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50 Years After The Coup That Changed America Forever

By Jim Smith

*Have you heard it on the news
About this fascist groove thang
Evil men with racist views
Spreading all across the land
Don't just sit there on your ass
Unlock that funky chaindance
Brothers, sisters shoot your best
We don't need this fascist groove thang
—Heaven 17*

This is the 50th anniversary of the end of progressive government in America. The assassination of President John F. Kennedy in Dallas on November 22, 1963 has profoundly changed our country and our daily lives to this day. It was a coup d'état by the 1 percent that was carried out by a multi-departmental “Murder Incorporated” that had been growing within the federal government since World War II.

From the beginning, Americans in overwhelming poll numbers have rejected the lone-gunman theory that the Warren Commission and the mass media have presented to cover up their dastardly deed. Now on the 50th anniversary, we'll see a parade of pundits on TV who will try to convince us of the impossible: that Lee Harvey Oswald acted alone, in spite of volumes of evidence that Kennedy was killed by those elements of government who had been killing - and continue killing - ordinary citizens and heads of state.

Two new books have been published that can serve as refresher courses for those who lived through this nightmare, and for those who were not yet born in 1963. *They Killed Our President*, by Jesse Ventura and Dick Russell, brings together 63 reasons why Oswald didn't act alone, and didn't even shoot anyone as he said after his arrest. (“I'm just a patsy,” said Oswald.) This exhaustive survey can save you the time of reading many, many books to get an overview of the assassination.

JFK's last hundred days: The Transformation of a Man and the Emergence of a Great President, by Thurston Clarke, takes a different tack. It shows how Kennedy changed from a Cold Warrior to a peace advocate, a supporter of civil rights, and an enemy of the military-intelligence-crime syndicate within his own government. The Nuclear Test Ban Treaty was a crowning achievement of his administration. Although he was born to great wealth, he became a traitor to the ruling class.

The details of the assassination and coverup are important for an understanding of the world in which we live. But what often doesn't come through is what America was like in 1963.

I wasn't an eyewitness to the murder of our 35th President, but I was an eyewitness to life in 1963. I can tell you that the hatred for President Kennedy was dark and deep. It was much greater than that against President Obama. 1963 was a time when the John Birch Society was going strong. The China Lobby was still seething over the Red Army winning the civil war and driving their hero Chiang Kai-shek into exile on the island of Taiwan. There had not yet been a victory for the civil rights movement and jim crow laws and hard-core racism was rampant in the South, including Texas. Whole classrooms of children, echoing their parents' attitudes, cheered when they heard of Kennedy's death.

*Dead president's corpse in the driver's car.
The engine runs on glue and tar.
Come on along, not going very far.
To the East, to meet the Czar.
—Jim Morrison, The Doors*

Assassinations of leaders and murders of individuals were commonplace in the 1960s, so much so that the decade has been called the Era of Assassinations. Before Kennedy, Civil rights leader Medgar Evers had been murdered on June 12, 1963 by the KKK. Assassinations of foreign leaders were commonplace, including Congolese Prime Minister Patrice Lumumba (1961) on orders of CIA chief Allen Dulles and South Vietnamese President Ngo Dinh Diem (1963). The possible assassination of United Nations Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld (1961) is the subject of a new inquiry by a UN committee. The CIA attempted to assassinate Fidel Castro more than 600 times, according to some accounts. The CIA was also involved in an attempt on the life of French President Charles de Gaulle (1962). And then, after the successful coup, came the murders of Malcolm X, Martin Luther King, Robert Kennedy and hundreds more.

From time to time during 1963, I would happen to see President Kennedy on TV. His comments struck me as much more progressive on civil rights and foreign affairs than I had ever heard from any other government official, including JFK, in past years. As detailed in Clarke's book, *JFK's last hundred days*, he was genuinely trying to end the Cold War, establish equality between races and undermine control by the military and intelligence establishments. Not everyone was as pleased with the President's policies as I was. Hatred and violence were running rampant. There had been more than 400 threats on the life of the President in the months leading up to Dallas, according to the Secret Service.

— Continued on page 11



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Mail: P.O. Box 2, Venice, CA 90294.

Email: free@venicebeachhead.org

Web: www.venicebeachhead.org

Twitter: twitter.com/VeniceBeachhead

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Dear Beachhead.

I would like to thank the Beachhead for printing the article by Brian Connolly "On Being Homeless in Venice".

I thought the article was extremely well written and the content and message stayed with me long after after reading it. I think it is important for people to read this article as it shows a side to being "homeless" that so many choose not to see or think about. It shows the daily struggles, the hardships, the pain, and a glimpse into a world that many of us just want to ignore. Too many Venetians like to blame and criticize and condemn the homeless, and I am sickened by the ignorant few who refer to homeless people as "crusties" or worse. Too many assume being homeless means you are only a drug crazed violent criminal. This article is a perfect example as to how false and misguided those sentiments are and I welcome that! I encourage that. And I thank Brian Connolly for doing that. It shows the compassion, the humanity and the intelligence that exists in the lives of those who have to live on the streets.

My hope is that people who judge or vaguely ignore the homeless, realize that the person sleeping on the concrete may in fact be the person who could inspire them.

Good luck to Brian Connolly and all the homeless people who are trying to survive in this world. Just like all of us are.

Della Franco
Venice Resident

Dear Beachhead.

Soon after 6am, the many unhoused Venetians must vacate their concrete repose on 3rd Street until well after dark, permitted only to set their bedding down at 9pm.

Teri Shapiro, an unemployed nurse who is partially disabled, sleeps there, side by side, with her 17-year old cat "Possum."

Being a feline rescuer most of my adult life, I thought someone would be touched by this fact and might donate some quality cat food for her precious elderly kitty.

Sincerely,
Suzanne Verdal

Dear Beachhead.

Just read the letter in the Sept issue (yes I'm late!) from Anthony Castillo re: gentrification on Abbot Kinney, and then the article, "LAPD in the Spotlight for Racial Profiling" by Mark Lipman. Does anyone see a connect here...profiling of all human beings and gentrification? I have three stories to tell. I'm also appalled to know Ocean Front Walk is now closed from midnight to 5 am.

I'm a night owl who lives in Mar Vista. I occasionally go down to the Venice Pier to walk late at night when I haven't gotten my exercise during the day. About 5 weeks ago (maybe beginning of September/end of August) I was walking from the end of the pier back towards the parking lot, and a police truck had been moseying down the beach from the north. I saw it stop once further north, shining its light on something or other in the dark.

When the police got to just past the pier where that pile of rocks is, I saw them turn the light on towards the rocks, stop their truck and get out. It was a young man and a woman officer. There were two young people, a man and a woman, who had been 'snuggling' under some blankets there. Disturbing no one, making no noise.

When I walked up, the blanket was off, and it looked like they were putting their clothes on (still sitting down on the bottom blanket) with the bright light shining away of course. I bucked up and walked over and asked the police (tactfully, no animosity) why they were doing this. Well, for one, I was informed, the beach now closes at midnight! I was like, what?!! They said it's been a couple of years (I'm not normally down there quite that late) and that I need to talk to the City Council about passing the law.

They were 'interrogating' these two young people who did not appear to be homeless (God forbid!) extracting all kinds of information from them. I wish

– Continued on page 10

Thanks for your generous donations!

Green Scene Gardens
Joseph Doro
James Schley
Nutritional Warehouse

Dear Beachhead.

My thanks to you and CJ Gronner for the informative article on the Abbot Kinney Hotel debacle. New York transplant Abrams and his minions were no doubt stung by the reception to their planned gift to the neighborhood by an ungrateful citizenry. No good greed goes unpunished. Mr. Abrams, take a bow. You are not only the most disliked (putting it mildly) man in Venice, but also, with Angelica gone, FatCat Outsider of the Year! (Joel Silver is livid.) Now run down to Aviator Nation and buy yourself a \$50 "Locals Only" trucker's hat. Oh. You have. Well, of course you have.

Sincerely,
Gene Mendez

Dear Beachhead.

Approximately a week ago I attended the Venice Community Council PLUM meeting at the Oakwood Recreational Center. There were over 300 residents. It was well run and very well organized.

Everyone agreed that there are perhaps 5,000 or more "illegal" short term rentals in Venice wherein the property owners are indeed serving as a surrogate, stealth motel or hotel Business, and not paying any Business or Bed taxes. A simple examination review of many of the popular computer sites will reveal that there may be as many as 10,000 or more illegal short-term rental operators. All of that revenue is lost.

Simply stated, we already have several dozen or more illegal hotels in the city. We have transients or tourists using our highway, street parking, beach attractions and of course, our restaurants and other amenities.

The new hotel of course would establish a new, substantial TAX BASE; employ only local Venice residents as staff or others; generate enormous taxes and be a destination venue for anniversaries, conventions, weddings and bar mitzvahs. In no way would it obstruct anyone's view. The zoning already has been designated by the Coastal Commission as appropriate for a hotel. It brings good paying jobs to Venice. It's well designed and appropriate. Accordingly, let's stop being hypocrites: there are already major, substantial hotel businesses in Venice, although they are below the radar, inappropriate and illegal.

Your friend always,
Michael Millman

Dear Michael Millman.

Respectfully, Mr. Millman, "Everyone" did not agree that there were illegal short term rentals in Venice - that was your argument alone. Those "illegal" rentals, in fact, help enable many people to meet their mortgages and/or rents that have skyrocketed in recent years, so that they may continue to live in the Venice they love. That revenue is not "lost" ... it helps to keep Venice residents in their homes. Our tax money never stays in Venice anyway. We are merely 1% (ironically) of the greater Los Angeles budget, so that argument doesn't hold water either, and only reinforces our need for cityhood. Renting out your spare room to give a visitor a real Venice experience and help families through financial strain is hardly the same thing as a big hotel, which we - and nearly everyone else at the meeting you attended - wholly oppose.

Sincerely,
The Beachhead

Free Venetians.

As an over-mountains Venetian, I have always taken exception to Ocean Front Walk being called "the boardwalk". I always presumed that that was just a conceit of those from the wrong ocean. But to see it used in the Beachhead is most disconcerting.

Best Regards to the City of Venice!
Ted

Dear Ted.

You are absolutely right. Ocean Front Walk should never be referred to as the Boardwalk. We apologize for the oversight.
The Beachhead

Town Hall: Venetians Say No To Bollards and Cameras

By Greta Cobar

Town Halls are held for those in charge to listen to the public. If anyone was listening during the October 29 Town Hall on Ocean Front Walk safety, what was to be heard was NO to bollards, NO to security cameras, YES to bathroom upkeep. Those were the only things being re-iterated over and over again.

