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# FREE VENICE SINCE 1968 BEACHHEAD



Support  
Independent  
Community  
Journalism

May 2021 #464

## VENICE FOR ALL

Creating a Venice Neighborhood Council that is Truly Inclusive of ALL of its Constituents

Venice For All is out to transform the Venice Neighborhood Council into an advisory council that is inclusive of and accurately reflects the makeup of Venice. We operate within standards that prioritizes humanity, equity, and racial justice.

Rectifying systemic inequities requires deliberate and explicit effort. During the upcoming VNC election, we aim to install the best representation possible by encouraging and prioritizing the seating of the underrepresented populations within Venice, namely native Black and Brown Venetians, native residents of all backgrounds, Spanish speaking Indigenous residents, and unhoused citizens – the demographics most targeted and risk for displacement.

All our candidates have a proven and consistent track record for solidarity with the aforementioned marginalized demographics and are held accountable by established vanguards of equity and racial justice in Venice.

[venice4all@outlook.com](mailto:venice4all@outlook.com)

## ARE YOU HUNGRY? FREE FOOD AT VENICE BEACH

(times and places occasionally change)

**\*Hope for the Hearts of the Homeless-** Pam & Joel and friends. Thur. & Sun. around 9am. Coffee, pastries, sandwiches. north Ocean Front Walk near Ozone Ave.

**\*You Matter with Michael and friends-** Tue. & Thur. Around 11am. Hotdogs, burgers, fruit, snacks. north Ocean Front Walk near Ozone Ave. also Sat. around 8:30am near Windward Ave.

**\*Oasis Network Inc.** with Dan & friends- various groceries, bread, fruit, vegetables. Sat. & Sun. around 9am. Ocean Front Walk by Dudley Ave.

**\*Venice Equity Alliance-** fruit & vegetables. Wed. 12:45pm. 132 Brooks Ave.

**\*St. Joseph Center-** their clients, To-Go Meals. M-F 9:30am-12pm. 663 Rose Ave. Also weekly food if you register at (310)396-6468 ext.313

**\* St. Mark Church Free Food Pantry**  
Every Saturday from 11am to 1pm  
940 Coeur d'Alene Ave, Venice 90291 (entrance Garfield Av) Vegetables, fruits and other food items. No registration needed. Drive-thru and walk-in options. Call St. Mark Parish at 310-821-5058 or email us at [loavesandfishes@stmarkvenice.com](mailto:loavesandfishes@stmarkvenice.com)

:(These organizations all need your donations and help): THANKS



## THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF VENICE AND THE SAVE VENICE COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION

By Jon Wolff

The following is from a recent conversation with Dr. Naomi Nightingale about the Save Venice Community Organization. Save Venice is the activist group in Venice that has been fighting for over three years to save the First Baptist Church of Venice from being gutted and turned into a private mega-mansion.

Jon Wolff: What is Save Venice and how did it start?

Dr. Naomi Nightingale: Laddie Williams coined the name, Save Venice. Miguel Bravo set up the website. Initially, it started as a protest movement against the church being sold and re-purposed as someone's personal residence. That, in itself, was just unacceptable. People in the community saw that as being sacrilegious, particularly with First Baptist Church of Venice being the largest church, and having the oldest roots in the community. Then people began sitting there [at the church] visibly showing support for the church, the meaning of the church to the community, and the history of African-Americans and their contributions to the community. That became the essence of what Save Venice is: to bring recognition to the African-American. It has expanded to be inclusive of the Mexican-American and Indigenous folks who were here and built the community. It focused on the settlement of Arthur Reese and Irving Tabor. The narrative was about the significance of African-American contributions and history, and how we make that known, and maintain that history and culture. Save Venice is about the recognition of the contributions of African-Americans and others in the Venice community starting from its roots in the early 1900s. From that point of recognition, we're working hard to expand into larger communities and bring about an understanding of ways in which to protect, preserve, and maintain that history.

JW: Can you describe the development from a movement to a non-profit organization?

NN: As more people joined in with the common purpose, there needed to be a formal structure for the movement so that monies could be donated and received. Grants and proposals could be written and there would be an organization to receive them, and have accountability and responsibility for them.

JW: What are the immediate goals and long term goals of Save Venice?

NN: The immediate and largest goal of Save Venice is to have the church designated as a historical site within the community so that it cannot be destroyed or changed in its structure. The long term goals are to save the infrastructure of the Oakwood Venice community so that the culture and architecture and ideas are not eradicated by gentrifying investors who really don't have a history in the community.

JW: What kinds of opportunities would people have to get involved with Save Venice if they want-

*continued on page 5*

## Make Sure You Vote in the VNC Elections

By Free Venice Beachhead Staff

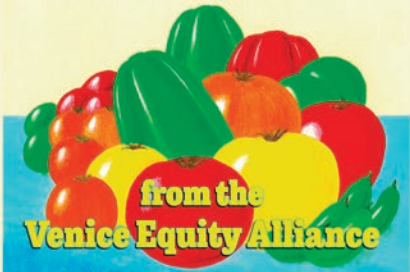
2021 Venice Neighborhood Council Elections are underway. The last election was 3 years ago but it usually happens every 2 years. We've been a little behind on our Election coverage but you know we "cut through the stuff" and give you the real information you need, not like the other gentrifier-centric publications in Venice.

This year very few of the usual ugly spirits are returning for a run. We're seeing many fresh faces running which is great but double-edged. The bad side of the sword: the faces are fresh but most of the rhetoric is not– with candidate statements still filled with the vague and superficial gentrification speak.. "i love venice and diversity", "more police", "safe and clean", or speaking like they grew up here and are "local" but really just local Angelenos— comical. Indeed freshness is needed in our local political scene but only a small contingent of the candidates have engaged with the Native Venetians or native Black and Brown community. In a time when our society's biggest issues revolve around race and housing justice, and Venice being a textbook example of those inequities, failing to acknowledge said issues and demographics begs the question— what direction are they going and who are they serving if they are not engaging with the native community?

The good side of the sword: a contingent of the fresh faces are Native Venetians and BIPOC. Some of the nice surprises are Sergio Perez, owner of Hoagie's; Jason Sugars, multi-generational Venetian, Steve Williams, native Venetian and environmentalist, and our associate Mike Bravo who is also a multi-generational Venetian, and prolific newcomer Christopher Lee, who are all part of the VeniceforAll.org recommendation slate– all people of color or Native Venetians upsetting the usual monochromatic and gentry geared candidate norms. There are other Black and Brown candidates

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**FREE**  
**Fresh Food & Veggies**  
every Wednesday at 12:45pm  
at  
132 Brooks Ave in Venice



  
**GRATIS**  
**Comida y Verdura Fresca**  
todos los miércoles a las 12:45pm  
en  
132 Brooks Ave en Venice









Vice-President— Alex Nieman

As a 31 year resident and native to Venice I have seen our community evolve like many of you have. I have seen historic, coastal bungalows turn into modern homes, I have seen shops come and go on Abbot Kinney, I have seen neighbors leave and friends move in. Our community is unique in that it is home to people of all different walks of life. We are a microcosm mirroring the vibrance of all of Los Angeles.

I have sat on the VNC for over 3 years and have been dismayed by the hateful discourse, frustrated as both a councilmember and a stakeholder by the City’s lack of engagement with our specific needs, but encouraged by the people I have connected with and the colleagues I have worked alongside. I am a proud Venetian that is humbled by our community’s evolution and hopeful for where we can go. As your Vice President I will continue to connect, to listen and to guide the transformation of our neighborhood into a more equitable, caring and action oriented community.



Treasurer— Robin Rudisill

My family and I have lived in Venice for 17 years, and for most of that time I’ve been involved with the VNC—I’ve been a Board Member and I also served on the Neighborhood, Safety/ Emergency Preparedness, Land Use & Planning and Ocean Front Walk Committees. I’m running for Treasurer because I’m a former CFO and CPA, and I’ve also been Treasurer of Jr. Achievement Hawaii and Soroptimist International Founder Region. I can definitely balance a budget!

