

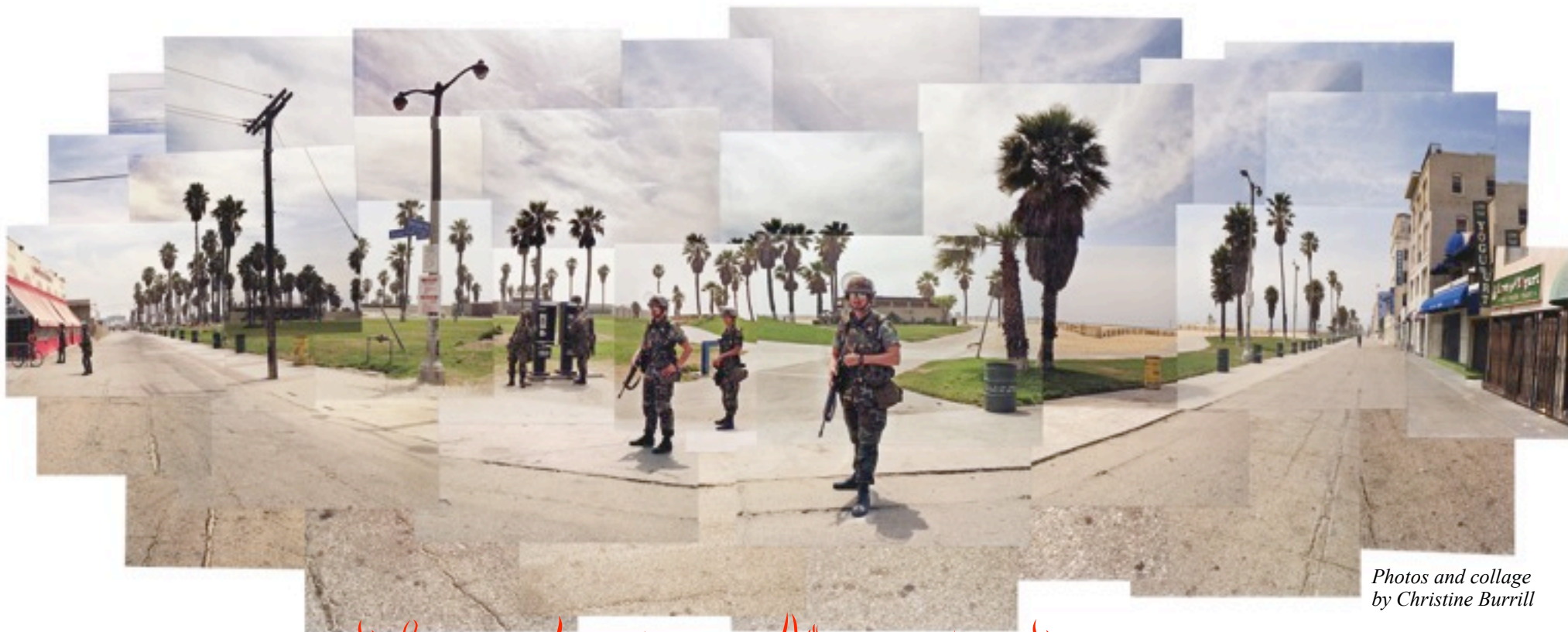
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May
2012
#367



Photos and collage
by Christine Burrill

THE FIRE NEXT TIME

By Jim Smith

Christine Burrill's stunning exhibit of photo collages of the 1992 Los Angeles Uprising has an impact and immediacy that few other art forms can convey.

Three of the large collages were printed on brushed aluminum sheets by the Social and Public Arts Resource Center's (SPARC) founder and artistic director Judy

Baca. The effect gives an appropriately industrial feel to scenes of devastation and repression. The show, entitled *Uprising Los Angeles: A Walk Through the Civil Unrest of 1992*, continues at SPARC (old Venice jail) through June 8.

Twenty years ago, Los Angeles exploded in anger. Poor people of every nationality took out their frustration at nearby stores and shopping centers. Many took

the opportunity to claim goods and food out of stores that they could not normally afford to patronize.

Others were more political. The Los Angeles Times, seen as a defender of the establishment, was one of the first targets. The ground floor of the Times building was trashed. Parker Center, the Los Angeles Police Department's headquarters, was under siege. The dismissal of

-continued on page 4

EXTRA! Silicon Discovered in Venice

By Jamie Virostko

Free Venice Where Art Thou?

How will Venice's future be affected by the recent and continuing influx of the Tech Industry? That was the subject of the well attended Emergence of Silicon Beach Town Hall, held at Westminster Elementary on April 12.

Money and expertise are sweeping into Venice. We stand to gain jobs, economic prosperity and resources for our children. We must make a crucial and difficult decision. What we do about the homeless and economically challenged will define our soul as a community for decades to come.

In the past, you could count on poets, painters and musicians to align with the Venice disenfranchised. Hustlers, junkies, sunsets, bums, sex and freedom – that's why they came. In Venice, artists are not shielded from life.

Is there now a danger that the tech industry could soften the community's resolve in regards to our fragile citizen wanderers? Silicon Beach could significantly broaden the global reach of our substantial artistic population. Why not go for it? Do we have to lose our diversity in the process?

By the time the Town Hall was over, Councilmember Rosendahl's passion to sell this influx of the tech industry, combined with a pervasive culture of individualism, undermined reaching the inconvenient heart of serious community concerns.

Courtship

Only in LA would a "Town Hall" have corporate sponsorship, a set provided by a local furniture store, a catered spread and an after party. With twenty-five companies on display, a semi-dazzling Trade Show greeted the Venice public. Rather than a Town Hall, it was a Showcase of the Tech Industry. A true Town Hall would've had at least one community leader, within the panel discussion, representing the diversity and homeless issues.

Wrangling the well-fed crowd, VNC President, Linda Lucks, preambled about "unique" and wonderful Venice, challenging the all tech panel to consider the "fabric of our community."

Our charismatic moderator, Bill Rosendahl, soon took control and we were off. Marveling that he had never seen such a crowd at a town hall, he informed us that it was being broadcast throughout Los Angeles on Channel 35. His coining of the word "Venassiance" produced not only laughter, but audible groans. He took it in stride.

Our all tech panel was introduced: Thomas Williamson from Google, James Citron with Mogreet, Jeff Solomon with Amplify, and JJ Aguhob from Viddy.

Transitioning into the discussion, it was mentioned how social media played an important role in the Arab Spring and Occupy Movement. That certainly gives lip service to the community's political activism.

James Citron informed us that, where there was an insertion of a 10 percent increase of cell phones into a developing market, the GDP increased 3 percent. That is impressive.

Google opens up portions of its local facilities for public use. Very nice.

But, why did the tech industry choose us? According to them, 1) ready and available talent; 2) Venice is a world renown, cultural icon; 3) it is an enjoyable and inspiring environment in which to live and work; and, 4) the proximity to the entertainment industry.

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See Page 8

Photo: Matthew Hynes



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

The staff reserves the right to make all decisions collectively on material published. There is no editor on the Beachhead. The printing is financed by ads, sustainers and donations. The articles, poetry and art work express the opinions of the individual contributors and are not necessarily the views of the Beachhead Collective.

To submit material, include your name and telephone number. Anonymous material will not be printed, but your name will be withheld on request. No payment is made for material used.

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Venice Skills Center

Dear Beachhead,
After reading the April issue of the Beachhead (April 2012) in which Charles Thomas writes about the Venice Skills Center, I realized that he did not mention the testimonials at http://www.lausd.net/Venice_Skills_Center/testimonials.html

I think it’s important for people to have a first hand view of those that have benefited from the schools courses. I like the article, it is well written.

I ran into “Chicago Baba.” I remember him as a local icon who used to sit on an Ocean Front beach bench and meditate in silence. He was invited to live in India by one of his religious leaders. He said he remembered my photography I sold back in the late 70’s. We’ll miss his!

I enjoyed Sam Schatz’s “Venice In The 70’s” article. I can remember sitting nude on the beach next to the oil rig at the Windward breakwater and three French stewardesses came over and sat nude next to me. It was an unusual but liberating experience. Regrettably I was short a camera in those days.

Rich Mann

Big Wheel

Dear Beachhead,
THANK YOU, GRETA for your article in the April Beachhead. My sentiments exactly. I was one of the outspoken residents at the informational presentation on March 5 and I’ve already emailed such stated opposition to Councilman Rosendahl. You have covered all the same points that I had to oppose such a monstrosity.

Here’s an additional point to oppose it. We noticed that there will be advertising on it and when we asked about this, the Dept. of Rec and Parks representative mumbled something about how the ads wouldn’t be “inappropriate.” We’ve been opposing (and so far successfully) “For Profit Signage” in the parks in Los Angeles.

In regard to the three years perhaps extending beyond that, when I “googled” them I read that they had put up the one in Paris for one year only and when it was time to disassemble it, they refused. It was fought in the courts for two more years until they finally removed it.

I’ve been playfully nicknaming this “Observation Wheel” the “Non-Observation Wheel Due to Marine Layer and Fog.”

Gail Rogers

Moved by Open Letter

I am an occasional reader of the BEACHHEAD, and thru the powers that be, happened to pick up a copy of the April 2012 issue, which I perused last night.

The article “An Open Letter to the Community” moved me to tears. I have been a resident of beloved Venice for about 2 years and am keenly aware of the homeless situation day in and day out. I was terribly saddened to read about the 3rd Street/Rose Ave. raid and it’s devastating aftermath.

I wanted to voice my full support for the author of this article and editors of the BEACHHEAD and commend them for their compassion and attention to the search for a REAL solution to this REAL fact of life.

I have tried to become involved in a solution to this situation for years now, but find my energies thwarted; i.e., people “say” they want others’ help & contributions but are failing miserably organizing and reaching out to those like me that have the time & heart to contribute.

Please continue your fight for the rights of our weakest, most needy members of this wonderfully diverse community. Everything the author stated in her Open Letter is a reflection of my own thoughts and feelings. We ARE the coolest. We CAN solve this. Love, generosity and understanding can help to heal a broken soul. One by one we can make a difference. Together we can change many lives.

I am available to help & contribute whatever I can. Just, please, contact me.

Diane Loggin

Thanks for your generous donations!

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Wealth and Poverty in Venice. Homeless person sleeps in front of the home of heiress and former Member of Congress, Jane Harman.

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Tenants Reclaim Lincoln Place

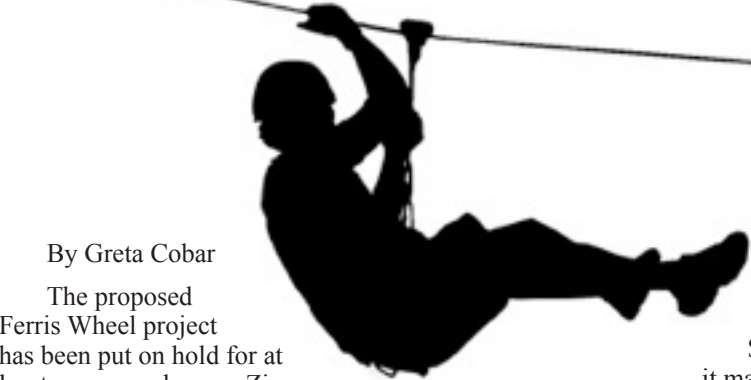
Six years after they were booted out of their homes by corporate landlord AIMCO, happy tenants began returning to newly refurbished apartments on April 15. Evictees and their union, the Lincoln Place Tenant Association, plus a large number of Venice activists, never stopped fighting against the largest single-day eviction in Los Angeles County history. They set up a tent city, held rallies, hired lawyers, won historical status, got Councilmember Bill Rosendahl’s support, and had lots of media coverage in the Beachhead and elsewhere. AIMCO finally agreed to restore the tenants to the vacant Apartment complex of nearly 800 units. The process is slow going, only about a dozen of around 50 people have moved in so far. AIMCO hasn’t exactly rolled out the welcome mat. Instead it has attached a number of “small print” restrictions on tenants

that has caused a number of them to delay moving back until the lease language is modified. If AIMCO relents, the evictees will be back in their remodeled apartments by the end of May. Otherwise, the process may drag on for several more months. One unhappy evictee said, “it seems that AIMCO is still trying to drive people away.” The remodeling of the apartments set aside for the returning tenants is nearly complete. AIMCO was to begin work on refurbishing the remaining several hundred units as agreed with the Los Angeles County Labor Federation which is providing an all union workforce. However, rumors are circulating that AIMCO may instead prioritize development on the empty lots (where apartments were illegally bulldozed several years ago). Similar looking, but more expensive apartments, will be built on these lots.

—Jim Smith ☺



Zip Line on the Beach?



By Greta Cobar

The proposed Ferris Wheel project has been put on hold for at least a year, and a new Zip Line project is going to be proposed by Councilmember Bill Rosendahl at the May 15 Venice Neighborhood Council (VNC) meeting.

The Zip Line was first suggested by Kevin Regan, assistant general manager of Recreation and Parks. Rosendahl subsequently called Linda Lucks and asked her to put the proposal on the next VNC meeting agenda.

“If the community is excited and wants it, if the positives outweigh the negatives, I will make the Zip Line a reality for this summer,” Rosendahl said in a phone interview with the Beachhead. When asked what makes him think that Venetians would be supportive of the Zip Line when they proved to be so vehemently against the Ferris Wheel, he re-affirmed his determina-

tion to be a “politician that represents the people.”

Parks and Recs needs to self-generate \$30 to \$40 million of its annual \$185 million budget, so it makes perfect sense for Regan to fully endorse the Ferris Wheel and the Zip Line.

Although Great City Attractions declined to state why they were putting their Ferris Wheel project on hold, the UK-based company and its Scottish representatives wanted to jump right in and install the wheel in ten days without realizing that it would take at least a year to go through all the environmental and planning regulations. If we are not careful we will end up with a Zip Line and a Ferris Wheel by next summer.

Rosendahl could not say how long the Zip Line would stay in Venice and did not know the name of the company that would provide such a service. However, he did mention that the Ocean Front Walk bathrooms need to be cleaned and the trash cans need to be emptied more often.