Bollards are posts or structures used to obstruct the passage of motor vehicles. Although cars drive down OFW almost on a daily basis for deliveries, emergencies, or because they're lost, obstructing vehicles off of OFW became a concept after Alice Gruppioni was killed August 3 by a maniac who drove onto OFW with the purpose of hitting pedestrians. Although the driver could have entered OFW from a number of streets open to vehicles, such as Rose, he pre-meditated and entered through Dudley, which is blocked off by permanent metal bollards. He got around those by driving on the sidewalk.

The question now is: will they go ahead with the planned bollards, gates and cameras in spite of community opposition?

Upon gazing at the crowd of over 100 that had gathered for the meeting, I out loud wondered who were the out-of-Venice-looking group of four women dressed up and sitting together. I didn't know everybody in that room, but I could tell that all were from Venice just as easily as I could tell that those four women were not from Venice.

They turned out to be architecture students from USC (University of Spoiled Children) who were attending the meeting to present their plan of bollards, planters and gates to be installed on OFW.

As Dede Audet stated to cheers and claps during public comment, "One thing about Venice: ask the people!"

The ridiculousness of the USC students' proposal was pointed out by several speakers during public comment: Who is going to water the plants that you're planning to put in the planters? Living here and being all too familiar with how the city of Los Angeles ignores Venice, we know those plants would not last till the end of the weekend.

"Bollards did not stop the guy [who killed Alice Gruppioni on August 3]", Theresa Dietlein said. "Bollards are not the answer. Cameras are not either, what happened to innocent till proven guilty?" she went on to say.

Barbara Peck pointed out that gates and bollards would block evacuation in case of a tsunami. Ira Kuslow stated the obvious: "you can't stop a maniac. They're gonna do what they're gonna do." Another obvious fact that he pointed out was that blocking side-streets would increase traffic on OFW, as trash, delivery and emergency vehicles would not be able to enter and exit on the closest street available.

One of the most effective speakers of the night was Suzanne Thompson, who wanted to know whom she was supposed to be addressing and why Rob Kadota, from Mar Vista, was chairing the meeting. And why the community was not involved, why the Venice Arts Council was not consulted, but only USC students' plan was considered. The audience overwhelmingly agreed with her that money needs to be spent on bathrooms instead of bollards.

The installation of bollards alone would cost \$1,200,000. Gates, planters and cameras were proposed as well. The question that came up over and over again was: where is this money coming from when all we have heard for as long as we can remember is that there is no money for toilet paper. "We need bathrooms, not bollards," said Lisa Aycock.

"It wasn't the car that killed the woman, it was the person driving the car," said Barbara Gibson.

"Our public safety issue is the LAPD. They have not changed at all since the 80s and 90s. They just cover their asses better," a gentleman said.

Our new councilperson Mike Bonin did one thing in Venice since taking office: he installed useless plastic bollards on OFW and side streets that started out as an eye-sore and have since become a tripping hazards, as many have been broken off. How plastic bollards that flatten to the ground when a car touches them would have stopped the driver on August 3 is very unclear.

While speaking at the Town Hall meeting, Bonin himself admitted that his bollards "are not most effective." He also said that he wants to make the beach better than it is by holistically managing it. Aha....

"I did not feel threatened, but I did not feel comfortable," Bonin told the audience about his experience walking down OFW at 9pm. I wondered if having to badly use the bathroom was making him feel uncomfortable.

The proposal submitted by the USC students will go before a Venice Neighborhood Council Board vote, and will then be considered and amended by committees and sub-committees of the City Council.



Mike Bonin addressing the crowd at the October 29 VNC Town Hall meeting.

Photo: Suzanne Thompson

The August 3 incident was horrific and unfortunate, but blocking and fencing off OFW as a result would be an extreme reaction. Ironically, we have been told over and over again through the years that streets cannot be blocked off for festivals and community gatherings. Did that change overnight?

In light of the latest government spying scandals at home and aboard, the last thing we want are more police surveillance cameras on OFW. Let's not allow the authorities to use the August 3 incident as an excuse to increase surveillance over Venice.

We have spoken our hears and minds out loud and clear during the October Town Hall: no bollards, no cameras, yes toilet paper. Now we'll just have to wait and see if anyone was actually listening.



Above: Ineffective, broken bollards as an eyesore and tripping hazard

Photo: Greta Cobar



Political cartoon by Khalil Bendib

EPIC P&F Campaign: End Poverty In California

By Eric Ahlberg

Now you may ask yourself, “How can I wave my freak flag high?” How can I stick it to the man? How can I express my utter disgust at what this country is being driven into? Police Violence, stop and frisk, forfeiture laws, gun violence, horrendous war making, idiotic Republicans, and some highly compromised Democrats. How can a poor man stand these times and live?

Register for the Peace and Freedom Party, and campaign for Cindy Sheehan.

The Peace and Freedom Party is is running on an EPIC program, End Poverty In California. Upton Sinclair got for 37.8 percent of the gubernatorial vote for a Socialist EPIC agenda in 1934.

The Peace and Freedom Party Platform is fully politically correct. You are not, but maybe you try. Pricks start with the PC jokes. They are probably Republicans in disguise. Unfriend them and steal their spouse.

“Cindy Lee Miller Sheehan (born July 10, 1957) is an American anti war activist whose son, U.S. Army Specialist Casey Sheehan, was killed by enemy action during the Iraq War. She attracted national and international media attention in August 2005 for her extended anti war protest at a makeshift camp outside President George W. Bush's Texas ranch—a stand that drew both passionate support and angry criticism. Sheehan ran unsuccessfully for Congress in 2008. She is a vocal critic of President Barack Obama's foreign policy. Her memoir, *Peace Mom: A Mother's Journey Through Heartache to Activism*, was published in 2006.” - Wikipedia

Cindy Sheehan hung with Hugo Chavez, she’s down with the Cuban 5. She is an advocate for Matriotism.

“*Matriotism is the opposite of patriotism...not to destroy it, but to be a yin to its yang, and balance out the militarism of patriotism. A Matriot loves his/her country but does not buy into the exploitive phrase of 'My country right or wrong.' (As Chesterton said, that's like saying, 'My mother, drunk or sober.')* A Matriot knows that her country can do a lot of things right, especially when the government is not involved. For example, I know of no other citizens of any country who are more personally generous than those of America. However, a Matriot also knows that when her country is wrong, it can be responsible for murdering thousands upon thousands of innocent and unsuspecting humans. A true Matriot would never drop an atomic bomb or bombs filled with white phosphorous, carpet bomb cities and villages, or control drones from thousands of miles away to kill innocent men, women and children. There is one most important thing that matriots would never do, however, and this is the key to stopping killing to solve problems: a matriot would never send her child or another mother's child to fight nonsense wars...and would march into a war herself that she considered just to protect her child from harm. Aha! Matriots would fight their own battles, but take a dim view of having to do so, and would seldom resort to violence to solve conflict! Patriots cowardly hide behind the flag and eagerly send young people to die to fill their own pocketbooks.” - Political Affairs
<http://goo.gl/rVabG6>

The banks and the corporations already own the Democratic and Republican parties. Both of these parties have been destroying the social welfare systems, and wasting trillions on fraudulent military adventures. They are OWNED. You are the Peace and Freedom Party. You are the Peace and Freedom Family. You can do this, you can figure out how to crowd-source outreach for the campaign. This is the people’s atomic theory, where progressives can leverage social networking quantity to quality.

United we stand, divided...well...Jerry Brown already has \$10,000,000 dollars in his campaign fund, but do you want to keep being sold out by Democrats? Do you want to sit there and do nothing when they tell you that things are going to hurt more? This while the 1% have run off with all the money. FTS Venice get your act together like the Coastal Commissioners suggested and take this thing over.

Gentrification still grinds into Venice. The LA Weekly rated Venice the highest apartment rent, and rated Abbot Kinney Blvd. as one of LA’s most douchey neighborhoods. Most of my friends are finding their affordable rental prospects getting dimmer and dimmer. 609 Millwood: 300% inflation in 10 years, to \$2.5 million. This is driven by free money for investment banking, from the Fed. They have to inflate real estate or it all goes down. On the street there are the maintenance evictions of rent controlled renters to allow the landlord to re-rent at market rents, \$3800 for a 2 bedroom.

“We recognize the right of everybody to quality, secure housing. We demand: Production and rehabilitation of non-profit, community-controlled housing through public financing with immediate emphasis on housing the homeless. Rent and eviction control laws and collective bargaining for tenants. Resident-controlled community renovation programs to create, not destroy, low- and moderate-income housing. Enforce local affordable housing quotas.” - Peace and Freedom Party Platform. www.peaceandfreedom.org

So how can you, the Venice Beachhead reader, participate in such an adventure? How can you steal back your country? How can you challenge the 1%? How can you bring compassion and economic justice back to our society? Yes, the campaign needs money, but more than that it needs good agent provocateurs like you find around Venice. People who busk for a living. Who can go out and troll Abbot Kinney for the campaign. People who can stand on the street and represent the future they want. I’m thinking comedy push pollers on the street interviewing people who are pissed off, on Youtube. Yeah that’s old school campaigning, but you can also Socially Network this fucker. Blog, make videos, write songs. Monthly postings on the friends lists. We can photoshop you in next to Cindy or any endorsing celebrity, for you to post on your stream. Weekly campaign quotes for contributors. Daily for campaigners. WTF kill your TV already, the wheel of karma is turning and you are riding it up. How about some good old negative campaigning? Muckraking, it feeds not only the cynic, but the rebound militant. Things are really fucked up, but we’re gonna change them.

The New York Times reports that the Democrats are now fully in control of the State Legislature. All they can can come up with is prison privatization? The stop-and-frisk the-poor-non-whites policy, that the police state adopted in the "Drug War", now passes the responsibility for the outcome to privatized prisons. This is what a Democrat looks like at the end of his rope, unable to release prisoners of injustice for fear being attacked as soft on crime. Jerry Brown is down with that, and he is out there attacking public-pensions too. In this way it seems like Democrats are like the undertakers at the funeral for Social Justice.

Supporting Cindy Sheehan is about standing up for the principles and platform of the Peace and Freedom Party. Do it.

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# Dream Come True: Equal Access to Justice

By Greta Cobar

Equal access to justice is just another one of the many American dreams that we are still dreaming about. This is a story about a group of committed individuals dedicated to closing the access to justice gap.

The dedicated staff of the Eviction Defense Network, a nonprofit community based organization, provide affordable legal representation to those facing eviction. They make a real difference in the lives of those going through the worst times of their lives.

“If you have to worry where you’re gonna spend the night, it’s very hard to do anything but survive. Families that are displaced by eviction find themselves searching for replacement housing in a market with extremely high rents, a low vacancy rate, and with an eviction on their record. This results in instability, and in some cases, homelessness,” Elena Popp, co-founder of the Eviction Network, told the Beachhead.