But more importantly, this is a crucial time in Venice’s history, and I want to give of my time right now to support and be part of creating the very best future for Venice. In the words of Peter Douglas, one of the founders of the Coastal Act, “The Coast is never saved, it’s always being saved. Our work, your work, the labor of love that it is, is never finished. It’s a job that will always be ongoing.” I look forward to working with a new Board that effectively uses its voice in advising the City, in our ongoing labor of love for Venice!



Secretary— Erica Moore

Venice small catering business owner of 37 years. A single mom and renter living in 5 diverse Venice areas for 4+ decades. I’m persistent, determined, motivated & always accessible. I’ve supported myself since age 16. Taking initiative and responsibility is who I am. I’ve provided countless meals for transitional housing/shelters, homeless folks, scout troops, school sports programs & field trips. My company employs local residents of all ages, I mentor budding chefs/new food vendors.

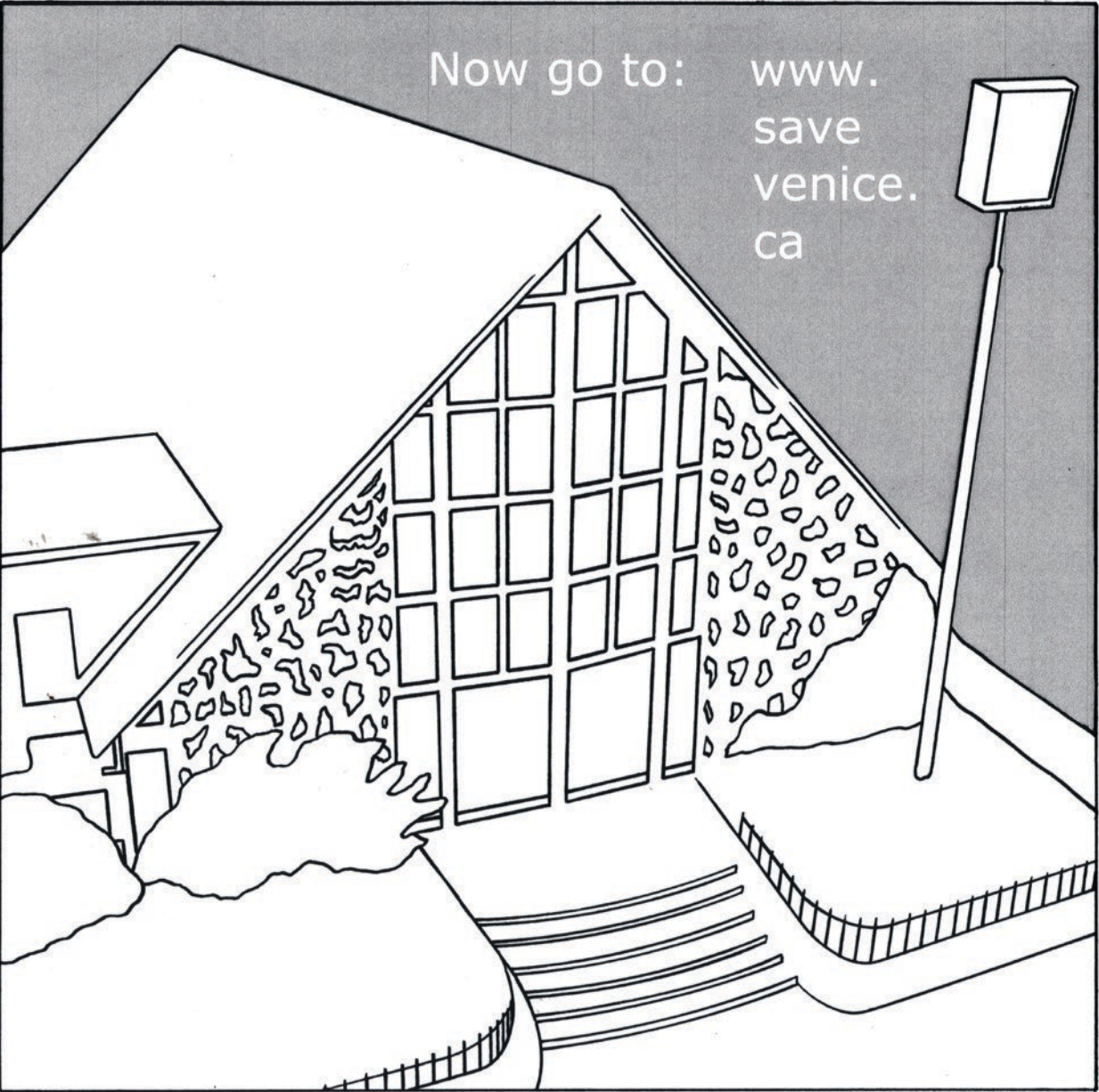
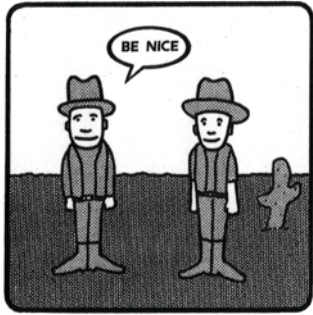
I see A LOT inspiring me to take action to help! My purpose is to be of service to others, I’m comfortable as a supporter or leader. I’m detail-oriented, organized, with abundant energy & enthusiasm! You can count on me to listen to you, to work hard, to research, to take issues you care about seriously. I’m open and not afraid to have hard conversations, I am respectful and can agree to disagree. I believe the collective interest of the neighborhood comes first, and that’s how I will represent you!

*Make Sure You Vote – continued from page 1*  
running but there seems to be no record of who they are in relation to our community and some are unfortunately working for gentrification interests and opportunist orgs.

Probably the most important seat is VNC President. Brian Averill is competing with Jim Murez for the seat. Ben Decker is also running for that position but aside from his small cult following , and people seeing through his PR facade, it doesn’t look like anyone is taking him seriously. At any rate, the race is clearly between Averill and Murez. Averill being our favored candidate who’s been effective and reliable doesn’t go

without criticism of course, most notably for his spearheading of the Venice Boardwalk Action Committee’s (whoever they are) letter to city and county agencies associated with managing the Unhoused issues in our city. The alternative is Jim Murez, pro-gentrification, Penske supporter, and misogynist whose VNC “volunteering” comes off more as an entrepreneurial endeavor. At the EVNA debate forum last week as Ben Decker was saying he supported the First Baptist Church of Venice, his friend was disrupting the FBCV’s vigil for Adam Toledo and Daunte Wright. If people had no qualms about twice voting for Ira Koslow, who is a

*continued on page 12*



Land Use & Planning — Alix Gucovsky  
I have served as the Chair of the Land Use and Planning Committee for the last two years. Land use on both a local and state level is what I am most passionate about. We need sustainable, thought out, equitable growth in Venice that respects the unique historical and cultural ethos of Venice. Open space and environmental concerns must be key priorities as the community evolves.

Maintaining and preserving existing affordable housing stock is another key issue that must also be addressed. When I ran at the last election, I spoke to the importance of fighting against top down upzoning legislation currently in favor in Sacramento, and the need for better thought out solutions to the affordable housing crisis. I have consistently addressed the above issues. Thank you to everyone in the community who has supported me and engaged at meetings. It would be an honor and privilege to serve you again.





The Haters - by Emily Winters. Emily painted this to represent the people who felt they were entitled to come and disrupt and cast shade on the progressives who won the Neighborhood Council Election in 2003.

The opposition to the progressives, “Team Venice”, lost all their appeals to the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment.

The council was seated, however “Team Venice”and their cohorts then proceeded to sabotage the next election, since the numbers showed they would lose, with help from the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment, and so the progressive council was decertified by DNE, on an election technicality that DNE caused. This set in motion the takeover of the VNC by the Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber is one of the most powerful anti-worker political forces in the USA. They are against unions and minimum wage raises, and support Republican and conservative Democrats and oppose ecology initiatives that impact businesses.



