. Business had slumped also. Several bigger and prettier clubs had opened around L.A. The times were also a changing. The beatnik hipsters were transforming into hippies. Jazz and folk music was eclipsed by rock music. Reading poetry wasn't as cool anymore as listening to rock 'n' roll. Jim Morrison began putting his poems to rock music instead of just bongo drums. His music became his poetry.

The civil rights movement in the early 1960s had gotten many people organized politically to fight racism in our country. The war in Vietnam had begun to stir anti-war sentiment. John Haag had written poems even in the late 1950s that were against war. The war began to have more and more killings on both sides, and John and Anna began to put more of their energy into the growing anti-war movement. Their experiences with city hall and the cops while running the cafe made them even more politically aware. He traveled up north to Washington State and a local group called the Peace and Freedom Party was supporting local anti-war candidates from both the Democrats and Republicans. He dreamed of a real Peace and Freedom Party that would have its own candidates. He returned to Venice and began to

organize a new political party with his local pals. He liked the name Peace and Freedom Party and it won out over several other names. So the real Peace and Freedom Party was born in Venice in 1967. They had a terrible time getting the party on the ballot because both Democrats and Republicans didn't want another political party to take away their votes. John and his new group needed 68,000 people to register in the new party. This meant you had to change your party affiliation from Democrat or Republican to Peace and Freedom. They had to battle all sorts of obstacles. With plenty of hard work they got 105,000 people to register to the new Peace and Freedom Party. He had stopped me walking on the boardwalk many a time to bug me to help him get signatures or to go to some rally or demonstration. I went once or twice but I usually tried to think up some excuse! I wasn't very political. I spent all my spare time playing basketball. I told John on their first try with their own candidates that he should run for President. He told me that nobody outside Venice knows him and they needed someone with name recognition. He said maybe he might run at some later time and he did run for President later on. The Peace and Freedom Party ran Eldridge Cleaver who was well known at the time. During the war years the new party got quite a few votes. More recently, in 2012 they ran the comedienne Roseanne Barr for President.

John thought they needed a voice for the new party and their anti-war ideals. They thought of having a radio or TV show, but John figured they could start with a local newspaper. In 1968 the Free Venice Beachhead began. “This paper is a poem” was his idea to have poetry, art and political and local news that is ignored or misreported in the other newspapers. When asked what “Beachhead” meant John said, “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!” He didn't want to run the paper himself and thought a collective of people who care could run it. He worked on the first couple of issues, but he was spending more and more time on the Peace and Freedom Party. John reminisced about the Beachhead, “

Of course it was all volunteer. Nobody got paid or anything. The personnel in the collective changed from time to time, and sometimes fairly rapidly, but there were always people to come in and put the paper out. I think it was some kind of miracle!” He tried to let the collective run things on the Beachhead. I wanted to be a cartoonist and had done some cartoons in college newspapers. The Beachhead printed a few of my cartoons in 1978 and ‘79. At one point some new collective members began editing my cartoons and I went to whine to John. He told me that the collective decides on the content and he didn't want to interfere, although he enjoyed my cartoons. I quit, but later I still occasionally submitted a cartoon. Here I am again writing for the Beachhead! I feel I owe John and Anna much for their contributions to Venice. John's poems and the poets at the coffee house had inspired me and still inspire me now!

Everyone was devastated in Venice when our King and Queen, John and Anna broke up. This was a major tragedy because together they were such a powerful force. Anna once said, “I might love a man, but I love Venice more!” John and Anna continued to work on politics and civil rights until they passed away. John still wrote poems until the end. Anna died in 2003 and John in 2006. Today the Peace and Freedom Party continues the fight against wars. Despite many not believing our Beachhead would ever work, our paper still continues on while most newspapers of that era are long gone. Let us hope and pray our Beachhead will go on forever... Well all you groovy chicks and hip cats, I blew my like crazy thing! It's time for me to cut out and split until the next cool time. Far out man, ya dig it?

