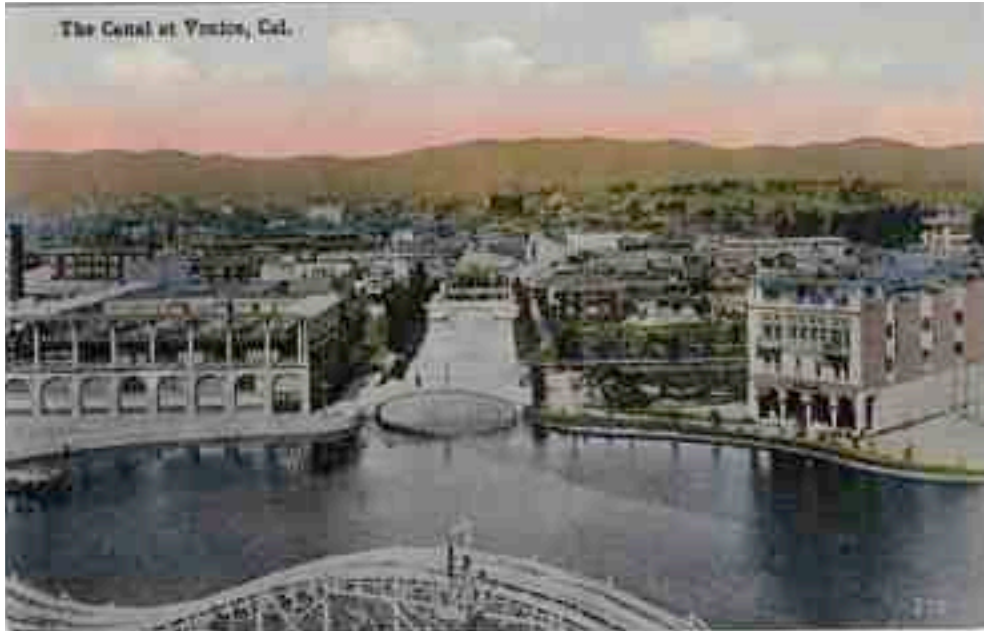


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Happy 109th Birthday, Venice!

Venice, Burning to be Restored

By Jim Smith

July is the month of revolutions. The American colonists did it on July 4. The French did it on Bastille Day, July 14. Many more nations celebrate their revolution, or liberation from an occupying power, in July. They include Algeria, Argentina, Belarus, Belgium, Mozambique, Peru, Venezuela and many more.

And so it is with Venice. We celebrate our founding as taking place on July 4, 1905, when Venice of America had its grand opening. For the next 20 years, inhabitants of Venice – Venetians – basked in independence as a free city of California.

This is not the place for a recounting of the machinations that Los Angeles performed in order to annex Venice (they have been told in other Beachheads and in books). Ever since Venice lost its independence, Venetians have been struggling to regain it.

This spring, while most eyes were focused on the Ukrainian crisis, the city of Venice, Italy, held a referendum for total independence from Italy. It passed with more than 89 percent in favor. The voting was organized by the people of Veneto (the Venice region) giving the powers in Italy an excuse for not recognizing the results. But at the very least, the issue of the rebirth of the Serene Republic of Venice, after more than 200 years, is back on the table.

Should Venice, California do any less to regain its cityhood? Holding a referendum might be the first step to independence. A resounding vote in favor of Venice cityhood would show the legislators in Sacramento – who have the power to ease the process to cityhood – that there is broad-based support for an independent city.

The failed vote in 2002 for San Fernando Valley cityhood is often brought up as somehow justifying a lack of activity in promoting Venice cityhood. Yet, what is not well known is that a majority of voters within what would have been the new city, cast votes in favor. It was only outlying areas of Los Angeles

that voted no after a fear-mongering campaign by L.A.'s 1 percenters.