Sean Tyrell’s house demolished

Photos and story by Alon Goldsmith

Sean Tyrrell is sheltering in place in Marina Del Rey in a double story structure that he built from the ground up. Originally from the Camino Island area north of Seattle, Sean has been in Los Angeles for nine months. He has been homeless for eight. “When I moved to LA, I knew I needed a break. I needed to make money somehow and I hoped Covid would end within a month or two but it didn’t. I was just glad I lived in a place where the weather was better than most places. If you’re homeless that really helps.” “For the first month I was in the Pod Share in Venice. I cannot recommend that place to anybody. They stole my things and then kicked me out for no reason and then wanted a thousand dollars just to get back my computer and guitar amp. It was a dispute about me playing my acoustic guitar. It’s a real sketchy outfit. I suspect there’s human traffick-ing going through there. And certainly drug dealers were coming and going. I think they just didn’t like me because I’m a normal person. I’m glad I got kicked out although I’m not glad I became home-less.” “From there I slept in my car three or four nights just around the area looking for places I could pitch a tent. I finally settled on this place. Back then, there were other people living here on the sidewalk but not jammed like in other parts of the city. The people that were here got paid to leave. I was offered

\$100 but I’d already made good progress with my building. I’m legally here and I’ve obviously spent a lot of time investing in the structure. The offer was an insult.” I asked Sean what made him leave Washington in the middle of COVID. “I’d already planned to leave because I was pursuing music and I was planning on moving to Nashville. And so I flew there and that’s when everything in the nation started shutting down. I flew back and forth staying there several weeks at a time hoping things would start opening back up. I had a real estate agent showing me rental properties but that never happened -- the venues never opened. So I wasn’t able to play music or meet anybody in the recording industry there and then it just became apparent that things weren’t opening up any time real soon and that’s when I went back to Washington and decided to move here.” Sean explained how he views himself as an artist. “I view my art as being cheerful but having a very dark quirky sense of humor to it. This one for example (see photo), you might say trash cans are a funny thing to put in a painting. It’s myself in this giant city where there’s all these structures being built all over the place and there’s all this waste and garbage everywhere. It’s an abstraction of a map with some of the buildings shaped like letters and things spelled out. It’s not as clear now that it’s been damaged.” I asked him about how his painting got damaged. “There’s a few people in the neighborhood who were paying people to attack me for no reason. This was about the time they were trying to pay me to leave. I had walked down to the park where I fill up my water jug from the drinking fountain and I came back and they had broken in and ripped the painting off the wall and broken a bunch of stuff inside. And there were literally ten people watching them do it. Nobody called the police. So it was very obvious that it was a hit job. People were just standing there and when i asked them about it, they just shrugged their shoulders. That was their response. It was two women that did it. And they had a blog that some of the people in the neighborhood set up about me. I was told by some people that they were celebrating



Oakwood Recreation Center has added even more signs to the gates: "DOGS MUST REMAIN ON LEASH AT ALL TIMES". Yet on Tuesday, March 30, 2021 a young boy was mauled by an off-leash German shepherd. His wrist was broken and he suffered bites up and down both legs. Thank goodness that one courageous man was there to get the dog off the child and assist the panicked mom. The owner ran from Oakwood Park with her dog, jumped in her white car, and backed down the street while the child lay screaming and the mom screamed for help. Oakwood Park is not a dog park. Respect Oakwood Park. It is not an off-leash dog park. Children and families come first in Oakwood Park. Respect Oakwood Recreation Center and the thirty signs that are posted all throughout the park.

KEEP YOUR DOG ON A LEASH AT ALL TIMES!



**Stop Asian Hate Rally at Venice Japanese American Memorial Monument**  
Staff from Los Angeles City Councilmember Mike Bonin’s 11th District rally at the Venice Japanese American Memorial Monument on the northwest corner of Venice and Lincoln Boulevards against recent anti-Asian assaults and vandalism. Thank you to Nisa Kove, Venice Field Deputy, and Len Nguyen, Senior Field Deputy and other supporters. March, 2021.

when I got vandalized and all this crazy stuff. Who are these people?!” “It still goes on a little bit, but not nearly as bad as it was. Earlier this week someone threw a tomato in my building at one of my paintings. And I get the occasional rock or dirt clod thrown at the building. But there are some people I’m friendly with in the area and then the ones that aren’t interested just ignore me. Occasionally they’ll just spout off some insult or something and just keep walking but I don’t get people looking to start fights with me anymore -- at least it’s been awhile.” I asked Sean what he would want for himself as an artist in a best possible world. “I want to be touring right now. Playing music in front of people with a band. That’s my goal. I’d like this place to be here to come back to. Maybe even create some kind of tourist attraction. Not just the structure with all my art but I have a vision for the other side where it’s like a park space where artists go and paint and perform plays and that sort of thing. But my ultimate goal is to be a recording and performing artist, which hopefully will be a possibility at some point in the near future. You know, people are eating in restaurants again. You’d think it would be okay to have someone on a stage in front of them.” Sean spoke about how the pandemic has affected his ability to keep working on his art and music. “The pandemic has given me more time to work on my art and music. That’s the part that’s an opportunity. If the pandemic hadn’t started, half of my time at least would be focused on driving for Uber to pay my bills and keep my 800 credit score. Well once that all gets thrown out the window, and your credit score is in the toilet, and it’s never going to

*continued on page 6*



ZERO COVERAGE OF A 6-7 HR STANDOFF  
Hello Los Angeles Times,

I am questioning why the Los Angeles Times has ZERO COVERAGE OF A 6-7 HR STANDOFF WITH LAPD SWAT IN VENICE YESTERDAY. The location of the disturbance was 688 Westminster Avenue, the accessory parking lot of the First Baptist Church of Venice. This is a central property in the historic Black Oakwood residential community in Venice opposite Oakwood Park. Venice is a 3-square-mile area. Oakwood is a one-square-mile residential area. The entire park and all of the streets surrounding 7th Avenue and Westminster Avenue were closed to traffic with LAPD, SWAT, and an LAPD helicopter on site for 6-7hrs. Police cars at each intersection redirected traffic or escorted residents in and out. How is it possible that California’s most popular public visitor destination got zero coverage under these circumstances?



On February 16, 2017, Jay Penske and Elaine Irwin bought 685 Westminster and 688 Westminster under \*685 Westminster Holdings LLC and \*688 Westminster Holdings LLC. Sales records show that Penke’s sold these properties to real estate broker Lee Polster, \*1036 North Highland Management LLC, on October 30, 2020, and November 3, 2020.

However, Secretary of State records show that the Penske’s renewed the \*685 Westminster Holdings LLC and \*688 Westminster Holdings LLC registrations on September 25, 2020 and again on February 21, 2021. Penske Media Corporation executive assistant Janet Dane processed all of these registrations. This suggest that the Penske’s continue to have an involvement in the property.

Several week back an inoperable tour bus and very large mobile storage unit were towed onto the property. Neighbors observed the “Dragonlaine” name on the tow equipment. Dragonlaine is a Penske business entity. \*Dragonlaine, LLC was registered with the Secretary of State on August 8, 2011 with Ms. Dane as the processor. Secretary of State records for Jan. 14, 2019 show Elaine Irwin Penske as the manager of \*Dragonlaine, LLC.

Community residents made Mr. Polster aware that people were living in these inoperable vehicles creating a nuisance and potential danger for the neighborhood and requested their immediate removal.

On April 3, 2021, Mr. Polster replied (full email below):

"We had a crew visit the site today and I am happy to report there is no one living inside the trailer. There is no unwanted debris on-site. Admittedly, the trailer door was ajar, but it has now been re-secured. There are no signs that anyone had inhabited the trailer at any point.

We will be posting No Trespassing Signs and installing surveillance equipment to further secure the site. Thank you for your concern.”

Community members continued to contact Mr. Polster to let him know their safety concerns and provide photos showing an accumulation of trash and letting him know that he needed to remove these inoperable vehicles immediately.