This Paper is a Poem

By Marty Liboff

This paper is a poem
We laugh and cry
In joy and sadness
We recite, read and sing
Poems of the world gone wrong
Poems of the world gone right
Beauty and hell
Good and bad times
The changes, the years
The tears, the fears
The misery of the masses
The pain and happiness of an individual
Mankind cursed by society
Money mad developers and corporations
Banks, police, judges
Picking on the poor and helpless
And also the blessings...
The blessings of our Mother Earth
The beauty of a seagull flying by
And the simple kindness of good souls
We laugh and lament
To the passings and new births and new beginnings
The Muses recite and sing to us
The 9 Sisters tell us everything
Mysteries revealed
In adversity we learn and gain strength
For hope for a better future
A poem of life
A song we sing
Sing, sing your song
Of liberty, freedom and love
This paper is a poem...

This Paper Is A Poem

A Short Beat Glossary:

- “BLOW” To sound off either with music, poems or words.
- “BREAD” Money.
- “CAT” A sexy cool male beatnik.
- “CHICK” The male beatnik's Beat girlfriend or any cute gal.
- “COOL” Anything you like a lot is cool; cool jazz, cool painting...
- “CRAZY” Anything that is kind of wild or new
- “CUT OUT” To take one's leave. To leave.
- “DIG” To understand.
- “FAR OUT” It really sends you or impresses you. Also, way out.
- “GAS” The best, or greatest of times.
- “GROOVE OR GROOVY” With it. In the (record) groove. Playing with the beat. Something nice.
- “HEAD” Someone smart and also someone who smoked pot.
- “HIP” To know. Knowledgeable. In the new style.
- “JOINT” A place like a cafe. Also a marijuana cigarette.
- “LIKE” To make sense of. Comparative reality.
- “MAN” Giving greater emphasis to. Also the police, “The Man”.
- “PAD” Your apartment or home.
- “SPLIT” To leave or go.
- “SQUARE” A conformist to society and culture who can't drop his suit and tie.
- “SWING” Uninhibited. Able to swing with music.

Beachhead, Dec.2003 article by John Haag. 'Venice West', 1991 by John Maynard. 'John Haag Speaks', YouTube, 2002, posted by Jim Smith. 'Bohemians', 2000 by Elizabeth Wilson. 'Holy Barbarians', 1959 by Lawrence Lipton. Beachhead interview of John Haig, 2002 by Suzy Williams. 'Venice California Coney Island of the Pacific', by Jeffrey Stanton. Various -Wikipedia, etc.



John Haag running for President



Community Event Calendar

Free Venice Beachhead • February • 2015 • 14

4 February Wed, 7:30-10:30pm, The **King's Ball-Crowning** pre-Mardi Gras Party, Gumbo Bros, Ms Jessica, Michelle Van Vliet, Mark William Sloan. Dress up and go to Danny's.

6 February, Fri 7am, **E-waste Collection** at Venice Farmer's Market

6 February, Fri 7:30pm, **Angi Neff and Jono Shaffer**, empowering political music, at Witzend, cover.

6 February, Fri 8pm
MASON'S NOISE PARLOUR - Sofia Wolfson; musical-comedy duo, The Highflying Fishnets; poet Sarah Sanders-Messmann; and writer, William Yates. hosted by singer-songwriter, Mason Summit, Regular Admission. Beyond Baroque

7 February, Sat 7pm – 11pm **Art & Music Show** – hosted by Audrey McNamara-Garcia - Unurban

7 February, Sat 2-6pm, 5th annual **POETRY OF VENICE PHOTOGRAPHY** - beyond baroque free2-4pm: panel discussion 4-6pm: Opening PHOTO SHOW, Paramedia ecologist Gerry Fialka hosts a panel discussion of award-winning Venice photographers, who explore landscapes of the human psyche and push pictorial representation beyond! With Kristy Campbell, Margaret Molloy, Dave Healy, Larry Brownstein, Daniel Beaman and more. laughtears.com donations appreciated. Beyond Baroque

7 February, Sat eve, **Li Hill, John Park** at Cave Gallery 1108 AKB

8 February, Sun 4:00 PM
HOLY BARBARIANS: THE VENICE WEST POETS Toren Wallace, gives a history of the Venice West Poets 1950s, Stuart Perkoff, Bruce Boyd and Philomene Long; 1970s Wanda Coleman, Laurel Ann Bogen, and Charles Harper Webb. Guest readers LINDA ALBERTANO and LAUREL ANN BOGEN. FREE.