In reality, Regan and his department would have discretion over how the funds are spent. His priority might not even be to have cleaner bathrooms and trash cans, but meeting his norm of money raised. Even worst, the city has a poor history of keeping local the funds generated in Venice.

Los Angeles might get anywhere from 15 to 25 percent of the profits generated by the Zip Line, but what percent of that would actually trickle back down to Venice is unsure at this point. Rosendahl stated that it all depends on negotiations, but was unable to provide specifics. Our beach bathrooms will look as good as the ones in Santa Monica only when we will have city hood as well.

Tens of Venetians spoke loud and clear against the Ferris Wheel project both at the March 5 community meeting and at the April 17 VNC meeting. What makes Rosendahl think that we will have a different attitude towards the Zip Line is elusive.

If you are interested in joining the discussion regarding the Zip Line before the next VNC meeting, please contact the VNC Visitor Impact Committee at visitorcommittee@venicenc.org for time and date of meetings. Otherwise, come out May 15 at Westminster Elementary for the next VNC meeting. ☺

To feed or not to feed, that is the question?

By Ronald K. Mc Kinley

In most major cities there are ordinances stopping or restricting the feeding of the homeless. Las Vegas, “home of Lost Wages,” was one of the first. A federal judge has blocked that law.

New York’s mayor Bloomberg blocked food donations to all government-run homeless shelters, concerned that the donated food would not be nutritious enough. We all know that no food is better than food of low nutritional value. Stop me if you’ve heard this joke before.

Philadelphia, the “City of Brotherly Love,” had its mayor Nutter saying that feeding them lacked sanitary conditions, a common excuse, and took away the dignity of the homeless. Their dignity was more important than eating. He loses his dignity several times a day.

Houston’s christian organization “Feed a Friend” was banned and told they would not be granted a permit in the future. Christian rapper Tre9, Bobby Herring, appeared before the City Council and won some wiggle room.

Dallas area pastor Dan Hart is suing over food ordinance. Suing for free exercise of religion protected by the Texas Religious Freedom Restoration Act. “It is what Jesus did,” he said.

In Orlando, 12 “Food not Bombs” activists were arrested. The activists needed a permit if large groups of people are within 2 miles of city hall. Sounds like they don’t want to be occupied. Each group is allowed two permits per park per year. Food not Bombs exceeded their limit. They knew they would be arrested.

In Venice, an anonymous donor gave money to Whole Foods to feed the homeless once a month on Sundays. Whole Foods, heartened, decided to feed every Sunday. The “housed” went ballistic. Kelly Layne, marketing supervisor for Whole Foods, first approached by the donor, connected with Steve Clare of Venice Community Housing Corporation (VCHC). He offered his facility across the street from Whole Foods, on Rose, for feeding. The homeless haters were still not appeased. The feeding was moved to the boardwalk, in front of the Adda & Paul Safran Senior Housing Presbyterian Home, 151 Ocean Front Walk. There are two spaces designated as feeding places on OFW, 69 and 205, the last space on OFW.

I got up at 7 in the morning, no small feat, to see the feeding. I got to 151 OFW at 8:00, there was a short line. That grew fast. I asked people in line about the food, as I knew some of them. The responses were all positive. People talked and caught up on boardwalk gossip. It was a warm somewhat humid day.

Only one man did not seem to be happy. He bel-lowed of someone who was after him over some trans-gression. He was ignored as he sought out an audience. Someone said, “ we don’t want to hear that shit.” At a lost to a come back, he stopped his rant.

At 8:30 Whole Foods showed up and started to setup. The line now held about 90 people. They where instructed by a volunteer about trash, and not to sit on the steps of 151 OFW. A patrol car pulled up about ten minutes later. A portly officer extracted himself, with effort, from the black & white. He lectured the volunteers and then squeezed back into black & white and left.

The food consisted of a breakfast burrito, scrambled eggs, bacon, fresh fruit, juice, coffee, pastry. The best of Whole Foods breakfast menu. About 250 people were fed that day. It was a beautiful thing to watch.

The homeless are a quantum of humanity, a section of America. The haters would have you believe that all homeless are drug users, lazy, criminals, with no social grace, waiting for the next hand out.

This sounds like some of our elected officials. The economic collapse was not caused by poor people, but by greed. The homeless population will continue to grow.

A year ago I would have been standing in this line. Thanks to St. Joseph Center and VCHC I am no longer homeless. Albert Einstein said, “Problems can not be solved with the same level of awareness that created them.” ☺

Cinco de Mayo Pancake Breakfast

Venice’s own Fire Station #63 will hold its annual Pancake Breakfast on Saturday, May 5, from 8 am until noon at the firehouse at Venice Blvd. and Shell Ave., next to Beyond Baroque.

Come and meet Capt. Rex Vilaubi and his in-trepid crew, check out the big red fire engines and equipment, tour the station and enjoy breakfast with your neighbors. Great fun for kids young and old!

All the proceeds from the breakfast are used to maintain and upgrade the station house. This is one case where revenues generated in Venice stay in Venice!

Last year Station #63 responded to an average of thirty calls a day in the Venice area, mainly medical emergencies and traffic accidents.

They are always there for us – here’s a tasty way to show your appreciation.

—Roger Linnett ☺

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Lowest Prices in Town

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 - ❖Protein Powder – 2 lbs. \$13.99
 - ❖Coconut Oil – 54 oz. \$19.99
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Santa Monica College Students Blind-sided by Campus Police

By Roger Linnett

Santa Monica College has joined the list of places where the police have used pepper spray for crowd control under questionable circumstances. A dubious honor to be sure, SMC joins UC Davis and the original Occupy Wall Street in New York City, where, in the last year, police have callously pepper-sprayed participants.

To be fair, the action of the SMC campus police, unlike the other occasions, was more a reaction to a perceived loss of control than the flagrant and callous brutality exhibited at Davis and Wall Street. But that does not lessen its egregiousness.

Around thirty people, including a four-year-old girl, were doused with the capsaicin-based spray when campus police, reacting to the overflow crowd that gathered at the board’s meeting room that was woefully inadequate to handle the number of students that showed up.

Three needed to be rushed to a local hospital for treatment. The others were treated at the scene with low-pressure water hoses and gallon jugs of milk by Santa Monica Fire Dep’t. crews, summoned to assist the injured.

SMC student Monte Hawkins, one of those sprayed, told the SMC newspaper, The Corsair: “The board knew there would be this many students there. They should have relocated the meeting to a bigger venue.”

On the evening of April 3 the SMC Board of Trustees met in the campus’ Business Building to consider a measure to create a two-tier system for the high-demand requisite classes needed to transfer to four-year institutions. Students massed in the hall outside the meeting room intending to appear before the board to voice their opposition to the measure.

These transfer-requisite classes, which are always the first to be closed, necessitate waiting lists, and leave many desperate students attempting to crash the class on the first day. Most must be turned away, which can mean another semester, possibly a whole year, before they can transfer.

Ironically, SMC’s contention that it’s the country’s #1 two-year school in transfers to UC and CSU schools, the source of much school pride, and its strongest recruiting tool, is the reason why the dual system had been proposed to begin with.

A common student complaint about the two-tier system is that the very students who attend SMC because of limited resources would not be able to afford the higher per unit fees. So they feel those students who have the money to pay the higher rates have an unfair advantage.

And some advocates for the measure are of the mistaken notion that the measure would actually make the



regular classes more accessible, but who in their right mind would pay four times more for a class than necessary.

The state’s budget woes, necessitating drastic cuts in education funding, are the major factor in the board’s search for a way to satisfy the demand for these classes. Decreased funding will raise present credit-unit prices from \$36 to \$46 next semester, or \$138 for the average three-credit class.

The proposed system would raise that to around \$189 per unit, or \$567 for the same class, which reflects the true cost to the school to offer a course. This subsidizing of these costs has always been understood as an investment the State of California makes to help improve the lives of its citizens, which every study shows results in a many-fold increase in future wages, productivity, standard of living and, ultimately, the tax revenues to the state, that more than justifies the initial cost.

Community colleges, of which SMC, established in 1957, was one of the first in the state, were founded so that those who could not afford, or meet the academic requirements to attend, a four-year college could bolster

their academic record, enabling them to go on to earn a college degree, or, now long abandoned, to train for a good job in the trades like the automotive sector.

Associated Students President Harrison Wills told The Corsair that he feared that should ‘Contract Ed’ [as it is commonly known] pass, it would create a precedent for the state to allocate fewer funds for community colleges in the future, “It’s taking away the social equalizer which is open access to the college.”

In a letter to The Corsair board member Rob Rader made the case that the “at cost” rates were still lower than for-profit schools, and because it was widely-acknowledged that state funding would not recover for three to five years, the board faced the choice of either reducing the number of classes available, or figure a way to fund the classes internally by raising tuitions.

Photos of the incident, taken by The Corsair staff, can be seen at www.thecorsaironline.com. The photos apparently are property of Getty Images, which requires licensing fees our esteemed but humble publication refuses to pay. ☹

THE FIRE NEXT TIME

—continued from page 1

charges against four LAPD officers who had been videotaped beating African-American Rodney King by a nearly all white jury was the final straw for many in South Central and Midtown Los Angeles.

As the uprising, which began on April 28, gathered momentum, it spread throughout the area, from Long Beach to Venice. There was little property damage in Venice, compared to other pockets of poverty around L.A. A store was burned on Lincoln Blvd., but it was later determined that it was torched by its owner to collect the insurance money.

In all, there were 53 deaths, 2,383 injuries, more than 7,000 fires, damages to 3,100 businesses and nearly \$1 billion in financial losses. Sympathy uprisings occurred in other cities, including San Francisco, Las Vegas and Atlanta. Venice, and other parts of the city, hosted 4,000 California National Guard troops. Ocean Front Walk was closed down with bayonets. Since many of the Guard troops came from the “war” zone, many turned out to be not sufficiently tough enough to put down the civil disturbance. A further 4,500 military troops, mainly Marines, were deployed to restore order. In addition,

1,000 federal officers, including FBI, arrived on the scene.

In the face of tens of thousands of determined rebels, it was not enough. The uprising finally petered out as people returned to earning a living and the increasingly difficult task of finding food. In the aftermath of the uprising, a half-hearted effort was made to reconstruct the damaged businesses and increase economic activity in the poorest neighborhoods. A public-private organization called Rebuild LA was created and Peter Ueberroth was named to lead it. He had recently made a success of the first privatized Olympics, held in Los Angeles in 1984. However, his entrepreneurship didn’t work this time. Rebuild LA quickly faded into oblivion.

Today, much of Los Angeles is still in the throes of poverty, higher education is even farther out of reach than it was in 1992, and unemployment reaches 20 percent in some neighborhoods.

On the other hand, the LAPD has become militarized, with

high-tech weapons (soon to include drones) and many officers who have experience in urban warfare in Fallujah, Baghdad and Kandahar. Even so, a random, unscientific poll around Venice reveals that many people think it’s just a matter of time until the next uprising. I asked one San Juan Avenue resident at the art opening when he thought the next uprising might occur, he answered, “When Zimmerman goes free.” (George Zimmerman is the alleged killer of Black teenager Trayvon Martin).

More of Christine Burrill’s work may be seen at photoc



Photo: Chip Gatz - Reprinted from July 1992 Beachhead

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Ocean Front Walk: Vending or Free Speech

By Greta Cobar

As expected and predicted, enforcement of the new Ocean Front Walk (OFW) ordinance regarding vending is starting to dwindle and become selective. While most vendors selling mass-produced, for re-sale merchandise on OFW were banned at the beginning of the year, when the new ordinance took effect, its enforcement is becoming less and less stringent.

The usual “lack of resources” prerogative is used to excuse police officers from doing their job, especially on sunny, warm weekends. More and more re-sale merchandise is being allowed to pop back up.

It’s interesting to see who sets up to sell or perform on different days of the week and in different types of weather. Currently on a nice, warm Sunday about 15 percent of spaces are taken by vendors re-selling merchandise, which is in violation of the ordinance. Because it is so crowded and it involves doing so much work, the police officers do nothing about it.

During the week, on an over-cast day, most spots are empty and only the local, true artists who live day-to-day are out there trying to make a dime and a dinner. It is at these times that police officers have been messing with the artists and issuing bogus tickets.

For example, at 5pm on Monday, April 23, more than half of the spots on OFW were empty. The weather was bad, and there were hardly any tourists around. Not a whole lot of business was going on. So why did the officers ticket a local artist for occupying more than one spot, when there were so many empty ones? And why were vendors allowed to re-sell merchandise the previous day, sunny and warm Sunday?

While Venetians were opposed to the ordinance’s prohibition of jewelry and its inferred provision allowing police officers to decide what is or not to be considered art, we got stuck with both of the above. The higher-ups assured us that things will be considered on an individual basis, but police officers used their discretion to target painstakingly hand-made objects on another gloomy weekday afternoon instead of targeting re-sale on a busy, crowded day.

For example, an artist who hand-makes beads out of paper and then assembles them by using fishing line into things like little bags, water bottle carriers or bracelets got a ticket stating that she is selling things with more than a “nominal” value or utility.



Above: Cited for taking up two spaces. Below: Cited for hand-made creations. Photos: Greta Cobar



The public was told by the downtown representatives at the many community meetings regarding the ordinance that such hand-made objects would be allowed on OFW. We were assured that the purpose of the ordinance was to rid OFW of the re-sale of mass-produced merchandise while making space available for articles truly hand-made. The current situation on OFW does not reflect these promises.

As summer approaches and competition becomes even more fierce, it is just a matter of time before the police officers throw their arms up in the air and declare the vending situation out of control and give up on enforcement altogether. After all that is what happened to the previous five ordinances as well. 🚲



Pianos? Venice had them first!

Edward Brown and his Rolling Piano perform for a crowd in from of the Side-walk Cafe.

*Photo: Martin Fogal
Date: March 27, 1977*

From the Beachhead Archives

POed at the PO

Song by Suzy Williams

COME AND SEE! A TRAGEDY!
THE VENICE POST OFFICE BY THE SEA
THE BRIGHTEST JEWEL IN OUR CROWN
NOW THEY WANT TO SHUT IT DOWN
TAKE THE HEART FROM OUR COMMUNITY!

