

## inside

- Letters - 2
- Freeman hospital - 3
- Venice election results - 4
- Interview with Suzanne Thompson - 5
- Venice history - 6
- Navy vs. the Whales - 7
- Grocery strike aftermath - 8
- Poetry - 9
- Fahrenheit 9/11 - 10
- Our Brando - 11
- Calendar - 11
- 9/11 Poster - 12

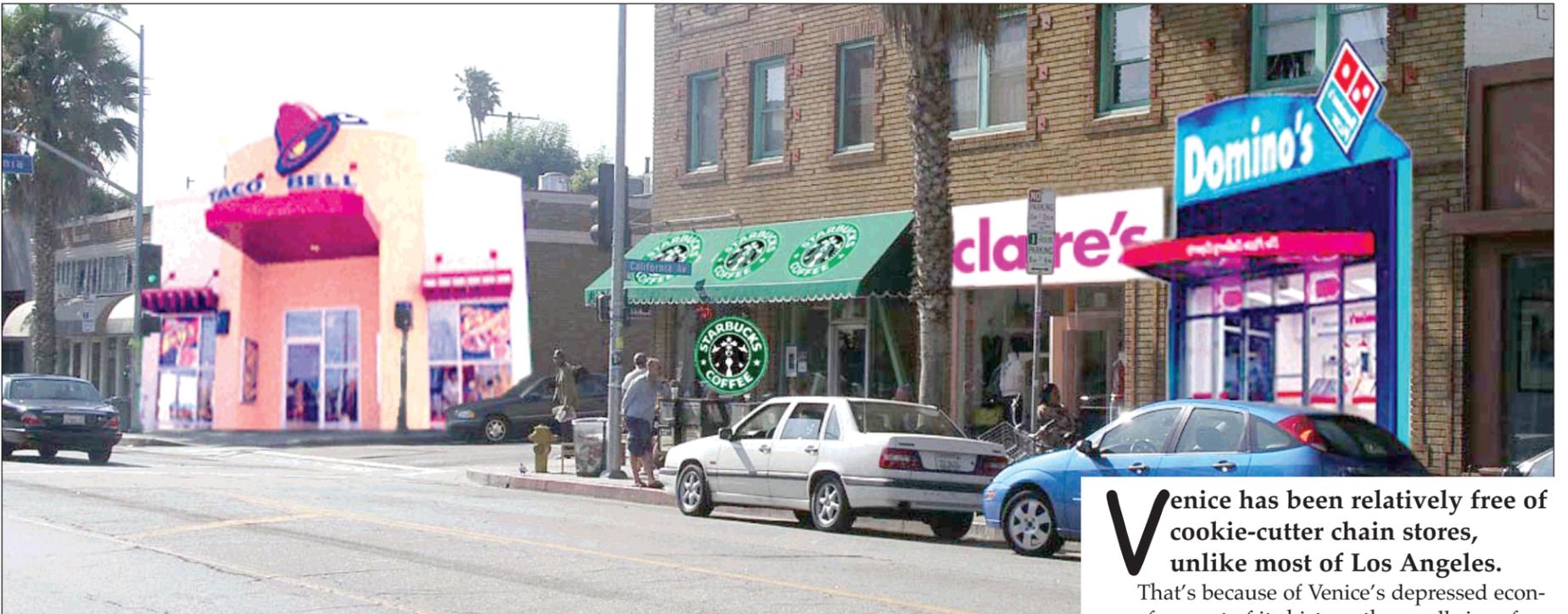


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# Chain Stores in Venice?



Artistic rendering of Abbot Kinney Blvd. by Eric Ahlberg

## Big Election Win for Progressives

By Jim Smith

Venice Progressives won a startling victory over rivals and multiple obstacles in the annual Grass Roots Venice Neighborhood Council (GRVNC) election, June 27. Three of the most caustic critics of the Progressives garnered only a handful of votes.

Elected were Suzanne Thompson, president; Alice Stek, vice president; DeDe McCrary, 2nd VP; John Davis, secretary; Francisco Letelier, at-large; Deborah Krall, Penmar North; Bonnie Cheeseman, North Beach/Rose Ave.; Bridget Graham, Oakwood; Dennis Hathaway, Penmar South; Emily Winters, Milwood/Central Venice; Michael McGuffin, Presidents' Row/Triangles; and Zoe Garaway, Canals/Peninsula.

Thompson, Stek, Cheeseman, Hathaway and Garaway have been serving on the Board. The only incumbent to be defeated for reelection was Milwood/Central Venice Rep. Kelley Willis.

Along with the election of new Board members, a vote was held on six bylaws amendments that had been approved by the Board on April 7. All of them passed by margins of 72 to 95 percent, thereby superseding opposite amendments that had passed by lesser margins on May 6 (see page four for details).

A total of 509 voters - one every 42 seconds - made their way into the polling place at Westminster school, in spite of a complete lack of parking and confusion about whether the elec-

tion would actually be held.

The opposition was so vociferous about not proceeding with the annual event that one would think there was a community-wide "fear of an election" epidemic. In the end, it turned out to be only a handful of highly vocal contrarians who couldn't come to grips with such an elemental democratic practice. In fact, Venetians seemed to have taken a dose of voteagra, such was their zeal in supporting the progressive direction of their local governmental body.

Viewing the cheerful crowd that swarmed through the school auditorium all day, no one would suspect that just two short days before the holding of the election was still in doubt. Crank calls came to the elementary school and to the downtown offices of the school district warning of trouble if the election was held on the premises.

One caller, claiming to be one of the Venice Progressive slate candidates, told the vice-principal that 10 busloads of protesters would be descending on the school. They were unsuccessful in stopping the election, but they did accomplish a more dastardly result. Not only was the school's parking lot sealed tight on election day, but the district also ruled that Westminster school could no longer use it to provide beach parking whose proceeds had been going to classroom instruction needs.

The calls to the school were just the culmination of a month-long campaign against the elec-

Vote totals and an interview with newly elected president, Suzanne Thompson - pages 4 & 5

Venice has been relatively free of cookie-cutter chain stores, unlike most of Los Angeles.

That's because of Venice's depressed economy for most of its history, the small size of most commercial buildings and a populace that doesn't particularly like the corporate shopping experience.

All that could change with property values rising and new developments going up on Abbot Kinney Blvd. and elsewhere.

Venice may join communities around the country that are taking steps to stop the replacement of local businesses with chain store outlets.

A proposal is coming before the Neighborhood Council's Land Use and Planning Committee (LUPC) on July 13 at the Boys and Girls Club to make Venice free of "formula retail" stores. That is, chain stores would be acceptable only if they didn't look like chain stores. Presumably existing chain stores would be exempt.

A new website, [www.veniceunchained.org](http://www.veniceunchained.org), and a petition opposing formula retail stores in Venice are being launched this month.

The formula retail ban has been upheld in court, and is spreading rapidly. On March 30, San Francisco designated some communities free of their chains (stores). In the San Diego area, the Venice-like community of Ocean Beach is petitioning for a vote on becoming free of formula retail stores.

More information on communities banning formula retail stores is on-line at [www.newrules.org/retail/formula.html](http://www.newrules.org/retail/formula.html).



St. Mark's Hotel, formerly at Windward and Ocean Front Walk. It was destroyed by city of L.A. code enforcement in the 1950s.

Happy 99th or 100th Birthday, Venice

-continued on page four



The collective staff of the

**BEACHHEAD COLLECTIVE:**  
John Davis, Carol Fondiller, Theresa Hulme, Hillary Kaye, Peggy Lee Kennedy, Calvin Moss, Lydia Poncé, Jim Smith, Alice Stek, Suzy Williams

The FREE VENICE BEACHHEAD is published monthly by the Beachhead Collective as a vehicle for the people of Venice to communicate their ideas and opinions to the community at large.

The Beachhead encourages anyone to submit news stories, articles, letters, photos, poetry or graphics of interest to the Venice community. The staff reserves the right to make all decisions collectively on material published. There is no editor on the Beachhead. The printing is financed by ads and donations. The articles, poetry and art work express the opinions of the individual contributors and are not necessarily the views of the Beachhead Collective.

To submit material, include your name and telephone number. Anonymous material will not be printed, but your name will be withheld on request. If return of material is desired, a stamped self-addressed envelope is required. No payment is made for material used. Mail to: P.O. Box 644, Venice, CA 90294. Web: <www.freevenice.org>. Email: <Beachhead@freevenice.org>. Copyright 2004

### Our Mission Statement

Oh Holy Shit  
The Thought Police are rising  
It is the Time  
for the Beachhead's rebirth  
Now is the Time to get your thoughts together  
If you care whether you have a thought of any worth.  
Thoughts left of Center  
Homeowner or Renter  
Put your Head where your Pen\* is  
Send it to us use your wits  
and if we like it  
We'll print or plagiarize it  
or tear it into  
teeny tiny bits  
— by the Slumgoddess

\*Pen: Antique Term for Word Processor or Computer

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**LETTERS** — send letters to:  
Email: Beachhead, POB 644,  
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### Racism in Venice?

Dear Beachhead,  
I look forward to Venice Beachhead. Its growing and as a local and writer I am excited about it.  
Venice has a long history. Venice has been an attractive location for law breakers ( since prohibition) as well as wealthy mogul types looking to capitalize on this great location.

Racism in America often included the promotion of racial segregation.  
To be a true Venetian is to be a life loving, playful, and creative thinking individual who's a little more invested in the community as a home than as a profitable real estate venture.

Using racial slurs does not in and of itself define a racist.  
If the writer of the article is a racist then let him announce this personal sentiment for himself about himself.

But to make such negative broad stroke generalizations about a community in that community, in addition to communicating only have a half hearted knowledge of its history is well, disturbing.

Freedom of speech is a beautiful thing, but what makes indy newspapers so worthwhile is the very ability to get closer to people and to promote positive things that larger medias often overlook for a thousand reasons that frustrate more often than not. I did not see one article about the peaceful family filled events at the community center during the memorial day weekend.

I seriously suggest rethinking the negative / covertly hostile articles in the beachhead. No body needs that. Its not what being a Venetian is about. If you want to live here and objectify your experience try and come up with something inspirational to say.

After all we are still neighbors.  
Camille Jacks

Response from the writer:  
Camille,

I'm sorry you didn't like my Beachhead article, Racism in Venice? I've gotten a lot of supporting comments about it. However, I didn't write it for popularity, but to shine a spotlight on a problem in our city. I believe the first step in solving a problem is to recognize that it exists.

I think I speak for the Beachhead Collective when I say that we would like more uplifting and inspirational articles in the paper. As you probably know, it is an all-volunteer staff so many good things in the community don't get reported on simply because no one was there to write about them.

We would appreciate any submissions that you'd care to make! You can email them to <beachhead@freevenice.org> and they will probably wind up in print, although it's up to the Collective.