In order to head off the fear mongering, advocates of Venice cityhood should assure low-income tenants that rent-control will not go away, but will become stronger as absentee landlords lose power. New development schemes will be decided by people in Venice who have to live with them, not by city hall bureaucrats who never set foot in Venice. And unions, should be assured that their representation rights for city workers within Venice will be recognized.

The city of Venice, along with Berkeley, can be the most progressive place to live in California, where people's rights, regardless of their wealth or lack of it, are recognized and celebrated.

Yet, there seems to be a peculiar lassitude among Venetians, even activists, in taking the needed steps to restore cityhood. Perhaps it's the chem trails, or maybe the GMOs that are making people passive. In any case, if civil rights activists had been as passive, there would still be segregation in the South. And if the American colonists, who were among the world's elite in the 1770s had not roused themselves to endure terrible hardship at Valley Forge and elsewhere, this would still be a British colony. And, yes, some of us would still be demanding independence.

For those who are still not convinced that they should put their shoulders to the wheel of Venice history, perhaps the words of Venice's greatest poetess, Philomene Long, will convince:

– Continued on page 12

Above: Photos of Venice from the early 1900s. See pages 8 and 9 for more historic Venice postcards courtesy of Marty Liboff

"Abbot Kinney had way more imagination and creativity than Disney – Look at what he just made up!"

–Marty Liboff

L.A. Living in Vehicle Law Found UnConstitutional

9th Circuit Court of Appeals Overturns

By Peggy Lee Kennedy

To me it's a sweet, but sad victory. This recently overturned unconstitutional Los Angeles City law, LAMC 85.02, has been used over the years to harm many more people than the four plaintiffs in the Desertrain vs. City of Los Angeles appeal.

Harassment, arrests, tickets, vehicle tows, pets taken to the pound, stay-away orders, intimidating city attorney hearings, unnecessary court appointments, warrants for those who could not show up each time, inappropriate hate mongering by the city and homeless hate groups - these are some of the injustices connecting the victims of this unconstitutional law.

The hope is that this win results in more overall justice for all those affected.

Sometimes being a leader means taking the responsibility to make amends and create some form of reconciliation. Not just using our tax dollars to pay for the mistakes of the City. We have a systemically broken system in Los Angeles that criminalizes poverty and our elected leaders need the guts to honestly try to fix it. Our City Attorney took a first step. But people, it is much more than just this one unconstitutional law.

Carol Sobel, the civil rights attorney who won this important case, believes that "Not only is this a victory for unhoused individuals, but it is also a very important step in the judicial recognition of the need to address any legitimate issues the City seeks to remedy by some more humane means than criminalizing poverty." And she is so right. There are plenty more humane means to addressing homelessness than ticketing, arresting, towing, and police harassment.

– Continued on page 15



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

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320 SUNSET UPDATE
- IT'S YOUR VENICE -
HAVE YOUR SAY

By Roxanne Brown - member: Concerned Neighbors of 320 Sunset (CNS)

Rose Avenue continues to produce more and more upscale restaurants with liquor licenses and late-night hours. And now, it looks like Sunset could become the next Rose. Here's a quick update on Rose and Sunset, and how to get your voice heard.

THE ROSE CAFÉ: Gift shop is closing to make room for a late-night wine bar.

FIESTA BRAVA at 5th and Rose: Proposed upscale restaurant serving alcohol with late-night hours

THE MARKET at 5th and Rose: See Fiesta Brava above – it will be part of this new development.

609 ROSE: Another upscale restaurant with alcohol and late hours is in the works here.

320 SUNSET: This is our current big fight. We learned in the April Beachhead that owner Fran Camaj, Gjeline's owner (1427 Abbott Kinney), had proposed development of a bakery with accessory retail at 320 Sunset. And, we learned that he and former Land Use and Planning Committee (LUPC) 320 Sunset case manager, Jim Murez, had failed to mention the proposed off-site beer and wine sales.