Since 1939, the Venice Post Office
Has been the place to meet and greet and mail
It’s a classy destination in a circular location
and now they want to put it up for sale!

For years we ‘ve been adorin’
The brass Terazzo floorin’
And the walls of a rich mahogany
And our pleasure has been plural
with that Abbott Kinney mural
He’s our special visionary deity!

Just look how this is angled
We are slowly being strangled
Cutting window clerks and janitors
and stamps
With no intention for success,
no wonder it it is such a mess
And sadly, it’s a common circumstance

If you read the constitution,
there’s a postal institution
And a militia to protect us night and day
We get billions for the latter,
but the former doesn’t matter
And they want to take our Post Office away!

LET THIS NOT BE A TRAGEDY!
THE VENICE POST OFFICE BY THE SEA
THE BRIGHTEST JEWEL IN OUR CROWN
WE WON’T LET THEM SHUT IT DOWN

WE’LL KEEP THE HEART OF OUR COMMUNITY!

How Peter Douglas Saved Venice and the California Coast

By Jim Smith

Peter Douglas, who was the chief guardian of the California coast for the past 40 years, died April 1. It would have been much better for Venice if this were a sick April Fools joke, but it isn't.

Douglas began his advocacy for the coast as an aide to Assembly member Alan Sieroty (who represented Venice) when he wrote a coastal protection bill in 1971 that Sieroty introduced. The bill failed due to opposition from developers. In 1972, Proposition 20, written by Douglas, won in a landslide with more than four million votes. The California Coastal Act of 1976, which Douglas co-authored, further extended beach protections.

Douglas went to work for the Coastal Commission as a Deputy Director, and in 1985 was appointed Executive Director. He was the driving force of the Commission, often pushing reluctant Republican and Democratic appointees to oppose unneeded developments.

At the same time, Venice activists turned increasingly to the Commission for support after hitting a brick wall with Los Angeles. Beachhead writers Moe Stavnezer, Arnold Springer, Rex Frankel and John Davis led caravans of Venetians to take up appeals of city-endorsed developments that were not in character with our community.

Douglas won many victories – small and large – for protecting the coast. He led the fight on the Commission, in 1998, to deny the Hearst Corporation's application to build a 650-room hotel and golf course on the San Simeon coast. He also forced media mogul David Geffen, in 2007, to open his beachfront compound in Malibu to public access.

While it was not exactly part of his job description, Douglas was known for driving the coast and pulling over to check permits on any construction projects he encountered.

Peter Douglas was born in difficult circumstances, as a Jew in 1942 Berlin. How he and his family survived the next three years is unclear, but they emigrated to the U.S. after the war.

In a farewell speech to the Commission last August, Douglas noted that the World Bank had called California's Coastal Protection, "the strongest in the world." He attributed this to the independent nature of the Commission. In writing the proposition, Douglas had wisely broken up appointment power between the Governor and the two houses of the Legislature, ensuring that no one person or group would be able to control the commission. "We haven't been captured by those we regulate," said Douglas.

I first met Peter Douglas in 1997 when I went with my daughter to a Coastal Commission meeting to oppose a permit parking plan for our neighborhood, Central Venice. It would have allowed four-hour parking during the

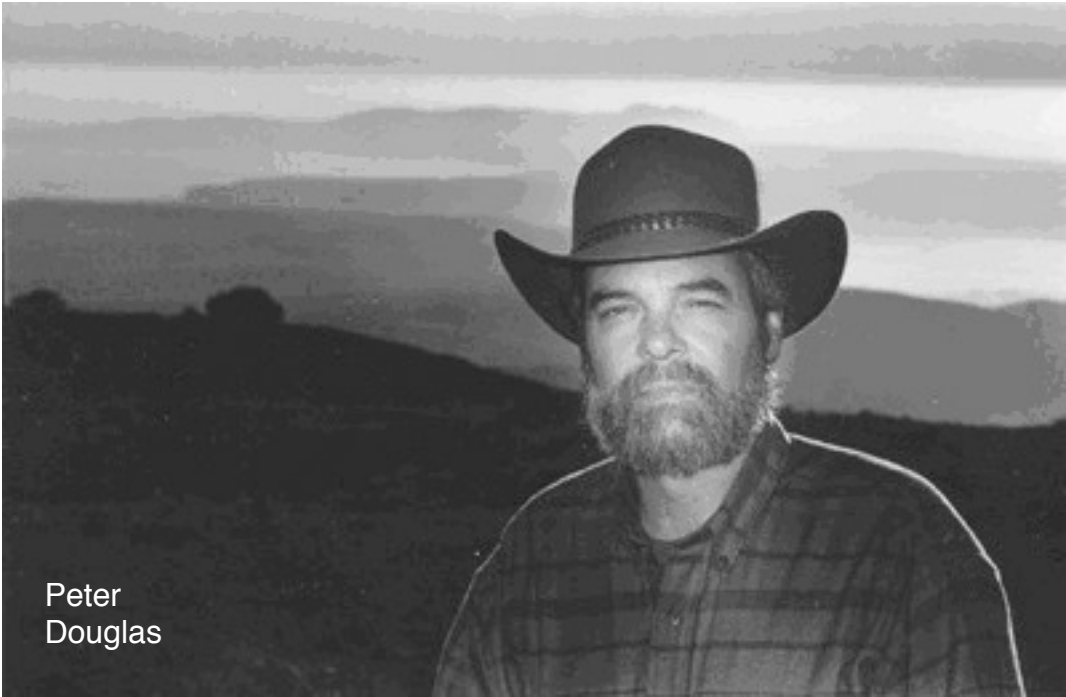
day for non-permit holding vehicles. This would have meant that beachgoers would have to return to their cars in mid-day to find another parking place. Instead of visitors roaming the streets once a day in search of a parking place, they would have to do it twice.

Both of us spoke against the plan, which had passed the City Council and would have been implemented unless the Commission blocked it. We argued that the plan would reduce access by placing an extra burden on those who only wanted to enjoy the beach. During a break, Douglas approached us and thanked us for speaking in favor of beach access. He told us that many people who live near the beach don't appreciate that it is a natural resource for all Californians.

I asked Douglas how the LAPD could get away with imposing an after midnight curfew on the beach, since that prevented access. He said he was unaware of the curfew and suggested that I get a ticket for breaking the curfew and bring it to him. He said not to worry since it was obviously illegal. I still regret that I didn't follow his advice and get a ticket.

In June 2010, John Davis brought the matter of the curfew up while he was addressing the Commission. The members expressed shock that such a thing existed and asked the staff to look into it.

There followed a series of letters from the Commission to city officials informing them that the curfew was illegal. The City Attorney, Carmen "Nuch" Trutanich, responded that the Commission was harassing the city. This resulted in Douglas, who was already ill with cancer, sending a four-page response in which he stated that the curfew restricted beach access and that the Commission was empowered to issue a cease and desist order. That order never came, probably due to Douglas' infirmities. Meanwhile, the LAPD is still selectively enforcing the curfew and has broadened it to include Ocean Front Walk. So far, no one in Venice has appealed this illegal action to the Coastal Commission.



Peter Douglas

At that same June 2010 meeting, the final showdown on Overnight Parking Permit Districts (OPDs) took place. The city's plan to charge all of Venice for the privilege to park in front of their homes was on the fast track. Standing in its way were the Coastal Commission and we 38 Venetians who had appealed the permit plan. The Commission staff had recommended approval of the OPDs. Douglas must have been out of the loop by then. He took the unlikely, but admirable, position of filing an appeal of his own against the OPDs. Suddenly, he became our star appellant. While the eloquence of scores of Venetians who took the microphone to oppose OPDs had a big impact on the Commissioners, we cannot discount the impact of having the highly respected Executive Director make common cause with our motley crew.

Douglas says in his autobiography on the Coastal Commission's website "that the way to live one's life is to follow your bliss." He goes on to say that he found his bliss in environmental stewardship. The right man in the right place at the right time.

What does the future hold for Venice, and the entire California coast without Douglas? Steve Blank, a Commission member and friend of Douglas told the New York Times, "Once he's gone, this commission will implode in the blink of an eye," Blank said, "and all we'll be talking about is the color of the concrete used to pave over what's left of the coast."

At the least, we in Venice will have to work harder and be more vigilant since we won't have Peter Douglas on our side. ☹️

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Political Cartoon by Khalil Bendib

Venice is for the Birds

By Vanessa Cabello

I will be honest... it's not often I typically think about birds. From afar, I see and admire them within their natural habitat, but I have never really quite paid much attention to the study of birds (otherwise known as ornithology). Now that I have lived in Venice since the beginning of this year, I have become more aware of the birds in this area. In fact, not only have I become more aware of their daily activities and whereabouts, but I have also become privy to the dangers that they face. I wouldn't say I'm quite the bird stalker, but some may say, I'm pretty close. I do admit, I have grown particularly fond of some of Venice's local birds and therefore have focused this article on the general issues that birds face in the community. I feel it necessary to give them a voice to help ensure their safety and preservation through awareness. What better way than to do it through the Beachhead?

I know there are so many other issues at hand here in our Venice community, like the homelessness, no parking for the residents, and boardwalk ordinances, just to name a few. So what in the world could be drawing visitors to our beloved Venice – THE second largest destination in Southern California (second to Disneyland)? Certainly not the birds or wildlife! I would guess that people probably want to see the ocean, visit Muscle Beach, shop down at the boardwalk and just feel the eclectic energy in the air.

If these visitors just stop and gaze for a moment or two, they may notice the mallard ducks by the canals, or the seagulls and sandpipers by the ocean. Maybe their eye catches a snowy egret lounging in the sun or a brown pelican that is flying over the ocean. It's truly amazing to see such a variety of beautiful birds that either live in the area or are migrating through. Crows, african parrots, english sparrows, seagulls, pigeons, egrets and pelicans, all of which I have now begun to notice regularly. To think of how these birds must survive on a daily basis sometimes baffles even the Darwin-

ist in me. But between the sea, and the canals and whatever else they may find within our community, these valiant birds somehow seem to not only survive, but thrive. Did you know that mallard ducks were indigenous to this area? Recently I learned that they were here actually before Abbot Kinney built Venice. Hard to imagine that this particular lineage of ducks could have existed here before us!

Where do they hang? I've noticed that the mallard ducks like to peruse the canal and the Abbot Kinney Venice Library Branch area. Often, they can be seen in the grass and parking lot at the library, which in my opinion, is quite a dangerous location. The mallards also like to waddle over to the canal off of Venice Blvd., and in the past, I've seen them crushed by careless drivers. Not once, not twice, but several times. In fact, I have seen almost half a dozen bird accidents in the four months that I have lived in Venice and it's a bit disturbing. I have been thinking lately that perhaps it would be a good idea to put a duck crossing sign at Venice Blvd. near the library and also at Grand Canal and Venice Blvd. I am surprised no one has done anything about it yet!

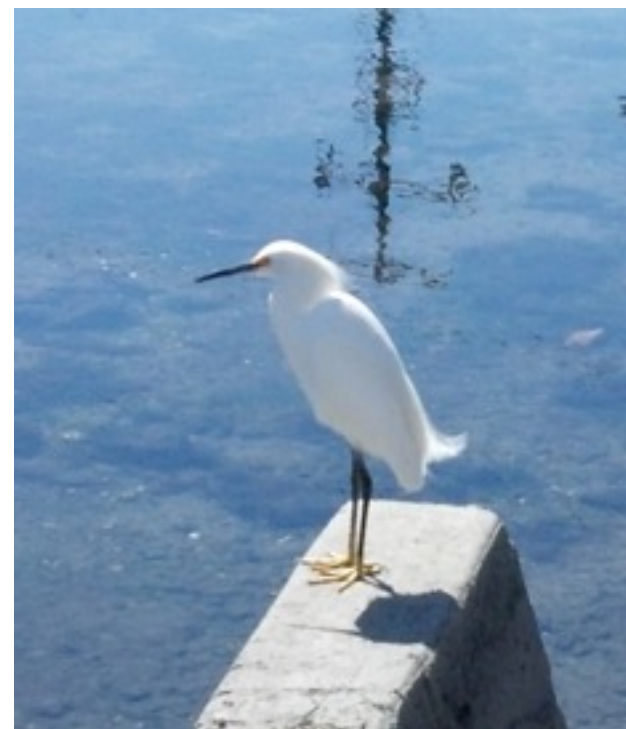
Well I am not one to just sit around and wait for someone else, so my next mission, as rudimentary as it may seem, is to get a duck crossing sign installed at these locations. Drivers should slow down and have the right to know that they are traveling through what I consider to be somewhat of a natural sanctuary for our birds. I am going to contact the City of Los Angeles to find out what steps need to be taken to complete this duck sign installation project, and then will report back the details of my findings. Hopefully it will result in the legal and proper installation of a duck crossing sign. Like I said, I would like to have two duck signs. One sign at Venice Blvd South near the canal, and the other near the corner of Ocean and Venice Blvd near the library.

What we do without our beloved birds? There usually isn't a day that goes by that I don't see a seagull soaring in the sky. Since I live about a block away from the beach, I also hear them often. I love waking up to the sound of the seagulls, it's so soothing. Thanks goodness for our bountiful ocean. I notice that the seagulls thrive well in our beach environment, since mostly what they feed off is from the shore (or our trash receptacles). I have noticed that egrets and pelicans can be found throughout the Venice canals, the Marina, and the Playa wetlands. These guys don't frequent the boardwalk much. For some reason these



exotic birds really dig their wetlands, the Marina and shallow waters. You can find them near the canal, especially on a sunny day when the tide is high.

So what's left? More bird gazing of course and I'll report back with any progress on getting duck crossing signs installed. Until then, wish me luck and happy bird watching! For more information on how to conserve and restore our natural ecosystems, focusing on birds and other wildlife for the benefit of humanity and the earth's biological diversity, please visit the Audubon Society: www.audubon.org. 🐦



Photos: Vanessa Cabello



They're Walkways, not "Side" walks

By Fred Owens

Venice – maybe it doesn't say so in the tourist hype about all the weird people on the boardwalk and all the ultra-cool people on Abbot Kinney – is a walking community. It's compact, you can get there from here, on foot, from Rose to Washington, from the beach to Lincoln -- why bring your car, there's no place to park anyway.