Yesterday, according to LAPD onsite, a person inside one of those vehicles threatened a person entering the property with a gun at around 7.30am. Two people apparently were inside these vehicles when LAPD and SWAT arrived. After a 6-7 hr

SWAT standoff, the situation ended peacefully. The two offending vehicles were towed away. A recently installed Black Lives Matter mural on the street in front of First Baptist Church of Venice was damaged in all of this. Laddie Williams, Naomi Nightingale and Miguel Bravo, cc’d here, are the leaders of Save Venice. Miguel Bravo has excellent drone footage from yesterday.

I would appreciate a response as to why the Los Angeles Times had no coverage of this?

Additionally, the Los Angeles Times often writes about expensive homes in Venice, new restaurants, unhoused residents, or crime.

Please document white-collar crime issues in Venice.

The community group Save Venice has maintained the property at First Baptist Church of Venice for several years with multiple clean up days because the irresponsible billionaire property owners ignore the maintenance needs of the property and ANY RESPECT FOR THE COMMUNITY and let dry weeks grow several feet high as well as trash accumulate. This is somehow acceptable in their eyes while they await an appeal of their application to convert the historic First Baptist Church of Venice into their private mansion.

Then, new owner Lee Polster towed these huge inoperable vehicles onto the parking lot in a residential neighborhood and then ignored multiple warnings of residents until the situation culminated in yesterdays stand-off that could have easily ended in tragedy.

Venice also has property owners who violate City laws such as operating 100% residential apartment buildings as “hotels” while paying property taxes for multi-unit residential property, while holding prominent business and political roles in the Venice Chamber of Commerce and such, and complaining about unhoused people in Venice, crime and more. These people displace residents, then complain about the displaced unhoused, and claim the need for private security. This needs to be documented.



The most important Venice story is that it is the first “intentional Black coastal community” on the entire West Coast and the only surviving "original Black coastal enclave.” The Los Angeles Times has written several stories recently about the painful racist history of Bruce’s Beach in Manhattan Beach and the possibility that some of that property will be returned to the Bruce family. The Los Angeles Times has also covered a similar violent history of the destruction of the once-thriving Black community in the Belmar Triangle in Santa Monica, in the beach-area of Ocean Park Boulevard and Pico Boulevard, and efforts to memorialize the historic Black population there through community art + history projects.

The historic Black community still exists in Venice and the multi-generational families are today’s community leaders. Please interview Laddie Williams, Naomi Nightingale and Miguel Bravo, ccd here, the leaders of Save Venice. The full story of Venice needs to be told!

Today, I would appreciate a response as to why the Los Angeles Times had no coverage of yesterdays multi-hour LAPD SWAT stand-off in Venice?

Please all recipients confirm receipt of this email. I would appreciate your response as soon as possible.

Appreciatively,  
Margaret Molloy.

5 • May 2021 • FREE VENICE BEACHHEAD

First Baptist Church – continued from page 1  
ed to help out?

NN: We are in the process of defining that. One of the things we've talked about is having people sign up to serve on certain committees or to attend meetings. It's been challenging in the era of Covid-19 because we don't have a physical space, and the interaction has been limited.

JW: In the future, would people be able to financially support?

NN: Some people have donated through GoFundMe. So there is money that has been donated. One of the things we're talking about is using that money to replace the story boards that we use at our presentations, the story boards of the history of the church and of Arthur Reese and the families that started Venice.

For more information go to: [savevenice.ca](http://savevenice.ca)



Steve Williams

I grew up here in Venice and have always felt lucky to be from such a unique place. Venice has such an interesting history of art, culture, recreation and diversity. This unique legacy of diversity and arts by the sea is now threatened by market forces. I work as a conservation biologist and CA native plant landscaper, and have a habit of seeing organisms both thriving in diverse communities, and going extinct by habitat disruption.

I see the culture of Venice in a similar light. Although different groups of humans are competing for space here, there is shared common ground. We need to acknowledge these shared goals, and find a way to share our valuable cultural resources with all. We can have a safe place to live AND an interesting place to live.



\*Secretary of State public records.

SALE OF PROPERTIES:

685 Westminster sold on November 3, 2020.

688 Westminster\_Sales sheet\_10.30.20

On September 15, 2020, Councilman Mike Bonin submitted a Motion to the City Council to designate the properties at 685 Westminster Avenue and 688 Westminster Avenue as historic cultural monuments.

688 Westminster Holdings LLC\_SoS Feb. 12, 2021\_CAPITOL CORPORATE SERVICES, INC. (C1990324)\_Holding Company

Dragonlaine, LLC\_CAPITOL CORPORATE SERVICES, INC. (C1990324)\_SoS Jan. 14, 2019\_Elaine Irwin Pensk





**James Robb**  
I am a 33-year Venice resident, current member of the VNC, and chairman of the Oceanfront Walk committee. I will continue to do my best to protect the neighborhood from shameless gentrification. I love Venice and its boardwalk. Greedy developers and their big box properties in our small community have caused substantial damage by pushing out many beloved residents and small businesses. The shops and people who have made Venice unique are disappearing. Developers are buying a 110 year old neighborhood church and trying to turn it into a billionaire’s mega-mansion. This egotistical outlook combined with greed has also led property owners, developers and corporate monsters to continue to break zoning laws, take parking away from residents, prohibit beach access, and dump thousands of electric scooters all over our public areas. We are facing big fights ahead to preserve our history, culture, and character. I will continue working hard to resolve the issues facing our neighborhood!



**Abby Deen**  
I strive not only to work hard for yourself, but to work hard for others. To help the community in every way I can. I’ll work hard behind the scenes to make sure the future will be the greatest it can for you and others. To be an at-large community officer is an important job that must go to the right person, that will do it the best they can and for the right reasons and for the community.

*Sean Tyrell – continued from page 4*  
return at least for like 20 years, even if you know everything went your way, you know you start thinking -- why would I go do Uber again? Why not just do what I’m meant to do, which is be an artist. I think everybody’s meant to be an artist in some way. It’s our whole economic system that’s focused on making people robots rather than artists. People should be encouraged to do this rather than sit in offices so that they can pay 2 million dollars to build a three-story building or castle or whatever.” Our conversation turns to interesting or expected things that have happened during the time of Corona.  
“Yeah, a lot of things, good things. All the time I’ve been able to put into my art whether it be painting, singing or building and designing. It’s really just sharpened things. It’s like when your mind’s just like that’s what I work on now, it’s different than when you’re worried about what you’re going to do to pay the bills. So then you can do those things. I feel like my music has just gone way through the roof of what it would have been.” Sean then tells me about the biggest challenges.  
“There’s the neighborhood conspirators who want to vandalize my building or throw doggie poop at my car or pee on my stuff. You know that’s obviously something that’s difficult to deal with. The other thing is that there’s so many ideas I have that would be easily achievable technologically but I can’t because there’s all these businesses that have conspired to make it difficult even though they’re simple technologies. For instance, instead of solar panels, I just wanted to stick a windmill on my roof and charge a battery with that. We had that technology in the 1700s probably. Well can i get it now -- no -- maybe if I was a movie star and knew people who could make it for me but you can’t go to any place around here and get something simple like that.”  
“And of course, electricity and the Internet. You have to jump through all these hoops when it could just be so cheap and easy for a person in my situation to get Wi-Fi. I can go to Mcdonalds to get Wifi. I’ve gone there twice. One time it worked and the other time I got kicked off and wasn’t able to

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**CALIFORNIA WOMEN'S LAW CENTER**  
Pursuing Justice for Women and Girls

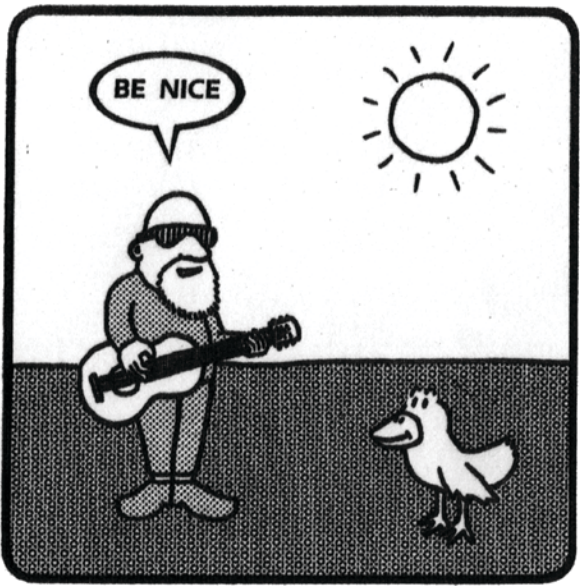
**FREE LEGAL HOUSING CLINIC**  
**CALL FOR SCHEDULING**

The California Women's Law Center is helping tenants answer their legal questions. Attorneys are available to discuss your legal housing needs, including questions about emergency measures related to COVID-19.