Camaj appears to be doing a bait and switch. Now, instead of a bakery, he is proposing a restaurant with 30 employees, serving 20 inside and 65 on an outdoor patio, 12 – 20 feet from residential dwellings. Construction on the "bakery" isn't complete - it hasn't opened and Camaj wants to convert it to a restaurant? Was a bakery ever even on the radar?

LUPC April 16th: Many neighbors spoke out against this. One resident had taken pictures revealing that rather than a bakery; it appeared that a full-blown restaurant had been built.

April 26th: Camaj hosted a tour and outreach meeting, sharing with the 60 neighbors gathered that when he applied for 320 Sunset's conversion to a bakery, it presented less than 10% increase in usage (this falls within the constraints of a maximum 10% increase in intensity per the Venice Specific Plan). Camaj told the community that the prior tenants at 320 Sunset were six architects. A restaurant with 115 people is nearly 20 times that usage – a 2,000% increase in usage.

How can this happen? It seems this kind of "case splitting" is a loophole in the system, which allows developers to apply for one thing and then slip through a very different thing – all allegedly legal – through the city.

Camaj said patrons would be allowed to eat in 320's parking lot, seated on milk crates. 320 Sunset has a parking lot that could maybe hold 15 vehicles. But, if people are eating on crates there, is it still a parking lot? Where is the real parking? Where will deliveries be made?

With proposed opening hours from 6 a.m. to 1 a.m. (19 hours), noise and traffic will likely be 24/7.

Camaj repeatedly insists (LUPC and April 26th) that he has a seven-year track record as a good neighbor at Gjeline's. But, the LA Times, Grub Street, Eater LA, the Beachhead and other media have reported on Gjeline's seating over capacity city code violation and interfering with street parking regulations on Abbott Kinney. Media has also reported on neighbors con-

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tinually complaining about loud music from the patio being heard in their residences, congestion and noise from pedestrians and vehicles, and lack of residential parking.

Camaj has a permit for a bakery at 320 Sunset. He proposes to obtain a variance for the zoning of 320 Sunset from light manufacturing (M1-1) to commercial. The 300 block of Sunset is currently home to a large, quiet artist community, as well as to senior citizens, families and young couples with children.

Traditionally, restaurants have been on commercial streets like Rose, Main, Abbott Kinney, and Lincoln, not in residential areas. If 320 Sunset gets a commercial variance, what's next? Other buildings in M1-1 zoning and residential streets in Venice will become vulnerable to similar zoning variances..

No wonder many Venetians believe our community's unique quality of life is under attack by developers and look-the-other-way political representatives. If there is going to be change, we want what is right for Venice. If you agree, now is the time to be heard.

HAVE YOUR SAY: The easiest way to be heard is to join a community organization. They inform you of what is going on via email or Facebook. You can get information regarding 320 Sunset from: **CONCERNED NEIGHBORHOODS of 320 SUNSET (CNS)** by emailing us at concernedneighborvenice@gmail.com. And/or go to Facebook – SPIRIT VENICE

More community organizations on Facebook: **Venice Community Unity Coalition and Stakeholders of Venice.**

Learn what **The Venice Coalition to Preserve Unique Community Character (VCPUCC)** is doing (see June Beachhead).

Land Use and Planning Committee (LUPC)- Venice Neighborhood Council (VNC): LUPC reviews proposed developments and gets residents input. VNC represents Venice's voice to the city of Los Angeles. The Venicenc.org website posts their agenda. 320 Sunset may be on July's agenda.

Go to that meeting and sign up to speak. LUPC meets at the Oakwood Community Center on the first and third Wednesday evenings every month at 6:45 – corner of 7th and California. VNC meets once a month on a Tuesday at Westminster Elementary School at 6:45 – corner Westminster and Abbott Kinney. Your presence makes a difference-no need to talk. There is power in numbers and unity.