9 February, Mon, 6-10pm **DOCUMENTAL-Folk Music Films** at Unurban FREE
<http://www.laughtears.com/documental.html>

11 February, Wed, 7-10pm: **SUZY WILLIAMS** -jazz & blues- Danny's
FREE <http://www.dannysvenice.com/>

12 February, Thu - Folk Rock and Blues - **Stefani Valadez and Steve Moos**. The Unurban

13 February, Fri - 8:00 PM
POETRY L.A.: THE SEVENTIES DECADE - Sophie Rachmuhl, 1970s' L.A. poetry scene with Bill Mohr, George Drury Smith, Regular Admission. Beyond Baroque

14 February, Sat- 20:30–22:30
The Love Uninhibited Orchestra - Witzend, cover.

14 February , Sat NOON
14th Annual Venice Beach Mardi Gras Parade~ Photo Shoot at 11:30, PARADE ROLLS AT NOON!! Meet at Rose and OFW.

14 February , Sat 4pm: **MESS** – Author **Tosh Berman interview** at Unurban FREE
<http://www.laughtears.com/mess.html>

15 February, Sun - 4:00 PM
PUBLICATION READING: A HIGHER FORM OF POLITICS history of Los Angeles poetry scene 1950s to 1990s, Mindy Menjou and George Drury Smith's skillful translation. Film will screen at 7:00 PM. FREE. Beyond Baroque

17 February, Tue 7pm, Venice Neighborhood Council, Westminster Elementary School Auditorium

18 February, Wed, 7-10pm: **MOM - MEDIA DISCUSSION** at Beyond Baroque free <http://venicewake.org/Events/current.html>

18 February, Wed - **Ben Jackel: American Imperium**, LA Louver Gallery

19 February, Thu 6-9pm - **Venice Art Crawl Mixer** at qart.com

21 February, Sat 5pm-8pm Reception **A Short Essay on Chicano Photography**. SPARC

22 February, Sun 7pm - 7 Dudley Cinema - **EXPERIMENTAL FILMS** with Rag'n'Bones, live music, poetry, Beyond Baroque, donation

22 February, Sun - 5pm
LA POESÍA SALON: A MULTILINGUAL POETRY EXPERIENCE A salon style meet up of Spanish language and bilingual poets. Hosted by Antonietta Villamil. Suggested donation \$5. Beyond Baroque

28 February, Sat Noon-6pm **Green Venice Expo**, at Mark Twain Middle School 2224 Walgrove Ave.

28, February, Sat - 7-10pm **JAZZ FUNK FEST** at Unurban

28 February, Sat - 8:00 PM
LOS ANGELES LAUREATES: AMANDA GORMAN Los Angeles Youth Poet Laureate. **LUIS J. RODRIGUEZ** is the Poet Laureate of Los Angeles, Hosted by Linda Albertano. Plus singer-songwriter Mason Summit. Regular Admission. Beyond Baroque

OCCUPY VENICE BEACH

OVB General Assembly
Every Monday at 8pm upstairs at Beyond Baroque (681 Venice Blvd). All are welcome. More info here: www.OVB.so
People's Potluck
Every Sunday at 8pm at 3rd & Rose. Feed the People. Volunteer or donate - 424-209-2777. Or give here: www.OVB.so/HelpUsHelp
March 12 - **Doccupy** Film Series & Community Discussion/Urban Agriculture & Food Security. OVB is hosting our next Doccupy at the Electric Lodge in March, exploring urban food production and featuring films selections that highlight grassroots community food programs. Free organic food at 6pm and the event starts at 7pm.