**To receive free legal assistance please contact [cwlc@cwlc.org](mailto:cwlc@cwlc.org) or (323) 951-1041 to schedule your reservation.**



get back on. Starbucks don’t do it anymore today or if they do you have to have a subscription or something which is like 35 bucks a year, which isn’t much but I don’t drink coffee and they don’t want people just coming in there for a cup of water and using their Internet either. I’m just hoping the libraries will open sometime soon. It seems odd that they’re still closed. I’ve been waiting for that for a long time.  
“But yeah, simple technology to run my electricity from my car. They sell this tech stuff but they could make it so much better probably for less money than it costs them to make it crappy. But they don’t want people to run electricity from a car battery. Why? Because they want you plugging into the grid or buying lithium ion solar panel charging batteries that cost thousands and thousands of dollars when really you could plug a little windmill into a car battery and I would have lights all night.” Sean tells me his car keys got stolen and it’s too expensive to have new ones made at this point.  
“It was partially my fault my keys and wallet got stolen. I left them on the train and no one turned it in. I’m going to try and see if I can get in through the underneath because I modified the car and turned it into a pickup truck, so the trunk doesn’t actually have a bottom. Well it has a bottom, but it’s one I put in. There’s no seats in there, so I haul 14-foot pieces of lumber all the time. That’s partially how I was able to build this structure. I turned my BMW, which is a fairly new one, into a work machine. The goal was to turn it into a camping vehicle also. I’ll get there someday.”  
Website: <https://seanceciltyrell.com/>



[www.DaleNewmanDesign.com](http://www.DaleNewmanDesign.com)

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7 • May 2021 • FREE VENICE BEACHHEAD

# The Trading Post - A Community Store, and Venice OG Legend by Enyaj Pitchford



Matt, Eli, and Dandy Lion aka Daniel unmask for the camera...mostly.

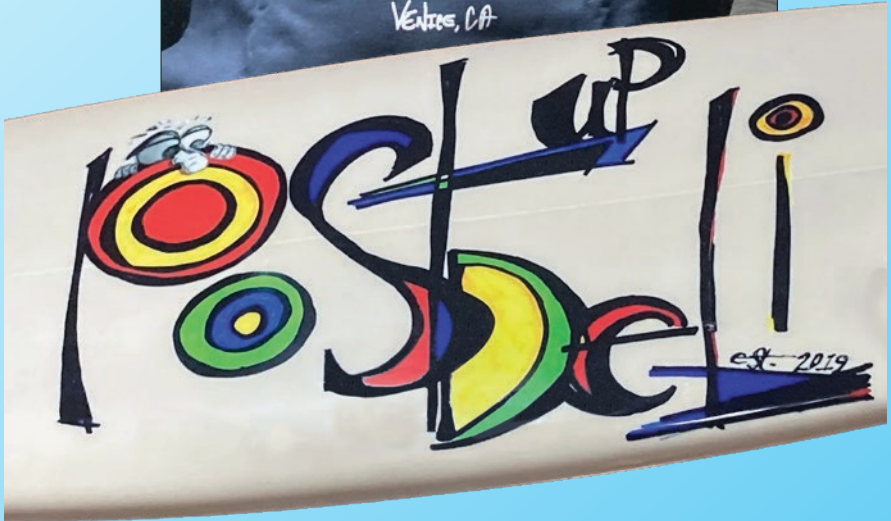
**The infamous Trading Post of 1313 Main St. is not** to be passed by. , Numerology calls 1313 an Angelic number; its presence requires you to keep working hard because you have a big chance to make progress and to achieve something amazing in your life. It speaks to those of special gifts and talents, that need to be constructive with their time to use these gifts. Well, this aptly describes what I feel when I enter the Trading Post.

The atmosphere is one of hard work, intelligence, wit, and a palpable sense of

camaraderie between the workers and the owner. There is a lovely Spirit in this place, and its name is Venice. Apart from my home and being with my friends, I’ve missed this familiar Spirit and was surprised to find it in this neighborhood liquor store!

But this is more than just a liquor store. It is a veritable landmark! Steve Youn inherited the place from his mother who had it since 1979. He’s run it for the last 9 years. It was named the Trading Post because its walls were once covered in heads of animals, animal traps, and guns! Steve’s mom took down the decor, and Steve enjoyed keeping the gun collection! Yet running a liquor, was not what Steve envisioned for his life. He saw how running the store is like being married to the store. It’s an all-day, everyday affair. He had his own appraisal business, and he was making decent money and was the master of his time. He didn’t want to lose that. But his mother retired and he inherited the business.

He didn’t follow the model of ‘running’ the place himself; lording over his workers, hovering over them while they work, and checking his security cameras in between. Instead, being a community-minded man who has always loved Venice, he found workers whom he could relate to and now feel more like family. He delights in how grateful he is to his workers. They are all hardworking and having fun at the same time. “As long as the numbers match at the end of the day, I have no problem with them doing things as they see fit” He loves that he can trust them to do their work. And they are all from Venice, except one whose been here for over a decade. So it’s truly a Venetian confluence. Everyone is greeted when they enter the store. If there is a question, there is someone who knows your answer. Eva is in charge of the wine and the deli. Eli knows all about beer and has stocked the place with the best of craft beers. Daniel, or Dandy Lion, is the King of Tequila ad Mescal. If there are any questions, Steve needs only to point to the right person who can give your answer. Steve, Eva, Eli, and Daniel are the Core Four that runs the shop. Steve feels he is blest with helpers that keep up the vibe and with the work-



load. They’ve been there so long together. They are family.

Besides the array of fine wines, craft beers, and quality hard liquors, there is a price to suit your needs. There’s also an area in their refrigerator, where he stocks common staples that the locals have requested of him. And he’s always open to suggestions of the locals. They even get a 10 percent discount when they pay cash. Now that’s a community man! I asked him about the homeless. He feels most of his trouble comes from the people in

the summer who come from inland. Steve explains that they’re not from the neighborhood and some have little respect for the community. But the locals come and support the store and the local kids, feel this is ‘their store;’ they keep the derelict energy under control. Steve says that so many business owners just come to Venice and ignore the community. “But Venice is a place where you are part of a community and you need to welcome that”.

The common trend on the Westside when getting an established grocery/liquor store

is to remodel, which often involves gutting it out and adding wood floors and walls and modern design models which are great until you look at your receipt and realize you, the consumer, are paying for those designs! When Steve took over the store, he felt like it was dated and a bit of a dump. Being a community store, the boss and the workers got together over the holidays and closed for three days and they tore up the old linoleum and scraped and polished the concrete floor, and topped it with a clear shiny poly coating. Eva had slowly been matching the colors of the walls. They removed the mirrors and are now putting up surfboards and skateboards that the locals have donated. Many of the locals congratulated him and thanked him for fixing up the place.