TELL CITY HALL: All of these developments, liquor licenses, improprieties, code violations, zoning variances, change of use – way over 10%, case splitting, late hours, and inadequate parking are happening on City Council Member Bonin's watch. He wants to hear from you. Write him at Council Member Bonin, City Hall Office, 200 N. Spring St. #475, Los Angeles, CA 90012 or email councilmember.bonin@lacity.org Keep a copy – give it to your organization.

Now, you know there is something simple and easy you can do. Join an organization that will represent your views, your voice. You can be heard. Every voice counts.



Above: People waiting in front of Gjeline on Abbot Kinney Blvd.

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California Coastal Commission’s Decision to Demolish 8 Homes Demoralizes Venice

By Krista Schwimmer

The superstitious believe that Friday the 13th is an unlucky day. One reason is because King Philip IV ordered Jacques de Molay and the French Templars to be simultaneously arrested on a Friday the 13th in 1307. Many Templars were then tortured and executed, including their leader, Jacques de Molay. Although the King claimed it was for their idolatry, in reality, the king simply needed to fill his empty coffers with the Templar's vast treasures.

On Friday, June 13th, the California Coastal Commission (CCC) ruled in favor of another form of gold: Venice real estate. With little debate, the Commissioners approved eight new demolitions of residential homes in Venice for so-called cutting edge, oversized architectural projects posing as family homes. They also gave the green light to the restaurant, “House of Pies”, setting a new, unfortunate precedent that significantly lowers required restaurant parking in the Venice coastal zone.

It was only a few years ago, when Venice was fighting OPDs, that the Coastal Commission heartily had her back. In fact, more recently in March, they made the decision to stop diminishing waivers in Venice, causing enough of a halt on development that architects, developers, and even Councilman Mike Bonin came pleading to them to reverse their decision. One such architect, David Hertz, argued that change can be beneficial, and asked the commissioners not to “let people who are afraid of change – which is a vocal minority – use bureaucracy as a process to slow things down.” Easy to say when he himself would not only benefit from the project he represented that day, but the many others he is involved in, including the Abbot Kinney Hotel.

As each of the individual projects were heard, Jack Ainsworth, Senior Deputy Director, Los Angeles County, South Coast District, gave the impression that the Coastal Commission's hands were tied, particularly around the protection of affordable housing in the coastal zone. In 1981, Ainsworth stated, the legislature removed the provisions for preservation of low cost and affordable housing in the coastal zone. As a result, the

CCC had “no regulatory authority over affordable housing” and could only encourage it. He did say that other coastal areas were having a similar problem with the loss of affordable housing because of gentrification.

During his lengthy explanation of how the City's own coastal program works, however, Ainsworth did claim that the CCC could assess “whether or not the project is compatible with the area.” This one comment alone should have been enough to stop the projects being proposed that day. Testimony from real neighbors living near the different projects proved it. One heart wrenching moment

came when Debra and David Blocker, 25 year residents of the Venice Canals, spoke against the three story mansion that was being proposed 30 feet from them. “I don't understand how anyone could say this is the character of the city,” she said. “They are creating white box neighborhoods.” His voice shaking, David added that some neighbors had already moved out because of the mansionization of the canals. Over the last five to ten years, he continued, the canals were losing their ducks, geese, and other bird residents. Wasn't the CCC created in part to protect them?

Project after project, Venetians cried to the commissioners to protect them against the City of Los Angeles. The CCC did nothing, despite the fact that several Venetians showed that the city was breaking building codes, as well as using loopholes to push through big development. During the hearing on the restaurant, “House of Pies,” Mr. Aronson, involved in planning for the last 20 years, spoke strongly against the restaurant. Why?

“What I've seen in the last few years is that the city is chipping away at our local coastal program. They're increasing density and reducing parking at the same time. This is one of several examples. The city changed their policy. The policy conflicts with your policy.” In this instance, Aronson was referring to the fact that any restaurant in Venice should provide MORE parking than elsewhere in the city. When calculating the number based on Service Floor area, the applicant did not include the “path of travel”, something contrary to what the CCC has done themselves in the past. In any other area of LA, this same restaurant would be required to provide 37 parking spaces rather than the proposed 20. In spite of his and other people's pleas, the CCC unanimously approved this restaurant, setting a new precedent in Venice that LOWERS required parking.