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

- 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.

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.

MISCELLANEOUS

- 9-4pm, 2nd Saturday, every month. **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. 500 North Venice Blvd.
- 4:15pm, every Thursday – **Chess Club**. Ages 6-15. All levels welcome. Abbot Kinney Library.
- 11:30am-2:30pm, every Sunday, 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.
- 5:30pm, Sundays. **Open Mic Night**. Twentieth Church of Christ, Scientist. 132 Brooks Ave. Free.
- 7-10pm, 3rd Wednesdays. **MOM: Meditations On Media**. Beyond Baroque. Free.

POETRY

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

YOGA

- Mondays 8-9am **Heal One World: Community Yoga**, The Electric Lodge - Free

DANCE

- Mondays, 1:30-2:30pm **Dancing Through Parkinson's, Donation**, Electric Lodge

Location Guide

- **Abbot Kinney Public Library**, 501 S. Venice Blvd. 310-821-1769, fov1.org
- **Beyond Baroque**, 681 Venice Blvd. 310-822-3006, www.beyondbaroque.org
- **Danny's** 23 Windward Ave Venice 310-566-5610
- **Electric Lodge**, 1416 Electric Ave. 310-306-1854, electriclodge.org
- **G2 Gallery**, 1503 Abbot Kinney Blvd. 310-452-2842, theg2gallery.com
- **Hal's Bar and Grill**, 1349 Abbot Kinney Blvd. 310-396-3105, halsbarandgrill.com
- **Oakwood Park**, 767 California Ave.
- **Pacific Resident Theatre**, 703 Venice Blvd, 310-822-8392, pacificresidenttheatre.com
- **SPARC** - Social and Public Art Resource Center, 685 Venice Blvd. sparcmurals.org
- **Townhouse**. 52 Windward.
- **Vera Davis Center**, 610 California Ave. 310-305-1865
- **Westminster Elementary School**, 1010 Abbot Kinney Blvd. (enter auditorium from Westminster Ave) 310-606-2015
- **Witzend** 1717 Lincoln Blvd, Venice, California 90291 - 30-702-6765
- **Unurban Coffee Shop** - 3301 Pico Blvd, Santa Monica, 310-315-0056



Get Your Local Event Listed

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

Calendar by ericahlberg@ca.rr.com

HISTORICAL VENICE OFW HOMES DESTINED TO BE AXED – Continued from page 1

Avenue, the Venice street which will be most affected by the project.

The plan is for two residential apartments, a fine dining restaurant that will seat 100 and a bar in the back that will seat 16. Hours of operation will be Sunday to Thursday 8am to midnight and Friday and Saturday 9am to 1am. There will be 28 underground parking spaces for the patrons and the building's residents. No spaces will be allotted for surrounding Venice residents. It will take about 14 to 16 months before construction can begin, given the many applications that must be submitted, and 14 more months of construction, according to Reed.

The chief concerns of the residents were backed up traffic, pollution from the traffic, and noise by the comings and goings of the patrons in the late restaurant hours.

Their small alley, Park Court and surrounding Speedway, a one-way alley, would be the only routes to the restaurant, and street parking in the area is scant. They did not think that 28 parking spaces could accommodate two apartments and a dining room of 100 seats plus 16 in the bar. Reed countered that there would be layered and elevator parking plus valet and that that would help. The residents believe that would cause backed-up traffic on both Park and Speedway while the cars are being parked. Reed countered that they expect much walk-in business from the people on the Ocean Front Walk. Residents emphatically did not think so. They thought that people on the Ocean Front Walk generally are there for sun and fun and not for fine dining, nor would they be properly dressed for it. They also reminded Reed of the midnight curfew on Ocean Front Walk. Reed responded that the patrons would be asked to leave from the back area during the curfew hours.