So I am thinking about the sidewalks and their state of disrepair. The tree roots heave up the sidewalks and the city of Los Angeles is years behind on the maintenance. Los Angeles has more than 10,000 miles of sidewalks. It has been estimated that 4,700 miles are in need of repair at a cost of \$1.2 billion. And the city does not have that kind of money.

Property owners used to be responsible for sidewalk repairs, but in 1973, blessed with the chance to get the federal government to cover the cost, the city of Los Angeles took over the cost of repairs. Only a few years later the federal money ran out, and the whole repair schedule went south. Very few property owners have been willing to take up the slack.

So name your favorite walk. My favorite walk is from my sister's house on California Ave, down to Abbot Kinney, and threading my way to Windward and the Boardwalk, past rose bushes and special gardens, observing small changes -- "I see they trimmed the clematis." I know this walk by heart and I know the roots and bumps and holes and I watch where I put my feet.

But I get tired of doing this. I am frustrated with the possibility of municipal reform, so I took direct action. I carried a coffee can full of gravel three blocks down the street and filled the hole in the sidewalk in front of Abbot's Habit coffee shop. The hole was not so wide, but it

was deep and you could easily fall and break your ankle. I filled it. Now I want to fix all the rest of the holes in Venice -- the holes in the sidewalk, I mean.

That's the easy part. But the root humps – you might mark them with fluorescent paint or just learn to live with them, and think about how wonderful it is to walk to the beach, past the beautiful small gardens, and meeting people you know while you're out for a stroll.

This is fine, except for one thing --- the folks in wheel chairs and walkers, and parents with infants in strollers. They deserve a flat place to roll, because getting around town, people to people, store to store, beach to park and all that – everybody gets an equal chance at getting where they want to go.



So, even if we have our favorite walks, we still have a problem -- crumbling sidewalks and no money or plan to repair them.

I was in Manhattan Beach last week visiting a friend. We walked down to the beach. Their sidewalks are in very good repair and they don't have any homeless people – I mean none I could see. I have no problem with Manhattan Beach being the way it is, but I wouldn't want to be like them.

Venice is walking on another path, so watch for those tree roots, and if you see someone struggling with a wheel chair, then help them get where they want to go.

🦽

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Scene of the Crime: Marker Unveiled Where Japanese-Americans Were Taken to Camps



The threat to civil liberties following the attack on the World Trade Center reminded local residents of the mass incarceration of the Japanese-Americans during another time when war hysteria took precedence over people's rights.

"After September 11, 2001, members of Venice Peace and Freedom Party became increasingly alarmed by the creation of an atmosphere by the popular media and by our politicians...encouraging the residents of this country to accept serious restrictions in our civil liberties," Dr. Alice Stek told the assembly.

In April 2003, the Beachhead published a photo of the hundreds of Japanese gathered at Venice and Lincoln Blvds, with only a small bag to take on their years' long forced absence.

It was the first of a series of photos and articles about the unlawful incarceration of our fellow Venetians.

In 2009, a student at Venice High School, Scott Pine, picked up a Beachhead with an article about the need for a memorial marker and showed it to her teacher, Phyllis Hayashibara, who shared it with her class.

The students decided to write letters to Councilmember Bill Rosendahl and the Beachhead supporting the creation of a marker.

One thing led to another and soon the travail of our neighbors will be known to everyone who sees the marker. As one speaker put it, "this monument will be a beacon that lights the way on the road to real dignity and respect for the rights of all of our human family." —Jim Smith 🚲



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It was 70 years later, to the day, that more than 100 Venetians gathered in support of a handful of Japanese-American survivors of the Manzanar Concentration Camp. In 1942, they had been taken away from the very spot of the April 25 gathering and bused to the central California camp.

They were rounded up, not for any crime, but because of their race. In all, more than 110,000 Japanese and Japanese-American citizens from throughout the western U.S. were put behind bars and barbed wire in concentration camps for the duration of World War II. No such mass incarceration happened to other adversaries, such as, Italian or German-Americans.

The action against the Japanese-Americans was without due process and was in disregard for their civil liberties. In 1988, Congress and the President apologized for the government's treatment, saying its actions were driven by "race prejudice, war hysteria, and a failure of political leadership."

Still, no apology or token payment can rub out the stain on this country's honor, nor restore years out of the lives of hard working farmers, shop keepers, workers and fishermen.

And neither can the imposing monument that was dedicated at this gathering. But it can warn future generations that this happened on U.S. soil and can happen again if we are not vigilant.

IN APRIL 1942, DURING WORLD WAR II, MORE THAN A THOUSAND AMERICAN MEN, WOMEN, AND CHILDREN OF JAPANESE ANCESTRY IN VENICE, SANTA MONICA, AND MALIBU REPORTED TO THIS LOCATION AT VENICE AND LINCOLN BOULEVARDS WITH ONLY WHAT THEY COULD CARRY. THE WESTERN DEFENSE COMMAND AND FOURTH ARMY ISSUED CIVILIAN EXCLUSION ORDER NO. 7 WHICH GAVE THEM ONLY DAYS TO DISPOSE OF THEIR PROPERTY AND POSSESSIONS. BUSES TRANSPORTED THEM DIRECTLY TO MANZANAR WAR RELOCATION AUTHORITY CAMP IN INYO COUNTY WHERE MANY INTERNEES WERE INCARCERATED FOR MORE THAN THREE YEARS.

EXECUTIVE ORDER 9066 HAD EMPOWERED THE UNITED STATES ARMY TO DECLARE AREAS OF WASHINGTON, OREGON, AND CALIFORNIA MILITARILY SENSITIVE, AND FORCED THE REMOVAL OF 120,000 JAPANESE AND AMERICANS OF JAPANESE ANCESTRY TO TEN AMERICAN CONCENTRATION CAMPS AFTER JAPAN ATTACKED THE U. S. NAVAL BASE AT PEARL HARBOR, HAWAII ON DECEMBER 7, 1941, PLUNGING THE U. S. INTO WAR WITH JAPAN. THE FORCED REMOVAL AND IMPRISONMENT OF CITIZENS OF THE U. S. WITHOUT ANY REGARD TO DUE PROCESS OR THE WRIT OF HABEAS CORPUS VIOLATED THEIR RIGHTS UNDER THE U. S. CONSTITUTION.

MAY THIS VENICE JAPANESE AMERICAN MEMORIAL MARKER REMIND US TO BE FOREVER VIGILANT ABOUT DEFENDING OUR CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS, SO THAT THE POWERS OF GOVERNMENT SHALL NEVER AGAIN PERPETRATE AN INJUSTICE AGAINST ANY GROUP BASED SOLELY ON ETHNICITY, GENDER, SEXUAL ORIENTATION, RACE, OR RELIGION.

Monument photo: Ron Heinmiller



ABOVE: Former internees (left to right): Top Row: Maguerite Tanaka, Brian Maeda, Arnold Maeda, Councilmember Bill Rosendahl. Bottom Row: Kimi Ishii, Mae Kakehashi, Amy Ioki.

BELOW: Arnold Maeda meets the press.

Photos: Pegarty Long



No one ever said it would be easy

Saving the Venice Post Office

By Jim Smith

In spite of a lawsuit brought by the Coalition to Save the Venice Post Office, the Postal Service has plowed ahead with efforts to sell the historic building and substitute a “hole-in-the-wall” facility in the old Safeway store, now a postal distribution center.

There was a flurry of activity of would-be buyers of the current post office building before the April 23 deadline for bids.

Several Coalition members were courted by the buyers who promised an open lobby so the public could still view the Biberman mural or a basement set aside for community use. In the end the buyers all failed in getting endorsements from the Coalition activists, all of whom are committed to keeping the building as a public post office.

The most visible prospective buyer was Hollywood producer Joel Silver, who arrived to inspect the building in his \$400,000 plus Maybach limousine. Silver told us, individually and at a Neighborhood Council meeting, that he wanted to relocate his office to the building, if it were not possible to keep it as a post office.

On April 26 Deadline Hollywood, a blog from Nikki Finke, reported that Silver Pictures and Warner Brothers have broken off their long-time partnership. Silver must vacate his office at Warner Brothers by the end of the year. He must also pay back sizeable loans to Warner Brothers, according to Finke.

Finke muses, “Some might wonder why Joel at age 59 doesn’t take early retirement from the movie biz and go out on top.”

Whether this will have a bearing on Silver’s lust for our Post Office is unknown.

Another bidder, possibly The Ale House on Ocean Front Walk, wants to put in a restaurant and brewery. Jackson Browne, who toured the Post Office, reportedly wants a restaurant. Another group wants to buy the Post Office on speculation that they can sell it later for more money.

Judges and Politicians

Our lawsuit is still sitting in the in-box of the Third Circuit Court in the District of Columbia. This is not necessarily a bad thing since it keeps the USPS lawyers on their toes. When the judges will decide to hear it is known only to them. There is no timetable to which judges must adhere.

In addition to pursuing legal action, our intrepid save the post office crew have been visiting our lawmakers. Congressmember Janice Hahn didn’t have much clout with the USPS, but she was willing to write letters on our behalf. Then, redistricting put her in a universe far, far away.

Next we went to our U.S. Senators. We actually had meetings with Dianne Feinstein and Barbara Boxer’s designated representatives. They expressed sympathy and said they would see what they could do. So far, it’s been nothing.

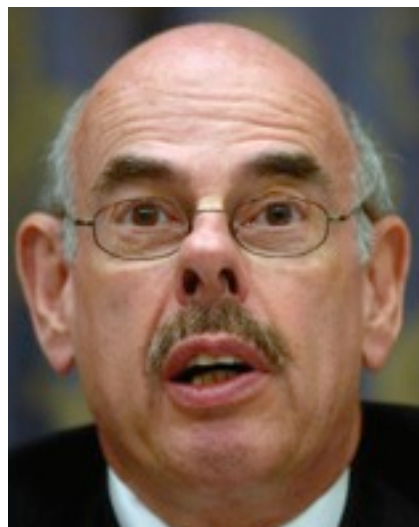
Now it’s up to Henry. The man who stopped the “Subway to the Sea” for 20 years, can probably at least get a moratorium on closing the Venice Post Office.

That is, if he wanted to. Unfortunately, Waxman has said he can’t do a thing because it’s still Janice Hahn’s district until the next Representative is seated in January 2013. Meanwhile, Waxman is running to represent us in the next Congress. Am I missing something here?

You can express your views to Waxman at 8436 W. Third Street, #600, L.A. 90048 or 310-652-3095. His official email form will not allow messages from 90291, but you can contact Waxman through his chief of staff, Pat Delgado at <Patricia.Delgado@mail.house.gov>.

Free Venice Beachhead • May 2012 • 9

Can This Man Save The Venice Post Office?



Henry Waxman

Long-time Member of Congress and Candidate to Represent Venice.

While politicians are doing everything they can to avoid taking action, a bill, S1789, has passed the Senate. It might help the Postal Service with its financial problems, but it may do more harm than good.

Meanwhile, the self-appointed Postal slayer, Darrell Issa has a competing bill in the house that would virtually dismantle the USPS. If his bill passes as expected, the House and Senate will get together and come up with a - probably dreadful - compromise. In any case, legislation is unlikely to help us save our post office.

Rallies at the Post Office

Meanwhile, Venetians are proceeding as if their opinions mattered. A third rally was held in front of the Post Office on April 17, Tax Day.

More than 100 letters to our Senators were signed (hope springs eternal). Since there was a big turnout of postal police and LAPD, who lurked a block away, we gave them something to do when rally participants, each bearing a Senator’s letter, crammed themselves into the lobby, causing the specter of a civil disorder. All ended well, except the postal police got a parking ticket on their SUV.

The presence of the postal police is useful, since they have to write a report up the chain of command about all the problems Venetians are causing in defense of their post office.

The Coalition to Save the Post Office is now meeting weekly to plan how to keep the pressure on the Postal Service. If you would like to get involved, please email savethevenicepostoffice@gmail.com or call 424-246-8676. 🚲

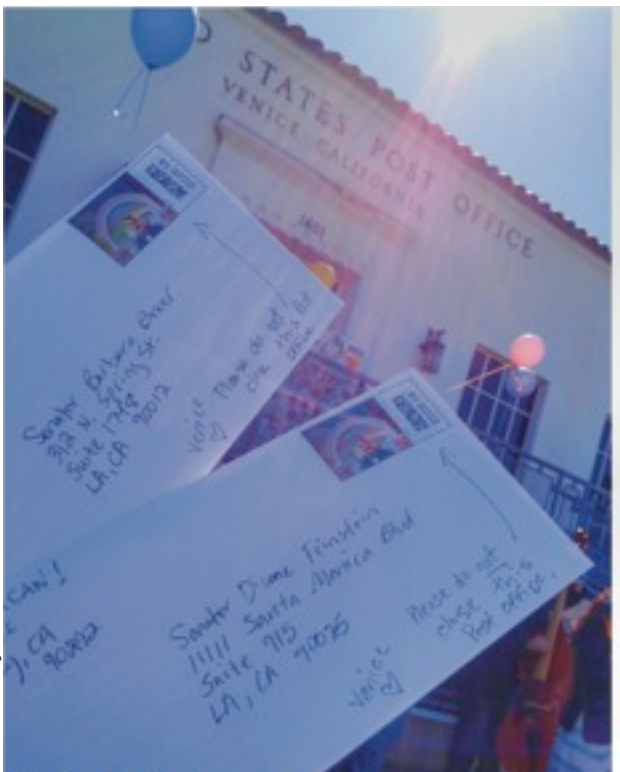


Photo: Sonjia Gust

Daniel Kaufman – Art at the Speed of Heat

By Roger Linnett

Most art is the result of painstaking effort that can often take weeks or even months to complete. Daniel Kaufman was never the kind of guy who could sit still that long to see the results of his work, which is one of the reasons he took up photography, graduating from Amherst College in 1973 with a degree in fine arts. His photographs soon began appearing in Life and National Geographic and other national magazines.