Two of the surfboards have already been graced with the logo of the Trading Post, done by Steve’s daughter Stephanie Youn. The other has the PostDeli logo that Eva created. The deli was added in what they all saw as a ‘dead zone in the store. After two years of paperwork and rigmarole, they were finally able to open it in July 2019. Ginger, Franco, and Eva are in there, and sometimes they even suck in Steve! Steve recounts how it was a quick success He advertised in the Venice Beach Head and all the small local tech companies in the area would stop by and grab their lunch, then invite their friends Of course, like all businesses, it got hit hard when COVID struck and a lot of his clientele had to move out of town. He’s hoping they will find a way back as the business is reopening. The Post Deli is already having an upswing in business. They expect a great surge in the Summer. With their top-quality deli meats and homemade pizzas with lots of choices of toppings, one can only agree with them. And don’t forget, the famous Groundworks organic coffee, freshly brewed! The PostDeli is open every day but Tuesdays from 9-8 pm. He hopes to have it running seven days a week by the summer until 9 pm. They also have hoodies and beanies and tee shirts with their logos as well for sale.

Steve feels like he’s at home with family when he comes to work. He feels very free having a trustworthy, fun, and hardworking team Steve likes to feel like he’s part of a community I feel it as soon as I walk into the place. It’s the real Venice!







drawing by Robert Crumb, permission by Suzy and Brad.

Howdy by Gerry Fialka

“How you doing?” - common expression

How can we be energetic, sincere and inventive with this question we all ask often?

Venice, California is a friendly town. I enjoy seeing people daily and exchanging conversation. Sometimes, it is only a quick glance, a nod of the head, or a simple “good day.” Investigating the patterns of human greetings has enabled comprehensive awareness. I am still in a quandary why some folks acknowledge another’s passing on the street, and some folks refuse to even recognize our common humanity with a simple gesture.

I have even sung a little song when I say “hello,” and there is no attempt to reciprocate. I belt, “Acknowledging another human can’t kill you, but why take a chance?” It seems they usually don’t even hear it, even if I yell it out loud. Am I simply asking too much of my fellow humans? Is perception reality? Are they just having a bad day? Or are they deep into thought and don’t even notice their environment? Or?

I worked the voting polls for over 15 years. Some of my neighbours would see me behind the desk, signing them up, and they’d bestow a favourable reception. Though normally walking down the street daily, they hardly ever gave a hoot about acknowledging another human. Yikes!

Wiki says, “Greeting is an act of communication in which human beings intentionally make their presence known to each other, to show attention to, and to suggest a type of relationship (usually cordial) or social status (formal or informal) between individuals or groups of people coming in contact with each other. Greetings are sometimes used just prior to a conversation or to greet in passing, such as on a sidewalk or trail. While greeting customs are highly culture- and situation-specific and may change within a culture depending on social status and relationship, they exist in all known human cultures. Greetings can be expressed both audibly and physically, and often involve a combination of the two.”

Is it an obligation to acknowledge another human? Since I get frustrated with expecting a response, I often just do the quick “hand wave.” The other words for “obligation” are revealing a bigger picture view: bond, burden, duty, necessity, need, right, understanding. Am I just making too big a deal?

I am not asking for extended eye contact. Some say that if two people engage direct eye contact for 6 seconds or longer, it reveals either a desire to have sex with or a desire to kill the person. This pop psychology theory seems dominant in a lot of people on the street. Maybe they feel that it is just too creepy to acknowledge somebody else, even if one stares into the other’s eyes for one measly second without saying anything.

Years ago, I read in the LA Weekly that one of best things to do when encountering a homeless person, is to look them in the eyes. That seems like a very humane practice that could apply to everyone all

the time. Basic neuroscience says that oxytocin can be released during eye contact. It flows into the bloodstream as a hormone likened to love and can increase positive attitudes, such as bonding. Sharing commonality in our humanity could actually bring us together. Why fight it? Let’s spread connectedness with more oxytocin, commonly referred to as the “love hormone.”

Study the Wiki entry for the “cooperative eye hypothesis,” which is “a proposed explanation for the appearance of the human eye. It suggests that the eye’s distinctive visible characteristics evolved to make it easier for humans to follow another’s gaze while communicating or while working together on tasks.” Our pupils actually mimic the other person’s pupils. The whites of our eyes are larger than other species, so we’re easier to read!

Blind people are not excluded from this essay. That must be explored in my future writings. Their other senses achieve the same feelings. Practice ways of greeting unsighted people. But, is it really that hard to acknowledge another human on the street, even just for a few seconds?

The “10 and 5 rule” is a simple guideline that is widely used in hospitals. The rule dictates that when a staff member is 10 feet from a guest, the staff smiles and makes direct eye contact. When they are within five feet, the staff verbally greets the guest. Join in my mantra: the 4H Club - “Hope Happy Healthy Healing.”

Get knee deep in “Howdy” by reading more: Wiki entry of [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eye\\_contact](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eye_contact)

Wiki entry of <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gaze> Eye Gaze article <https://scanberlin.com/2018/07/01/a-brief-look-at-the-neuroscience-of-eye-gaze/>

Greeting others on the street can lead to new friends, too. The author A.A. Milne, wrote that “Weeds are flowers, too, once you get to know them.” In “The Ballad of Frankie Lee and Judas Priest,” Bob Dylan sang,

“They were the best of friends.

So when you see your neighbor carrying somethin’  
Help him with his load  
And don’t go mistaking Paradise  
For that home across the road.”

There are a million variations of “Howdy.” Be creative. Awake and try the Finnegans Wake-ish version, “Sup? Mungry? Geet?” which means, “what’s up? are you hungry? did you eat?”

Mark Edmundson celebrates National Poetry Month with these related words in WSJ 4-17-21: “In ‘Leaves of Grass,’ soon after he offers his master metaphor Whitman rises up to view American democracy from overhead. The poem’s famous catalogues of people doing what they do every day are quite simple: ‘On the piazza walk five friendly matrons with twined arms;/ The crew of the fish-smack pack repeated layers of halibut in the hold,/ The Missourian crosses the plains, toting his wares and his cattle,/The fare-collector goes through the train—he gives notice by the jingling of loose change.’

This is your family, these are your sisters and brothers, Whitman effectively says. In general, we walk the streets with a sense of isolation. But if we can move away from our addictions to hierarchy and exclusive individuality, and embrace Whitman’s trope of the grass, our experience of day-to-day life can be different. We can look at those we pass and say not ‘That is another’ but ‘That too is me. That too I am.’ Or so Whitman hopes.

Of course, the benefits that Whitman promises do not come for free, or simply by reading his poem. We’ve got to meet his vision halfway, by being amiable, friendly, humane and nonhierarchical. This repudiation of hierarchy is not so easy; it’s not clear that even Whitman himself pulls it off. Isn’t he trying to be a great poet, the first truly American bard? But his effort matters. He knew that democracy is always vulnerable, that the best hope for human

IN MEMORIAM

TIMOTHY J. DUNNE, 1938-2021

“ Mind is a comparative tool, you only know your own experience so it is difficult to imagine what it would be like to live like someone else.” -TJD

Timothy Joseph Dunne made his last gesture on March 5, 2021 signing off on a life of 82 years. Born in Iowa on 6/16/1938,during the depression years shaped Timothy’s formative years resulting in a life-time of frugality and helping and sharing



with neighbours and the needy. Being the eldest son brought the dubious task of keeping his younger siblings in line, but he was up for the challenge. His parents preceded him in death and his younger brother Harold Luis Dunne, who had an IQ of 160. Timothy, started his long and illustrious career in Avionic Maintenance and was ranked as extraordinary class 3 technician by the U.S. Navy. After High School he joined the Navy with his class buddies to see the world together. His first assignment was on board the deck of an aircraft carrier USS Coral Sea CVA-43. He served during Vietnam War in the Operation Rolling Thunder the first strike into North Vietnam. His success in the world was attributed to his work ethics and his natural mechanical ability his attention and concentration to details was legendary. The discipline and patriotism he learned in the Navy never left him, as his friends and neighbours would attest.