Residents also raised the question that those patrons who want fine dining with open bay windows overlooking Ocean Front Walk might find the Ocean Front Walk scene offensive, sometimes even repulsive, and not conducive to fine dining. Reed said he lives in Venice and he knew what the scene was, and didn't think that would be a problem because the bay windows of the restaurant could be opened or closed.

Residents brought up the transients in the area and the many who sleep around Park Avenue at night. Reed answered that the owners of the property and he had been in contact with "Mike" (Councilman Mike Bonin) about this and that they were assured by Bonin that he was working on the the problem and it is being resolved.

On the issue of excessive noise, besides the comings and goings of traffic and people from 8am until 12 midnight or 1am each day of the week, Reed was made aware that on Ocean Front Walk musicians are drawn to playing in front of restaurants and other eating places and disturb residents by playing loudly and frequently, often with bongos. These musicians would attempt to get restaurant patrons' attention and money. The residents were assured by Reed that the building will block any noise because of its sheer size.

Reacting negatively to these statements, the residents also voiced their concerns about the underground water problems that arise when digging deeply into the ground for the underground parking in this area of Venice. They advised the architect to seek consultation with the builders of Thornton Lofts, a large condominium with underground parking a few blocks away. That project was stalled for over a year and went over the estimated budget because of the water that surfaced while digging. Venice, which is located right by the ocean, was built on landfill. (As many seasoned Venetians know, when founder Abbot Kinney flipped that coin in the air and won the toss to choose which of two large areas of real estate to build on, he famously chose what seemed to be the least desirable for his dream of a Venice of America... a swamp.)

When Reed was asked why he did not design a building which would incorporate the existing historical buildings in his design he answered, "this is what the owners want".

At the end of the meeting Reed thanked all for expressing their concerns.

The project will be presented to the Venice Neighborhood Council land use and planning committee. Time and place can be confirmed at: www.grvnc.org.

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As Venice Falls, Who Will Hear Her Appeal?

By Krista Schwimmer

Demolition after demolition. Monstrosity after monstrosity. The hyper-gentrification of Venice continues its ugly march. Homes that are over-sized, out-of-character, and illegal are mushrooming on Brooks, in Oakwood, and other, quaint neighborhoods. The peace of Venice has been shattered by developers seemingly in bed with City officials. Residents rally at neighborhood meetings, behind doors, and in bars. Some residents even take matters into their own hands.

One such resident is Robin Rudisill, the current chair of the Land Use and Planning Committee (LUPC) of the Venice Neighborhood Council (VNC). Acting as an individual, and not on behalf of LUPC, Robin, along with Dr. Judith Goldman, Lydia Ponce, Laddie Williams and Kim Michalowski, have filed two of four appeals against 416 and 418-422 Grand Boulevard, owned by South African artist and filmmaker, Ralph Ziman. The previous tenants have filed the two other appeals. The intent and the justification for all four appeals are the same. The appellants are asking an appeal of the Zoning Administrator's decision to approve a Coastal Development Permit that would authorize the construction of a new single-family dwelling at that location. West Los Angeles Planning Commission will hear these appeals on Wednesday, February 4th, after 4:30 pm, at the Henry Medina West L.A. Parking Enforcement Facility, 2nd Floor, Roll Call Room, 11214 West Exposition Boulevard, Los Angeles.

As chair of LUPC, Robin is often the first to see projects in Venice, as well as to hear the distressing stories of those affected by them. The story of 416 and 418-422 Grand Boulevard has a shady beginning. Both projects were presented as two, separate ones: 416 as a 1,425 square foot, 23 feet high project; and 418-422 as a 5,183 square feet, 35 foot high project. On examination of the renderings of each project, Robin noticed a pool and jacuzzi in the middle, with a partition that could easily be taken down after both were built. According to the justification in the Appeal, evidence shows that both the Zoning Administration (ZA) and Ziman's representatives, listed as Melinda Gray of GrayMatter Architecture and Rosario Perry, deliberately misled the VNC and the public by handling them as separate cases. From the start, these two should have been processed as one single-family dwelling unit with a pool and a jacuzzi in the middle.