I do believe we have been trying to accentuate the positive, while exposing the negative. In the June issue we had two beautiful kids on the front page, a review about an uplifting book by Vincent Coppola, a number of photos about positive activities around Venice, the always inspiring poetry of Hillary Kaye, and a full page devoted to that Venice tradition, the Independence Day Parade.

Yes, we could use more. Please help us.  
Jim Smith

### Talk of the Town

No wonder we can't understand each other, there are at least 34 languages spoken in Venice!

The Modern Language Association has put up a website, www.mla.org/census\_data, showing what languages are spoken in each zipcode. For 90291, here's the top 10:

- |                           |        |
|---------------------------|--------|
| 1. English                | 20,506 |
| 2. Spanish                | 6,326  |
| 3. French                 | 608    |
| 4. German                 | 248    |
| 5. Hebrew                 | 216    |
| 6. Japanese               | 202    |
| 7. Italian                | 152    |
| 8. Scandinavian languages | 134    |
| 9. Korean                 | 123    |
| Russian                   | 123    |

See the Beachhead on-line at:  
www.freevenice.org

### Beat Bush

Dear Beachhead:

Thank goodness for Carol's thoughtful and provoking question in last month's beachhead. My answer to "Are we there yet?" is not yet, but we are definitely getting there. I believe, especially after watching The Jesus Factor on TV, that George W. Bush is engaged in a modern version of the Crusades. It's the true believer Christians against them, no matter who they are. In this case they happen to be Muslim, no matter what version, not very different from the wars of hundreds of years ago.

Bush's government has lied to us about weapons of mass destruction in Iraq and then conducted a rat-hole of a war that continues unabated, taken civil liberties away in the name of national security, held hundreds of people in prison without cause or legal representation, taken housing benefits from the most needy, gutted environmental protections, put us in the most incredible national debt imaginable; and has opposed worker, women, abortion and civil rights at every opportunity. Have I forgotten anything?

But make no mistake about it, no matter that he can't put a coherent sentence together, is the butt of countless intellectual's jokes; George W. Bush knows exactly what he's doing. And he has gathered people around him to implement his philosophy. And they have done just that.

How should we respond to this, to this government that is acting contrary to the humane ideals that most of us believe in?

First and foremost, to my mind, I believe we must do everything possible to defeat dubbaya in November. And we must work to defeat like-minded Congress members who are up for election. I wear a move.on T-shirt that says democracy is not a spectator sport. Get involved!! I recently had a birthday party where I asked people to make checks out to John Kerry in lieu of a present. We raised more than \$700! Do something like that.

While I am not an impassioned supporter of John Kerry, I am an impassioned hater of George W. Bush and all he stands for! And, I believe there is a difference between them. I am not naïve, I am perfectly aware that our 2-party system is often called the "RepubliCrats" and not without good reason. But, and it's a big but, look at Bush's court appointments which shape policy far longer than the president, look at the Bush government's position before the Supreme Court on abortion, civil rights, worker's rights and the environment.

So, I implore that you NOT vote for Ralph Nader but instead work and vote for Kerry. It may sound crass but, in this circumstance, I don't believe that we have the luxury of voting our ideals. Instead, I think we must vote our survival and I firmly believe that means defeating George Bush. You can get involved in many ways and giving money is only one of them. Volunteer in your neighborhood, go to phone banks, walk precincts, write letters. Whatever it takes, do it! Visit w online if you'd like to know other ways.

Whatever you do, work to BEAT BUSH!!!  
Moe Stavnezer

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# Daniel Freeman Hospital: Still Fighting for Its Life

By Theresa Hulme

Local volunteers are boldly challenging, once again, one of the largest hospital chains and Fortune 500 companies in America. Tenet Healthcare Corporation purchased the Daniel Freeman Marina hospital from Catholic nuns a few years ago and transformed the hospital from a community serving non-profit entity into a Wall Street favorite. Though investors cash in handsomely on the 'hospitals-for-profit' fury that has hijacked U.S. healthcare, it is the average American that ultimately pays the price with their health and lives.

Known as the Enron of healthcare, Tenet Healthcare Corporation is not only the subject of investigations by the U.S. Department of Justice but has been recently exposed in the national media for crimes such as: performing unnecessary surgeries, recruiting patients, Medicare fraud, illegal doctor kickbacks, altering billing codes to bilk insurance companies, etc. In one Northern California Tenet-owned hospital, raiding authorities determined that about 80% of heart surgeries performed at this facility were unnecessary. As the quality of 'healthcare' spiraled downward following a Tenet hospital purchase, Tenet stock (THC: NYSE) seemed to fly high. With the stroke of a pen, Tenet executives eliminate desperately needed services while they sit fat and happy in distant and detached corporate offices.

The Marina's Daniel Freeman hospital was once the choice for LA's rich and famous. It now sits eerily neglected and near-empty. Tenet has literally starved patients of essential services that were once unique to the neighborhood facility by transferring many of its most profitable departments to other locations.

With federal investigations abounding and Tenet's reputation and stock price suffering since the national media exposure, Tenet has put up for sale 27 hospitals in its nationwide collection. 19 are in California, 15 in Southern California and 4 on the Westside. Less than 10 miles from one another, the hospitals serve the rapidly growing populations of West LA, the beach cities, and communities surrounding LAX.

Not wanting to pay the cost of California earthquake retrofitting, Tenet seeks to shed itself of the hospitals that require expensive construction upgrades. Consistent with its pattern of buying hospitals across the nation and then selling them for profit, Tenet borrows the Wal-Mart style of 'predatory pricing' in which corporations purchase large blocks of real estate in a town, bankrupting the competition, thus monopolizing the market which results in a masochistic dependency.

Area hospitals affected by the Tenet divestiture include: Brotman Medical Center, Culver City (420 beds); Centinela Hospital Medical Center, Inglewood (370 beds); Daniel Freeman Marina hospital, Marina del Rey (166 beds); Daniel Freeman Memorial hospital, Inglewood (358 beds).

These communities are already struggling with inadequate emergency care facilities. Tenet said it hoped to find buyers but couldn't make any guarantees. If the hospital does not sell, it is simply closed. Obviously, mortality rates will be profoundly affected.

The local volunteers challenging the unscrupulous corporation have created "We CAHRE." Created by

Playa del Rey resident Julie Inouye, the acronym stands for Community Action for Healthcare Reform and Education. Grassroots and blazing new trails in healthcare reform, the group seeks to acquire the Tenet hospitals. The corporation is supposedly 'donating' the facilities to receive a tax deduction, writing off the property as bad debt.

The ideal arrangement is for Tenet to donate the hospitals to the very same community that fought to keep its only area emergency centers open. A few years ago, Tenet purchased the hospitals, announced they would be keeping them open, then a few weeks later put the property up for sale. Julie Inouye rallied, created a group of volunteers called Save Our Marina Hospital and rescued the neighborhood hospitals from closure.

With U.S. healthcare an increasingly failing system, the profit-seeking hospital chain debacles echo the drastic need for serious reform. The non-profit We CAHRE is attempting to lay the groundwork for what expects to become a national trend: community ownership partnered with preventative medicine. If the community organization can inherit the hospitals, the plan is to transition the reactive and trauma based nature of American medicine into a more holistic, humane and common sense approach to healing. The profit driven mania of U.S. medical care has become tragic to many families but lucrative for investors and hospital owners.

As pharmaceutical corporations dominate the industry, the actual definition of 'healthcare' has sadly become a misnomer. Many people, even the well-insured, are simply afraid of seeing a doctor. With surgery departments wildly profitable, many doctors instantaneously recommend intrusive and unneeded surgical procedures. Handed

out like band-aids, pharmaceutical drugs are promptly suggested.

Simply, the industry profits when people are ill or believe themselves to be. In America's fast food, drug obsessed economy, our 'healthcare' system stands to benefit and actually helps to create a sick and drug addicted society. Unbeknownst to many, most pharmaceutical drugs are petroleum based. Incidentally, the Bush Administration/Republican party receives some of its largest donations from pharmaceutical/drug corporations. The invasion and occupation of oil-rich Iraq was eagerly supported by Corporate America.

On a more positive note, We CAHRE has recently picked up support from Westside's Councilwoman Cindy Miscikowski and L.A. Mayor Jim Hahn. (With election year coming up, he needs a feel-good issue) Wherever the support comes from, We CAHRE needs it. Tenet is reported to be planning to 'donate' the hospitals to an inside group of doctors and CEOs affiliated with Tenet and its local holdings. Some say that doctor owned hospitals create conflicts of interest, especially considering Tenet's sordid history.

In the bigger picture, the work of this local group of activists and volunteers will reverberate nationally. The poor state of healthcare in America is a huge national embarrassment, even in comparison to substantially less 'developed' nations.

In any case, most Americans agree that the current system, or lack thereof, is in need of Emergency Medical Treatment. We CAHRE is paving the way, pioneering efforts to address vital quality-of-life issues. In the process of obtaining 501 (c) 3 status as a non-profit entity, financial support is critical. Sought after nationally by reporters and other community leaders experiencing the same crisis, founder Julie Inouye says "The community must understand how important this is.

This hospital is for our region, we plan to turn it into a cutting-edge, model facility. At this point, we need the community to step up to the plate and help us. Nobody knows better what is right for a community than the people who live in it. This is our opportunity to do something great." If the hospital becomes owned and operated by We CAHRE, the non-profit status means that any profits generated simply recycle back into the system.

Donations from the community have come in as low as \$10. The estimated upfront cost for the hospitals is at about \$10 million.

For more information, to become a volunteer or donate to WE CAHRE, visit [www.somh.org](http://www.somh.org) or call 306-1487. Literally, a life or death issue.



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**GRVNC Election** – continued from page 1

tion which included convincing the city's Dept. of Neighborhood Empowerment (DONE) that Venice was split down the middle over the issue and the election should be postponed.

The Board deliberated over DONE's advice to postpone the election and concluded that the future of the neighborhood council was in danger if the election was not held as scheduled, since a majority of Board members would no longer be in office after June 30. In that case, the Board would no longer be able to conduct business without a quorum. A majority of the GRVNC Board rejected DONE's advice and voted to proceed with the election, whether or not it was sanctioned by the city.

Board member Paul Ryan, who works for the Center for Governmental Studies and specializes in campaign finance reform, was appointed to chair the election committee. Ryan drafted new rules for the election which included no absentee voting, but they were not approved by DONE. He resigned three days before the election after checking with Westminster School and learning that the site and/or parking might not be available after all.

Two days before the election, the Board appointed Attorney Sabrina Venskus, an at-large member, as the new (third) election chair, and Casey Peters as the Independent Election Administrator. Peters had recently administered the elections for a station board at radio station KPFK.

Venskus hastily created ballots, instruction sheets and other election material, drafted a crew of poll workers and open the doors of the polling place on time at 10 am, Sunday morning. Promptly at 4 pm, Peters announced the polls closed and began counting the ballots.