“People are losing their homes because they don’t have a lawyer,” Popp said to herself in 2002. And then she demanded: “There must be a better solution!”

And so the Eviction Defense Network was co-founded by her and her life partner, Bridgett Gonzalez, on August 7, 2003 with \$10,000 from their savings account.

Out of the about 70,000 evictions filed in the LA County in 2002, only two percent had legal representation in court. That number rose to approximately ten percent by 2012 thanks to the model developed by the staff at the Eviction Defense Network.

Legal services at the Eviction Defense Network are provided based on someone’s ability to pay and range between \$400 and \$1,200. Most clients end up paying \$600-800 for a qualified and committed lawyer to handle their entire eviction case.

According to Popp, the two most commonly asked questions about the Eviction Defense Network are: 1) How can you charge so little to handle an entire case? and: 2) How do you expect low-income people to pay that much money?

“To answer the second question, less than 1% of the tenants that go to court alone win. Going to court alone means being displaced. It costs more than \$1,200 to move. It is worth investing the funds on representation. Payment plans are available and we work hard to ensure that inability to pay is not an obstacle,” Popp said.

“To answer the second question, if we average \$500 per case, it pays for the team that can provide services to 700 people. We are non-profit and operate very efficiently.”

Popp reports that while she recently spent five days representing a family of three living in a very low cost rent-controlled unit for a fee of \$500, this is relatively unusual. “We have a good reputation. Most of our cases settle – it is relatively unusual for the other side to want to go to trial.”

Not just that, but the Eviction Defense Network takes all cases, does not turn anyone away, and makes sure everyone gets represented.

“Before we opened the Eviction Defense Network, I would have to sit in court waiting for my cases to be called. There would be as many as fifty cases on the calendar; I would have about 5 of them. I would watch tenants struggle with cases that were completely winnable ... but the tenant did not know how to present the case. Or I would listen to the terms of the settlement that had been shoved down the tenant’s throat, and sometimes the terms were so bad that the tenant would have been better off losing. Everyone is entitled to a defense,” Popp said.

I personally met Elena Popp three years ago, when I was faced with an eviction notice. I attended one of the consultation sessions sponsored by community organizations like the Coalition for Economic Survival and the Alliance of Californians for Community Empowerment, where tenants can get a consultation with an attorney for a mere \$15-\$25 donation, and no one is turned away if they do not have it.

After listening to my case, Elena Popp told me exactly what to do, and thanks to her I am still living in that same apartment now. She thoroughly explained to me what my choices and likely outcomes would be and then sent a certified letter to my landlord. All for a \$25 donation that she told me that I do not have to pay if I cannot afford it. For a list of similar consultation sessions, see side bar.

Tenants’ rights is only one of the many movements Popp had been involved in through the years, the complete list being way too long for this paper. They include, however, the Chicano movement, women’s movement, advocating for the rights of the LGBT community and fighting to prevent lead poisoning from paint in children. The list goes back to

the progressive movement in Venice, Venice Renters Canvass, Venice Community Housing Corporation, Venice Neighborhood Action Coalition and saving Lincoln Place. No wonder a May 2003 Daily Journal article about her was titled *Santa Elena*.

“The gap between the need and the available resources is called the Access to Justice Gap. That gap was 98 percent in 2002 and approximately 90 percent today. To launch its next decade, the Eviction Defense Network is announcing an initiative to close the access to justice gap five percent in 2014 and five percent each following year until the Access to Justice Gap is zero,” Popp told the Beachhead.

On November 14, 2013, the Eviction Defense Network will celebrate its ten year anniversary at the Park Plaza Hotel across from McArthur Park. They will be honoring Gary Blasi, a long-term housing rights advocate and lawyer. General admission is \$50; for students and low income is \$25. You can also sponsor the event by becoming a Champion for Justice for \$1000; a Leader for \$500; an Advocate for \$250; and a Friend for \$100. By participating in this event you too can help stop the injustice of displacement without due process faced by 63,000 LA County households each year. For information go to [evictiondefensenetwork.org](http://evictiondefensenetwork.org) or send an email to [info@evictiondefensenetwork.org](mailto:info@evictiondefensenetwork.org).

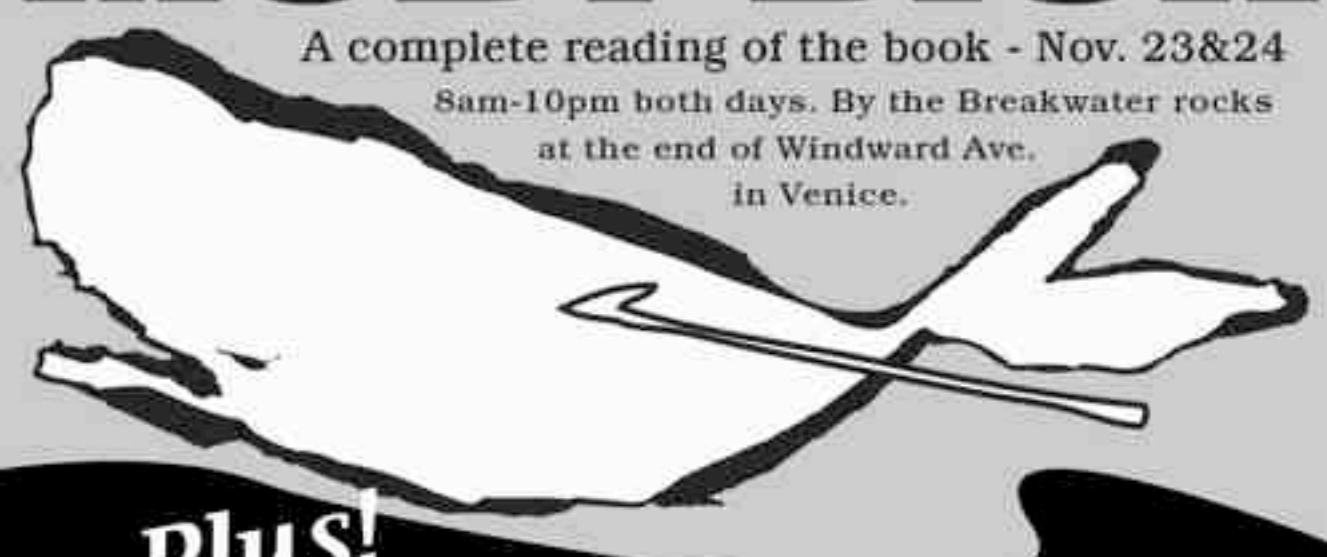
*“Several weeks ago I was counseling a couple with few defenses when I noticed that their 9 year old looked petrified. I asked if he was okay and he lowered his glance as the tears began to stream down his checks; I reached out to him. He walked into my arms and began to sob. Through the tears he revealed his fear that “they” were going to take his mom away. I was instantly transported to 1969 and weeks of hushed conversations amongst the grownups in my life. I too had concluded that the ubiquitous “they” were going to take my mom away; a fear confirmed one morning when the police came to the door with an eviction order.”*

Elena Popp

| FOR HELP BEFORE AN EVICTION<br>COME TO ONE OF THE FOLLOWING<br>TENANT’S RIGHTS CLINICS<br>\$15-25 Donation Requested – Consultation, Counsel and Advice<br>No one turned away due to lack of funds |                                                                   |                                                                   |                                                                                |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| PICO UNION /<br>WESTLAKE                                                                                                                                                                           | LINCOLN HEIGHTS TEN-<br>ANTS<br>RIGHTS CLINIC                     | ALLIANCE OF CALIFOR-<br>NIANS FOR COMMUNITY<br>EMPOWERMENT (ACCE) | COALITION FOR<br>ECONOMIC SUR-<br>VIVAL                                        |
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# The Townhouse: Drinking Up Venice History

By CJ Gronner

There has been a bar operating out of 52 Windward Avenue continuously since 1915, even when it had to be disguised as a grocery during Prohibition. Today it is The Townhouse and The Del Monte Speakeasy, and both tip their hats to the venue's past, yet keep it modern with the entertainment and good times of today.

Owners Louie and Netty Ryan took over the space in 2007 after having their eyes on it for years. Louie is from Dublin, Ireland and Netty is from New York, which is where they fell in love on a dance floor, when Louie was running a place out there called the Scrap Bar. There he learned the ins and outs of managing a bar and booking music acts. After that became stressful and enough, the Ryans came out to California for a visit. While in Joshua Tree, they had a revelation that they needed to make the move out West. They landed in Venice in 1997 and instantly loved it. "It had a vibe, a sense, an energy that it's hard to put words to," said Netty when describing pretty much what we all feel when we arrive here. They went to an Art Walk and finally saw what had been behind all the boarded up doors around town, and were blown away, knowing immediately that the diversity and flavor of the place made Venice be where they wanted to live and raise their three children.

In 1999, the Ryans opened the popular music venue, The Temple Bar in Santa Monica, which operated until 2008, after they realized they really wanted to concentrate on Venice (They also owned and operated Zanzibar in Santa Monica until 2012, and Little Temple - now Virgil's - in Hollywood).

I never went to The Townhouse much before the Ryans took over, mainly because it was pretty scuzzy and I couldn't get past the constant and oppressive stench of cat urine that permeated the joint. The Ryans took over after the previous owner died, and cleaned the place up, restoring it to its original luster bit by bit, without ever closing down. "Like a '59 Impala, I just cleaned it up and made sure it ran well," says Louie. Gone now is the feline odor, and right when you walk in the door from Windward, it instantly feels like a place where Abbot Kinney himself would stop in for a stiff libation during the course of his hey-day. That's not by accident. Enormous attention has been given to detail, from refurbishing original fixtures to General Manager, Bradley Ristaino creating a good old fashioned Old Fashioned from his throwback cocktail menu.

The Townhouse is Venice's oldest bar, and has quite a storied past. During Prohibition, ships used to sail in liquor from three miles out from shore where smaller boats would smuggle the barrels of hooch to underground tunnels that led to The Townhouse (or as it was known then, Menotti's, now the name of the Ryan's coffee stop next door). The tunnels must still exist, though they've long since been sealed up (It would certainly be interesting to excavate that and maybe have a Speakeasy within a Speakeasy?). Which leads us to the Del Monte Speakeasy, located in the basement of The Townhouse.

The Del Monte downstairs was closed down for three years due to legal wrangling and neighbor issues, and re-opened - beautifully - in 2010. But like Ryan says, "I'd hate to own a Speakeasy that had never been raided." Spoken like a true bar owner, and a true Venetian.