In 1977 he became the first artist to be awarded a Fulbright Fellowship after inquiring of the Fulbright-Hays Foundation why no artist had ever been recognized by their prestigious organization. Thus he spent a year working in Ireland, producing a beautiful photo essay book titled IRELAND: PRESENCES, published by St. Martin’s Press. While there he also conducted workshops at the National College of Art in Dublin.

Insatiably curious Kaufman turned from photography to more conventional artistic media and created critically acclaimed works in oils, acrylics, gouache and watercolors, but he bridled at, what seemed to him, the



torturously slow method of conventional painting, which was a constant irritant to his always amped disposition.

Then one day, while watching his daughter Anastasia trying to melt crayons with a magnifying glass, he had an AHA! moment. Heating a spatula on a stove, he started melting crayons, pressing and smearing them like paint, ecstatic at the immediacy of this simple medium Kaufman says recalls “the smell of childhood”.

Not only did the crayons melt and then harden again in seconds, the melted wax was infinitely manipulable. He could reheat and rework any part of a piece with instantaneous results, giving him a freedom no other medium had allowed, and liberating him to try things other media had discouraged. “I don’t believe you

can have fine art without some element of accident, but it’s not totally random,” he says.

A decade or so ago, after some experimentation, Kaufman discovered that applying several layers of gesso to whatever material - wood, flagstone, cement, masonite or canvas - he chose to work on, helped the base coat of wax to adhere, and helped prevent cracking.

However, this base coat requires a dozen or more crayons of the same color for each piece.

Kaufman prefers white for this purpose, but since a box of crayons contains only

one of each color, he was stymied. At one point he had resorted to using his daughter as a lookout at local drugstores while he changed out the white crayons from every box of Crayolas until he had a box of all whites.

Employing the same savvy that garnered him the Fulbright, he contacted the company that makes Crayolas, Binney & Smith in Easton, Pa., and sent them a sample of his work. Shortly thereafter he was visited by Crayola’s Manager for Inventor Relations and Innovation, who ended up staying three days to document Kaufman’s technique.

A week later a shipment of 20,000 white crayons arrived at his studio with their compliments. Several of his works now hang in the Crayola Factory Museum alongside Picasso and other famous artists who had created works of art using Crayolas.

Kaufman discovered better, faster methods of melting and working the hot wax, taking his art to a whole new level, and allowing him ever more freedom in its manipulation and the ability to create finished pieces in a remarkably short time.

Kaufman’s unique abtracts, what one art critic called “molten cloisonné,” have been exhibited in shows all across the country, where, despite commanding handsome prices, they have been eagerly snapped up by art



Pink Wand



Baby Green Grass Fairy Tale



Beauty in Motion

-continued on page 16

Like Father, Like Daughter

By Jack Neworth

For the last years of his life, legendary comedian, satirist, social critic and best-selling author George Carlin lived in Venice. Actually he, his wife Brenda and young daughter, Kelly, lived here back in 1970 and had a great affinity and affection for this unique community. In 2008 when Carlin died I was asked by the Beachhead to write his obituary.

Everyone I spoke to, neighbors, friends and even merchants, commented on how down to earth Carlin was. Never mind the 14 HBO specials, the 5 Grammys, the Mark Twain Prize for Humor, or that his books sold a million copies. George Carlin was just a regular guy, albeit a remarkably talented one. Even at 72, he went far too soon.

I first saw Carlin on TV more decades ago than I care to admit to. I was a boy when my father, who loved comedy, introduced me to it as we’d watch the Ed Sullivan Show every Sunday night.

Among the myriad of performers I remember a young George Carlin who, with his variety of voices and characters, always made me laugh. But my favorite act was a Spanish ventriloquist, Señor Wences.

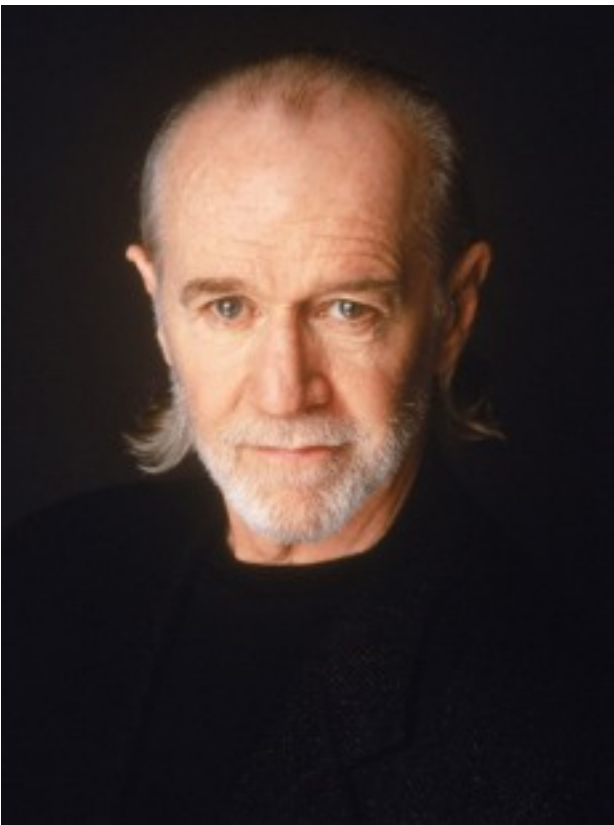
Part of Wences’ rapid-fire routine included banter with a character, just a head, which was in a box. Wences would open it and ask, “S’alright?” The head quickly answered, “S’alright!” after which Wences promptly slammed the box shut. (I recently watched a clip on YouTube and I still find it hilarious. Go figure.)

As I grew up and went through radical changes, i.e. the 60’s, so did Carlin. He came out of the “straight” closet and evolved right before our eyes. He went from a traditional comedian whose goal was to have a career like Danny Kaye to a long-haired counter culture icon whose cutting edge comedy impacted generations of audiences and untold aspiring comedians.

And Carlin did so right up until his death. His last HBO special, It’s Bad For Ya was one of his best and was less than four months before his passing. In fact, as Carlin got older he was even more daring. It was as if he were saying, “I’m an old fart, what can you do to me?”

Well, now on May 24, at the Santa Monica Playhouse, we have a chance to see Carlin perform again. A séance? Not exactly. Actually it’s a one woman show written and performed by Kelly Carlin, George’s only child.

A natural storyteller, Kelly weaves the forty-year journey of her life with classic photos and footage of her talented and often tempestuous father. (Who, given occasional drug and alcohol abuse, didn’t always know best.)



Father: George Carlin



Daughter: Kelly Carlin - Photo by Don Dior

A Carlin Home Companion is highly entertaining, very funny and very moving. At the risk of a cliché, it’s bound to make you laugh and cry. (To me, the ultimate compliment for a writer/performer.)

But finding her performing voice is fairly recent for Kelly. After getting her Masters in psychology she had planned to become a therapist. In fact, she interned for three years when she found herself using more and more of her spare time writing stories about “growing up with George.”

A Carlin Home Companion begins with Kelly at age four “making spice cookies with daddy.” Naturally, “daddy’s cookies had a little more spices than Kelly’s.” A few years later George, having been up for days on coke, confided in his daughter that the sun had just exploded and that they only had seven minutes to live. Naturally, this was something that Kelly couldn’t exactly share with her classmates next day at school.

The Carlins lived in upscale Pacific Palisades, surrounded by Ronald Reagan’s friends and a high-ranking

executive at the Rand Corporation. (Not exactly George’s “base.”)

As Kelly recalls in the show this close proximity lead to the occasionally provocative neighborly chats that may have been peppered with some of her dad’s famous seven words you still can’t say on prime time radio. (Following a radio broadcast of Carlin’s routine there was a single complaint to the F.C.C. This resulted in the “seven words” case going to the U.S. Supreme Court and is still known as “the Carlin words.”)

A year in the making, A Carlin Home Companion, directed by actor, comedian and filmmaker Paul Provenza, is a remarkably honest and revealing look at what is was like to be swept up by the career of George Carlin. But it also chronicles the struggles of their father/daughter relationship and what it took for Kelly to find her own place in the world.

A Carlin Home Companion is a roller coaster ride of laughter, emotion and, I dare say, even insights into all our lives. I can only add that I’m very glad that she survived the sun exploding all those years ago. 🚲

Stop Drinking Soda

By Marisa Peck

Sometimes feeling our best involves doing more, and sometime it involves doing less. We are going to focus on a friendly foe in our midst; a culprit who offends both personal health and also the health of our planet. I am talking about our beloved soda pop.

Commercial soft drink products typically contain water that is stolen directly from people who need it, in some part of the world that the corporate giants think you don’t care about. That water is then mixed with high fructose corn syrup or aspartame. High fructose corn syrup is widely known to cause obesity, diabetes, mood swings, insomnia, chronic fatigue, and it can depress the immune system making you more vulnerable to disease. Aspartame was approved for use amid very shady circumstances the day after Ronald Reagan’s inauguration in 1981. Monsanto’s subsidiary GD Searle had previously been denied approval for use of the product because aspartame had caused brain tumors in lab rats. But this time around, when the committee voted to again deny the application by 3-2, Reagan’s new FDA commissioner Arthur Hayes appointed a 6th member to vote in Monsanto’s favor, and then broke the tie himself allowing Monsanto the use of aspartame in consumer products. Less than two years later, Hayes left the FDA and went to work for Monsanto’s public relations team. Further studies of aspartame have only raised more questions regarding its safety. But in the meantime, it is in our diet sodas. Also in our sodas, both diet and regular, are artificial colorings

that are proven to cause cancer. The Center for Science in the Public Interest has petitioned the FDA to ban the use of these artificial colors, but so far there has been no response.

As if the soda itself were not bad enough, there is all that packaging it comes in. It takes a huge amount of energy (OIL) to produce the plastic and aluminum bottles that contain the 15 million gallons of soda we Americans purchase every year. We recycle less than one fifth of these items. The rest go into landfills or directly into the ocean. There are also all the crates and plastic wrappings that are used during the many stages of transportation (more OIL) the soda has to go through before it gets into our hands. Let’s not even get started about how plastic bottles release hormone mimicking chemicals into

the beverages... but if you’re interested you can Google it!

So this month’s health tip is to stop drinking soda. Save the money you would have spent on soda and invest that money in a water filtering pitcher and a canteen that you can fill up and keep with you. At fast food restaurants they will always give you a free cup for water and even fill up a to-go cup for you at the drive through window. So no excuses, even when you’re on the run! We are lucky to live in a part of the world where clean water is readily available, and smart enough to know that our bodies deserve the best. Drink to your health. Cheers to you! 🚲



I feel like I’d like to live but I look forward to death. Death has no fear for a man or a woman whose love has become impersonal and endless. In death, you just get cut off from lemon meringue pie. The recognition that there is no end to life is wisdom.

Everyone should live in the moment, but you have to love what you’re doing to do it. We are too much in the mind. The ego and the mind are the same thing.

Being well paid is not evidence that you are successful and/or happy. If we were to eliminate money and encourage/inspire people to do what they love to do, they might find some happiness. God, being in everything and everyone, has a challenge of making sense out of humanity. If people truly understood that God is everywhere,

the education of the ego would be an easier task. However, we do arrive at the truth and compassion eventually comes from working on the ego. And there really is God, nature, and ego.

Another name for God might be truth, good and beauty. Other names suggested by Hindu sages are consciousness existence and bliss absolute. Islam offers Allah the merciful. God is a reality pervading and transcending the creation and projection of the absolute.

My own ego and need for approval is the motivation for writing stuff. I have others, all of which are making me less popular and more obnoxious. Shouting at people makes no sense, unless of course, you are a politician, parent, or TV commercial. 🚲

Sinners
decadent desserts

**Ron Rouda
Recommends**

Saints
guilt-free delights

**2547 Lincoln Blvd.
Venice**

Andrew’s Alley

i think of the alley
across from where i live
linking Horizon & Market
as Andrew’s alley.
He use to walk that way
coming & going to the post office
to mail packages of the goods
he sold on ebay to pay his rent.
Sometimes, his hair was long –
sometimes, short.
Sometimes, it was morning –
sometimes, late afternoon.
i like to walk that alley
myself. i never know what
i might find there: hummingbirds
drawn to the bougainvillea, clicking & chasing
at one another; the wild parrots of Venice gossiping
in the nearby apricot tree. Once, a woman with long, gray
hair
stopped me and said, “Here, take this.” She handed me
a fairy sized flower pot with a single quartz crystal inside.

i can see clearly the beginning
of this alley from my porch.
i like to imagine Andrew once more
his back turned to me,
so that i cannot possibly see his final expression –
only his wry body, his thick, dark hair
swaying slightly, sandwiched between
trees & birds, dissolving at last
a young Osiris
descending into the world below.

–krista schwimmer

In Rhyme

By L.E. Mintz

I started to pray to find my connection, change direction,
be the next selection for a place in heaven
before the man with a business plan
bought up that property high in the sky for a very low rate
then hung a neon sign on the pearly gate saying better not trespass
or we’ll burn your skinny white ass
Interpreted in tongues by a fat cat who sat in the back
of a black Cadillac with a trunk full of puns
if you think that’s outta’ whack Jack listen to this
Leonardo Da Vinci an artist of might who painted by num-
bers but never at night
spoke of infinity with such serenity
while he carved a statue of the mother Mary
in the perfect image of a naked canary
Chewing on half eaten bread
He spit out songs by the Grateful Dead
Then he recited Dante’s Inferno word for word with a bit of
humility
But it seemed like vanity to those in the know
Now Leonardo Di Caprio was another story
Had its own sense of personal glory.
He sank on the Titanic, but his box office was gigantic.
Female groupies roamed from town to town to tell of his
tales
while the critics hammered him home with rusty nails
They gathered around him like Jesus Christ
turned his blood to wine then to ice
Meantime Salvatore Dali painted a mirage in Death Valley
as Albert Einstein made love to Long Tall Sally
in a poorly lit bowing alley then they met up at union rally
Al took a political stance Sal took off his pants
Together they danced outside a hall near the great Chinese
wall
where the ladies in pink played with a single blind eyeball.
Without warning Einstein clutched his mc squared climbed
atop a parking meter
screamed “I want to be Rita the parking maid feeder”
Since he couldn’t be her or even see her
he rode toward the sun with his atomic onion
sounding like a character ripped from a story by Damon
Runyon



Nobel Prize winner and Germany’s most famous
writer, Günter Grass, has been in the middle of a fire
storm of criticism and praise for the past month for writ-
ing the following poem. *What Must Be Said* has become
one of the most controversial poems since Allen Gins-
berg’s *Howl* and Amiri Baraka’s *Who Blew Up America*.
Yet, for all the media coverage of the controversy, the
poem itself has not been presented to the American pub-
lic. To the best of our knowledge, the Beachhead is the
first newspaper to print it in its entirety, as follows:

What must be said

By Günter Grass

Why have I been silent, silent for so long?
Our generals have gamed it out,
Confident the west will survive.
We people have not even been considered.
What is this right to “preventive war”?
A war that could erase the Iranian people.
Dominated by its neighbor, pulsing with righteousness
Smug in the fact that it is they, not Iran,
Who have the Bomb.