While the turnout was somewhat off from previous elections, it was not as much of a fall off as some have alleged. Two years ago, 621 votes were counted in the GRVNC's first election. Last year, in a highly-contested election, the on-site tally was 678 (another 570 votes came from absentee voters). Neither of these elections had the problem of not having any parking or the uncertainty of whether the election would even be held. In these circumstances, having only a 25 percent smaller turnout at the polls is amazing.

Now that Venetians have spoken, the ball is in the city of Los Angeles' court. Will our overlord permit genuine grass roots democracy or will we become Iraq-west?



**Election Day Photos by Lydia Ponce**



# Grass Roots Venice Neighborhood Council Preliminary results from the June 27 election

**Total voters: 509**



**President**  
Suzanne Thompson

Jennifer Carson: 46 regular votes + 6 provisional votes = 52 total votes  
**Suzanne Thompson: 357 regular votes + 31 provisional votes = 388 total votes**  
 5 regular write-ins + 1 provisional write-in = 6 total write-ins

**Vice President**

**Alice Stek: 359 regular votes + 35 provisional votes = 394 total votes**  
 10 regular write-ins + 1 provisional write-in = 11 total write-ins



Dr. Alice Stek



**2nd Vice President**  
DeDe McCrary

**DeDe McCrary: 363 regular votes + 33 provisional votes = 396 total votes**  
 6 regular write-ins + 2 provisional write-ins = 8 total write-ins

**Government Relations Officer**

**Sheila Bernard: 335 regular votes + 31 provisional votes = 366 total votes**  
 14 regular write-ins + 2 provisional write-ins = 16 regular write-ins



Sheila Bernard



**Secretary**  
John Davis

**John Davis: 357 regular votes + 31 provisional votes = 388 total votes**  
 10 regular write-ins + 1 provisional write-in = 11 total write-ins

**At-Large Representative**

**Francisco Letelier: 346 regular votes + 30 provisional votes = 376 total votes**  
 Richard Myers: 25 regular votes + 3 provisional votes = 28 total votes  
 Larry B. Smoot: 7 regular votes + 3 provisional votes = 10 total votes  
 4 regular write-in votes + 1 provisional write-in vote = 5 total write-ins



Francisco Letelier



**Geographic Representative District 1 – Penmar North**  
Deborah Krall

**Deborah Krall: 90 regular votes + 3 provisional votes = 93 total votes**  
 Rick Selan : 2 regular votes + 0 provisional votes = 2 total votes  
 0 write-in votes recorded

**Geographic Representative District 2 – North Beach/Rose Avenue**

**Bonnie Cheeseman: 25 regular votes + 4 provisional votes = 29 total votes**  
 7 regular write-ins + 0 provisional write-ins = 7 total write-ins  
 Total votes cast for Geographic Representative District 2 = 36



Bonnie Cheeseman



**Geographic Representative District 3 – Oakwood**  
Bridget Graham

**Bridget Graham: 63 regular votes + 12 provisional votes = 75 total votes**  
 2 regular write-in votes + 1 provisional write-in vote = 3 total write-ins  
 Total votes cast for Geographic Representative District 3 = 78

**Geographic Representative District 4 – Penmar South**

**Dennis Hathaway: 30 regular votes + 2 provisional votes = 32 total votes**  
 Will Yeager: 2 regular votes + 2 provisional votes = 4 total votes  
 3 regular write-in votes + 0 provisional votes = 3 total write-ins



Dennis Hathaway



**Geographic Representative District 5 – Milwood/Central Venice**  
Emily Winters

Howard Saxe: 3 regular votes + 0 provisional votes = 3 total votes  
 Kelley Willis: 8 regular votes + 0 provisional votes = 8 total votes  
**Emily Winters: 115 regular votes + 9 provisional votes = 124 total votes**  
 1 regular write-in vote + 0 provisional write-in votes = 1 total write-in  
 Total votes cast for Geographic Representative District 5 = 136

**Geographic Representative District 6 – Presidents' Row/Triangles**

**Michael McGuffin: 27 regular votes + 3 provisional votes = 30 total votes**  
 John Raphling: 20 regular votes + 3 provisional votes = 23 total votes  
 3 regular write-in votes + 0 provisional write-in votes = 3 total write-ins



Michael McGuffin



**Geographic Representative District 7 – Canals/Peninsula**  
Zoe Garaway

**Zoe Garaway: 34 regular votes + 2 provisional votes = 36 total votes**  
 2 regular write-in votes + 3 provisional write-in votes = 5 total write-ins  
 Total votes cast for Geographic Representative District 7 = 41

Total votes cast for all 7 districts Geographic Representative = 481

**By-Laws amendment 1** - Defines stakeholder status (live, work, own property, participate in Venice organization). Stakeholder status attested to by the voter (ID not required).  
**Yes: 317 regular votes + 34 provisional = 351 (77%)**  
 No: 100 regular votes + 7 provisional = 107

**By-Laws amendment 2** - Redistribution of Board duties.  
**Yes: 371 regular votes + 33 provisional = 404 (90%)**  
 No: 38 regular votes + 6 provisional = 44

**By-Laws amendment 3** - Stakeholders will affirm by signature at the time they request a ballot that they meet the criteria to be a stakeholder.  
**Yes: 299 regular votes + 34 provisional = 333 (73%)**  
 No: 115 regular votes + 7 provisional = 122

**By-Laws amendment 4** - If more than two candidates are running for an office, voting shall be by Instant Runoff Voting.  
**Yes: 399 regular votes + 38 provisional = 437 (95%)**  
 No: 20 regular votes + 1 provisional vote = 21 no votes

**By-Laws amendment 5** - A third party, such as the League of Women Voters, shall serve as the election administrator.  
**Yes: 404 regular votes + 36 provisional = 440 (94%)**  
 No: 23 regular votes + 3 provisional votes = 26

**By-Laws amendment 6** - Board members shall remain in office past the July 1 expiration date for their terms if newly elected Board members are not seated by then due to election challenges.  
**Yes: 386 regular votes + 35 provisional = 421 (91%)**  
 No: 36 regular votes + 4 provisional = 40

## Interview with new Venice Neighborhood Council President Suzanne Thompson

Suzanne Thompson, a resident of Central Venice, became the second person to be elected president of the Grass Roots Venice Neighborhood Council (GRVNC). Two years ago, Tisha Bedrosian was elected unopposed to become the first president. Bedrosian resigned after a year in office, and the Board appointed to replace her until the June 2004 election. Thompson, a member of the Venice Progressives slate, was elected last year to an at-large position on the GRVNC Board. She now begins a two-year term as president. She was interviewed for the Beachhead by Jim Smith.

**Beachhead:** How does it feel to be elected to a position with no compensation but lots of headaches as the leader of Venice's emerging government?

**Thompson:** I'm honored to have the support of my community and look forward to advancing the Venice Progressive's Platform along with the backing of a group of committed, highly talented individuals elected to the Board. It's great to be monetarily compensated for one's work. However, I find great satisfaction working for social justice and for the good of my community. I feel very fortunate to represent Venice and I know I gain strength, courage, and patience working with this Board. I see my role as President of GRVNC to inspire others to join in, get involved and make a difference in Venice. This will not be a one woman show. I'm happy to share the headaches.

**Beachhead:** Tell us a little about yourself. What do you do for a living? How long have you lived in Venice? etc.

**Thompson:** I first moved to Venice in 1984 and lived with my partner at the time, Ed Ferrer. This is where I found community and knew this where I wanted to spend the rest of my life. I can remember waking up in the morning and phoning Steve Clare and Susan Millmann to join us for breakfast at the Merchant of Venice on Abbot Kinney Blvd. (then known as West Washington Blvd.) and it was like party. All our friends were there having breakfast. Our social time was spent discussing current events, especially the war in Central America and what was happening with the homeless on Venice Beach.

I became politically active volunteering for

El Rescate, the largest Central American Refugee Center in the country, located in downtown L.A. which led to a development director position. Jackson Browne and Bonnie Raitt were very committed to the cause and I was successful in securing them for many benefit concerts. In the early 80's I spent two weeks in Nicaragua and El Salvador and witnessed the destruction and violence my country was imposing on these people.

I spent years fundraising for non-profit organizations which included the American Red Cross and the American Lung Association where I produced a three-day outdoor adventure, a Bike and Hike on Catalina Island. My love for the arts and politics grew even stronger and I was fortunate to be asked to manage Sabia, a Nuevo Cancion music group based in LA which then led to work with Huayucaltia, an L.A.-based Andean Jazz fusion ensemble. That led to working with the music group Soul Vibrations from Bluefields, Nicaragua. We toured the US and Canada.



Suzanne Thompson

I've also done a lot of work about the founder of the ILWU (Longshore Union), Harry Bridges. I helped develop two radio documentaries, "From Wharf Rats to Lords of the Docks: The Life and Times of Harry Bridges" and "From Piers to Plantations: A Union in Hawai'i". Last year, I produced the live performance of "From Wharf Rats to Lords of the Docks" in front of an audience, mostly ILWU workers and brought in Haskell Wexler to film it.

**Beachhead:** What do you see as the most pressing issues before the GRVNC?

**Thompson:** For me, it is the neighborhood council being recognized by our Councilwoman, Cindy Miscikowski, as the official representatives, or "voice" for Venice, as the city charter provides. We need better relations with her and her aides.

The other pressing issue is communicating with the Venice stakeholders, media and City Hall. GRVNC has not done a good job of that and I feel it has really hurt the organization and its credibility. It is a major priority for me and I believe the organization can make a recovery and involve more people in the organization as well, by informing people of our accomplishments, goals and upcoming meetings and events. There are several GRVNC committees doing great work for Venice. Check out the website, [www.grvnc.org](http://www.grvnc.org). This too will be improved.

**Beachhead:** It's still up in the air whether DONE will certify the June 27 election? What do you think should be done (pardon the pun)?

**Thompson:** The GRVNC board members need to meet with DONE and try to work this out. The neighborhood council and its committees can and should continue to meet over the summer. I'm committed to doing whatever it will take to keep this organization alive.

**Beachhead:** Getting past the current adversities, what do you want to accomplish in the next two years?

**Thompson:** I want to work to improve the organization's communications, as I earlier stated and to involve more stakeholders on committees and form new committees. Two that come to mind are a Community Garden and an Arts Committee. We need more public art in Venice and to celebrate our community of musicians, actors, poets and visual artists. We have several artists on the board, two of whom have beautiful murals in Venice. I know there are lots of people who care about what's going on in Venice and are looking for opportunities to improve their neighborhoods and to make a contribution. If I can help make that happen, along with the Board, then I'll be happy.