And true Venetians the Ryans are. They pored over historical records, they've done extensive research on Venice history down to the microfiche in a library level, and have created such a gorgeous homage to our town's past, while the very latest hit musical act plays for packed houses of locals and locals. Musical acts like Feist, Raphael Saadiq, Jonwayne, Tom Freund, Ben Harper, Haim, and Austin Peralta, the late jazz musician, whose favorite place to play was The Townhouse. Mayer Hawthorne and LMFAO ("I'm Sexy And I Know It") shot videos there, and great entertainment can be found both up and downstairs most every night of the week.

This is the REAL Venice. You will see someone you know in there. The Ryans have honored the history of Venice, and are preserving it with integrity. "It's always going to be local, it's always going to be quality, there's always going to be great music, and we want all walks of life to feel welcome here," both Ryans agree. "We only want to own and operate places that we're inspired by." You can feel that inspiration the moment you walk through the front door (or maybe it's the ghosts, which are also rumored to frequent this saloon).

You can also feel the fun. Belly up to the bar and hear stories from longtime bartender/historian, George Czarniecki, who has seen it all. Sit in a booth and shoot the breeze with Louie, who Czarniecki says



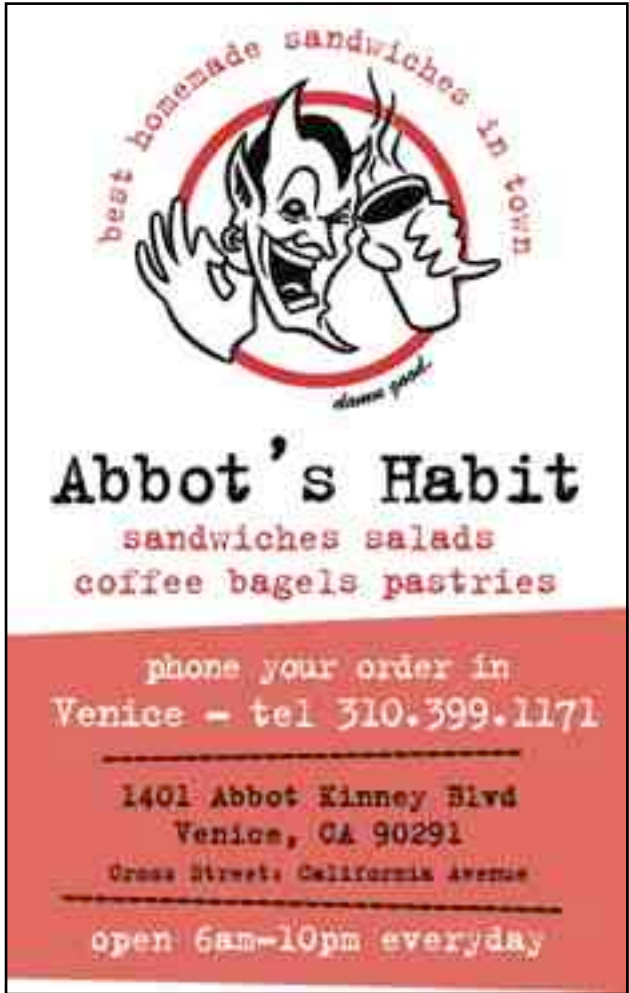
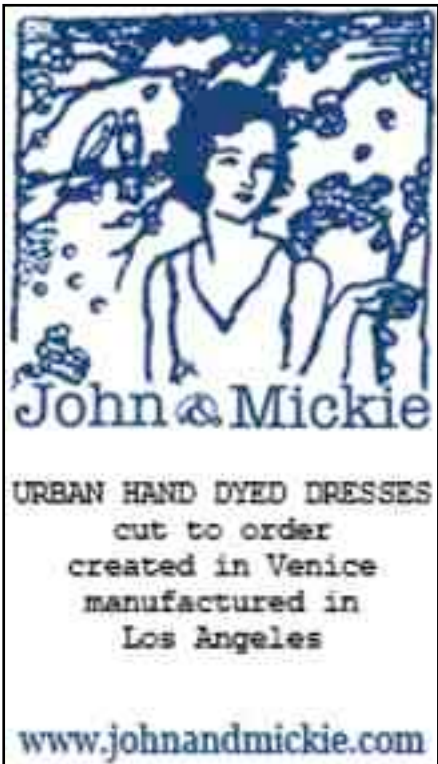
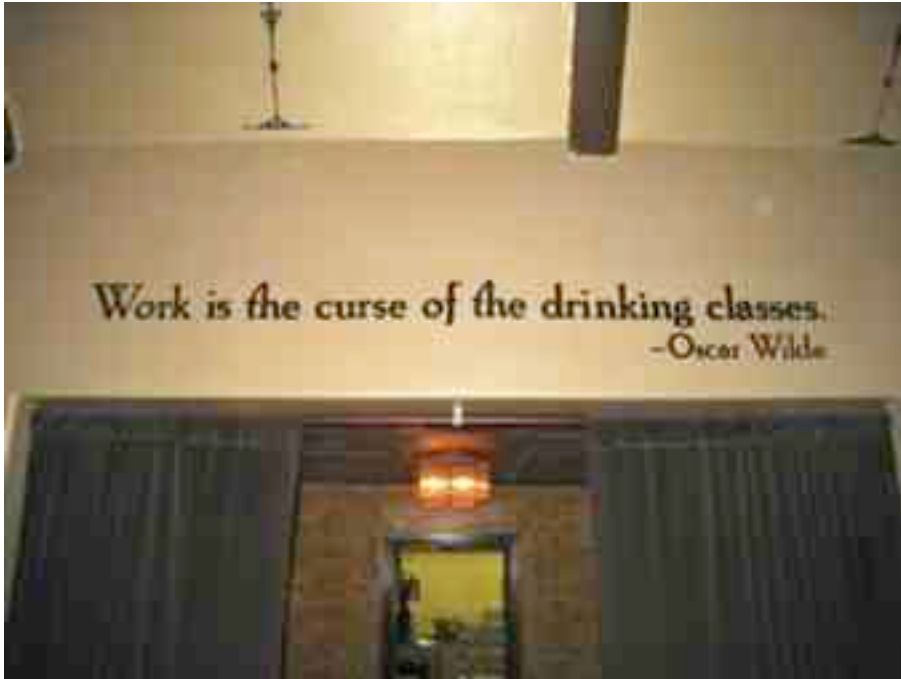
Above: Netty Ryan and Louie Ryan, inside The Townhouse.  
Below: The Townhouse

Photos: CJ Gronner

has "got the gift of the Blarney." Squeeze in downstairs to listen and dance to some of the freshest music of today (or on Sundays, time travel back to the Ragtime era with Brad Kay). Special events are always being dreamed up, like a party for Prohibition Repeal Day (December 5th), where they'll roast a whole pig and feature real bathtub gin in a bathtub, at 1933 prices. They're talking about closing off Windward for street dances, big St. Patrick's day shindigs, and all sorts of other cool things that really pull focus on just what excellent stewards the Ryans are of the letting the good times roll legacy of Venice.

Louie summed it up by saying, "We're honored to be at the helm of such an historic, iconic institution. You'll get the best drink, best music and best atmosphere in Venice." Netty added, "We love Venice so much, and it's humbling how people are right here with us. We want to keep this in the family for generations." That kind of dedication and sense of a place is what makes - and keeps - places special.

Which is just what they say they want The Townhouse and The Del Monte Speakeasy to be - Special. With good friends. Good music. Good cocktails. Good TIMES. And all are welcome! Save me a seat!





# Affordable Housing: Basic Human Right

By Greta Cobar

Shelter is a big deal - according to Maslow's hierarchy of needs, it is just as important as food. With the aim of preventing friends, family and neighbors from getting kicked out of the neighborhood and/or being homeless, Venice Community Housing (VCH) was formed in 1988. It has since provided low-income, affordable housing to thousands of individuals and families.

I had the wonderful opportunity of riding around town with Steve Clare, co-founder and Executive Director of VCH, to check out and learn about the 14 building the VCH currently owns and manages in Venice and Mar Vista. Within the last year it has acquired a 15th property, which is in development for a future housing project.

First stop was Tabor Courts, which is a piece of art just as much as it is an apartment building. With noted Venice artists Bill Attaway's and Noel Osheroff's mosaic work throughout, the building resonates pleasant visual abundance as opposed to the bare look usually associated with public, affordable housing.

**Steve Clare:** *We were able to build this 25-unit building on three lots with the help of then-councilperson Ruth Galanter. When Extra Space Storage asked for a parking variance, Galanter told them: 'I'll give you the variance if you donate two lots for affordable housing.' We purchased the adjacent third lot and opened the one, two, three and four bedroom apartments for family housing in 1996.*

*History was made right here at Tabor Courts with the first job training program to take place on a city-funded affordable housing construction site. In 1995, after a nine month gang war between the Venice Shoreline Crips and the Venice 13 that yielded 17 killings and 55 injuries, we hired 5 youths from each gang and offered them the opportunity to participate in a job training program and get paid at the same time.*

That's how Venice YouthBuild started, and it has continued since as a violence prevention and intervention program providing construction training, education and leadership development services to youths ages 18 to 24. In 2012, 23 students graduated from Cycle 10 of Venice YouthBuild after spending a combined 15,000 hours working on the construction of 164 units of affordable housing and participating in weekly community service projects.

While the Tabor Courts building was under construction Venice ceramic artists Bill Attaway and Noel Osheroff contacted VCH to get involved. Bill wanted to work with the youth, and Noel wanted to create a ceramics art program for kids who were going to move into the building when it was completed.

Bill and the youth created the ceramic tile entry floor, and Bill created and installed the totem at the front entrance.

Noel contacted the parents of families selected for tenancy and offered to create a ceramic arts program on site during construction. About fourteen kids joined the program, which included learning to work with clay and learning about marine life through field trips and meetings with local marine biologist Tim Rudnick. The sea animals that the kids created were installed into a wall mural in the first floor hallway.

These positive experiences motivated VCH to start Clayworks, a ceramic tile making and installation program for at risk youth which operated suc-

cessfully for about 8 years. Several other buildings owned by VCH are also beautifully decorated with ceramic tiles made by Clayworks participants.

The building was named Tabor Courts after the Tabor family, and several members of the Tabor family attended the grand opening of the building in 1996. Erving Tabor was Abbot Kinney's driver, and when Kinney died, he willed his home to Erving. At that time the house was located where the new post office now stands, and restrictive covenants prohibited sale of the property to an African American. Tabor moved the house to 6th and San Juan, where no restrictive covenants existed. It remained in the Tabor family until 2003, when it was sold to a private party.