Even when presented with a blatant disregard for legal process, the CCC did nothing. Agenda item 10(d), requesting the demolition of a single family home at 2413 Wilson Avenue, had ALREADY been demolished without the proper coastal permit. After Ainsworth publicly admitted that this was a violation,



Above: Deborah Lashever and David Busch, June 13 Coastal Commission meeting
Photo: Krista Schwimmer

the commissioners nevertheless unanimously approved the application.

Towards the end of the day, one lone commissioner, Martha McClure, began to speak up for Venice. She even asked if all of her “yes” votes could be changed to “no”. Even if this had been possible, one vote would not have been enough.

As Lydia Ponce said in her testimony before the Commission: “Ladies and Gentlemen, you're being bamboozled.” The City of Los Angeles needs to “know the law, apply the law,” Ponce continued.

What will happen to Venice now? Like the Knight Templars, some residents such as the 5th generation, young family who testified at the June meeting, have already fled. Unlike the Templars, such families are forced to leave their treasure behind.

Venetians, don't let government bodies erode the character of Venice. Don't let money force change. The “architectural renaissance” promoted by developers here in Venice is an architectural sham. Let's get together and create the next vision of Venice, one that embraces all of its relations – from human to insect. Let's get together and free Venice from the self-made kings and queens who lust after her remaining treasures.

Bonin Walks From Meeting

By Mary Getlein

A community meeting was held on June 18th, at the Boys and Girl's Club in Venice. It was hosted by "Venice Life" to discuss the "livability" of Venice. The spokes-people included Mike Bonin, Peggy Thusing, Steve

Waller, Marc Saltzberg, and Sarah Blanch. The subjects ranged from "A Vision for Venice," Crime, Homelessness, Livability and Substance Abuse and how these things impact Venice.

Mike Bonin started the meeting with a speech about where Venice was at, right now, and where he would like it to go. He said Ocean Front Walk was not "community friendly" and not artistic any more. His goal is to create a "Board of Venice" and address the problems of homelessness. He wants to create a data base of affordable housing. He said he wants to take away controls from the state and have a local "coastal plan" to protect the coast.

His plan for traffic and parking was to limit the amount of space in the road for cars, and increase the size of the sidewalks and bicycle lanes. This idea is not feasible, anyone can go out any day in Venice and be overwhelmed by the amount of traffic. Just ask commuters trying to use Ocean Park Blvd. -- they put in huge bike lanes and now traffic is backed up much worse than it was before. It's good to urge people to walk and use bicycles, but it is not "do-able" for most people.

After announcing that the meeting would be a conversation between all of the spokespeople and the audience, Mike Bonin left. So no one got a chance to ask him any questions. His last words to the audience were: "Define yourself by what you believe in," "people love Venice," and then he left.

The next person to speak was Peggy Thusing, who is a senior cop in LAPD. She has spent 28 years

in LAPD, 20 years in Venice. She said most crime in Venice is property crime, with people breaking into cars and houses. She urged people to lock their windows and homes when they left their homes.

She mentioned the Jones Act which says you can sleep on the sidewalk between 9 pm and 6 am, if no housing is provided. She linked the fact of homelessness and crime together. They have a new technique of arresting people, called predictive policing where they take data which predicts crimes and put extra police in that area. She said that the Pacific Division covered an area of 26 square miles with 8 cars.

The next spokesperson to speak was Steve Waller, pastor of the Venice Foursquare Church. He told touching stories of trying to get people off the streets, but they have to be sober and willing. They focus on young people and elderly people. He asked the audience to have compassion and extend mercy to the homeless. He said they can only manage one case at a time, so it's very slow going.