Beyond Venice:

## Trends in Foreign Elections

By Faramarz Nabavi

Most U.S. media virtually ignores the rest of the world, unless if America has thousands of troops fighting somewhere. There is a blackout on how people are reacting both to Bush and pro-business policies in their own lands.

The single trend that cuts across most countries is the breakdown of two-party dominance; even in those that lack proportional representation, such as Canada and Britain, more than a third of voters cast ballots against the two biggest parties.

On June 28, Canadians gave the pundits a run for their money by voting solidly against the pro-Bush Conservative Party. A major corruption scandal, and displeasure with the increasingly pro-business, anti-social orientation of the incumbent Liberal Party, high antagonism toward American military and economic hegemony caused Canadians to reject the Conservatives. This despite projections showing a race that was "too close to call."

With turnout high, many Canadians voted for the socialist New Democratic Party (similar to the Peace & Freedom Party), the leftist Bloc Quebecois, and the Greens. Founded by unions, the New Democratic Party forced the Canadian government to adopt universal single-payer health care back in the 1960s. Now, with no party holding a majority in Parliament, the Liberals will depend on support from the NDP and BQ, providing protection for social services at home and an independent foreign policy abroad.

Overseas, the European Parliament elections, held over four days in June and covering 25 countries, including the 10 new member-states in the east, showed a strong trend among voters against ruling parties that sent troops for Bush's war on Iraq, as well as those that have been imposing pro-business economic policies, as in Germany and France. In addition, a major issue was the future of European integration.

The main groupings in the European Parliament did not change their overall relative standing. The conservative Christian Democrats came in first, followed by labor/social democrats, libertarian/liberal centrists, eurosceptics, greens/regionalists, far left, and far right. Conservatives ran very strong in Eastern Europe. The centrists ran strong everywhere, and the eurosceptics grew in a number of outlying countries (Britain, Denmark, Sweden, Poland, and Slovakia).

Of the major West European countries, Britain faced the greatest political upheaval, with Tony Blair's (a.k.a. the "Bliar") Labour Party getting a moribund 20 percent of the vote, with the Conservatives having a huge drop as well, while the eurosceptics surged from almost nowhere to within striking distance of both. The Greens and the racist British National Party also made big gains, though the BNP failed to win a seat.

The Green parties across Europe witnessed divergent trends: in Germany and Britain, they did very well, benefiting from dissatisfaction with the ruling labor parties, but elsewhere their support dropped. The German and French Green parties have a centrist "realo" orientation, supporting interventionist wars (NATO vs. Yugoslavia); left "fundi" Greens did poorly.

For the far left, the results were also mixed. Those who pursued a "reformist" coalition strategy (France, Spain) lost many seats, as did the Trotskyites; those who kept a strong left stand (Czech Republic, Portugal) and those who pursued a broad left strategy (Netherlands, Germany) did well. However, in Berlin, where the PDS has imposed pro-business budget cuts in a coalition government with the SPD, the voters gave both of them a stunning rebuke.

Finally, for those who are interested in resistance movements, Sinn Fein won seats for the first time, in both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. However, the Republic of Ireland also passed a constitutional amendment withholding citizenship from the children born to recent immigrants. Basques protested the Spanish government's repression by organizing their own mock election.

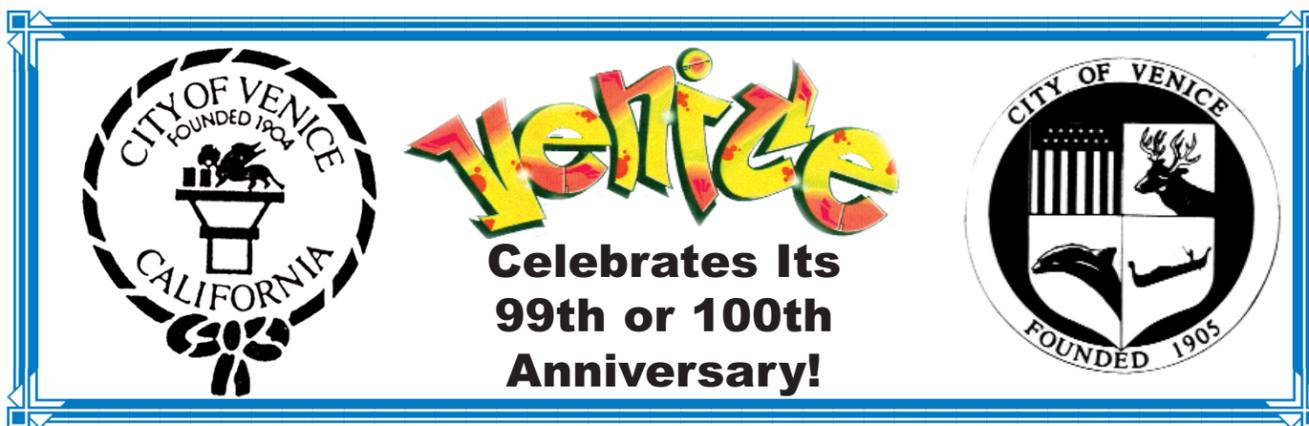
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## The man who built the Venice Trailer Park and turned the swamp into a boat harbor

By Linda L. Schmidt

**M**y father, Larry Norman, came to the Venice area in 1919 from Edmonton, Alberta and had been active and prominent in affairs relating to the development of the harbor and the beaches until his death. He was born in Canby, Minnesota on January 9, 1899 and at the age of eight he was sent with his sister to live in a convent in Innesfail, Alberta after an intruder murdered his father. His mother, Mary, was a nurse in the Yukon Territory and flew from one Eskimo village to another providing medical treatment to the Eskimos. She was the only medical person at that time treating all the Eskimos in the territory.

After arriving in Venice, he worked at the pier. He later became a newsreel cameraman for Pathe News. His first business connection in Venice was with the Harry C. Lieber Realty Co. Larry later worked for Harrison Brush Chevrolet Company as a branch manager in Venice.

In 1929, Mr. Norman opened the Chevrolet-Oldsmobile Agency in Hermosa Beach, while still living in Venice. While in the south beach community, he joined the Rotary Club in Hermosa Beach and became the president of the club in 1932. He also joined the Masonic lodge there and was Master of the Hermosa lodge in 1935. He was also a Hermosa Chamber vice president and a member of the police commission.

In 1936, he acquired the first property at 346 Washington Street for Trailer City. In addition to selling cars to finance the purchase of land, my father sold rebuilt electric meters out of his car while crisscrossing the United States. After each successful trip he would return to Venice and purchase another lot.

Eventually, Trailer City grew to three(?) acres and the park had 110 spaces that could accommodate single and doublewide mobile homes up to 50 feet long. It became one of the first mobile home parks in the city.

For years, during the summer months, whenever the circus came to town, they would rent space at the trailer park. Generally a band of Gypsies would follow close behind and they too would stay at the park. We were the only park in the Los Angeles basin that would allow them to make camp.

During the 1940's, he was too old to join the military but that did not discourage him from doing his part in the war effort. He went to work in Long Beach as a welder building ships. My mother managed the trailer park and took care of the kids.

In 1950, he became active in real estate and insurance after he purchased the Bert Gable property and business at 327 Washington Street. He and my mother, Rose were very active in scouting and it was at the real estate office that he added a room for the girl and boy scouts to meet. He was president of the Venice Board of Realtors in 1958. In addition to scouting, Larry was very active in the P.T.A. and he received a lifetime membership from the Venice Council.

Mr. Norman sold his real estate and insurance company to Lloyd C. Knight when he became too sick to work.

Credited with being the most outstanding contributor from the beach community to the development of Marina del Rey and Venice, he began his civic activity with two terms as president of Washington Beach Improvement Assn. in 1949. He also became a director of the Venice Chamber of Commerce in 1950 and was elected president in 1952.

After Norris Poulson was elected mayor of Los Angeles in 1953, Mr. Norman was his first Recreation Commission appointment. While serving a full five-year term he was active in setting up numerous recreation projects for the Venice area, including the new Venice Beach million dollar recreation center, Penmar golf course, the expansion of Oakwood Playgrounds and the funds for the Venice all-year covered pool.

He was a member of the Marina Del Rey advisory committee. As chairman of the southern division of the Citizens Advisory Committee to the State Legislative Committee on Marine Affairs and Bay and Harbor Development, he was active in sponsoring state legislation which resulted in enabling legislation that made state approval and financial assistance possible in the harbor.

While working for the harbor development and as Chamber president, he traveled three times to Sacramento to aid in securing state funds with which to purchase the harbor site. After becoming a commission member, he made other trips to the state capital and one to Washington, on behalf of the funding of the marina.

Mr. Norman was a member of the Los Angeles Recreation and Parks Commission and served as president for a year. He also has been a member of the Coliseum commission and he was a Chamber of Commerce president in 1953. He was a member and director of the Chamber of Commerce group for many years.

In 1960 Mr. Norman, his wife and three children took an extended visit to Europe. They

went over to do some snow skiing at the famous resorts and travel throughout 17 countries in the six months they were there. Larry was able to attend a Rotary Club meeting each week in some of the major cities of each country. He was an informal goodwill ambassador for Venice Beach.

Mr. Norman and his family enjoyed many sports, but ice skating, water and snow skiing were the family favorites. With Lake Los Angeles only two blocks away, you would often find the family and friends at the lake. This lake is now the beach area of the marina.

He regularly performed in shows with the All-Year Mercury figure skating club. In a performance of Pinocchio, Mr. Norman played Gepetto and Richard Dwyer (age 11) played Pinocchio. Richard Dwyer also known as "Mr. Debonair" has been an Ice Follies favorite for 30 years and is the corporate general manager of the Redwood Empire Arena in Santa Rosa, Calif. For the past 14 years Mr. Dwyer and "Peanuts" cartoonist Charles Schultz, who is the owner of the Arena and the show's executive producer, provide Sonoma County with an annual holiday extravaganza. The Thursday night premiere benefited Starcross, the North Coast community that cares for kids with AIDS.

During my father's illness he would sit in his bedroom of our house on the hill in Playa del Rey and watch the progress of the building of the marina. On August 24, 1962, my sister took my father for a ride around the harbor on the newly paved Admiralty Way. He did not live long enough to see that thirty years of hard work building up the trailer park would be destroyed by the very project he spent so much time on getting developed.

My father died the next day, August 25, 1962. Shortly after his death the zoning committee took away our zoning for a trailer park and forced us out of business.

My mother sold our property to La Casa Linda Properties with Alan J. Radford as General Partner and there were sixteen Limited Partners. I was told that La Casa Linda Properties went bankrupt and my family never did get the \$1.25 million dollars for the purchase of the 3 1/2 acres of land where Trailer City once occupied. My father's real estate office at 327 Washington St. also disappeared from the trust fund set up by my mother and the probate court could never account for the dispersal of the land.