**Steve Clare:** *Both federal and local government institutions, as well as many foundations, are now focusing on Housing First - meaning take people off the street and put them into permanent housing. As a result, there has been a reduced emphasis and funding for shelters and transitional housing. Because of sequestration these programs were cut by eight percent and Section 8 housing was cut as well. Meanwhile, according to the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority, there was a 16 percent increase in homelessness in Los Angeles from 2011 to 2013. Currently there are 58,000 unhoused individuals in L.A. County, with half of those in the city of L.A. Although United Way and its Home for Good campaign aim to eliminate veteran homelessness and chronic homelessness by 2016, we're not going to solve homelessness anytime soon unless we have more resources.*

*Unhoused individuals are big consumers of medical and law enforcement services. By housing them, we decrease their societal cost.*

"The number one medical intervention for the unhoused is housing," stated Elizabeth Benson, Executive Director of the Venice Family Clinic.

In spite of the shameful recent cuts in all government social programs, VCH has managed to thrive. In 2012 alone it provided 513 people with a place to call home, 148 of which were children and another 152 of which were formerly unhoused.

Operating on an annual budget of \$3 million with 32 regular full time employees, VCH gets about half of its budget from rent fees they collect in their buildings, and the other half from government and foundation grants, and individual contributions.

VCH owns and rents out 195 units, 57 of which are reserved for chronic homeless individuals. Chronic homelessness is defined as having been on the street for more than one year and having a disability; or as having had four episodes of homelessness within the last three years and having a disability. The rent subsidies for these 57 units come from Shelter Plus Care, and the individuals who are placed in these units do not have to be on a waiting list, but are recruited off the street with the help of other or-



ganizations, such as St. Joseph's. Supportive services are provided to these tenants as well. VCH has had tremendous success retaining these individuals in housing and preventing them from being on the street again.

Another eight units are reserved as a Transitional Living Center for women with children. The tenants and their children can occupy these units for up to two years, but they tend to move out after an average of nine months, which is consistent with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's goal of getting the women employed and into permanent housing as soon as possible.

Of the remaining 130 units, 14 of them are reserved for unhoused individuals. The rest 116 units are available to low-income individuals and families. These units have long waiting lists and low tenant turn-over. The waiting list usually opens once a year, and this year the VCH will be opening its waiting list from November 15 to 22 to receive applications for 2, 3, and 4 bedroom units only for low-income households of no fewer than 3 or more than 9 people. If you meet these qualifications, you should go to the VCH office located at 720 Rose Ave. on November 15 or as soon as possible afterwards to pick up an application, which must be returned no later than November 22. Although funding does not allow discrimination based on boundaries, VCH tries to let Venetians know when the waiting list opens up.

In 2012 a total of 430 children and youth participated in VCH's after school programs, which include Study Lounge, Westside Science Club and Teen Court at Venice High School. In addition, VCH provided help with income tax, voter education and transportation to its residents.

Last year VCH sponsored a voluntary storage program to assist homeless people who wanted to participate in the Winter Shelter Program but had too much personal property to take with them on the bus. The program was staffed almost entirely by volunteers, and they hope to provide that same service again this year.

A vital part of VCH's operation are community volunteers. During the month of November volunteers are needed on the 15th for the Donation Center and on the 27th for the Thanksgiving Lunch. During the month of December, Holiday Gift Wrapping volunteers are needed from the 9th to the 13th. Toy and gift card donations for one or more of the 225 children living in VCH buildings and participating in After School programs are much appreciated during this holiday season. Donation Center volunteers are also needed on December 20th. Ongoing volunteer opportunities include computer tutors, high school tutors, teacher aides, landscaping and teaching life skills classes. To sign up or learn more, contact Volunteer Coordinator Barbara Milliken at 310-399-4100 x134 or [bmilliken@vchcorp.org](mailto:bmilliken@vchcorp.org).



Above: Jazz quartet House of Games performs at the 2013 Jazz at Palms Court champagne brunch fundraiser



# Remembering Lou Reed, a Rock n' Roll Animal

By Anthony Castillo

When I first heard the news of Lou Reed's passing I said to myself "not Lou!" As you age you expect your rock n' roll heroes to fall. But not Lou, at least not yet. He was still vital, still exploring new musical ideas, and his bullet proof cool was still intact. Unlike some aging rockers, Lou didn't routinely embarrass himself or his fans. As one who played in bands, wrote songs and hocked his wares, I've always felt uncomfortable using the title of artist to describe most rock n' roll performers, even if referring to my own work. But Lou Reed personified the title of artist, a rock n' roll artist.

Any attempt to sum up the vast influence that The Velvet Underground and Lou Reed's solo career has had on rock n' roll would be an impossibility. But the ripples from the stone that Lou and the Velvets launched into the rock n' roll waters of the mid 1960's are still being felt to this day, and will be for as long as there is a musical form known as rock n' roll. What would Punk Rock, Art Rock, Noise Rock, Alternative Rock, or rock n' roll in general be without Lou and the Velvets? Would we even have those terms to bandy about? I don't claim to be a scholar of Lou or the Velvets. I own the entire Velvets catalog and a good portion of Lou's solo output. All I know are the feelings I get when I drop the needle onto the grooves of the first Velvets album. I hear a cornerstone, a foundation, a blueprint of what was to come, and the sounds that so many were to grow up listening to. The student DJ's on KXLU and the new music they broadcast own more to Lou Reed and The Velvet Underground than any of them could ever imagine.

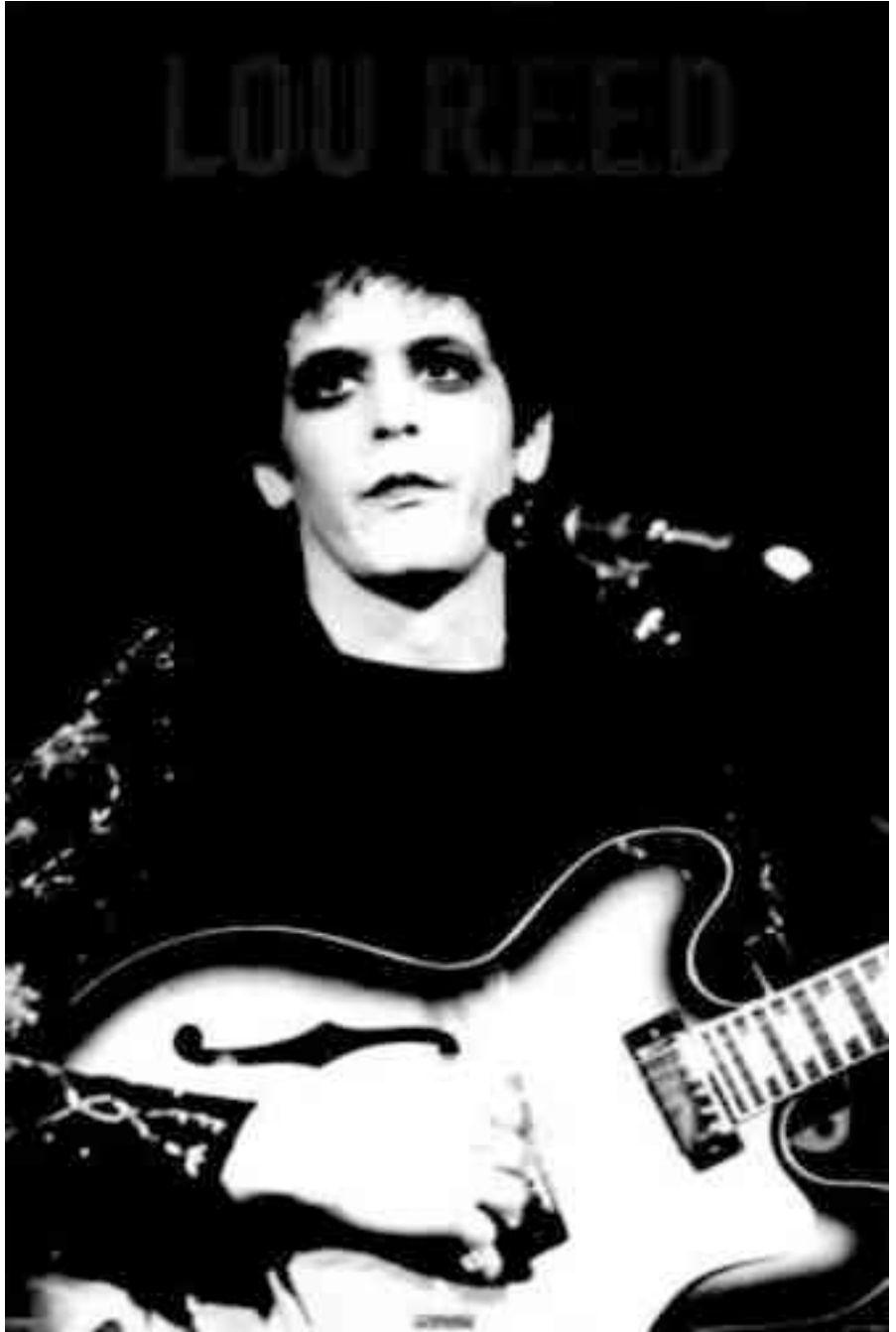
The story of The Velvet Underground is one of legend. They begin playing New York City dives and clear rooms in the process. But Andy Warhol gets wind of the band and builds the multi media "Plastic Exploding Inevitable" around them. They in turn become the house band at Warhol's Factory. The album "The Velvet Underground & Nico produced by Andy Warhol" comes out of this collaboration. Sales are poor upon its release. In fact none of the four Velvets albums sold well when they were first released. So how did this less than virtuoso, loud group of young artist/musicians go on to become one of the most influential rock groups in history? On the strength of Lou Reed's song writing. In making this statement I in no way intend to diminish or downplay the important contributions of the other members, John Cale, Sterling Morrison, Maureen Tucker, or for that matter even Nico (Warhol added her onto the first album). But without question it was Lou Reed's writing that made this band so meaningful and important.

What made the Velvets so unique (and hard to market) was that Lou wrote songs in a matter of fact, honest, conversational lyric style about subjects up to that point untouched by popular music. S&M, drug addiction, the darker side of the human condition, these were things that interested Lou and the Velvets

as much as beauty, melody, or a chorus with a good hook. While Lou's singing voice may have lacked range, his lyrics knew no bounds. Lou could tell disturbing, sad, or even ugly stories in such a beautiful, poetic way. His songs could touch the listener as deeply as any piece of great literature or screenplay could. Lou drew sound pictures of a New York City urban noir landscape all while keeping his pop sensibilities in tack. Commercial considerations were not part of the Velvets creative process. Did they want to sell records? Of course they did. But these were artists taking rock-roll to the avant-garde, that came first. Though the Velvets were all young people fresh out of collage, they weren't making music for teenagers. Instead they were creating adult art rock. Maybe that's a reason why after all this time their music still sounds as urgent, jagged, timeless, and beautiful today as it did when it was first pressed into vinyl.