Another troubling aspect of this particular project relates to the Mello Act. The Coastal Commission approved the demolition of the original properties by di minimus waiver. They had not, however, made a Mello Act determination. After the demolition, Douglas Swoger, Director of Asset Management, Los Angeles Housing and Community Investment Development (HCID) sent a letter to Greg Shoop in City Planning. He stated that "based on information provided by the owner, 416 and 418 Grand Blvd., LLC, a California limited liability company, the Los Angeles Housing and Community Investment Department (HCID) has determined that four (4) affordable units exist at 416-418 and 422-424 Grand Blvd., Venice CA 90291." This designation was then taken away by Greg Shoop on September 17, 2013. He gave no documentation or explanation for such a critical decision.

Ziman, or his representative, also did not inform the low income residents living at the ex-

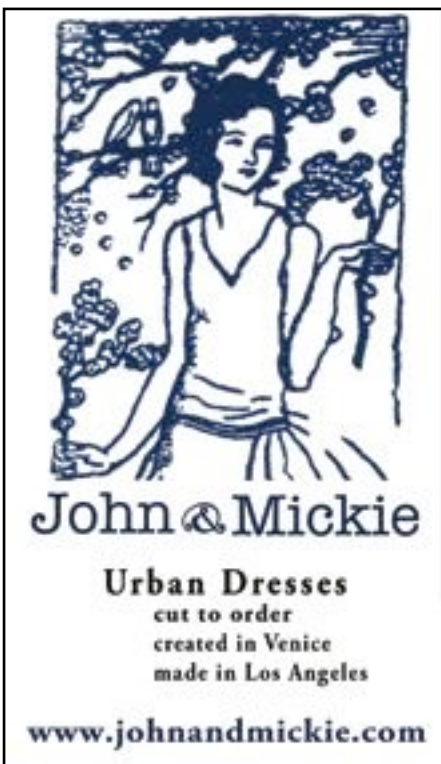
isting duplexes of their rights under the Mello Act. Instead, they offered the tenants a relocation fee based only on the Rent Stabilization Ordinance (RSO), tricking them into taking a settlement amount that did not reflect the value of their situation. On top of that, there is evidence that the owner or his representative tried to trick tenants into paying late or at the wrong place so that they would violate their lease and thus evict them with no RSO or Mello benefits. Ideally, Mello benefits would give evicted tenants replacement housing there or nearby. In this case, Shoop claimed it was not feasible to provide any kind of affordable units either on the site or elsewhere.

Although LUPC did approve both of these projects, individually, they did so with some conditions. 416 Grand Boulevard was initially approved subject to review and satisfaction of the Mello Act determination and Rent Stabilization. 418-422 Grand Boulevard was approved on condition of payment of \$400,000 in Mello Act lieu fees for each of the four affordable units there. This is not the first time that conditions placed on a project have been thumbed at by the City. This is particularly baffling as Neighborhood Councils are in the City of Los Angeles' charter.

Sadly, in the current chronicles of Venice, this is not a unique tale. At the same time, the end of the story has not been written. In fact, Robin Rudisill thinks that by all accounts, the Grand Boulevard project is a clear case, and could be a game changer for the better.

Grand Boulevard was once Grand Canal; today, it is part of the Lost Canals District. Directly across from the proposed development, there are still small, whimsical cottages. If these larger developments, however, are not stopped, one by one, they will eventually change the character of the street, then the neighborhood, and then, all of Venice. Although change is inevitable and sometimes desirable, the change these homes are bringing serves a few, greedy developers at the expense of the lives of many. And that's simply too high of a price to pay. Those of you who want to preserve Venice's character, please attend the February 4 hearing.

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www.OVB.so
On FB: OccupyVeniceCA**



Above: "And then they came for me": McMansion rising up at 120 Vista Place, between Main and Pacific. It blocks sunlight, view of the mountains, breezes, and changes the character and face of our beloved Venice
Photo: Maureen Cotter



Get That Filthy Rag Out of My Yard!