Why have I so far avoided to identify Israel by its name?
Israel and its ever increasing nuclear arsenal,
Beyond reproach, Uncontrolled, uninspected.

We all know these things
Yet we all remain silent, fearful of being labeled:
anti-Semitic
hateful
worse

Considering Germany’s past these labels stick
So we call it “business,” “reparation” take your pick,
As we deliver yet another submarine.
As we provide to Israel the means to deliver annihilation.
I say what must be said.

Why did I stay silent until now?
Because I’m German, of course.
I’m tainted by a stain I cannot wash out
I’m silent because I want so badly to make it right
To put my sins in the past and leave them silently there.

Why did I wait to say it until now?
And write these words with the last of my ink?
Declaring that Israel threatens world peace?
Because it is true and it must be said,
Tomorrow will be too late.

We Germans now carry a new burden of sin on our shoulders
Through the weapons we have sold
We are helping to carry out this foreseeable tragedy
No excuse will remove our stain of complicity.

It must be said. I won’t be silent
I’ve had enough of the hypocrisy;
Please shed the silence with me,
The consequences are all too predictable.
It’s time to demand free and permanent control
of BOTH Israel’s nuclear arsenal
AND Iran’s nuclear facilities
enforced with international supervision.

It’s the only way, in a land convulsed with insanity,
Israelis, Palestinians, everybody, will survive.
And we too, will survive.

What We All Must Say

By Jim Smith

Why have we all kept silent
while the sun was setting
and the darkness rising?

Why have we kept silent
while the homeless are abandoned
outside the mansions of the rich?

Why have we kept silent
while the American bully bombs,
dictates and subverts little nations?

Why have we kept silent
while our criminal justice system
becomes the criminal?

Why have we kept silent
while Native Americans
suffer in their own land?

Why have we kept silent
while the Palestinians
became the new Native Americans?

Why have we kept silent
while our country commits
war crimes in Afghanistan

And plots with Israel
to make a sneak attack
on Iran

Why haven’t we risen up
in the millions
against the blight of Wall Street?

Why do we not fight
the corporate pillage
of our Earth?

Do we secretly long
for species death,
for a suicidal/genocidal peace?

And why did it take the poem
of an 84-year-old named Günter Grass
to at long last loosen our pens and tongues?

But Don’t See Me

By Ronald K. Mc Kinley

You look
But don’t see me
My pain is animate
The potency increased
With age and unused love
You question my rights
But don’t see me
My hunger all too real
The food will be thrown away
With restrictions and malice
You call me names
But don’t see me
My body changed and morphed
The skill of your hate
With heavy handed scorn
You wall off the earth
But don’t see me
My cells the same as yours
The light gone from your being
With guns and laws to keep me low
You will look to me one day
But will not be seen
My vision will be redirected
The fragrance of goodness held
With transcendence the reward

Our Lady

Our lady of the deep blue sea
Don’t forsake us, don’t forget us
Us midnight travelers of your depths
New day, new depths
new ocean:
Huge waves crest the top of the breakwater
you can walk right next to it
taking a chance -
A huge wave hurls over the rocks
and onto you -
you’re drenched, but happy
you feel more alive than you ever felt before.
transcendental beauty of the world
beauty of the world
what does that mean?
The way nature looks when you stay out of its
way
the best thing you can do for nature is
leave it alone
That’s what conservationists say:
leave it alone
and it will repair
it will send out new sprouts of life
life is always repairing the warp
that humans have destroyed
the warp and weave of life
the threads in a straight line
or else you can’t weave
all the threads have to be going in one direction
if all the threads were messed up you couldn’t
weave
So -
if we are all pulled in all directions
what can we possibly achieve?
we have to get all our threads going to the same
place
LOVE
which is hard to do
when confronted by gestapo tactics.
LOVE always trumps HATE.

- Mary Getlein

Under the Sole

The 99% have captured
the world’s imagination

yet it is the 1% who are deprived
their hearts cut off from human warmth
and affection

their obsessive grasping of evermore wealth
a vain attempt
to fill an abyss of a chasm of lonely emptiness

contrast that with the unalloyed joy of sharing
chest to chest and mouth to mouth
in a flow of reciprocal lovingkindness

pity the self-crowned island kings
and industrialist Capitans
engraved on hollow Rushmores of terminal greed

ever hypervigilant, lest a slim sliver of gold
or a slight platinum disc
slip from their tight, tenuous grips

oh, great glorious 99, I admire your expanse
of wondrous terra-turf, under the sole
of the playful soul’s playground

how couldst one envy the gilded 1 percenters
their chest cavities filled with the black-red dust
of shriveled, ancient, desiccated gladness?

‘twould be madness.
–Hal Bogotch

Oil Strike in Venice Peninsula

By Delores Hanney

They were gathered together, a whole crackpot grove of grubby towers, uglifying the once lovely shoreline, fouling sand and surf and the toes that might touch them with despicable tar-y blobs. The wells sprung up, too, in private yards in Venice, like bad-smelling lawn statuary, appallingly bereft of beauty but providing of welcome income, thereby engorging 95% of the residents with an eager-beaver impatience to despoil their own nests.

Maybe the response would have been more measured had the discovery of Venice oil -- on December 18, 1929 -- not followed so closely upon the catastrophic crash of the Wall Street Stock Market less than two months before, sending the formerly-successful swan diving out of the windows of tall buildings, irretrievably ushering in the Great Depression.

The motivation was set in motion, one might say, in 1897 when then-17-year old Earle C. Anthony built the first automobile in Los Angeles that sent him scooting around town at up to six miles per hour. From this vehicular genesis the car population grew exponentially. By 1909, the city of L.A. nailed down the bragging rights to the greatest number of automobiles per capita of any city in the world.

The gasoline to power all those autos was mostly sold in 5-gallon cans out of drug and grocery stores. In 1912, Anthony had another brilliant brain fugue and like some avidly rearticulated Johnny Appleseed began ambitiously spreading canopy-covered fueling stations along the California roadways. SoCal's unquenchable thirst for oil was well underway -- as was the drilling to slake its thirst inaugurated by Edward L. Doheny, using picks and shovels and a sharpened eucalyptus tree trunk, near the current site of Dodger Stadium.

The Ohio Oil Company was the oil-finding functionary of Standard Oil. Weirdly enough, its maiden discovery attempt in Venice was focused on land abutting the chi-chi residential neighborhood east of the Grand Canal at Avenue 35. As if it had just been waiting for a petroleum seeker to come along and hit it with a refreshing Heimlich maneuver, the earth promptly coughed up black treasure -- and just as swiftly Venetians went wonky with oil fever.

Verily, as oil fields go, it proved to be a rather puny puddle and between its feeble volume and its rampant over-drilling the boom played out with a relative quickness.

That first ambiance altering well produced 3000 barrels of oil per day -- initially -- others up to 5000 barrels daily. Nine months after the original strike, there were fifty wells pumping for the Standard Oil brand -- as well as that of other major oil companies -- creating weekly Depression-era paydays for hundreds, boosting the rank of the Del Rey field to the sixth largest oil field in the state. But the beach was corrupted; an elementary school was closed, its students dispersed for their safety. An explosion obliterated one of the rigs and the swoony, upscale neighborhood was a mess.

At the end of 1930 there were 148 wells giving up almost 47,000 barrels of oil each day; by the next year, 450 wells were producing. In 1932 there was a great slacking off. Many of the wells were depleted; production of the others was plummeting.

Sadly, "when you're dead, lie down," was not a philosophy that would come into play here. Rather, it would be a decades long process of ever-diminishing returns and revolting drilling waste that continued to pollute the waterways and poison the land. On top of which, Venice was being steadily stifed by the City of Los Angeles for obligatory royalties due it -- according to the Coastal Tidelands Trust -- to offset the damages which rained down on the exploited area like some monstrous torrential typhoon.

Equally alarming for L.A.'s redheaded stepchild, in the 1960s the City kept trying to promote new drilling for oil in Venice, finally prevailing with a slant-drilled, offshore well. To soothe the outraged, its grimy derrick was tricked out as a lighthouse then garnished with attractive landscaping. The whole time Venice's supposedly guaranteed share of the proceeds was brazenly redirected to fund a fishing pier in San Pedro.

Another clear case of oil well abuse. ☹

Postcard courtesy of Delores Hanney



EXTRA: Silicon Discovered in Venice

—continued from page 1

Since money does not partner where it does not anticipate a genuine benefit, I would say, there is a sincere belief in the high level and quantity of creative talent in this community. I believe there is a need within Silicon Beach for that creativity.

After being told how fabulous we are, we learned how important bike paths are to tech folks. Apparently, we will get bike paths as a result of Rosendahl learning how many Google employees ride bicycles to work. Sure! The cycling lifestyle is great!

Our Moderator/Politician continued posturing, bringing up the Venice Post Office. Extremely important to the community, I understand the significance of the Biberman work. May I quickly point out; however, that a mural to your life is not your life. Be careful...

As the internal panel discussion continued, two key divides surfaced: The value of the Entertainment Industry and an understanding of the Free Venice Culture.

Your three young startups (Solomon, Citron and Aguhob) seemed hungry for Hollywood to merge with tech. Existing film and TV crews could shift their expertise into the development of premium internet content. Venice Beach (with its hip and eclectic backgrounds, top level talent and the latest technology) would be an ideal center for that production.

Thomas Williamson (a generation older), maintained that, so much highly viewed internet content was generated by average users, he didn't feel the need to marry entertainment and tech per se.

As for the panel's understanding of the community's existing culture, you will be happy to know, Free Venice, our young startups welcome your "being weird" and have no problem with the strange guy walking down the street in the "big pink hat."

Initially, the characterization of Free Venice was oversimplified and condescending to say the least. Witnessing the look of bliss in Citron's eyes, as he shared, "when you see a three or four year old kid pick up an iPhone for the first time," God bless him...

Within this aspect of the younger generation, there is a disconnect from the idea of doing what you wanted with your body, because it was not only a cosmic principal, it is a right guaranteed by the Constitution of the United States of America! It is about freedom of expression, not about "being weird."

Williamson, from Google, redirected the issue more respectfully, "They [tech industry] didn't move to San Francisco necessarily because they wanted to appreciate San Francisco for what it was. I'm not saying that's what's happening here now. But, they moved to change it into something they liked or something they wanted. So, I think we have to be careful about the things that make Venice special here and that the people we hire respect those things and want them to preserve."

Despite good intentions, what happens when wealth sweeps into a community; thereby, the poor and struggling middle-class (and diversity) are property taxed and rent increased out of apartments?

James Solomon pointed out that startup guys were not rich. He didn't want to see rents go up either. But, he

is not an elderly person on a fixed income, or collecting recycling to survive. An increase in rents would not push him out of the neighborhood, as it would more marginal folks.

Reassuring the crowd, there was an appeal to our legendary Venetian Acceptance: The influx of tech represents one more face of Venice in an eclectic sea of faces, asserted the all male, mostly white, panel.

Q&A:

Culture of Individualism vs. Community

Throwing us into the Q&A, Moderator Rosendahl skipped the portion of the town hall where our organized community leaders addressed the organized tech panel with our focused and well articulated community concerns. In his defense, the VNC didn't schedule that portion into the agenda.

Opening the microphone to the general, Rosendahl requested to please ask questions and not give speeches. Unfortunately, a pervasive, narrow-minded individualism, within the random sampling of our citizens, provided a way for our un-objective moderator to skirt un-easy topics.

Without getting into embarrassing specifics, let's just say the Q&A emphasized the need for community leadership, within such areas as: 1) Outreach to our economically challenged: How can they compete for entry level tech jobs? What support industries do we anticipate cropping up around Silicon Beach? How do we mentor potential local entrepreneurs within our struggling communities? 2) Organization of the Creative Community: How do we marry the local talent to all this new production? Should we think about an infrastructure or database designed to interface local artistic talent with outside companies staffing projects? How do we manage our own quality control? How will tech truly expand our reach? 3) Homelessness: What are viable, enduring solutions to the homeless dilemma? Who will make long terms commitments to those solutions?

The Homeless:

A Community Must Decide

Even with a fair amount of time devoted to the homeless issue, the panelists rightly concluded that, though they can be a part of the solution, they are not the solution. Homelessness is a complicated social challenge anywhere, but particularly within the Culture of Venice Beach.

To many Venetians, sweeping the homeless out of our community is karmic blood we do not want on our hands. The tech industry claims they are here because there is no where else in the world like Venice. As a community, we must decide if the homeless are as much a part of the Venice Brand as graffiti, music, love, skateboarding, freedom, pot and breath... as anyone of us in all our variegated diversity.

Regardless, they are human beings who give us the opportunity everyday to choose soul. ☹

More from the author at jamievsblog.wordpress.com



ADVENTURES WITH THE LANDLORD

By CJ Gronner

Everyone knows I love Venice, and always will. I’ve just become a little dismayed at the direction things seem to be heading these days, and feel like it should be discussed, pondered and helped.