After the breakup of the Velvets, Lou began his long solo career. The Glitter Rock and Punk Rock 1970's proved to be fertile ground for Lou Reed and the lasting legacy of The Velvet Underground. His only Top Ten hit "Walk On The Wild Side" would come from his second solo album the David Bowie, Mick Ronson produced "Transformer." Yes "Walk On The Wild Side" is a beautiful melody with a great arrangement. But the fact that this song has become a staple of FM Classic Rock radio worldwide is incredible! Each verse of the song deals with a different "superstar" from the Warhol Factory. The subjects covered in the lyrics are two drag queens, oral sex, and gay street hustling for cash. This is not what you would normally think of as subject material for a hit pop tune. But Lou was just being Lou, and writing about what mattered to him, and again not thinking in terms of commercial success or failure. Until the 1989 album "New York" Lou's music was not overtly political. But "Walk On The Wild Side" shows it was always subversive.

Lou always kept his edge. Through sobriety, a happy marriage with Laurie Anderson, and aging, Lou still had that edge. He would go on to release 22 solo albums. In the early 1990's he would collaborate with John Cale on "Songs For Drella" (a tribute to



Andy Warhol), as well as a short lived Velvets reunion tour. One of the last major things he did was to collaborate with Metalica. Lou Reed's "Rock n' Roll Heart" may have stopped beating, but his music is alive and well. It's difficult to say what Lou and the Velvets have meant to me. I've been hooked since the first time I heard their first record, and they've been a constant companion ever since. For those of you in the know, you may feel the same in a lesser or greater degree. But for those readers who have yet to discover Lou Reed or The Velvet Underground, I encourage you to seek out this exciting, provocative music for yourselves. Thank you Lou Reed, may you rest in peace.

– Continued from page 2: *Letter*

I had thought to say more...but I did have more conversation with the police, saying, that it is the people's beach! I never heard of closing the Beach!

And then, instead of the police just explaining to the couple most likely making whoopee that they were sorry, but the beach is closed and they have to leave...how many young (and maybe even old!) people do such things, when there no other convenient place for them to go for a modicum of privacy.

Probably what galled me the most was the police were asking them for ID and of course running checks on them. The guy looked white; she may have been of a light color. There was no reason for the police to interrogate these folks or give them a hard time. Tell them, time to go now. That's it!

But instead, they interrogate people, like they've committed some crime. (OK, once they've been told, if they keep coming back, that is another story, then you get their info, write a ticket (a ticket for being on the beach at 12:30 am at night, right next to a lit pier!) Sounds INSANE to me.

Gentrification anyone? This is what is going on. A couple of months back, I was out and about (in my car) and rode down to the main channel on the Marina side, where the jetty is, where there are pull in parking spots, lights, etc. and it's a few minutes after 10...I find it strange there are no other cars.

I then see the sign. No Parking 10 PM to 5 AM (or whatever the second time was). I was AP-PALLED. (I hadn't been there in a few years, obvi-

ously). I looked to the north, and saw newer buildings of mostly condos perhaps...It could likely have been these folks (and their tax money) that caused this wonderful little section of parking/grass to close down at 10 pm. Can't have the 'riff-raff' who are not from here (or even if they are!) coming down to this nice little public space, can we? Now if there were real /problems there, let's work on that. Not closing the area to everyone!

Then, a week after the beach blanket whoopee was stopped by 'LAPD coitus interruptus', I was at the pier again, much earlier, perhaps just about 10:30 pm. There was a small white 'police' car on the pier; he had driven out to the end and then back, and was about to close the gates. I'm like, what's up?

He said we close the pier now at midnight, nice enough fellow. He explained to me that he has other places to close, and he can't get to them all unless he starts closing before midnight. So now, at 10:30pm the pier is closed at to us who enjoy it and the fishermen??

SOMETHING is VERY WRONG with this picture. It's like we (even us more or less 'normals'!) are being walled off from public spaces within our communities. Right here I've listed four areas (three I experienced for myself) and one I read about - OFW, where the public is not allowed during certain hours. Some starting as early as 10 pm.

This feels like I (and all the others like me, i.e. regular people, part of the 99%) am being slowly imprisoned/walled off from community public spaces, where it is slowly being encroached upon by----- Money! I mean, the Beach, for God's sake?!!

And there is only ONE ANSWER as to who is forcing this encroachment. It's the 1%, the gentrifiers. Some gentrification is okay, but when does it ever work out that way? The rents go up, the locals who created the community in the first place is being forced out. So Sad!!!

It's all part and parcel of what Anthony Castillo wrote about in his letter re: the gentrification of Abbot Kinney. Locals being pushed out, fancier, more costly, up-scale taking their place. It's all of a piece, and it's a sad piece. I agree with Mr. Castillo, This is NOT Venice, that is for sure.

Is nothing sacrosanct? I feel Venetians and others who care about the real Venice really do need to rise up and fight for her...yes, things do change, but this is happening before our eyes and if it continues, there will hardly be any space for just 'normals' or artists or those who want to be, to live free and work in Venice.

Maybe we like it as it is? I used to like the SM Pier better too, when it was more old-style with its bumper cars. Of course the rides are great, but can't we have a MIX?

I feel this encroachment more and more myself, all the time. By the way, the young fellow on the sand, of course, agreed with me that it just isn't right. He thanked me as I was leaving. He also said, "and we know, it's all about the money!"

*Sincerely,  
Lola Tennell*



Miss Suzy – A Love Song

she skips, she turns and runs  
she sings -  
oh how she sings  
she opens her mouth wide and sounds pours out:  
a blessed sound  
lift up our voices and sing!  
she lives that commandment, every day  
she writes her own songs  
and performs them  
she is a teacher,  
tenderly telling the story of what it is like to be human  
what it is like to be in love  
and not loved back,  
she's our own Judy Garland  
such a tiny body to bring out such beautiful sounds  
her posture is erect and beautiful  
as she is  
she's a flirt to all, a lover  
she is interested in people  
and makes it personal  
she is delighted in discoveries, young and old  
she is jazz, jazzy, jazzified  
she is Miss Suzy Williams  
and we are lucky to have her  
a singer, a teacher in the art of living and loving life  
she never holds back,  
packs all her craft into song after song  
living gloriously in the moment  
magnetizing the audience  
they can't look away, they are drawn to her  
and bask in the warmth of her smile  
– Mary Getlein

Forgetting

By Emily Wood

Sometimes I forget who I am  
Who I am  
Sometimes I forget who I am  
Who I am  
Sometimes I forget who I am  
Who I am  
Sometimes I forget who I am  
Who I am  
So I close the eyes  
On this tumultuous head  
A thousand fears strike - Take me over  
But I remember what I said  
Have patience  
Have patience  
Have patience  
Have patience  
And it opens me  
Tears streaming to the ground  
There's no hope  
I don't need it right now  
Faces appear - I become them  
Feel through their skin  
And then there's mine  
In its insignificance  
I'm all over  
I'm all over  
I know now  
I know now  
But do I stay here?  
Can I stay here?  
Should I stay here?  
Will I stay here?  
I don't know  
I don't know  
I don't know  
I don't know  
Eyes open  
To the place the girl was sitting  
Someday I'll choose  
For now I'll try to stop forgetting

05:55 Tuesday, October 22nd, 2013, Adullam ..... A wolf, apartment-sized, lays on my floor, Where melting moonlight found a place to pour. Was quick to note the symbolism. Saw The irony in this. I heard the call. It woke me up. It would not let me sleep. It made me take dictation: record keep. The wolf, oblivious, just snores away. In moments, will begin the light of day. I let this interruption slowly steep. Then rendezvous once more. Plunge ever deep. Somnambulation. Writing on the wall. Awake, and dreaming. I'm beyond the pale Of ordinary, rising at this hour. With this last line, begin another tour ..... Roger Houston, Post-Beat Romantic (formerly a metaphysical cavalier)

Haiku

Dive Deep the self wait  
outside there is nothing Real  
Can you see Her smile!

– Devakinandana

Cosmic Grandeurs and Warfare

On a Mesa  
High above San Clemente  
The sun is in its daily surrender to the sea.  
The wane of light distills the sky  
Into a serene backdrop of cerulean  
For sanguine striates of scarlet  
Swathed in lustres of fire blazes  
As Finale a flicker, a  
Flash of emerald bids adieu  
In splendorous surrenders of amethyst horizon.

In antithesis, to the East,  
Explosions of clouds spatter the sky  
Etched in neons of silver as  
The supreme orb of moon, round with tribute  
Mounts amidst tumbled shapes  
A Full Moon Rise synchronized with the Sun’s Setting  
My soul soars with portents and possibilities

But wait!  
The music of the spheres  
Is displaced by an overture of boom cadences  
Ah, it is the Marines in Camp Pendleton  
In practice with heavy artillery  
Games to simulate wars  
In Afghanistan (or wherever we might find them)  
Such a Malevelance of Projectile Blasting  
On this night  
This night of cosmic grandeur  
No time for the regard of the Earth  
Nor Her Universe of Infinities.....  
Of Star Light  
Or Constellations,  
Ancient and guiding  
No siree!!  
The Marines to whom it has been charged  
To protect and to serve, we are  
In pursuit of the Real McCoy,  
YES SIR!  
And by the way,  
Blasting to smithereens  
Lots of the Do-Re-Mi!

I wonder about the wildlife?  
The Bobcats and the Bunnies  
What about the Trees  
As the men of war convert the magnificence  
Of High Desert  
To a Wasteland of Bomb Craters

Too bad, they’re missing the boat.  
And, man, why don’t we stop them  
For their own good?

– Laura Shepard Townsend



Lives Without Time

By Humberto Gómez Sequeira-HuGóS

For María del Rosario Aguirre Durán

I am a particle of dust  
structured  
in the thoughts of awareness  
produced  
by the fusion of electrons and neurons  
concatenated  
in the chemical current  
of the germs of lives  
without time  
created  
by the explosion of stars  
in the void.