### Venice Club Building Condemned; Site May Be Park

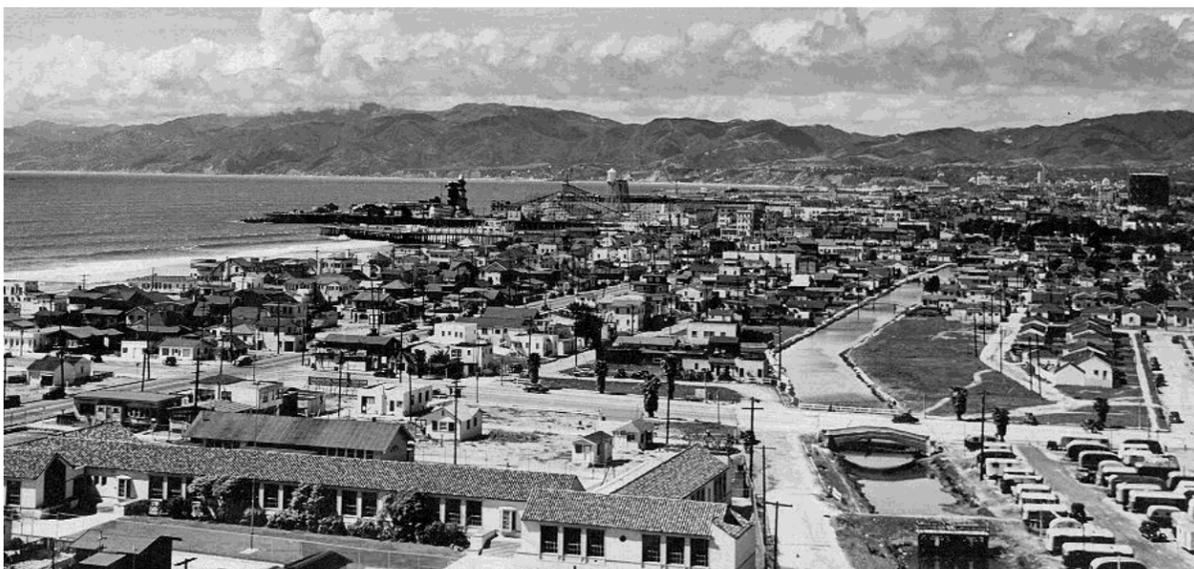
Once a spot of gaiety but now condemned by the City Health Department, the old Venice Country Club soon may become the site of a city park, it was revealed yesterday.

The city Recreation and Park Commission, at the insistence of Councilmen Harold Harby, took steps to trade city property for the square-block grounds of the old club in the beach area bounded by Westminster street, and the Pacific Electric right of way.

The old club house is now dilapidated. Families living there have been ordered to move because the building has been declared unfit for habitation.

The property on a small hill and comprising just less than three acres, was described as an "ideal parksite" by the commission, which asked the city real estate agent to start proceedings to trade city land or to condemn the land for park uses.

L.A. Herald-Express, 1946



Venice around 1940. In the lower right hand corner is Trailer City at 346 Washington Street. The lower left corner is Nightingale Elementary School.

## Venice of Los Angeles

By Jane Gordon

History has ups and downs. Venice started coming down after Abbot Kinney died. The powers interested in Venice were at that time divided into two main camps: those that wanted to adhere to Kinney's principle or absolutely no limits on business—i.e., amusement concessions—and those who wanted Venice to be a residential beach resort.

City mis-management brought this division to a head. For one thing, politicians seemed to be helping themselves instead of serving the people (1922: city treasurer vanishes with Venice's valuables.) Also, many were dissatisfied with public facilities. Motorists needed more streets and parking. Population growth resulted in an overburdened sewer system. There were complaints about the canals; since Kinney's death, the shallow canals were left untended and tidal flow was not adequate to prevent stagnation. They were declared a health menace.

So the argument shaped up—annexation vs. independence. In 1923, annexation to Santa Monica as well as to Los Angeles was to be voted on. Nobody knew for sure who was the good guy, which plan would be better. No plan got a majority. By 1925, the businessmen and other proponents of annexation to L.A. had got themselves together. They argued that annexation would solve all the above problems and as an extra-added attraction, Venice would get in on L.A.'s Chamber of Commerce, Board of Health, Police force, water supply, etc.

That is, the annex-ites were willing to allow their community to be controlled from the outside in return for financial gain. This was better than working with their neighbors to decide for themselves and to provide the reforms and services Venice needed.

The opposite faction felt that residents' interests in the community was more legitimate and sincere than the speculators' interest. They resisted the idea that others would be making decisions about their community for them. Their slogan..ANNEXATION MEANS SLAVERY.

But L.A. won Venice. The vote was 3,139 to 2,197. That was in 1925. The L.A. Chamber of Commerce immediately started announcing glowing plans for spending \$10,000,000 to make Venice a more famous and glittering amusement park than Coney Island. The Canals were on the list, too. They were filled in and paved in 1927. Thus they took two birds with one bulldozer, providing roads for the tourists, automobiles and doing away with the health menace of the Canals. Speculators decided to continue L.A.'s progressive direction by next filling in the lagoon to make way for a shopping center.

As a side note, a court decision was necessary before L.A. could touch the Canals—Kinney had provided that they should always remain private property to foil just such a plan.

Well. You can see just by looking out your window that a Coney Island we ain't. A Safeway, Post Office and Bank don't make much of a shopping center. What happened to LA's plan for Venice will be discussed next time.

A word of thanks to the L.A. City Planning Department, which let me come down there to let me look at their material on Venice. They planned to let us see our past before they let us know our future (see BEACHHEAD editorial). But they haven't been able to get enough money together to print the damn thing. Bodes ill for the future.



Canals celebrate Summer Solstice. Frank Strasser and a band of canal locals get their neighbors on their feet at the annual party sponsored by *Voice of the Canals*.

## U.S. NAVY ATTACKS THE WHALES

By N.G.

About 2 years ago, one type of sonar system, an underwater three dimensional scanning device, was tested in the Bahamas. Right after the tests, whales from different species beached themselves, and 7 of them died after horrible suffering. The US Navy initially denied their sonar system was responsible for the deaths, but their own investigation found out later, that the dead whales had hemorrhaging around their eyes and ears, indicating severe acoustic trauma. Since the tests, the population of beaked whales has disappeared, leading researchers to conclude that they abandoned their habitat or died at sea.

In July 2002, despite strong concerns from many leading scientists, the Bush Administration authorized the US Navy to use the SURTASS LFA Sonar System (Surveillance Towed Array Sensor System Low Frequency Active Sonar), which is the deadliest type of sonar system that had been developed, to detect submarines. Bush gave the US Navy a permit to use the SURTASS LFA Sonar System in 75 percent of the world's oceans. The vast dying of sea animals would have such an impact on our ecosystem, that mammals on land including us could suffer con-



sequences we do not even foresee now. This system is more powerful than the one that was tested in the Bahamas, and it's soundwaves spread across hundreds of thousands of square miles in the water. These soundwaves, sent out by underwater loudspeakers, scan the ocean for objects in vast distances, producing a sound volume of 240 decibels. Even 100 miles away from the source, the sound has a volume of 160 decibels, loud enough to cause permanent hearing damage in

humans. Marine mammals have a much higher hearing sensitivity than humans. Their survival depends on their exceptional hearing ability. In addition to the hemorrhaging of ears and lungs, the whales experience decompression sickness. Whales who are diving into deeper water panic at the volume of the sound and rise up too quickly, causing expanding nitrogen in their bodies from the rapid change in pressure, which can cause serious damage to cells.

NRDC, Greenpeace, and other environmental organizations are currently appealing in court against the deployment of the LFA Sonar System to save the whales from suffering a gruesome death. In 2002 a judge pointed out that the Bush Administration's permit for the use of the LFA Sonar System violates a number of federal laws,

**What's Your Bumper Say?** If you can top Andy Manoff and Frank Dorrel (publisher of *Addicted to War*), send us a photo. Your bumper may appear in the Beachhead!



# Who Killed The Living Wage? An Insider's View of the Grocery Strike

By Hillary Kaye

On February 26, 86 percent of the 55,000 workers of the United Food and Commercial Workers Union voted to ratify a contract with the three grocery giants Safeway (Vons and Pavilions), Kroger (Ralphs), and Albertsons. The strike, which lasted five months, began last October when negotiations failed with Safeway. Their competitors Kroger and Albertsons immediately responded by locking out their unionized employees.

The contract dispute was over two central issues, lowered health care benefits and the corporation's attempt to institute a two-tier system. A new person hired would be subject to a lower wage and benefit scale than those already there. This provision would open the door to increased profits by getting rid of older, better paid employees.

The strike was pivotal, because what was at stake was the future of the living wage for workers. As real wages continue to decline for workers and the middle class continues to disappear, it seems especially important to try to evaluate the strike and its results. To do so I plan to do a series of interviews with some of the participants. This first interview is with Neicer, a veteran Ralphs employee who was very active in the strike.

## BEFORE THE STRIKE

**Beachhead:** What did you think of the preparations for the strike?

**Neicer:** I felt the union was not prepared.

**Beachhead:** What sort of input did you and the others have in the decision to strike?

**Neicer:** Just our vote. Details of their take aways were conveyed during the voters meeting. Personally I felt the two-tier system was out of the question.

**Beachhead:** How long did you think the strike would last?

**Neicer:** I believed the strike would not happen, and when the strike began I thought "Two weeks, max."

**Beachhead:** Did the union express any view on how long it would last?

**Neicer:** No.

**Beachhead:** Did the union discuss strategy with the workers?

**Neicer:** It instructed members how to maintain effective picketing positions to restrict truck deliveries. Most members did not welcome aggressive picketing during the rallies. They basically wanted to keep peace with the customers, since management was threatening members with consequences they would face when returning to work.

**Beachhead:** What was your thinking about the strike at the time pre-strike?

**Neicer:** I thought we would give them a run for the money! The companies could not survive without us during the holidays, the most profitable time of the year and they would not jeopardize sales due to a labor dispute.

## DURING THE STRIKE

**Beachhead:** What was your role in the strike?

**Neicer:** I was active in the strike, and did everything I could to support our union.

**Beachhead:** What was your sense of how the strike was going?

**Neicer:** There was no balance of power. The management prolonged negotiations only to offer the same contract with switched wording. It was a slap in the face. They had the upper hand and were armed to side-step every old fashioned move.

**Beachhead:** Was there feedback from the union as to how it was going?

**Neicer:** Details were never discussed, only instructions as to how to keep members strong on the picket line, and news of upcoming visits from influential people at rallies or events.