His service to the country and community didn’t end after honorable discharge in August 1964. Timothy again returned to service as a reserve in 1967 and was posted at Bainbridge, Maryland. Then on to Treasure Island in San Francisco Bay area. Later in his formative years around 1974 he lived at Dick Neal’s Apartments on 15 Rose Avenue in Venice for a short while he first moved to Venice, subsequently moving to Santa Monica. While living in Santa Monica he worked for Continental Airlines at the Los Angeles Airport.

After his retirement he worked as a security guard and was a par excellence volunteer at the Israel Levin Center on Venice Boardwalk for many years helping the Senior Citizens. He was a master chef at the Israel Levin Center. Timothy was also an self-taught excellent drummer and a percussionist. Timothy had a very soft spot for pets, and had a small dog Schipperke, which he would take for daily walks with the fresh ocean breeze blowing through the dogs fur. Unannounced guests were numerous at his house and all would be well fed and welcomed with a good hearty homemade Chicken dumplings and cherry and apple pies. Timothy would always get up around 5

A.M. every morning and go hunting for early bird bargains at Ralphs and Gelsons snatching up bargains. His happiest times were with a cup of coffee and friends. Friends and neighbours are forever indebted to you for your unconditional giving. RIP Friend.

happiness could disappear from the earth. But Whitman would not let that happen without a fight.”

We become what we behold. The term “eye contact” was coined in the early 1960’s as a meaningful and important sign of confidence, respect, and social communication. Even a quick hand wave is kind. Propagate goodness with more greeting salutations. Howdy galore.

Please tell me your thoughts. Thank you. Laugh-tears.com

Gerry Fialka’s book Strange Questions: Experimental Film as Conversation is available from Amazon, and the greatest bookstore ever, Angel City Books on Pier Avenue in Venice. Check out <https://www.radiovenice.tv/> for Frank Zappa Special on May 23.



HUBA! HUBA! HUBA!

Sadly one of the most beloved entertainers on Venice Beach has died. Perry “Huba, Huba” Hernandez



passed away March 22 of cancer. Born in 1943 in Trinidad, Perry had been a street performer at Venice Beach for nearly 40 years. Perry usually performed near Windward Ave. He would start his act by playing Calypso music and yelling, “I come to party!” With the music playing he would do the limbo almost to the ground.

Then he would joke with the crowd and he would open up a big canvas filled with broken glass. He would get the crowd chanting, “Huba, Huba, Huba” and he would walk barefoot in the glass. Then he would yell, “I’m gonna throw my ass in the glass!” He would then put his ass in the glass and lie down on the sharp glass. While his ass was in the glass he would get some big dude from the audience to step on him. After more jokes he would do his finale. Perry would stand on a chair and jump on the glass! What an amazing show!

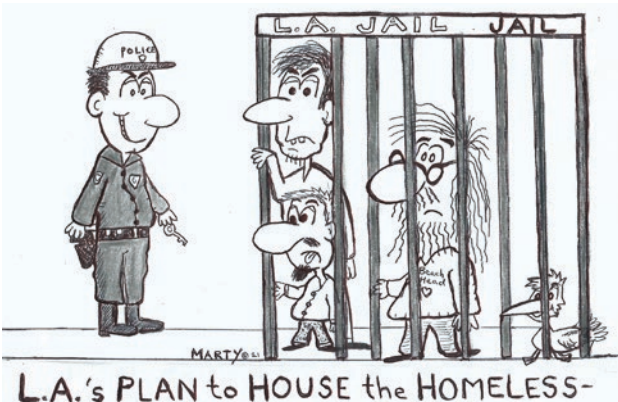
Perry had performed for tens of thousands of people over the years. He was known for being kind, helpful and wonderful to those on the beach. On March 28 there was a memorial on the Ocean Front Walk near where he used to perform. Many of his friends, family and locals all came to honor him. He was truly one of Venice Beach’s greatest talents and best entertainers and a legend in our time....Huba! Huba! Huba! - marty -



Clark Brown

Since 1969 I have lived and owned property in Venice. I am a just retired lawyer. I want to be a VNC At-Large Community Officer to help resolve our homeless problem. My website clarkbrown-4venice.org has my ideas in detail. The many homeless living on our streets, sidewalks, lawns and alleys are severe hazards to all. They are not going away. VNC and community groups should support: -Permanent housing (Lincoln apartments).

Rehab Housing (Emerson place). Transition Housing (Ramada Inn). Project Roomkey (motel vouchers). -Improved design and management standards for all homeless projects (increased policing; resident background checks; mandatory cooperation with social service providers; priority for people already in Venice, banning camping near projects; cooperation with neighborhood groups regarding design and management of the projects.). -City provision of sanitation facilities, trash bins, pickup for encampments -Get communities outside Venice to do same. Work on specifics.



HOURS

SUN-WED 8am-10pm  
THUR-SAT 8am-11pm

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Beyond This Moment: A Beyond Baroque  
Virtual Benefit  
Thursday, May 6, 2021  
7:00 PM PST

On May 6, we celebrate poetry, literature, and renewed literary community with **Beyond This Moment**, a virtual benefit in support of Beyond Baroque's reopening later this year. Featuring Amanda Gorman, Tyehimba Jess, Louie Pérez, Wayne Kramer, and many more!

Ramadan Resistance: Poetry as Process in Islamophobic Times A Workshop with Tanzila Ahmed  
Monday May 3 and May 10, 2021  
5:00 - 7:00 PM PST

A two day intensive workshop with author Tanzila Ahmed, hosted over two nights of Ramadan

\*\*\* Sat, May 22, 2021  
It's All Write Ma - Zimmy Zoomin' <https://www.facebook.com/events/373078470435815/> Could it be RobbMe Zimmer as Noel Coward? and/or: "I don't like propaganda in the theater unless it is disguised so brilliantly that the audience mistakes it for entertainment." When asked "Are you a poet?" Bob responded "I'm a trapeze artist." Bob says: "Don't ever tell anyone everything you know." and "I didn't create Bob Dylan. Bob Dylan has always been here." "Are you going to play yourself?" Bob: "No, I am gonna play my mother." TANGLED Up in EVERYawareNESS.



Bang, Bang You're Dead  
MOISHE OYVAY  
Bang, bang you're dead  
shot ya in the head.  
Shoot, shoot, shoot my gun  
ya better run, run, run.  
The gun lobby protects your rights  
so ya can murder in gun fights.  
Jerks think killing is so much fun  
shooting a machine gun.  
At a market, concert or anywhere  
bullets rip and tear.  
Kill, kill, kill  
murderers get such a thrill.  
Cowards with guns are sicko freaks  
the stench of rotting blood reeks.  
Blow out baby's brains  
everywhere blood stains.  
Screwed up nuts  
shooting out your guts.  
Gun creeps love their gun  
will die before they're done.  
NRA with 2nd Amendment lies  
you may be the one who dies.  
So many loved ones are shot  
maimed or killed and buried to rot.  
Bang, bang you're dead  
your blood runs red.



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Thank You – Tony Mason





REVOLUTIONARY

I am a revolutionary  
filled up  
with the bombs  
of injustices  
with pull pins  
labeled **freedom**

I am a revolutionary  
Filled with  
religious fever,  
out of balance,  
with what's righteous but  
with thoughts that  
may not be  
right –  
yet, not wrong

I am a revolutionary  
suffering under the weight  
of suppressed  
anger  
at those who believe  
but say they don't  
know any better --  
who live,  
yet, do not know life

I am a revolutionary  
praying for peace  
but fear it will not come  
until the pull pin  
from the bomb of injustices  
labeled **freedom**,  
is finally released.

Boom!  
I am a revolutionary  
Let freedom reign.