I recently had to move out of the rent-controlled apartment I’d lived in since the late 90’s. I had a nightmare of a situation for years with an overly entitled landlord who liked to let himself into my place whenever he liked and do whatever he felt like, which I don’t even like to think about. I had witnesses/neighbors tell me about seeing him go in and stay for an hour or so. I’d have friends stay over with just the guest key that works in the doorknob come back and be locked out because both locks were locked - meaning he’d been in there again. I make my bed each day like a military person, and I’d come home to see a sitting mark he hadn’t even bothered to smooth out, right next to my pile of laundry.

My brother once awoke from a nap to find him coming out of my bedroom, and when startled upon seeing my brother, made up some thing about checking smoke detectors. The last time I know of it happening for sure, I was at home at my desk writing and heard keys in the doorknob, but I’d dead-bolted it so he couldn’t get in. Scary! I confronted him and he made up something about needing to look at the plumbing. Yeah. Right. We all know this is illegal. I stayed because it was old school cheap rent. Rents for tiny little bachelors were now more than I paid for a two bedroom, and when I confronted him about it, he lowered my rent even further. Uh, guilty.

It’s a long, ugly story that finally wound up in civil court for our rent dispute (He should be in criminal court, of course, but we never got that video proof the police, the Housing Board, tenant lawyers, et al wanted. My word against his. His spendy lawyer versus me representing myself, plus I’m so over it and never want to

deal with the guy again in my lifetime ...). It’s really a blessing in a great disguise. I put up with that deviant situation for WAAAAAY too long, all because Venice has gotten so expensive over the years, and writing is a very financially up and down life choice, so I played it “safe”. Which turned out to be very unsafe, by the very person I was paying for years to live in a safe place. Yep.

So I got out. I’m extra blessed to have some fantastic Venice friends who invited me to stay at their place while they were away, while I looked for a new place. NOT easy, considering how much Venice has changed since I last house-hunted, and truthfully, how greedy people have become. Total shit holes are going for \$3,000 a month! Good luck with that. Anyway, Moving Day came and I had to put over a decade’s worth of stuff into storage (after I’d already put most of the stuff out on the curb and watched it disappear immediately. This was fun. I’d do little themes - a straw hat, a hula-hoop and a ukulele. Art supplies and paper. A cowboy hat and boots. On and on and all gone in 60 seconds. Signs of the times, I suppose. I only saw one of the people who actually took the stuff, but he seemed jazzed.).

I’d heard all about the raids/sweeps on the homeless living on that stretch of 3rd and Rose that has become a bit of a West Side Skid Row, where the police come through and throw all of peoples’ worldly possessions in the trash if they’re not watching them themselves. It was a cold and rainy day and I had a whole bunch of freshly laundered blankets, towels, old jackets and stuff that could go to Goodwill, or straight to the people that really need them. So, upon leaving the storage building at 4th and Rose with my two dear friends who were helping me move, I got out on 3rd and went up to the nearest guy sitting on the sidewalk, explained I knew about the raids, and asked if he wanted to take whatever he wanted and share the rest with people on the block. He was stoked, I felt better, everybody wins.

Until driving away about a block later, we see police lights flash behind us to pull over. Great. As if I hadn’t already been having the longest day possible, and was nowhere near done. My friends are Aussies and were driving a borrowed pickup, so the “license and registration” request was already out of the norm. I was in the backseat of the cab, and we were all asked for our licenses. One cop was on the driver’s side, the other on the passenger. The passenger side one was a little dickhead who I’ll forever regret not noting his name, but I was upset and forgot to. Here’s why.

“The reason I pulled you over was you were just seen leaving a high narcotic trafficking zone. What business did you have there?”

“Oh, we’re helping my mate move.”

“Uh huh. Have you met her before today? What’s her name?”

“Uh, CJ”

I mean the guy was implying I was a crack whore right to my face!! I know I was in sweats and no makeup with pigtails, but I don’t think I fit the casting, even so. I was getting SEETHING mad, and then -

“We have undercover agents working in the area, who saw you in an exchange with a man on the street.”

“Yes, I’ve heard about the sweeps on the homeless here, and I’m moving, so I gave them a bunch of blankets and stuff. It’s cold and raining.”

“What did you get in exchange?”

Uh, a warm heart. Is this guy kidding me?! Then his smarmy little mouth I wanted to slap comes up with this outrageous deal -

“Ma’am, are you out on parole? On probation?”

“No, Sir.” (That took everything I had to not just unleash the fury I had building, but I didn’t need it to get worse, as I still had a whole household to move and very limited time)

“Have you been taking narcotics today? Been drinking? The reason I’m asking is why are your eyes so dilated?”

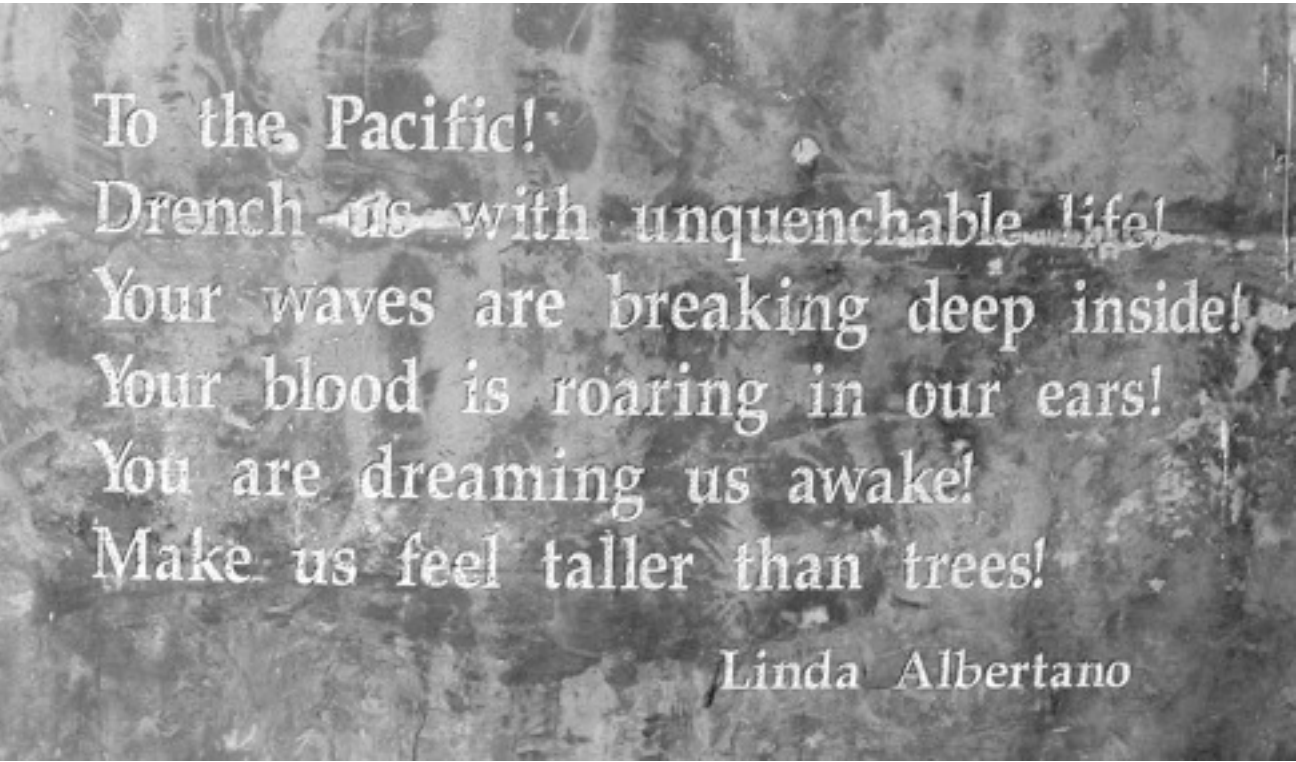
Hmmm ... I don’t know, maybe because I’m exhausted, have been crying, have had no sleep, am having one of the most stressful times of my life. Oh, and shooting heroin real quick while I’m moving heavy items. WHAT?!?! I was PISSED. So he took our licenses back to the cop car and did whatever they do, while my friends urged me to remain calm. After a bunch of minutes, they came back and returned our licenses, asked some more b.s. questions about where did I live, where was I moving to, and suggested we avoid the area in the future. I couldn’t even look at the guy. If I ever see him off-duty, it’s on. Getting accused of being a crack whore for giving away clean blankets to the homeless?! I’ve really heard it all now.

This is what concerns me ... If people are going to get in trouble for trying to help the homeless, then they won’t. They’ll stop trying. And then what becomes of us as a society? It’s already happening, obviously, but it doesn’t have to be this way. Venice began as a bohemian place for artists and writers and musicians and creative people that moved here because the rents were cheap and there was a true spirit of fun, camaraderie, and the art of living that set it apart from anywhere else. We cannot let that die. I’m pretty sure no one WANTS to be homeless. It always helps to try on someone else’s shoes before you judge - or bust - them. Landlords don’t HAVE to jack up rents just because they can. That disgusting “Silicon Beach” nickname being tossed around/Google moving in doesn’t have to squelch out the whimsical flame that has always burned here. Every store and restaurant doesn’t have to be fancy and insanely overpriced - those are choices. Choices based on greed.

There is a reason the Occupy Movement began across the country and the entire world, and all of the above illustrates why perfectly. The greed of some cannot be sustained. There will be an implosion. The ones who have always had each other’s backs will be the ones who continue to, and the ones who turned their backs will regret it in the end. That’s why I wasn’t too bothered ultimately about my creepy landlord deal, because after all is said and done, I still get to be me, and he has to fester in his dirty skin and mind. People who help others get to feel good, and the ones who don’t, well ... I don’t really know, ‘cause that’s never been me, but I can’t imagine it’s at all rewarding at the end of it all to have a fat bank account with an empty heart.

I always go back to my favorite Einstein quote, as it’s really all that matters ... “Remember your humanity, and forget the rest.” Amen. Let us hope that Venice can remember not only its humanity, but its origins, and remain true to who we should and can be.

Love, Your Venice Crack Whore - with a heart of gold. ☺



Fundraiser to Repair the Poetry Walls featuring music and poetry from Exene Cervenka, Michelle Shocked, Peter Case, Linda Albertano, Wanda Coleman, Ellyn Maybe Band, Frank Rios, Philomene Long’s poetry read by Pegarty Long, Francisco Letelier, Mike Bonin, Richard Modiano, Rick Noguchi and Sherry Rose. 7pm May 31 at 585 BoardRiders (formerly Samy’s Camera), 585 Venice Blvd. \$20. A “meet and greet” the artists will be held at 6pm for \$100.



Line at the bottom, left, reads: The poetry fragments around this park were written by Venice poets. Beyond Baroque Literary/Arts Center, Venice California, 2000.

Venice Skills Center Still Fighting for Survival

By Charles Thomas

Things are heating up again for the Venice Skills Center during the coming month. The LAUSD school board is expected to address the crucial budget issue on or about May 15. As you may be aware, the school board (in its March meeting) voted to slash all funding for adult education. If this budget decision stands, then this would mean closure of our Skills Center. However,

there is optimistic talk between the board and school superintendent and on closer scrutiny of the budget, something may be worked out. Depending on negotiations with labor unions and the almost \$200 million of recently discovered funds that the superintendent seems to think could keep adult ed afloat, we may have a better prognosis for the Skills Center’s survival.

In the meantime, an exciting development has occurred, namely that the school district has launched an incentive program to share our ideas on where the district can save money. The program is called the 2012 My Bright Idea Challenge.

All those affiliated with LAUSD (as students, employees and parents) can write a proposal to change what they see as wasteful spending. Ideas and proposals are submitted electronically via the program’s website at <http://mybrightidea.lausd.net>.

Prizes will be awarded to the winning ideas. Three different winners will be chosen in each category of student, employee or parent. Trophies will be awarded to the winners and \$3,000 will go to the winner’s school of choice. A private funder is sponsoring the cash awards.

In addition to the Skills Center, a number of other schools within the LAUSD school system located in Venice (Venice High, Westminster Elementary, Broadway Elementary, Animo Venice Charter High School, Coeur D’Alene Elementary, Westminster Early Education Center, Animo Westside Charter Middle School, Westminster Computer Science/Math Magnet) would qualify for prize money.

A special panel will evaluate the ideas and proposals submitted. You must submit your idea by May 11, so this is a “time sensitive” chance to let our voices be heard in a meaningful way. Please put on your thinking cap and visit the “My Bright Idea” web page. Please get crackin’.

Before the next onslaught of rallies (as we approach the mid-May school board decisions) this is also a time to take a moment and appreciate the Skills Center for its positive contribution (if you weren’t already aware). You can find out more about what really goes on at the Skills Center and adult education sites in general by visiting www.lausd.net/Venice_Skills_Center/testimonials.html.

This inspirational page is a personal glimpse of selected students and their testimonials as to how adult ed changed their lives. Some of the faces I recognize as continuing students. Others attesting therein have gone on to impressive re-entry in the career world gathering skills in computers, graphic design and electrical power line mechanics.

Rich Mann is a fine art photographer who earned his GED through adult ed which allowed him to go on to degree programs with acclaimed art schools. Jean De Latallide began a successful web design business from his home thanks to the knowledge he picked up at the Venice Skills Center.

Ryan Murphy of the Emerson Adult Learning Center attended the pharmacy tech program and now is a licensed technician. Please see the other personal glimpses for a fuller understanding of the importance of adult ed, and why it is important that we do rally and make our concerns heard.