**Beachhead:** What support did workers get from other unions?

**Neicer:** We obtained quite a lot of support from other unions, the first union up to bat was the Teachers Association, a group of 78-80 teachers who marched, chanted and scolded customers for crossing the lines. The iron workers Local 433 and 416, communication workers, IBEW, RIW, and the IUE made numerous contributions. The Teamsters gave their support by honoring picket lines and eventually went out on their "silver bullet" plan, refusing to drive their trucks in attempt to shut down the Vons distribution center. The International Longshoreman Local 13 shut down the port for 24 hours, held a Christmas toy drive for

the members and families our Locals 770, 324 and 1442 and a few others, as well as contributing over \$100,000 to the members who lost health care benefits due to the employers refusing to make their final contribution.

**Beachhead:** What was the community support?

**Neicer:** Local businesses adopted stores; others provided food and water for the members, as well as donations to purchase daily essentials. Fortunately we connected with the Harry Bridges Institute in San Pedro. HBI is community funded to aid families in need. UFCW members were accepted, depending on their needs for mortgage, rent, utilities, and payments of medical bills. We also received referrals for local food banks located in numerous cities throughout Los Angeles and Orange County, as well as organizations offering help to accommodate members in many ways. The Toberman House in San Pedro helped hundreds of families. All this assistance mind you, was extended to local 1442 members, who's to say what the other locals received.

## AFTER THE STRIKE

**Beachhead:** Did you vote to ratify or not?

**Neicer:** Not!!!!

**Beachhead:** Why not?

**Neicer:** It was unacceptable. I was willing to pay my share in health care costs, but the two tier system would begin the erosion of power at the bargaining table. I was fighting for all the single mothers who were paid benefits, and could work part time, go to college and still spend time with their children. This contract would eliminate that ability.

**Beachhead:** What do you think about the outcome of the strike when returning to work?

**Neicer:** Ridden hard, and put away wet! The employers have a plan in motion that does not include existing employees. Members are now realizing what type of contract they voted for.

**Beachhead:** What do you think about the out come now that some months have elapsed?

**Neicer:** Every promotion is under the new contract. The new hires take precedence in prime scheduling with a guarantee of 30 hours a week, whereas existing members hours are cut to accommodate the new part time employees with a minimum of 24hrs a week. Many members have left the company while others have taken early retirement with a freeze on promotions. The stores losing full time members borrow part time members from other stores, who are commuting up to 25-30 miles away from home, while new hires continue to work in their private little Idaho.

**Beachhead:** What has happened to workers on the job?

**Neicer:** Members refusing to train newbies are quickly transferred to other locations. Those turning down promotions under the new contract are transferred as well. New employees are flooding the stores, most of them are not trained at all in their general job duties, grooming standards, courteous customer service or even security. This cheap labor assisting in stocking, facing, price changes, and clean ups has no training or ability to perform these jobs efficiently.

**Beachhead:** What is the feeling between management and workers?

**Neicer:** Management's main goal seems to be focused on new hires, and continues to create an environment so the existing members feel uncomfortable. The store managers will state how important we are in the success of the company, but their actions play a different tune. The employers are implementing changes to accommodate the new contract, and store managers are following through with the unlawful threats made during the strike to employees, yet they claim it's for the good of the company.

**Beachhead:** What have the workers that you have spoken to said to you?

**Neicer:** Members from all three companies complain mainly of the lousy scheduling, how the new hires are given the prime shifts, and how most new hires are quickly promoted while the existing members with up to 15 years vested are passed up.

**Beachhead:** What happened to the scabs? Were some of them hired on with the new contracts?

**Neicer:** All replacement workers were fired, then a third of them were rehired under the new contract.

**Beachhead:** What is the feeling between old and new workers?

**Neicer:** Very difficult at first. Most store managers warned employees that any misconduct physical or



The Great Supermarket Strike and Lockout of 2003-04

verbal would not be tolerated, but I was not prepared to receive negative comments from the terminated workers returning to shop at our store. With the tables somewhat turned, they seem to have experienced resentment towards us as well.

**Beachhead:** How many new workers are there?

**Neicer:** About 20 percent of employees are new. The second week, most of the new hires and a few existing courtesy clerks began cashier training. It used to take years to reach that position.

**Beachhead:** How did people who have devoted years of their lives to these markets feel?

**Neicer:** Working for an employer who cares only of his profits, and the treatment exhibited to members during the strike and afterward does not convey a warm fuzzy feeling. Given the threats made by a store manager to certain members, I believe most members feel as I do, that it's just a matter of time before we're replaced or fired.

**Beachhead:** How do the workers feel about the union now?

**Neicer:** The few members I've spoken with seem to blame the union for the outcome of the strike. But when members are approached on ways to make politics work and preserve our union jobs or to prepare for the next contract, they have no desire to participate or even extend support to the very unions that helped us through our struggles. The union did what it had to do in order to protect the interest of its members. We did not lose this fight - we ran out of money!!!

In short, I feel the union members collective will is not as strong as it could be.

**Beachhead:** What would you have liked to have seen the union do differently?

**Neicer:** To have established outside resources following the employer's patterns. Track every move made by these mega conglomerates, as well as other companies in grocery retail, to analyze and prepare several strategies for attack. Calculate the amount of money needed to strike. Enforce militant picketing from day one. Publicize the union's position and corporation's intent. And call in all troops for aid.

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**A Place To Park**  
By Fast Eddie

I have those seven day a week  
Monday morning blues  
I must redirect  
The physical tangible presence  
Of my gasoline powered conveyance  
To an area and situation  
Where, all other things being equal,  
As is most unlikely, if not distinctly not,  
Said aforesaid vehicle  
Will be allowed to cease and desist motion  
At the unencumbered and unfettered pleasure  
Of its owner  
And/or the local vigilantes  
And/or the local cops  
And/or all other authorities relevant  
And without writ, alternate, primary, or otherwise  
And/or local crackheads

And/or the local alcoholics and juiceheads  
All of whom they not there and then sleeping  
Or patrolling or unsuccessfully attempting to bother  
Or bitching, moaning, and complaining  
Or otherwise in action of distorted replevin  
Or control fee simple and exclusive  
Can or shall or will  
Allow motion of said conveyance  
Full and lawful cease and desist  
In effect, a place to park.

**COWPOKE MEMORY**  
(Elegy to Ronald Reagan)

By Hal Bogotch

Engines roar. Sounds of productivity.  
Keep still. Moving the heart and mind.  
Blood is honest. It flows blue  
in hidden, silent rivers. It spills  
into the shocking light of day  
and is red. Trees bleed sap,  
shoot forth green fingers.

Saddle up for one last ride.  
The lash cuts air. Leather sings  
before it stings. Why not trot,  
ever forward, man-burden  
a work of sweat. Wagon trains  
kicked up and ate this same dust.

A man alone on a horse. Love  
measured in parts per billion.  
Hip flask of water. His father's son,  
well ran dry, sang for a shot of rye,  
smear mud in your eye. Afear'd  
of naught but a phantom red,  
empty head, man without bread.

Hoof comes down. Tin can crushed.  
Accordion-flat and silent. Lifeless  
as gross national product, diesel fumes,  
looming debt. No pulse. An empty wooden  
box. Flag waved, country saved, stone  
engraved.

**Thought for the Month**

“Those who profess to favor freedom and yet deprecate agitation...want crops without ploughing the ground; they want rain without thunder and lightning; they want the ocean without the roar of its many waters. The struggle may be a moral one, or it may be a physical one, or it may be both. But it must be a struggle. Power concedes nothing without a demand; it never has and it never will...Find out just what people will submit to, and you have found the exact amount of injustice and wrong which will be imposed upon them; and these will continue until they are resisted with either words or blows, or with both. The limits of tyrants are prescribed by the endurance of those whom they oppress.”

—Frederick Douglass

# POETRY

**Moore Electric**

Don't know if ya noticed but since  
I got zapped back into my body  
by lightening from  
an electric dream.....  
I've been writing about zzzzp  
stuffs....

More solar activity  
sunspots  
Venus transit  
I am still electric  
I hear...  
Rainbow waves  
I see  
blue sizzle  
holistic halos  
I feel  
minute tingling currents  
I stand on the mountain  
a magnetic rock  
collecting  
all these  
words on the wind.....

—Shanna Moore

**WHALES**

—continued from page 7

including the Marine Mammal Protection Act, the Endangered Species Act, and the National Environmental Policy Act. The judge also agreed, that science clearly demonstrates "the possibility, indeed probability, of irreparable injury" to ocean mammals, if LFA Sonar would be deployed widely. After a recent court ruling in favor of the environmental organizations, the US Navy is not allowed to test the LFA Sonar System during the whales' migrational periods, the test range was reduced to less than 1% of the originally approved range, and tests are now narrowed down to the eastern seaboard of Asia, including China, Korea, Japan, and the Philippines, an area of about 1.5 million square miles, and the tests are not permitted within the 30 to 60 miles coastline range. The restrictions become invalid in times of war.

The US Navy is constantly seeking exemptions from the laws they are breaking. The US Navy is trying to persuade the Legislation to modify the Marine Mammal Protection Act and other laws so they can deploy the LFA Sonar system more widely. Now the Defense Department is even in the process of being declared exempt from provisions of the Endangered Species Act and the Marine Mammal Protection Act. The battle is not over. Just the newsmedia make it look like the Natural Resources Defense Council won a "major victory", so the majority is being led to believe that everything is fine now and whales are safe. A few month ago the US Navy broadcasted a very deceptive advertisement on television, making people think they care about the animals in the ocean. The truth is that the US Navy could not care less about the ocean mammals. They care about money and power. The Bush Administration and the Navy does not want you to know what they are conspiring about.

We all need to write letters to our senators and congress people, urging them to speak up against the LFA Sonar System. The LFA Sonar System destroys the oceans and has to be completely outlawed. Together we can achieve our goal, every one a little wheel in a large machinery. For more information on the situation about LFA Sonar, please look at these websites:  
www.nrdc.org • www.greenpeaceusa.org

The Phantom  
By Hillary Kaye

I was created by a Phantom  
a hit and run into a nameless future  
created out of the rocks and sorrows  
of other times, the small infinitesimal  
particles of matter and matters not at all.  
I was born of a Phantom  
cloak and dagger  
used and worn  
I stood on the street corners of constant despair  
lost outside the blind man's crypt. I have become  
a replica of others wounded in this way  
there is something in their gait  
the slow way that they take in and out the air as if  
they deserved so little of anything  
their eyes wander upward  
for salvation and answers  
everything has to be taken on faith.  
the Phantom is gone.