Marc Saltzberg, the Vice President of the Neighborhood Council, got up next. He had a list of things that make Venice "un-livable". Tourists were high on the list. 16 million tourists go through Venice every year, which impacts traffic, and produces mountains of trash. Alcohol outlets which affect Venice in a negative way, drunk drivers making the streets and people unsafe. Short-term vacation rentals are turned into "party houses", which impact the neighbors with noises and loud partying.

He also mentioned concerns about the amount of development going on in Venice. Developers would get waivers for building their houses, in exchange for including affordable housing in their buildings, which never happened, or were such a small amount that it didn't really help.

The LA city budget has been cut 6 years in a row. When someone from the audience mentioned that we need more bathrooms on the beach, and port-a-potties for the homeless, he just referred to the budget crisis and said until the budget crisis is resolved, there will not be any new bathrooms in Venice. The bathrooms in Venice are rundown and ugly and are hardly ever cleaned. They are really disgusting to use, and for the amount of taxes LA gets from Venice, it seems the least they could do is give us new toilets.

Sarah Blanch, the last speaker, got up to talk about substance abuse in Venice. She said LA county has a high level of alcohol, which leads to traffic deaths, violent crime, and drunk driving. There are 108 liquor licenses in Venice, which is a higher number than other parts of LA. She is in favor of putting limits in place and have liquor store owners "card" the buyers of liquor, many of whom are underage and at risk.

The question and answer portion of the meeting was next. They asked questions about how to get more cops in Venice -- write to the chief of police. Restrooms. They want more lighting on the boardwalk. They wanted to know how to get an ordinance against oversized vehicles.

Marc Saltzberg said people need to advocate and organize. "We need people to participate in local government. The more you need, the more you participate."

It seemed like a whitewash and not real. It ended early -- it wasn't a conversation, it was like a press release. It was supposed to go until 8:30, but they cut off the questions and the so-called conversation at 8:05. There was a big turnout, and the people did not get the information they needed.

A Historytelling: Last Run

By Delores Hanney
Research by Samara Jacobs

It was ghastly! Young race guy around town, Hal Shain, was zooming along with an alarming absence of due diligence, even by daredevil standards. As he drove too close to the top of the cup-shaped track – known as the Dare Devil Race for Life – his 2500-pound Haynes automobile smashed into a post and reared backward. It threw Shain down 20-feet to the cup’s bottom, falling on top of him, leaving him horribly mangled.

But it took two hours for him to die.

Three members of the audience that had been keenly watching the spectacle from a spot on the observation platform at the crown of the track were injured by flying bits of rubble from the shattered post. Like Shain, they were taken to St. Catherine’s Hospital, prizefighter Luther McCarthy gallantly stepping forward to assist with the transpo.