By Carol Fondiller

This is a re-print from the April 1978 100th edition

The Free Venice Beachhead. My funny Valentine. Your columns not so straight. Shaky grammar. Earnest, pompous, sincere, mistaken, precise, and homey.

One hundred issues. Who'd uv thunk it! Who'd've thought that The Free Venice Beachhead would be cherished and needed enough by the community to survive all the staff changes, world events, fashions, to still be put out, month after month. This December will be the 10th year of the publication of The Free Venice Beachhead.

Let me see now, 1968. The Pacific Ocean Park Pier was still up. And the Metro Squad, the elite corps of the Los Angeles Police Department, was busy "getting the garbage out" in their own inimitable fashion. Long hair, beards, beads, and bells were looked upon with suspicion and fear.

The City of Los Angeles had unleashed the Master Plan on Venice. It involved upgrading the community to the extent that no one who earned under thirty thousand dollars a year could afford to live by the Ocean. The Canals were to be widened and dredged, and the surrounding property owners would be assessed for the building of a yacht harbor for, according to the architectural renderings of the project, very thin, tall, blond people who wore white deck shoes.

The Ocean Front Walk, to the joy of Werner S. Scharf, one of the largest property owners in Venice, was to be turned into a Miami Beach, complete with limited public access. To the City Fathers upgrading the community meant degrading the poor; "Be realistic. Venice is the only undeveloped beach near an urban center in the Southern California area. Be realistic." When we would trot to City Hall, we would be threatened by some of the property owners and speculators.

My God. Nearly ten years! Flashing the peace sign, the finger, picketing the police state, being misrepresented in the press and media, People's Park, anti-war demonstrations, Acid Rock, Hard Rock, Granny Glasses, incense, Day-Glo psychedelic posters. "What sign are you?" "Spare Change" "Far Out" "Bummer" "Power to the People" "Let it flow" "Why are you turning me down?" "If you're interested in Women's Liberation you have to believe in free love!"

The Peace and Freedom Party originated in Venice, an alternative to the Demopubs and the Republicrats, it became an umbrella organization for various community efforts.

The Venice Defense Committee would patrol the Ocean Front Walk to monitor the police who were busting hippies for playing music without a license. (They were wearing bells.) The Free Venice Organizing Committee was bent on being able to survive and surmount the pressures of government and real estate interests to get us out.

I never thought I'd ever say "Let's see, was it '68 or '69? No, it was the year that the cops busted the L.A. Free Press Love In. How time flies! Never thought I'd say that either.

After trying to get the newspapers and the media to print a straight story without too many quotes taken out of context, after choking down bile after hearing our side misrepresented, and seeing television cameras focusing only on braless bosoms and bare feet while making snide remarks, people decided to put out a commu-

nity paper, so at least the neighbors would hear another side besides the Chamber of Commerce.

The Free Venice Beachhead was assembled by volunteers. Everyone who worked on the paper had a say. I remember seeing the paper fresh off the press. I'd never smelt anything as fresh and clean as the smell of that first newspaper. The print rubbed off in my hand.

Local business people put ill ads. People sent in articles. It just kept going. I was always surprised when we met again to put out another issue. People began asking when the next Beachhead was coming out. "I didn't get my last Beachhead!" "Get that filthy rag out of my yard!" The Beachhead became a part of Venice.

At one of the innumerable pilgrimages to Los Angeles City Hall, Councilman Arthur Snyder, vexed at those Commie Hippies who opposed his pro-development pals, waved a copy of the Free Venice Beachhead, alleging that this was put together by outside agitators. He went on, turning bright red: "This pamphlet is not financed by these people" he said, waving the 'pamphlet' at us. "It's paid for by interests outside Venice! Outside the City! Outside the state! Outside the nation! It is paid for by MOSCOW GOLD!"