**requiem for a light weight**

his idiot's grin  
everywhere  
phony orange skin tan and shinola pom-  
padour  
he's dead  
labeled American Optimist  
easy to be  
optimistic  
when you can't  
comprehend  
the catastrophes  
your cartel creates  
when you rest safely  
removed from dismembering  
machetes  
of cocaine contra commandos  
the incoherent mumbling  
of gutter bound mentally  
ill  
denied human treatment  
to fund corporate welfare  
assisting the ascension  
of snake handler xtian minority  
as dominant policy architects  
for the righteous majority

a lifetime of grinning  
denial for drunkard  
dad  
Reich's friendly fascist grandpa  
invoking nostalgia  
for nonexistent eras  
empty headed sap  
holding the vault door open  
for treasury looting defense contractors  
and felonious cabinet members  
arming Saddam  
and gun flooded neighborhoods  
powerful patron of plunderers  
while assigning school kids  
ketchup as a  
vegetable  
voodoo economics  
sanctioning greed as our national pastime  
hard times, hunger, and ruin still  
trickle down

Satan welcomes you

with

awe and admiration

— Rex Butters

# The Sheriff of Hollywood: Michael Moore and Fahrenheit 9/11

By John Davis

Fahrenheit 9/11 is like a modern day western, but this time the genre has escaped confinement of the big screen and is roaming around the real world scaring the hell out of the Republican Party. World truth and justice are at stake as a Michael Moore presents himself as substantive matter confronting his evil anti-matter dual self, GW Bush.

I thought that by attending the 11:30 PM showing at the plush Bridge theater in L.A. on opening day I could avoid the crowds. But even at that late hour I counted only two empty seats, with the rest being occupied by mostly late teen to early-30s patrons. It made me feel a little old until Moore introduced some of those great anti-war rock songs from the sixties, energizing everyone.

In the beginning Bush's gang are swarmed over by hordes of cosmetologists doing their best to transform them into believable and credible media icons. Perhaps morticians could have done a better job.

A camera turned on any one of us for enough time would eventually reveal mistakes, a scratch in the wrong place for instance.

But Moore did not merely seek out mundane acts such as these to show the world, he revealed traits that show the internal thought process and even sexual workings of the Bush neo-con gang.

As Bush is caught waiting for the camera to roll, his beady eyes shift back and forth in a natural way before he locks them in place for the camera as if looking for the script he must read. He is also caught on camera bragging about his base, the "have mores," without shame.

Paul Wolfowitz has been reported by other movie critics licking his comb as he was getting camera ready. That is not the case. He actually attempted to have oral sex with it, plunging it entirely into his mouth, moving in and out as if attempting to sexually gratify an inanimate object. The audience no longer seemed to trust him to invent policy for the most powerful nation on earth after that.

Bush, a transplant to Texas, tries his best to con-

vince us he is an oil cowboy by wearing a big hat and buckle. He points that his dog is in a hole with another animal then talks dumb to what he must presume are people foolish enough to vote for him.

A master at understanding complex geo-political realities connecting the oil and war dependant industries, Moore boils it all down to barroom deals where the Bush gang glad-hands, backslaps, and embraces leaders of the Arab Oil empire. Most notably members of the Bin Laden clan are outed as having direct financial ties to the Bush family.

Michael is shown shouting a question to Bush to which he responds "Behave now, and get a real job!"

Then came the day we all remember and the movie once again shows the incredible scene of GW being notified of not one, but two attacks on America. After looking for someone to hand him lines, or cue cards or something the Commander in Chief made one of the most important decisions possible, he continued reading My Pet Goat to the children while America burned. He apparently got Mike's goat.

But if you were a Saudi or Bin Ladden family member, no worries that day. They were whisked out of the country by the scores while all other passenger aircraft in the United States were grounded on orders from the highest levels of government.

The Gang's public story then changes dramatically, now claiming that Iraq posed a direct threat the to US in contradiction to their prior statements. They all said the lies. Again and again, so many times that most of the Congress believed them. Some brave members did stand in opposition, speaking truth to power, but not one member of the Senate, not even liberal democrats would stand by their side to oppose what the movie shows to be an unjust war.

It was logical for the County to believe the President since GW had won the United States presidential election by a few hundred votes, maybe.

Moore allows for the faces of families and children of Iraq and the United States to populate the screen in peace and joy before the great bombing, giving faces to the faceless. It was clear that it was not only trucks and buildings that were bombed. Restaurants, homes, and

schools were hit too. And in the U.S. sons and daughters were lost during and after the pre-emptive action. Some made it back in flag draped coffins the Government forbade the public from seeing and some without limbs and otherwise maimed now sit in Veteran Hospitals struggling.

GW portrayed himself as a war hero too, like his daddy, by landing on the Aircraft Carrier Lincoln making the hollow claim that all major hostilities were finished in Iraq. Funny thing about all this though, Moore's portrayal shows he is not a hero but really a former National Guard member gone AWOL. Luckily, while he was on base you could be assured he was protecting Texas booze bars and cocaine venues from evil doers.

Figures are presented that validate members of our armed forces had their pay and benefits cut while Bush has been in office leaving one parent families to fend for themselves.

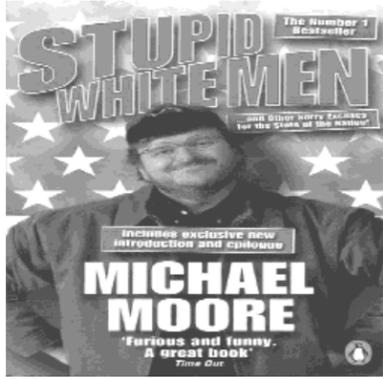
Stepping away, but not entirely, from his Capraesque every man video camera persona, Michael shows the real compassion of families affected in both countries. The indignities of war can affect anyone.

He slings that camera with the precision of a seasoned gunfighter. His camera still has notches carved into it from his last film, Bowling for Columbine. In the fifties, a Western, Johnny Guitar, introduced the notion that existing Government can go bad and that only a societal outsider can fix things right. But Moore is looking more like Gregory Peck in High Noon. After Bowling for Columbine Moore is now recognized as a real good Sheriff of Hollywood. Standing tall, and so strong he does not need the aid of society, he now walks down that western street, spurs a jingling, looking for the one known as Black George.

On November 7, a little after the film will be released on DVD, the two will clash.

The film is a matrix of clips creating a falling collage of information that can only be digested wholly by someone taking notes with a laptop. But the basics are there for all to see in the rawest of images. Government lies, grim war profiteers, love of life, and universal suffering spill over the screen with fingers pointing.

Moore is the type of hero America admires, genuine, unafraid, and willing to stand up for the common man. Of course he probably sees no harm in becoming the most successful and richest documentary filmmaker in history either. Sometimes the little guy wins.



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## Protect the coastal environment

- Stop Playa Vista Phase Two.
- Save the West Bluffs.
- Protect Native American burial areas and sacred sites
- Make the coast a place to visit, not a transportation corridor by discouraging through traffic within the coastal area and by subsidizing shuttles and trolleys in the coastal areas.
- Expand the coastal zone to include all of the 53rd Assembly District.
- Block new developments in the coastal zone that harm the environment or contribute to increased traffic.
- Build a light rail system to and from the coastal area that provides easy mobility for residents and visitors.
- End fossil fuel dependence by stimulating electric vehicle production and shifting to mass transit.
- Require solar power on all new construction.
- Introduce legislation for California to comply with the Kyoto Treaty.
- Curb jets at Santa Monica airport. Roll back LAX.
- Oppose offshore oil drilling, logging of old growth forests, destruction of wetlands.

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# ART

- **Edith Wellington Smith** - "Inner Views" at **Evolve**, 219 Rose Ave. Thru July 20.
- **SPONTO Gallery** @ 7 Dudley Ave. 399-2078. Collage
- **Agape International Spritual Ctr.** 5700 Buckingham Pkwy. Culver City 581-0373 features Stephanie Dawn: "Radiate Love" until June 13. A solo art show in a spiritual pop art genre.

# MUSIC

- July 25 (& every 4th Sunday) **Yoruba House presents SOUL OF THE DRUM** - Church in Ocean Park 235 Hill Street, O.P. - Drum class: 6:15-7:30PM - Circle 7:30-10PM Both for \$20 475-4440 - [yorubahouse@verizon.net](mailto:yorubahouse@verizon.net)
  - **Venice Bistro** 323 Ocean Front Walk 663-4673
  - **Townhouse** 52 Windward 392-4040
  - **Sidewalk Cafe** 1401 Ocean Front Walk 399-5547
- Acoustic music Wednesday- Friday /karaoke on Sundays

# Film/Video

- **Fahrenheit 9/11** - Various locations. [www.fahrenheit911.com](http://www.fahrenheit911.com)
- **Venicians Kathy Leonardo** and Steve Depena present a comedy show, "The Ground Floor," airing on Adelphia Cable, Ch. 77 and Comcast, Ch. 24. Email for time & date: [thegroundfloor@hotmail.com](mailto:thegroundfloor@hotmail.com).

# COMMUNITY

- July 16, 7-10 PM **RELEASING A PERSON WORKSHOP** - Recover from a breakup or divorce. Church in Ocean Park, 235 Hill St., O.P. \$30 - Kathryn Alice - 581-1981.
- **July 19, 5 PM Monday - Police-Community Meeting facilitated by Dept. of Justice representative.** Oakwood Recreation Center, 767 California Ave. 
- **Venice of America Foundation, Inc. 392-2633** is accepting nominations for "Spirit of Venice" for the year 2004. Nominations in writing not more than 250 words, email - [john.kertis@comcast.net](mailto:john.kertis@comcast.net) or US mail- 1319A Abbot Kinney Blvd. Deadline for submissions: 6pm, Monday, July 26, 2004 (the date has been extended)
- **Venice Center for Peace with Justice & the Arts** 2210 Lincoln Blvd 397.8820 Call for info-

## A Eulogy For Our Marlon Brando

By Dave Zirin

Marlon Brando's death at the age of 80 will begin a battle over how the "greatest actor of all time" will be remembered. Some will focus on his latter day isolation, his bizarre behavior, and the many personal tragedies that befell his family.

Others will focus exclusively on his iconic status, and when it comes to Brando performances, icons abound. There was the 1950s motorcycle rebel from "The Wild One" (1954), or the brutal Stanley Kowalski in "A Streetcar Named Desire" (1951) or Terry "I Coulda Been a Contender" Malloy in "On the Waterfront" (1954), or his performance as Vito Corleone in "The Godfather."

Then there is Brando's influence on acting itself. In a Hollywood built around "movie stars" Brando was at the vanguard of a new generation of performers in the aftermath of World War II schooled in Stanislavsky's "Method" acting style. Taught by Stella Adler and Lee Strasberg at the Actor's Studio in New York, The Method was a rejection of the Spencer Tracy approach to drama of "Just memorize your lines and don't bump into the furniture." Emotional honesty and "becoming" your character were the hallmarks of this style. It was an attempt to use art to break out of what was seen as a stultifying and frustration gray haze of early 1950s America. Robert DeNiro, Al Pacino, Laurence Fishburne, Sean Penn, and countless others count Brando as their primary influence.