Naomi Nightingale  
February 11, 2020

Written at the funeral services for Donovan  
Troy Jefferson, son of Anita Davis

REPLY ALL  
BY ALAN RODMAN

YOU DON'T HAVE TO  
BE A BIRD  
ANYONE WOULD PREFER  
DIRT TEA THE OTHER  
  
KIND IS SUSPECT  
AND DANK THE SEATS  
FOLD DOWN  
INTO A BED IT SURE HAD

A 287 V8 THEIR FLEAS  
ARE KNOWN TO CARRY  
THE BLACK  
PLAGUE AND MAY

CAUSE DEATH  
OR EVEN WORSE  
SO IF YOU ARRIVE IN  
THE SPERMISH AMBULANCE

SHALL YOU NOT DEPART  
IN FASTER EGG HEARSE?  
EVERY EXIT IS  
AN ENTRANCING DANCE

\*  
Trash talk  
buy alan r odman

Vermin and worms  
raccoons with germs

his refuse repugnant  
no uncertain terms

baboons who use spoons  
for hurling lampoons

chickens not checking  
their cheerful poop pecking

people who throw unused cheese  
from their decking

good fences in brief  
good neighbors make

a yard vac clears snakes  
so just suck it up Jake

dispose of it all  
right over the wall

make no mistakes  
take great relief

from garbage he builds  
a great barrier reef

11 • May 2021 • FREE VENICE BEACHHEAD

Dear Vaccine

By Majid Naficy

In response to Naomi Shihab Nye’s Prompt\*

Dear Vaccine,  
It’s too late for Vahab  
But you can save his wife and daughter.  
They still water his roses  
And feed his canaries  
But cannot watch his last video again  
When he tried to teach his class on Zoom  
And his coughs were more than his words.

April 1st, 2021

My American Love  
Thirty-Two Poems for Wendy  
- *excerpt*  
  
Seventeen.

Who Is More Envied?

by  
Majid Naficy

Who is more envied:  
The one who goes to work  
In her silver Corolla every morning  
Or I who walk to the seaside  
With a stick in my hand?  
  
I envy her  
Who in half an hour  
Will climb stairs  
Push open a door  
And be welcomed with the scent of coffee,  
"Hi's" and smiles.

But before my shoes  
Become heavy from envy  
I carry myself to the coastal path  
Over a highway overpass  
And next to seagulls  
I walk with my thoughts.

When I return home  
To write my new poem  
In the style of "Assyrian Tree"\*  
I see my answering machine blinking.

She envies my leisure  
And is ready to trade  
Her paycheck with my benefit.  
Perhaps after years of longing  
She can finally write  
A play about her job.

October 7, 2013

\*- "The Assyrian Tree" is a debate poem between a goat and palm tree written in Parthian language in ancient Iran.







Jason Sugars

From Broadway across the Boardwalk to the Breakwater – and back. I have risen, I stand and I will be blessed to rest forever loyal to the soil that was home to my Mother, to her Father, to his Mother [my Great-Grand-Mother]. I have long wanted to raise my hand and my voice in the town where I was born and raised, where I raised my kids and where those kids are now raising their own. .

I intend to build and to be a bridge between old and new, real and true. . Venice has long been a diverse, multi-cultural community, built on the legend and legacy of our many and myriad friends, family and fine feathered folks from all walks of life and style. . As late, the number of unhoused residents has risen exponentially while the influx of people and businesses from parts around the world have helped to turn our beautiful town into a clear reflection of the inequity and imbalances that only work to weaken the whole. . It is beyond time that we learn to work and live together to get on track.



Lisa Redmond

I’ve lived in Venice for decades. And even with all its difficulties and divisive issues, I feel very fortunate to live here. My primary goal as a VNC Board Member is to be a bridge builder, to bring the community together to move Venice forward. A near impossible task for sure, yet I’ve spent the last year developing relationships with multiple Venice residents from all viewpoints. I believe a lot of our divided community issues are based on not knowing all the facts and simply not listening to each other. It’s hard to progress as a community when more time is spent arguing than actual action.

I have compassion for all viewpoints. I hope to be a vehicle for positive transformation and acceptance for all, including the diminishing diversity of Venice, and a facilitator for a collective community engagement that represents all the voices of our beautiful neighborhood. My future for Venice is unity, and it’s imperative that the next VNC Board works together.

*Remember to Vote continued from page 3*  
nice guy but politically inept and so neutral he enables gentrifiers, then there should be zero issue for voting for Averill. We validate and understand the criticism about Brian but anyone entertaining the idea of voting for Jim Murez or even worse, Ben Decker for VNC president, is just being stubborn and irrational.

There are many more VNC seats that we will discuss but we are not afforded the print space for that here. You may read the full piece on FreeVeniceBeachhead.com. Please trust that the best vetted lineup of candidates are listed on VeniceforAll.org This is not to say that there are not other quality candidates. There very well could be. However the Venice for All recommendations are the only candi-



Christopher Lee

My name is Christopher Lee and I am running for a seat on the Venice Neighborhood Council. I am an actively involved member of the community, forming [venicecommunitycleanups.org](http://venicecommunitycleanups.org) with information from the Venice Neighborhood Council (VNC), Venice Business Improvement District (BID), and Venice Chamber of Commerce. I am an active member of the VNC Outreach Committee and am working with Los Angeles City District 11 on a “Help to Home” initiative to provide mentorship and services to the unhoused here in Venice Beach.

I have a 3 stage plan for Venice Beach that is based on 4 principles: integrity, legacy, humanity, and equity. It is my belief that all constituents of the community deserve to be heard by the VNC and only once the Venice community is appropriately represented can we best advise the City of Los Angeles on how we would like to grow. A vote for me is a vote for the future of Venice Beach. <https://cwlee.nyc/vnc/>



Sergio Perez

My name is Sergio Pérez. I was raised in Venice and manage my family’s food business, the iconic Great Western Steak and Hoagie Co. on Lincoln Blvd, a venerable Venice institution. For many years I have organized holiday toy and food drives and partnered with local institutions like the Fire Department and LAPD to make them successful.

I am on the board of Venice Pride along with years of service. My family’s business always steps up to fundraise for our local schools and youth, and to help community members in need. With my experience managing one of the most beloved businesses in Venice and longstanding community engagement, I will work to protect Venice’s diversity and contribute to effective and inclusive solutions for our community’s important issues.

dates whose record of community work oriented in housing, racial, and economic equity can be accounted for.

The center topic still being the unhoused epidemic of course. With tensions rising on both sides of the issue hopefully by electing a more inclusive VNC board we can get some well balanced proposals and solutions. We definitely won’t get far with another gentrifier inundated board even if there are people of color on it who essentially have the same capitalist and gentrification aspiring values. Voting this year is by mail. There is no in person voting. If you or anyone you know lives, works or owns property or a business in Venice they are eligible to vote. Make sure you request a ballot and get your vote in. If you need help you can email the Venice Beachhead and we will be glad to help you out. –V–



Monique Maion

Committed in finding solutions for the unhoused population in Los Angeles. I have experience and I can help get real help for our unhoused citizens in our neighborhood and help bring a sense of unity and safety to the community again.



Grant Turck

I co-organized the first Venice sign holiday lightings and have fought for the local LGBTQ+ community by starting Venice Pride, where I also created the Venice Pride Flag Lifeguard Tower - a groundbreaking, first of its kind beacon to the world on our shore celebrating our inclusiveness. Today, I see Abbot Kinney’s mission and Venice itself being attacked by outside exploitative development causing this community to lose its founding principles. As your At-Large Community Officer I will ensure change is guided to be both creative and consider the place Venice has historically represented.



Mike Bravo, [miguel@bravo1.la](mailto:miguel@bravo1.la), [bravo4venice.com](http://bravo4venice.com)

5th generation Venetian. Accomplished Indigenous educator at the forefront of Venice’s most critical and successful civil rights actions. I am outspoken and hold all to task regarding values that preserve and encourage true diversity to thrive. Solutions need comprehensive participation and collaboration. We will never accomplish that with a consistently homogenous VNC board making top-down decisions or enabling leaders who reinforce those inequities.

I work to ensure that all voices are included in the collaboration process and reflected in the solutions for our community. The surge in violence and the rising population of unhoused citizens is a concern for everyone but we can’t incarcerate ourselves out of these issues. Intelligent, comprehensive, and bottom-up solutions involving all economic, residency, and racial backgrounds of Venice are needed to tackle the root issues of these concerns.