I was standing next to John Haag in the back of the chambers. I bellowed out: "The shipment's a little late this month, Art!" Never let it be said that I let a cheap laugh at someone else's expense go by. I knew then that the Free Venice Beachhead had attained credibility. It had been slandered by a politician.

But it's strange. How many leaders, politicians, and movers and shakers so distrust the people whose votes they seek and whose interests they pledge themselves to protect. They can't comprehend that amateurs, volunteers, will work on something without any hope of getting paid – in money.

I remember the meetings of deciding what to call the paper, whether or not we should give it away free, should we apply for government grants. Yes, everyone should be able to get it, and government grants meant bein' watched by the government. So that idea was mixed. Not that we aren't watched anyway.

Sometimes split by ideologies, sometimes disorganized, I remember one time after leaving the Beachhead for awhile, I came back and new people were running it. I came to the meetings, and went to the place where the layout of the paper was to take place. No one was there. No note or explanation was on the door. After finding out where they were, I went there and was greeted by closed, hostile faces. I repeated my endeavors for awhile, but the meetings were kept from me. I stopped going. I found out later I had been purged because I was not a Marxist-Leninist. Well, at least I found out what I wasn't.

There were clashes, re-organizing, but the Beachhead kept on. Charlie Manson and his family came to Venice. Tye die clothes came and went. Nehru Jackets went into the free boxes, posters of Che, Huey, and Angela were put on walls and taken down, Nixon interpreted the War on Poverty to mean kill the poor. Reagan applied Lysenkian logic to the problem of the farm workers. And the Beachhead kept printing the stories of what would happen if the City of L. A. got what it wanted. It also gave extensive coverage to the trials of Russell Means and Skyhorse Mohawk. The community newspaper went on. An underground community newspaper.

Nothing has made me feel so proud as to be involved with this newspaper and this community. And in today's U.S.A., being involved with the destiny of a community is a rare occurrence, unfortunately.

What really excites me is that I, Me, am a part of history. Written History. I stayed in a place long enough to be remembered. I tried to change things. And some things have changed. A little.

No, the millennium has not come. There's still poverty of mind, hunger of body, and soul, there are still people who'd walk all over you to get more than their fair share, and developers are still trying to slide by without enough parking space. Women still get called vile names and raped. Blacks and Chicanos still bear scars of racism on their souls, and taxes are now forcing out the middle class. And artists come to Venice for the ambience and shut themselves away from it.

People come from Woodland Hills and they bring their fences and their 3,000 square feet of living space along with them, and the neighbors be damned, and they never go out to the beach and they live behind their fences.

And the condominiums are filled with rich trash who blast their stereos just as loud as any of the "undesirables" they replaced, leading lives of quiet desperation while counting their gold chains. But the idea of a mixed income community is not equated with spitting on the flag.

And there are a lot of people who are asking if the highest and best use that the beach can be put to is a Howard Johnson Hotel on the Ocean Front. Many people are even questioning whether real estate developers and speculators have the right to displace a community for their own gain. Is that really the American way?

When I hear of the gentrification, as the English call it, when the bright white young middle class move into an urban area and renovate the old houses and start moving out the old tenants, I get a bitter satisfaction of saying Yes, I told you so. I said that when I wrote the invasion of the Afflu-Hip.

I remember how the Evening Outlook used to report any picketing or rallies called by the Free Venice Organizing Committee. They always said it was non-violent with such surprise.

But they never mentioned the people who were threatened by Hettig Realty, illegally evicted by Hettig Realty, or the threats made by Mr. Dufay or Mr. Monroe to various people at many meetings.

And some of the far-out radical ideas that have been talked about in the Free Venice Beachhead have at least gained respectability as rational ways to solve problems, such as public access to beaches that are paid for by public funds, low-moderate income housing, decent health care for all. So there's still a need for this community paper.

Thanks, Beachhead. Keep on Truckin.

This month marks five years since the death of Carol Fondiller, one of the Founders of the Beachhead who, with a few short breaks, was a Collective member from 1968 until her death in 2010

Masthead on this page by: Jason Hill