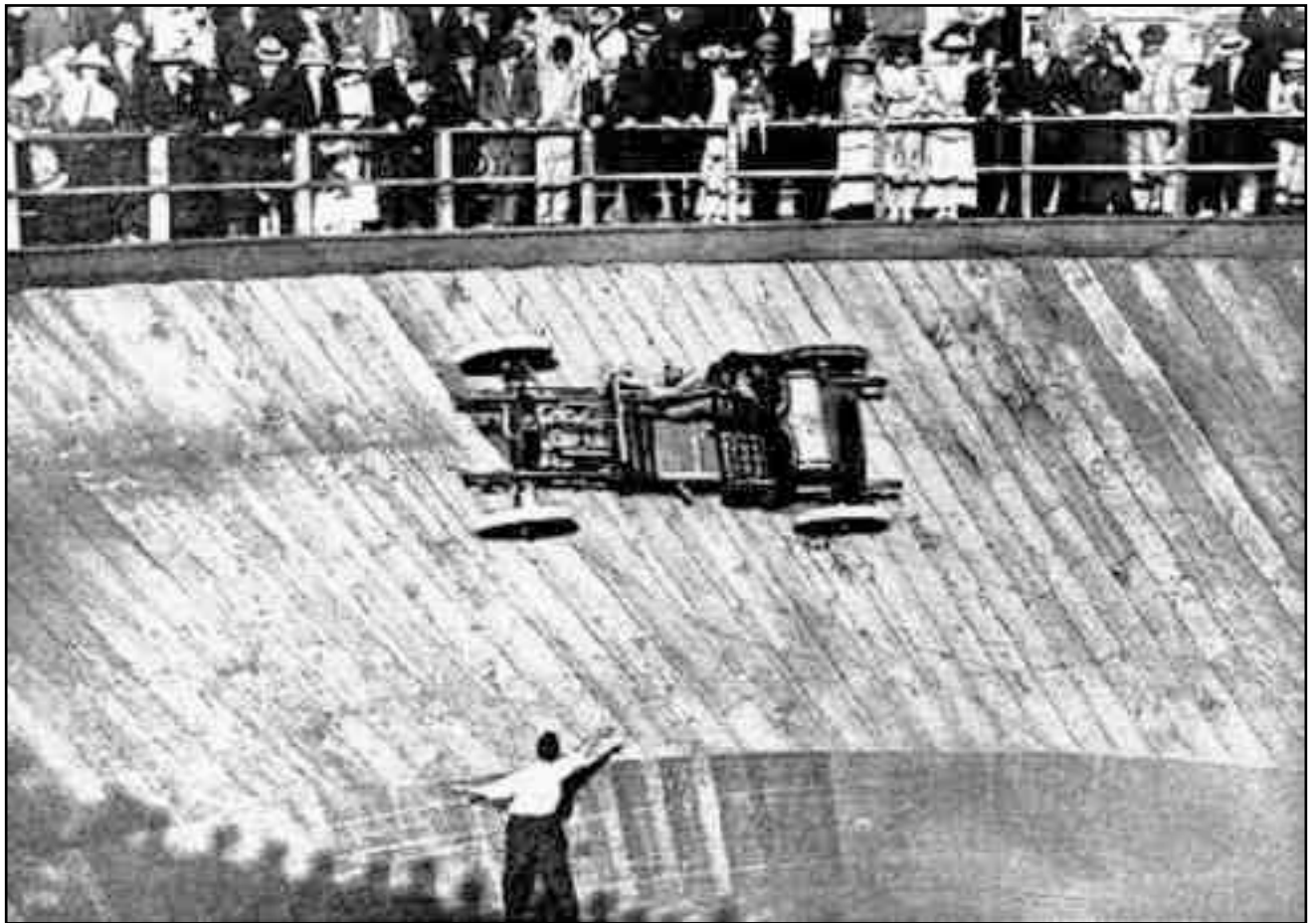
This was back in those times when Venice was virtually amusement zone central on the West Coast, famed far and near for its breath-sucking attractions and other crowd-pleasing enjoyments. Entertainment mogul, Tom Prior, had arrived from Chicago in 1911 – where he was the promotional kahuna for Chi-Town’s two big amusement sectors, White City and Riverview Park. His first project in Venice was the ginormous Race Through the Clouds rollercoaster erected alongside the now long-gone lagoon. Built on Windward Avenue across from the St. Marks Hotel, Dare Devil Race for Life was his second.

A small-scale motordrome, only 80-feet in diameter, the wooden track of it angled upward at a 72-degree angle; a red danger line a foot from the top urgently warned, “go no higher!” The attraction wasn’t exactly a race, per se, but rather an exhibition of very fast driving six times a day. Still, Hal Shain set several speed records that year as he tore around the track he had all to himself. The Race for Life was a big draw with the public but its original driver hadn’t fared so well either. Only two days after taking up the high-velocity employment he was mooshed when the crane lifting his car out of the cup-shaped arena dropped the vehicle on top of him. Though he wasn’t killed, he was badly hurt and never again returned to racing.