Reflectionless

To live in the light  
of the world. Is the  
top of life only to  
be revealed. A flavor  
in time, as a child,  
since gone.  
To find again  
unmasked, you  
must shatter the  
glass of the mirror  
that holds your fears.  
Release the pain  
of what you believe  
is true. It is your  
quest to validate  
the truth.  
Sift from those  
who feed what  
they would have  
you eat. It starts  
when you care  
enough to live now.  
To be a child with  
love, break the  
glass. BREAK  
THE GLASS!  
It will reveal itself  
and you will play  
in the fields  
once again.  
Free the false  
reflections that  
have bound your  
truth of what you've  
known to be real.  
To live in the light  
of the world. Is  
the top of life  
only to be revealed.  
A child in the field  
...of truth sifted,  
and free to play  
with the others  
in love.

for my diva daughter

Arist Niciforos

beats

By Steve Tegel

sometimes  
i hear people say,  
"i make beats."

but beats are found  
not manufactured.

why is your turn signal  
so funky?

it's no accident that  
every machine works  
in time.

the first beat i ever found  
came from a dryer  
and a washing machine  
operating on clothes.

the second beat  
was produced by the  
machine designed to  
wipe the rain off the  
windshield of my  
mother's car.

the byproduct of any  
machine is music.  
in this sense,  
music is waste.  
beautiful waste.

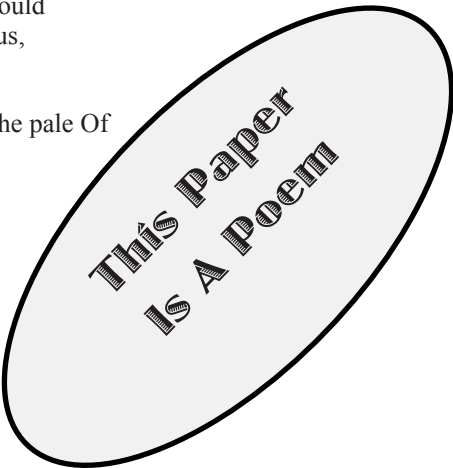
if you turned on a blender  
and a powerdrill  
at the same time  
you'd hear harmony.

i am also a machine.  
(a machine designed to  
detect and decode the  
musical waste of  
other machines.)

when human machines  
discovered rhythm  
everything else probably  
made a lot more sense.

i cannot hear the music  
made by the machine  
which records these words  
on this screen.

but someday  
someone will discover it  
and invent a new dance.





# Assault of a Neighborhood

By Laura Shepard Townsend

I saw they took the roof off Elinore Crawford’s house today. Oh, it’s only a house, I tell myself, but I know how much love Elinore poured into that house for many years.

I am no practitioner of organized religion, but I do believe that houses possess spiritual essences of their owners. In any case, I do know that Elinore dearly loved her house...a love that permeated her hardwood floors and woodwork along with the furniture polish. Her cottage garden of roses and hollyhocks, romantic pinks and scarlets were exquisitely balanced with the tangy blues of salvias, delphiniums and sages blooming love. Elinore is now gone, moved to a home for the aged, and they are dismantling the three sweet cottages to make way for the future.

This is by no means the first assault on our neighborhood over the past 25 years. Our first invader was Costco which, I have been informed by two very proud store managers, is the largest grossing Costco in the whole Continental U.S. so I guess it’s true.

In their primary architectural renderings, their diesel-spewing semis would have entered Costco from Zanja Street in the back of the shopping center. Since Costco is located in Culver City, who really cared about the fumigating of the cute little neighborhood of families living in the back, in Venice, after all, it’s Los Angeles.

I guess no one came to measure our streets, built for Model T’s and so narrow, two cars can’t pass one another without shattering side mirrors. I think everyone who parks on the street has had damage done to the sides of their cars....never mind the number of cats that are killed.

Say what you will about Ruth Galanter, but she took the Costco assault seriously, assigned Mario, her first lieutenant, a humorous and generous white knight, to guide us through the labyrinth of LA, as well as Culver City politics. Due to thousands of hours of collecting petitions, organization and meetings with the officials of two municipalities, we were awarded \$300K for traffic mitigation.

I assure you, it was not enough; our neighborhood, a narrow slice of houses, is now the official cut-thru for the savvy commuters of Playa Vista and Marina del Rey. However, our adamant protests ensured that the trucks now enter the Costco shopping center appropriately from Washington Blvd.

Our next invader, unfortunately still here, is Clearview, a drug and alcohol rehab to keep the rich addicts out of jail. Clearview is a bargain in the rehab world, a cut below Promises and Passages, the five-star celebrity rehabs in Malibu, but still pricey. These guys have so much dough, that whenever a new McMansion Craftsman bungalow in our neighborhood came on the market, they snatched it right up.

Once rehabs decide to entrap a neighborhood, their rate of profit is so immense, no one can outbid them if they want a house...or ten houses, or even twenty. The shills Clearview hired to buy the houses (usually employees or freelance associates) while the house was in escrow, would enthusiastically profess their excitement about being finally allowed to move in and pick out the curtains to the neighbors next to them.

These scammers and shameless liars have no shame in their pursuit of riches. Greedily, they cluster the facilities in daisy chains to share services like therapy and transport to further decrease their overhead and maximize their already gargantuan profits. Each house facility by law is required to have its own kitchen, but the kitchen, in our neighborhood, is shared by all five of the houses, which is absolutely illegal. However, our complaints to the State of California about violations fell on deaf ears since the state supports rehab houses as solutions to keeping DUI’s out of our scandalously overcrowded prisons.

In any case, Clearview’s real estate negotiations were so hush-hush that I only got a whiff of the predators when there was no parking up and down our whole street in the middle of the day!! Four or five frantic valets hustled to park mirror-polished \$30K SUV’s (no one at the time on my street had such cars). I grabbed a poster board to picket solo ala Norma Rae, shouting “No More Rehabs”, until the owner, wine glass in hand, came out to inform me that he was going to have me arrested for disturbing his ‘aren’t we all going to make big money’ party.

Unfortunately for him, I had paid attention during my Social Studies classes and knew my rights. The neighborhood rallied, Councilman Rosendahl came for a meeting in Elinore’s house, and with negotiations, the Clearview invasion was curtailed. We think, anyway. Cross your fingers, the economy is improving!

Rehabs love being in neighborhoods. Why? Because they want to tout the neighborhood feeling to the well-heeled parents of their customers, while they simultaneously savage that feeling. Rehab houses go dark, meaning there is no one really there. The drapes are drawn; no one is raising kids or walking dogs, or tending the garden. Just delivery trucks for goods; vans shuttle the denizens around.

Don’t get me wrong—I believe in rehabilitation, but Clare conducts their business in the business section of Santa Monica, not its neighborhoods, and I might add, without charging a fortune. For our neighborhood, I will always credit Councilman Rosendahl for curtailing the grabbing of more houses. He walked the block with us to see the location of the houses, muttering in his endearing Rosendahl style, “too many, there’s just too darned many.” Unfortunately, Clearview still got 4 houses in a one block area of 42 houses, 12% of the area.

Cut to the next parasitic arrival with a proposal to build two (2) condominium buildings, two-stories high (over twenty-seven feet in height), containing 8,000 square feet of floor space (four 2,000-square-foot dwellings), with ten parking spaces, just eighteen feet and ten inches from the sidewalk at 2435, 2437, 2439, 2441 Walnut Ave.

These are Elinore’s two lots, the site where once a year we would meet in the shade of her large avocado tree for the Walnut Avenue Poetry Festival, enjoying the talents of our neighbors’ music, poetry and their best recipes brought as delectable pot-luck dishes each summer. We would catch up with one another’s lives and share photos. This destruction makes me very sad.

Now Mike Bonin is our new Councilman; I am unfamiliar with his position on development in keeping with the feeling of Venice. I understand the VNC Land Use Committee met with him recently to explore his views on this subject; apparently the gist is that the Councilman will not interfere with development unless there is something illegal in the design.

I hope I am wrong, I hope that Councilperson Bonin will work with all of Venice to preserve the spirit of Venice. We shall see. Fortunately for us, in this case, it seems we do have a code violation since the developer seeks a variance to convert apartment buildings to condos on lots that are only 45-feet wide, a violation of the Municipal code that requires a minimum width of 50 feet per lot. So we may have a chance.

However, this could be the first domino to fall, tempting other developers to continue the invasion and degradation. As a footnote, it has also been brought to my

## 1963 (The year the real America died)

Fifty years ago I became a man.  
My father, then my president died.  
My father died from a blood clot; my president died from a bullet.  
My innocence also died; so did America’s.  
It was not real, like a dream. But it was real; it is real, real as pain that does not go away.  
My father dead in bed at home, my president dead in a limo in Texas.  
I was in school at the time. My teacher was called to the office, left us kids alone. She returned to a noisy classroom crying. The room became quiet after she said,” How can you be so noisy after your president is killed?” We did not know. I was thirteen.  
America has never been the same. You can see it; you can feel it. Who would it benefit to have him dead. Ask yourself.  
How can a few men shut down the whole country? Tea anyone?

“Ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country” JFK

Ronald K. Mc Kinley



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Venice, CA 90291  
[www.electriclodge.org](http://www.electriclodge.org)

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2013

Help us spread joy to over 300 children this this year for our 14th Annual Vera Davis Holiday Toy Drive.

*The Season of Giving*

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**\$10 Unwrapped Toy**  
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**Toy Drop Off Location**  
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[www.veradaviscenter.info](http://www.veradaviscenter.info)



**The Great Venice Toy Drive & Holiday Festival**

**December 7, 2013**  
10am - 2pm

**Oakwood Recreation Center**  
767 California Ave  
Los Angeles, CA 90291  
310-452-7479

Please bring new, unwrapped, non-violent toys to the below dropoff locations and join us at Oakwood on December 7, 2013 for the toy giveaway and other fun-filled activities including photos with Santa, moon bounce, arts and crafts, and snow!

Abbot's Malt 1401 Abbot Kinney Blvd, Venice  
Bank of Venice 80 Woodward Ave, Venice  
Oscar's Carwash 121 First Ave, Venice  
The Talking Stick 1411 Lincoln Blvd, Venice  
VNC Booth / Venice Farmers' Market  
Intersection of Venice Blvd and Venice Way, Venice  
Friday from 7:30am-10:30am

attention that east of Lincoln, though we are Venice, and share the zip code 90291, that we are not included in the VNC Land Use Committee’s overview. I do not know why this is, and will be pursuing this to further understand it.

Our neighborhoods in Venice are very special; they nurture our children, our lifestyles. It is precious indeed to be able to walk your kids and dogs around the block, greeting one another, assisting one another, and sharing home-grown delectables from one another’s garden.

Their fragility requires activism on everyone’s part. Darn it, I will always fight for such a way of life in my Venice.



– Continued from page 1: **50 Years After The Coup That Changed America Forever**

On Friday, Nov. 22, 1963, I had recently turned 20, and no longer a teenager, I was looking forward to a wild weekend with my homies. It would be three days without school or work. While I was a somewhat studious young man, I liked to run with the JDs (juvenile delinquents). That morning some of us were sitting in a drive-in restaurant planning out our weekend. We divided up our first diet pills, the amphetamines of the day.