Speaking of rallies, a rally and protest is tentatively planned for the Venice area on or about May 5. Details have not been finalized, but should be available soon on either one of two websites to keep you in the loop on adult ed. Those sites are <http://lastudents.org> and <http://saveadulted.org>. Please turn out on Cinco de Mayo so we can all raise our voices together. I hope to see you. ☺

SAVE ADULT EDUCATION

Westside Rally

SAVE the DATE

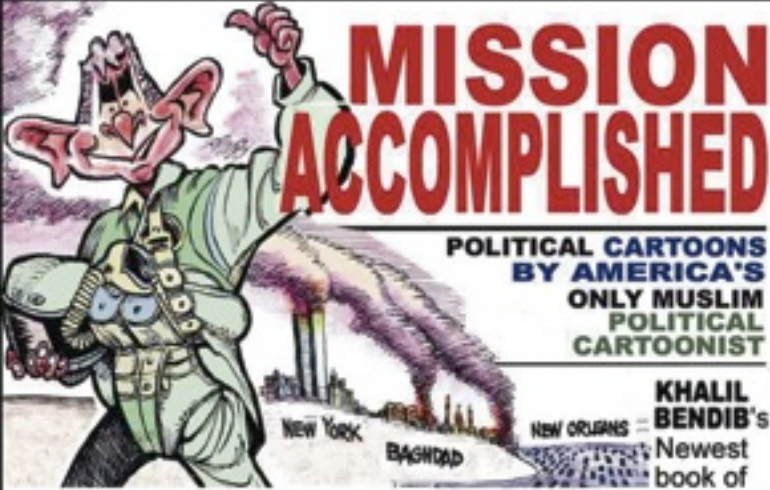
Saturday, May 5, 2012



Time: 11:00 am-1:00 pm
Location: Venice High School
(Sidewalks in front of school and Board Member Zimmer's office on Venice Blvd.)

The West won't Rest until Adult Education Programs are Fully Funded!

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Community Events – day by day

Tuesday, May 1

- 10am - **May Day General Strike: International Labor Day.** Gathering at Ocean Ave and Wilshire to March at 10:30am to Downtown LA.
- 6pm-12am - **May Day General Strike Celebration on International Labor Day.** All-ages social event for occupiers & others interested in joining them. UnUrban Coffee House, 3301 Pico Blvd. Free.
- 6:30-9pm - **Venice Neighborhood Council: Discussion Forum Committee Meeting.** Canal Club 2025 Pacific. Free.
- 9pm-12am - **Live Jazz** on Tuesdays. Del Monte Speak-easy (Townhouse, downstairs). 52 Windward. Free.

Wednesday, May 2

- 7:30-10:30pm – Miss Jessica and the Sugar Shack. Danny’s Deli. Free.

Thursday, May 3

- 7-8pm - **Occupy Venice General Assembly** every Monday and Thursday. Bring firewood for the fire pit. Ananda’s Backyard, 1354 AK Blvd. Free.
- 7pm – **7 Dudley Cinema** Series: Bill Brand Films: industrial production, medicine, travel, family history. Beyond Baroque. Free.

Friday, May 4

- 7-11pm - **First Friday on Abbot Kinney Blvd.** Lots of people and open shops. Free.
- 7:30pm - **Dick Halligan** (Blood, Sweat & Tears) one man show: **American Musical Life.** Beyond Baroque. Free.
- 9pm - **Soul singers** Kara Grainger, Jeff Young, TJ Gibson, Aquile. WitZend. 1717 Lincoln Blvd. \$10.

Saturday, May 5

- **Cinco de Mayo - Celebration of Mexican Victory** over the French at the battle of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1862.
- **10am-5pm - Venice Garden and Home Tour** fund-raising event for Las Doradas Children’s Center (obtain tickets at Center, 840 Broadway). \$60 in advance, \$70 at door, children under 12 free. 310-821-1857.
- 11am-1pm - **Save Adult Education Westside Rally.** Venice High School.
- 1pm - **Cinco de Mayo Daytime Music Show.** Trip. 2101 Lincoln Blvd. Free.
- 2pm - **Punk Rock Afternoon and Book Launch** for Mike Watt, live bands and special guests. Beyond Baroque. \$10.
- 5pm (reception); 6:30pm (performance) - **The Jeff and Gordon Show.** Performance-based conversation about William Blake’s poem “Silent, Silent Spring.” Beyond Baroque. Free.
- 8pm - **Book Launch reading of Mariana Dietl,** Argentine-American writer/journalist with readings by **Spanish poet Mariano Zaro and mc Pegarty Long, photographer and film-maker.** Beyond Baroque. Free.

Sunday, May 6

- 2pm - **Klezmer Band Jam.** Talking Stick. Free.
- 3pm – “**Art for Music’s Sake**” **Art auction** with donated works, including **Viggo Mortensen** and **Ed Ruscha.** Music performed by saxophonist Ulrich Krieger. Refreshments. Beyond Baroque. Free.
- 6pm (sign-up 4:45pm) - **First Sunday Open Reading** (5 minute limit) and Artist Reception for Billy Burgos. Beyond Baroque. Free.

Monday, May 7

- 7:30pm - **Max 10 Performance Laboratory.** 10 performers, 10 minutes. Electric Lodge. \$10.

Tuesday, May 8

- 1pm – **Gail Weissman: New Visionary Artist.** Very Venice Art & Design Gallery. 1629 AKB. Free.

Wednesday, May 9

- 7-10pm - **Suzy Williams sings at Danny’s Deli.** Truly amazing jazz/blues on second Wednesdays. Free.
- 9pm - **Venice Underground Comedy:** Local talent & national headliners every Wednesday. Del Monte Speak-easy (Townhouse, downstairs). 52 Windward. No Cover.
- 7pm - 2012 **Young Environmentalist’s Symposium** featuring speakers on threatened mountain lions, Amazon Rainforest and more. G2 Gallery. Free.

Friday, May 11

- 8pm - **Lauri Reimer and Band.** The Industry Café & Jazz. 6039 Washington Blvd. \$5 suggested donation.
- 9pm - **Comedy Show** with five people “coming together and collectively failing at being intelligent.” Electric Lodge. \$10.

Saturday, May 12

- 10-12pm - **Venice Be Prepared Expo** (for earthquakes and tsunamis).AK Public Library. Free.
- 11am-7:30pm - **Second Annual “Venice Spring Fling”.** Full day of live music, art displays, and dance. Windward Plaza Park at 1 Windward Ave. Free.
- 3-5pm - **Venice Historical Society’s “Vintage Tram Ride Around Venice** and guest lecturer. Hal’s Bar and Grill. 1349 AKB Free.
- 3:30-10pm – **Grassroots Acoustica.** Talking Stick. Donation.
- 9pm - **Poetry in Motion- “Hidden Treasures”.** Eve Brandstein hosts poetry readings. Beyond Baroque. Special admission \$10, members Free.

Sunday, May 13

- 7:30pm - **Special Ed: Voices From a Hidden Classroom.** Poems by investigative journalist **Dennis Bernstein on poverty, racism and class warfare.** Beyond Baroque. Admission: \$7; students/seniors \$5; Members Free.

Monday, May 14

- 3-5pm - **Library Homework Center** offers space, supplies and computers to assist students grades 4-12. Mondays and Wednesdays. AK Public Library. Free.

Tuesday, May 15

- 7-9:30pm - **Venice Neighborhood Council Board Meeting.** Always Open to the Public on Third Tuesdays. Westminster School Auditorium. Free.

Wednesday, May 16

- 7-10pm – **Meditation On Media.** Beyond Baroque. Free.

Thursday, May 17

- 6pm - **Venice Art Crawl.** Find the maps online or go to OFW and Windward. Free.
- 7:30pm -**Live storytelling.** Beyond Baroque. Admission: \$7; students/seniors \$5; Members Free.

Friday, May 18

- 8 & 10pm – **Singer/song writer Suzy Williams and pianist/song writer Brad Kay and Friends.** Moose Lodge.1600 Ocean Park Blvd. \$10.

Saturday, May 19

- 12pm - **Venice Speaker: Dr. Marie Branch** helped to establish the **Black Panthers’ People’s Free Medical Clinic** in L.A. during pivotal period history. AK Public Library. Free.

Sunday, May 20

- 12-4pm - **Venice Art Walk and Auction** fundraiser with art and live music. Registration 11am, Westminster School. \$50.
- 2pm (Sign-up1:45pm) - **The Great Beyond Open Reading** welcomes poets and writers of all ages (5 min limit). Beyond Baroque. Free.

Tuesday, May 22

- 7pm - **An Evening of Tea & Meditation.** Creative Chakra Spa. Marina Del Rey. Free.

Friday, May 25

- 7:30-10pm - **Subversive Cinema.** 212 Pier. Free.

Tuesday, May 29

- 7pm - **Bioneers Meeting of biological pioneers** who work with nature to heal nature. G-2 Gallery. Free.

Thursday, May 31

- 7-10pm - **Mikal Sandoval’s “Speakeasy” featuring Dutch Newman and the Musical Melodians.** Talking Stick. \$10.
- 6pm (Reception) 7pm (Event) - Venice Arts Council: **Venice Poetry Walls Fundraiser, Music, Poetry and Art Benefit** and readings. 585 Boardriders, 585 N. Venice Blvd. Proceeds to Monument Restoration Project. Reception \$100 RSVP; Event \$20.



Location Guide

- Abbot Kinney Public Library, 501 S. Venice Blvd, 310-821-1769.
- Beyond Baroque, 681 Venice Blvd. 310-822-3006.
- Burton Chace Park, 13650 Mindanao Way, marinadelrey.lacounty.gov
- Danny’s Deli, 23 Windward Ave.
- Electric Lodge, 1416 Electric Ave, 310-306-1854 - electriclodge.org
- G2 Gallery, 1503 Abbot Kinney Blvd 310-452-2842.
- Hal’s Bar and Grill, 1349 Abbot Kinney Blvd., 310-396-3105 - halsbarandgrill.com
- Oakwood Recreation Center, 757 California Ave.
- Pacific Resident Theatre, 703½ Venice Blvd. 822-8392 pacificresidenttheatre.com
- SPARC - Social and Public Art Resource Center, 685 Venice Blvd. 822-9560 x15.
- Talking Stick Coffee Lounge, 1411c Lincoln Blvd. 450-6052 - thetalkingstick.net
- Vera Davis Center, 610 California Ave. 310-305-1865.
- Westminster Elementary School, 1010 Abbot Kinney Blvd. (enter auditorium from Westminster Ave.) 310-606-2015.

Ongoing Events

Food

- 12:30pm - 2nd and 4th Thursdays - Vera Davis Center. 12:30pm - 2nd and 4th Thursdays - **Free Food Distribution.**
- Vera Davis Center - **Sign up for Food Stamps (EBT Cards).** Call for date and time. 305-1865.
- **5-7pm Mondays** - 1st Baptist Church - Hot Meals; Pre-packs: 2-3:30pm Saturdays, Westminster & 7th St.
- **8-10am Sundays** - Ocean Front Walk, near Rose Avenue.

Music

- 8pm-12am - **Hal’s Bar and Grill** features Live Jazz, Sunday and Monday nights. Free.
- 8:30pm - **TKO Comedy’s “Open Mic”** for comics, musicians. 212 Pier. Free. Every Thursday.
- 12-2pm - Saturday & Sunday; **Music at Uncle Darrow’s.** 2560 Lincoln Blvd. Free.
- 5-9pm – **Venice Street Legends.** Venice Bistro, OFW & Dudley. Every Wednesday. Free.
- 6-10pm - 2nd Thursday - **Psychedelic Surf Rock.** Mollusk, 1600 Pacific Ave. Free.

Movies

- 5:30pm - **Abbot Kinney Public Library** Thursday Movie Night. Call 310-821-1769 for title.
- 6-10pm - **7 Dudley Cinema** - First Thursdays at Beyond Baroque. Free.

Kids

- 6:30pm -Abbot Kinney Public Library Children’s **Pajama Storytime.** Second, fourth Tuesday evenings. Free.

Miscellaneous

- Daily ongoing Photography Exhibit (ends June 8): **“Uprising: Los Angeles 1992”.** SPARC (Old Venice Police Station). Free.
- 7-10pm - MOM: **Meditations On Media.** 3rd Wednesdays. Beyond Baroque. Free.
- 11:30am-2:30pm – **The Venice Oceanarium** (a museum without walls). Venice Pier. Every Sunday, weather permitting. Free.
- 6-8pm - **McLuhan-Finnegans Wake Reading Club.** Lloyd Taber-Marina Del Rey Library, 4533 Admiralty Way. First Tuesday of the month. Free.
- 6-8:30pm - **Eco-Yoga.** 3rd Sunday of the Month. Church in Ocean Park, Hill & 2nd St. Bring a mat. Donation required.

Computers

- Venice Library offers a variety of **Free Computer Classes.** 310-821-1769.
- Vera Davis Center offers **free computer use:** M-Th 10am-Noon and 1pm-3pm; Friday 1-3pm.

Get Your Local Event Listed

Email your time, date and a brief description to Calendar@freevenice.org by the 20th of the month. Please take out an advertisement if you charge admission.



A Large Vase of Flowers – Daniel Kaufman

Daniel Kaufman – Art at the Speed of Heat –continued from page 9

collectors. He is currently represented by the Robert Berman Gallery at Bergamot Station in Santa Monica, where his 2007 exhibition “Encaustic Perceptions” won citywide acclaim.

Kaufman recently completed two works commissioned by Binney & Smith for Oprah Winfrey based on two colors she liked so much she bought the rights to. One, of course, is purple - special shade dubbed “The Color Purple”, which he used for a piece called “Beauty In Motion” and the other called “Baby Grass Green”, for a piece he calls “Baby Grass Green Fairytale”. The two pieces, each 30” x 40”, complement each other beautifully.

Kaufman has donated one of his captivating pieces to the silent auction at this month’s Venice Family Clinic’s Art Walk. Be sure to make a point of seeing this unique work by one of Venice’s true artistic treasures.

What is Encaustic Painting?

The use of wax to create art, called encaustic painting, is one of the world’s oldest art forms. The earliest encaustic painting was done by the Ancient Greeks, and its name is derived from the Greek word “enkaustikos”, meaning “to burn in”. Greek artists used wax paint to adorn sculptures, murals, boats and architecture.

The Greeks introduced it to the Egyptians, who among other things, created portraits they affixed to the heads of mummies, which can still be seen today in museums. The encaustic portraits retain almost all of their original color and have remarkably little cracking or discoloration despite being over 2,000 years old.

And beautifully preserved encaustic wall murals, which somehow survived the hot volcanic ash and gases, were discovered during the excavation of the cities of Herculaneum and Pompeii, buried by the eruption of Mt. Vesuvius in 79 A.D. ☺



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