But the Brando I want to remember, especially now, is the actor who pulled back in the 1960s to focus on supporting the Civil Rights Movement and the broader struggles against war and oppression. In 1959, he was a founding member of the Hollywood chapter of SANE, an anti-nuclear arms group formed alongside African-American performers Harry Belafonte

## Comm-unity Events



# THEATRE



**BEYOND BAROQUE** - 681 Venice Blvd.  
 • July 23, Friday - 7:30 PM - A first reading of **GUANTANAMO - ACT 4**, of **STEPHEN YAGMAN** and **K.D. MATTOX'S** new 5-Act play. Yagman brought the only successful lawsuit to gain access for the Guantanamo captives to the U.S. legal system. Act 4 is a re-creation from the court's recorded transcript of oral argument before the U.S. Court of Appeals in August 2003 that resulted in the landmark decision. To see some real U.S. government bizzareness, as when a dissenting judge compares Guantanamo to a spa, come experience this theater of the absurd.

# Poetry-Readings

- **Beyond Baroque**, 681 Venice Blvd. 822-3006
- July 30, Friday - 7:30 PM - **AFRO-ARMENIAN POETS: WILL ALEXANDER** and **ALAN SEMERDJIAN**
- July 31, Saturday - 7:30 PM - **JESSICA GOODHEART** and **JUDITH PACTH**
- FREE Workshops & Readings (throughout the summer)
- **MONDAY NIGHT FICTION** - 8 PM - Workshop focuses on short shorts, stories, and novels. With **CHRISTOPHER RUSSELL** and **JASON MAHANES**. FREE.
- **TUESDAY NIGHT CREATIVE NON-FICTION** - 8 PM - Bring works of creative non-fiction, memoir, and prose. Led by **TODD JACKSON**. FREE.
- 2nd and 4th **TUESDAYS EMERGING WRITERS WORKSHOP** - 8 PM - Share your creative work for constructive feedback (fiction, poetry, memoir, etc). Led by **TUAN NGUYEN**. FREE.
- **WEDNESDAY NIGHT POETRY** - 8 PM  
 The West Coast's longest running, free workshop and a legendary gathering of poets. Facilitators are: July: **SARAH MACLAY**; August/Sept: **LIZ GONZALEZ**. FREE.
- 1ST and 3rd **THURSDAYS POETRY WORKSHOP** - 8 PM - For a novel approach and engaging dialogue. **LEILANI SQUIRE**. FREE.
- **THURSDAY ALT.SCREENPLAY** - 8 PM - Documentary, narrative, art film scripts, actor readings. Independent projects only. Moderated by **PETER COOGAN**. FREE.
- **SATURDAY AFTERNOON POETRY** - 1 PM With **BOB FOSTER**. FREE.

and Ossie Davis.

In 1963, Brando marched arm in arm with James Baldwin at the March on Washington. He, along with Paul Newman, went down South with the freedom riders to desegregate inter-State bus lines.

In defiance of state law, Native Americans protested the denial of treaty rights by fishing the Puyallup River on March 2, 1964. Inspired by the civil rights movement sit-ins, Brando, Episcopal clergyman John Yaryan from San Francisco, and Puyallup tribal leader Bob Satiacum caught salmon in the Puyallup without state permits. The action was called a fish-in and resulted in Brando's arrest.

When Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was assassinated in 1968, Brando announced that he was bowing out of the lead role of a major film and would now devote himself to the civil rights movement. Brando said "If the vacuum formed by Dr. King's death isn't filled with concern and understanding and a measure of love, then I think we all are really going to be lost."

He gave money and spoke out in defense of the Black Panthers and counted Bobby Seale as a close friend and attended the memorial for slain prison leader George Jackson. Southern theater chains boycotted his films, and Hollywood created what became known as the 'Brando Black List' that shut him out of many big time roles.

After making a comeback in Godfather, Brando won his second Oscar. Instead of accepting what he called "a door prize," he sent up Native American activist Sacheen Littlefeather to refuse befuddled presenter Roger Moore and issue a scathing speech about the Federal Government's treatment of Native Americans.

Even in the past several years, he has lent his name and bank account to those fighting the US war and occupation in Iraq.

# POLITICAL

- The L.A. Sound Posse presents Robert Jensen, Media critic & author of "Citizens of the Empire: the Struggle to Claim Our Humanity" - 7 PM Sat., July 10 - United Methodist Church, 1020 Victoria Ave. Information: 289-2171 or [www.lasoundposse.org](http://www.lasoundposse.org). Suggested donations are \$5.
- Venice Peace and Freedom Party meeting on Sat., Aug. 21, 11AM. For more info: 399-2215.

## BLACK PANTHERS

Historical photos from the 1960s by Ruth-Marion Baruch & Pirkle Jones. 18th St. Arts Center, 1639 18th St., Santa Monica. Thru July 23 - [www.18thstreet.org](http://www.18thstreet.org) - 453-3711



# Seniors

- **Israel Levin Adult Senior Center**, 201 OFW, 396-0205.
  - Movie matinee, 1 pm, Mondays
  - Line dancing, 11 am, Tuesday
  - Israeli dance, 10 am, Wednesday
  - Current events discussion, 11 am, Wednesday
  - Weight management workshop, 1pm, Thursday, 6 weeks

# Yoga Info-

- **Congregation Mishkon Tephilo** - 201 Hampton Dr. 392-3029 Yoga with Yiddishkeit Sundays 3 PM, Free
- **Vera Davis Ctr** 610 California Ave. 305-1865 Hatha Yoga classes Mondays & Thursdays 6:30 PM, Donation
- **Karmakulture** 1305A Main St. 399-1904 Emphasis: Body alignment Tuesdays & Thursdays 7:30PM to 9PM, \$7
- **Yogafit/Pilate Studios** 621 Palms Ave. 827-5144 Group Kundalini yoga Tuesdays 7PM, \$15
- **Energy/Movement Relaxation** Marina Dance Ctr. 13376 Washington Blvd., 915-8575 Tues. Evenings 8:15, \$15

## Ballona Wetlands

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**Thursday, July 8 - 8:30 AM**  
**Hearing on Playa Vista Phase 2**  
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## Grass Roots Venice Neighborhood Council

All meetings begin at 7 PM, at Vera Davis McClendon Center, 610 California Ave. unless otherwise noted. 821-6030 - [www.grvnc.org](http://www.grvnc.org)

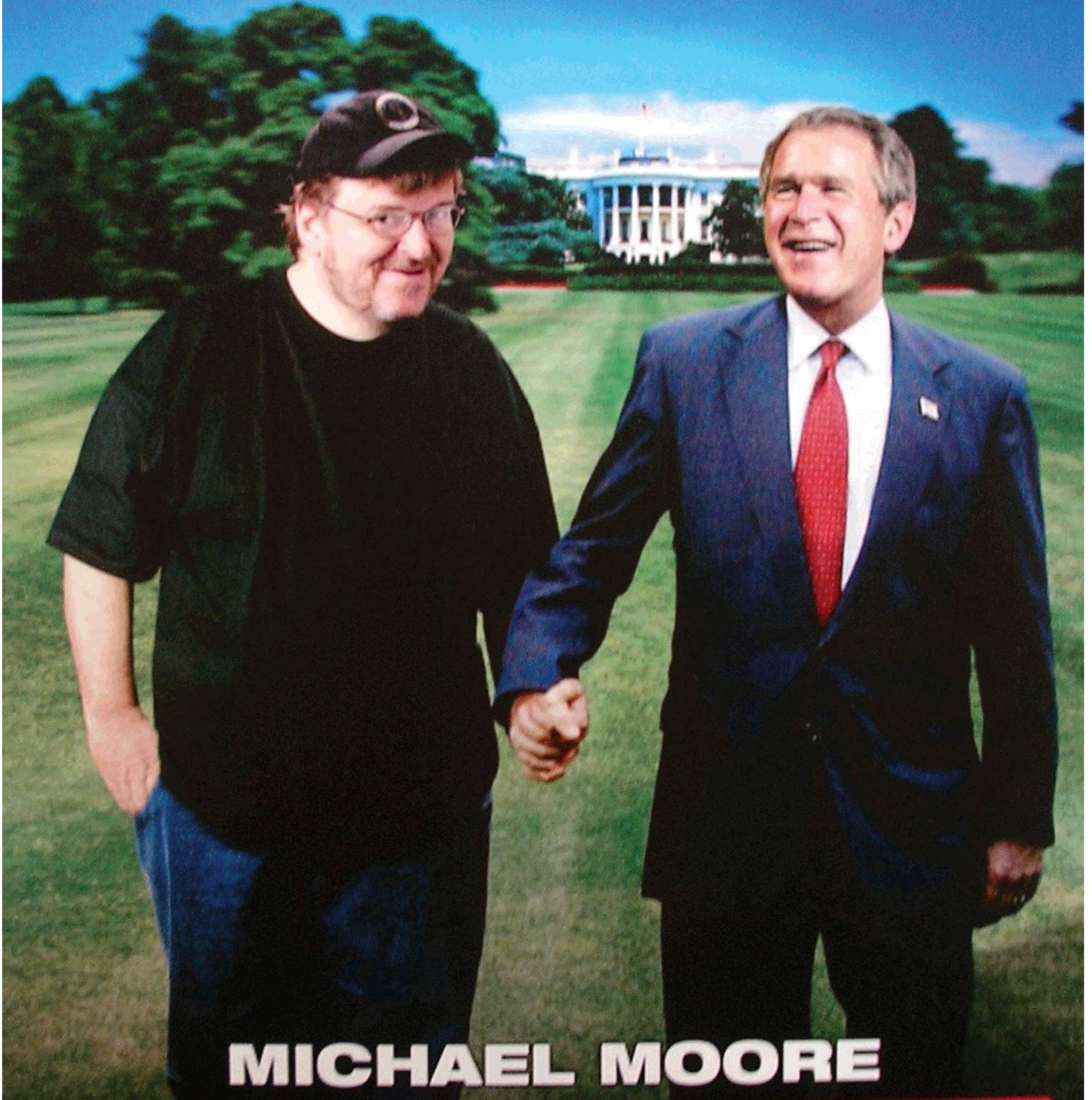
- **July 12 - Monday - Board**  
 - New officers will be seated -
- **July 13 - Tuesday - Land Use and Planning Committee (LUPC)**, Boys & Girls Club, 2232 Lincoln Blvd.
- **July 26 - Monday - Board**

So how do we remember Brando? He was a celebrity, an artist, an activist, and at the end an isolated and destroyed old man.

It is tragic that we live in a world where most people's talents never get to see the light of day. It is equally tragic that those like Brando who actually get the opportunity to spread their creative wings, can be consumed and yanked apart in process. Yet whether Brando was on the top of Hollywood or alone and embittered, he never forgot what side he was on.

Dave Zirin is the Editor of the Prince George's Post in Prince George's County Maryland. He can be reached at [editor@pgpost.com](mailto:editor@pgpost.com). His sports writing can be read at <http://www.edgeofsports.com>.

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