As we pulled out of the drive-in, I turned on the radio expecting to hear some Top 40 hits. Instead, someone was saying, “the doctors have just reported that the President is dead.” At first, I wondered who they were talking about, president of what? Then it slowly dawned on me they meant Kennedy. I felt stunned, disbelieving and angry, all at once.

We drove slowly down the street, hearing more news reports, then pulled into a gas station for a dollar’s worth of gas. An older man with grease stained overalls came out to operate the pump. He said to me, “I hope they’re happy, the bastards, they finally got what they wanted.” It was then that the enormity of the murder began to sink in. We were all united in our shock and grief - my friends, family, the guy in the gas station, everyone I encountered in that whirlwind weekend with my brain zooming from the speed.

Before long, it was announced that a lone gunman, Lee Harvey Oswald, killed Kennedy all by himself. Yeah, right!

As one sleepless, frantic day turned into another, and then another, we caught glimpses of the evolving drama on TV. When our gang stopped at someone’s house to take a shower, pick someone up or change clothes, the parents were always like zombies, glued to the set. At one house, we arrived just in time to see Oswald gunned down by Jack Ruby. Wow. That proved to me that there was more involved than just a crazy guy with a rifle that hardly worked.

That sad weekend, we talked about the assassination for hours on end (how could we not). Even then, it seemed like something in our universe had changed, had slipped out of the comfortable rock ‘n roll, car crazy, girl crazy, half-way to adulthood world we knew. Now 50 years later, I look back at Vietnam, the Cold War, the war on drugs, the war on terror, the war machine, the homeless, the unrealized struggle for freedom and dignity and know that this world didn’t have to be.

A year later I was hired as a bartender at Curtis Fowler’s “go-go” bar in a seedy part of town. Fowler, who may have had mob connections himself, had previously run a bar in Dallas where he had known Jack Ruby. He told me that it was well-known in Dallas that Ruby was a “soldier” with the Chicago Mafia. Ruby’s crime connection has since become an indisputable fact.

Within two to four years, my friends and I would mostly be wearing army uniforms. Freddie became a helicopter gunner in Vietnam. Bennie died over there. Our girlfriends, our loves, found new boyfriends while we were away at “war.” The world turned upside down, and the Sixties generation was born. Kennedy’s enemies became our enemies.

Kennedy was worried about a coup d’état, says Clarke. JFK asked his Hollywood contacts to please make a film from the book *Seven Days in May* by Fletcher Knebel. He thought that a strong statement in the media against a coup might help head one off. The film was made with an all-star cast, and with White House support, but was released too late in Feb. 1964. The military-Intelligence coup took place in Dallas. The spooks and generals put their man, Lyndon Johnson, in the White House.

Almost immediately, Johnson reversed Kennedy’s executive order to pull all troops out of Vietnam by 1965. The raids and assassination attempts in Cuba resumed as did the Cold War in all its fury. We got war, and more war, instead of the world of peace that Kennedy envisioned in his American University speech, delivered on June 10, 1963: “*What kind of peace do I mean and what kind of a peace do we seek? Not a Pax Americana enforced on the world by American weapons of war; not the peace of the grave or the security of the slave. I am talking about genuine peace*” bit.ly/19LRvgB

**Hey Hey LBJ how many kids did you kill today – Sixties chant**

What motivated top officials and leaders of the federal government to kill the President? 1) Kennedy was ending the Cold War. He had already cut billions from the military budget and was eliminating the reason for a massive military-industrial complex; 2) He was conducting secret talks with Fidel Castro aimed at normalizing relations with Cuba. The Cuban thugs and killers who worked with the CIA were most unhappy with this turn of events; 3) The mob felt that

the Kennedy brothers had betrayed them after the crime syndicate had made sure JFK won Illinois in 1960, which put him in office; 4) The oil billionaires in Texas were threatened with losing their source of massive profits, the Oil Depletion Allowance; 5) Right-wing racists saw Kennedy turning their world upside down with civil rights legislation and his advocacy of equality; 6) JFK stood in the way of Lyndon Johnson, the most ambitious and ruthless vice-president in history; 7) While JFK lived, Richard Nixon would likely never become President; 8) People with grudges: He fired CIA Director Allen Dulles, who considered the organization his personal property, as well Deputy Director Charles Cabell, whose brother was Mayor of Dallas, Earle Cabell. Mayor Cabell reportedly made a last-minute change in the route of JFK’s motorcade which took it into Dealey Plaza where the assassins were waiting.

How was the assassination coup accomplished? Since its inception with the National Security Act of 1947, the CIA had assembled a Murder Incorporated in the heard of the U.S. government. It recruited cold-blooded killers including General Reinhard Gehlen’s organization of Nazi war criminals <http://bit.ly/18F2Z4Y>, Cuban police and torturers from the deposed dictator Fulangio Batista’s regime, as well as home-grown mobsters, assassins and serial killers. Sadly, this group continues to take its toll on union activists, populist leaders and anti-corporate crusaders around the world.

The men at the top of the coup were likely Allen Dulles, Lyndon Johnson, mobsters Sam Giancana (Chicago), Carlos Marcello (New Orleans), Santos Trafficante and Johnny Roselli, who was identified as being in Dealey Plaza (both of Florida), Oilmen H.L. Hunt and Clint Murchison, some of the generals, possible Air Force Chief of Staff Curtis LeMay, who was parodied in *Dr. Strangelove*, but he may have been too much of a loose cannon to have been brought in by the other coup plotters.

A party and meeting was held at Clint Murchison’s mansion the night before the assassination. According to eyewitnesses, attendees included Lyndon Johnson, J. Edgar Hoover, Richard Nixon and George H.W. Bush.

The Operations Chief for the “Big Event,” as CIA agent and one of Nixon’s Plummers, E. Howard Hunt said it was called, was likely Air Force General Edward Lansdale, who was Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations, according to his aide, Col. Fletcher Proudly and others.

How did they get away with it when so many people were involved? The coup plotters got away with it because it was in the interest of nearly every center of power in the U.S., including the military, the CIA, the FBI, the 1 percent, which even then controlled the media and organized crime. Anyone who didn’t go along with the official story was silenced, fired, killed or labeled a conspiracy kook.

When some people confessed to being part of the plot, they were ignored by the media. E. Howard Hunt made a tape recorded death bed confession that he was involved under the general direction of Johnson. A number of others have come forward to reveal their parts in the assassination. Some are still alive, but discredited.

Why didn’t the Kennedy family speak out? Short answer: they would have been killed, and many of them were killed. Robert Kennedy reportedly demanded of Johnson: “Why did you kill my brother?” Robert was killed in 1968 as soon as he won the California primary and it appeared he would be the party’s nominee. Ted Kennedy broke his back and nearly died in an unexplained plane crash in 1964. How could Jacqueline Kennedy, the First Lady, protect their children? A few months after the second Kennedy brother was killed, she married one of the richest and most powerful men in the world, Aristotle Onassis. But time marches on. John F. Kennedy Jr. (John-John) died in another mysterious plane crash in 1999, shortly after announcing he was interested in seeking public office. When JFK’s remaining child, Caroline Kennedy, expressed an interest in the U.S. Senate seat being vacated by Hillary Clinton, she was greeted with a storm of criticism from the mass media, which said she was unqualified while at the same time raising little fuss about Tea Party candidates for Congress.

A few people courageously disputed the Warren Commission’s finding that Oswald was the lone assassin. Among them was Attorney Mark Lane, whose book, *Rush to Judgement*, became an overnight best seller after being turned down by 16 publishing houses. I did an exclusive interview with Lane in 1969. It can be found at www.freevenice.org. Jim Garrison, New Orleans District Attorney, would have blown the coverup wide open in the 1970s except that his witnesses kept dying before testifying or were

**The Prisoner**

By Jim Smith

They took him prisoner when the celebration was over.

The limos arrived at his house bringing famous men and twitchy bodyguards.

"Congratulations Mr. President," said the man with the TV face. "Here's how it will be Your speeches will be cleared with us Any questions, just ask Ron or Tim or Hillary, they know the drill."

When he protested, they complimented his pretty wife, and his beautiful children.

Then they talked about Kennedy. He had so much potential. What a pity he defied them. And wasn't it a shame about John, Jr. and Caroline.

"You see, Mr. President, the business of America is business. Your role is to speak on our behalf, nothing more."

That's why the CIA, the NSA, the military and Wall Street have taken the place of Congress and the Office of the President. It's just more efficient."

We're so excited that you won. It will be great working with you."

frightened into submission. It was later revealed that the CIA worked overtime to subvert his case.

In 1979, the House Select Committee on Assassinations found that at least two shooters killed President Kennedy. While this should have ended the government’s coverup, the media paid scant attention to it. The Committee’s chief counsel, Robert Blakey, refused to be sidetracked by the CIA, and plowed on to a truthful assessment of what happened in Dealey Plaza. Along with Lane and Garrison, he was a true people’s hero in uncovering the truth.

If JFK had not be murdered, we might be living in quite a different world today. If he had been successful in making peace with the Soviet Union, billions of dollars could have been spent on people’s needs, instead of weapons of war. What if the U.S. and the Soviet Union had joined together to go into space, and had conducted joint worldwide health and anti-disease programs. Might the USSR been influenced to become more democratic, and might the US have been influenced to focus on social welfare programs for the betterment of Americans?

**White boots marching in a yellow land – Phil Ochs**

Many of us see Kennedy’s assassination as a primary event that pushed the youth culture into a rejection of all authority and government. How different it would have been if there had been no Vietnam war and if the Sixties generation political thrust had been to defend the social democratic gains and peace program of the Kennedy administration against the constant attacks by the rich and the Right.

Kennedy would have won a landslide victory in 1964 over Barry Goldwater, who was the most far-right candidate of the Republican Party in the 20th Century. It is very possible that JFK would have been succeeded in 1968 by his brother Robert Kennedy. Sixteen years of a progressive, peaceful America would have made it impossible for any of the collection of Southern Democrats and right-wing Republicans who have held the Presidency since to have been elected in the first place. Nixon, Reagan, and two Bushes would have been footnotes in history.

Instead, we have been condemned to a world of unrestrained capitalism including war, violence, assassinations, drone attacks, growing poverty and homelessness, global warming, continued racism and sexism, low-wage jobs and high-cost education.

Fifty years later, the road back to the promise of 1963 will be a hard one, but it is the road we must take if we are to realize the peace, happiness and potential for all people that seemed so close, so long ago.

(I have avoided web citations as much as possible for brevity. I would urge anyone interested in the details to read Ventura’s book, “They Killed Our President,” or search the internet. The truth is out there.)



# Halloween on Rialto, 2013



Photos: CJ Gronner