Venice was then at the front end of its lust for hosting racing events that would come to include, in just the next few years, the Junior Vanderbilt Cup Races of 1914, a Grand Prix race and the Grand Prize International Motorcycle Race in 1915. The Dare Devil Race for Life might – with a little stretch – be considered the birth of the trend.

In the days prior to Shain’s death, it was noticed he was driving even more wildly than usual, a factoid that apparently aroused no more interest than a sneeze. On the fateful day of his death, he seemed almost suicidally resolved to propel his car to the very upper edge of the track. Alas, for inquiring minds that want to know, there was no psychological autopsy, no tidying up with an explanation for his especially heedless driving that Saturday afternoon and in the days before. Had he just learned he had a terminal disease process cooking away inside his 28-year old self? Did he have gambling debts that a throng of no-nonsense thugs was out to violently collect on or punish? Had his wife run off with an itinerant tinker taking Shain’s seven-year-old son along with them? Or had a foolish sense of invincibility simply disabled the caution button in his brain?

The coroner ascribed Shain’s cause of death to his own utter carelessness: a thrill junkie’s overdose, one might say. *The Daily Outlook* of Santa Monica purveyed a different opinion holding, instead, that a bloodthirsty hunger for daredevil antics was the problem. Right there in its December 30, 1912 issue it unequivocally laid the blame slap dab on the consumers of such life-threatening displays. “The public puts a premium



on dare devil feats by patronizing them and the public really has most of the responsibility,” the newspaper maintained.

Scads of guys were all hot to fill the vacancy left by Shain’s death but management chose his former mechanic, Bert Hall, for the job, giving orders for him to

drive no more than half way up the track. The minor damage visited on the facility by Shain’s rash jockeying of his car was quickly fixed allowing the hyper adrenalin-feed in both driver and spectators to resume just five days after it ceased.



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THE RAFT

By Cal Porter

Poling a raft down a waterway to get to school? Sounds like something right out of Mark Twain. Maybe Huckleberry Finn or Tom Sawyer did it. But in more modern times? Not very likely. But the fact is my friend Bob and I did it; and we did it many times to reach our elementary school in Venice, California in the early 1930's.



Above: A Venice Canal, 1909

When I was a kid growing up in the 1920's Venice was a town based on canals. They ran just inland from the beach to all parts of the city. These many waterways with romantic names like Venus, Coral, Altair and Grand Canal culminated at the large Venice Lagoon in the center of town. This is where thousands of spectators would gather in the grandstands to watch swimming and boating races and to see life-guard Jake Cox perform high diving stunts from a lofty platform in the middle of the lagoon. The lagoon was surrounded by hotels, restaurants, boating concessions, a miniature railway and an amusement park complete with roller coaster. This is where the popular gondola rides set out with a gondolier standing in the stern singing and poling the tourists through the colorful waterways. Excavation had started on the canals in 1904 and they were finished and filled with ocean water by the grand opening of Venice, California on the Fourth of July, 1905. All of this was under the vision and supervision of founder Abbot Kinney who had dreamt of a Venice of America ever since he had seen the other Venice on his travels to Italy. Bungalows, cabanas and homes were built along the canals. Colorful plant life and trees were introduced and flourished. The canals became an attraction where people wanted to live and tourists wanted to vacation. But there was only one little problem with these picturesque canals; they never really worked very well. The flow of fresh ocean water that came in and out with the tides from a distant inlet down the coast a couple of miles never circulated properly. The water level became low and stagnant in some places, there were occasional sewage overflows, mosquitoes thrived.



Above: Filling in the Canals, 1929

Twenty years later as the 1920's started to draw to a close and automobiles had multiplied and crowded the few roads in Venice, the canals had gradually fallen into disrepair and a decision was made to fill in the major ones and pave them over. Dump trucks were soon busily discharging load after load of dirt into the waterways, followed by paving equipment to finish the job. Few of the streets retained the colorful names of the canals beneath them, but Grand Canal became Grand Boulevard. The cir-

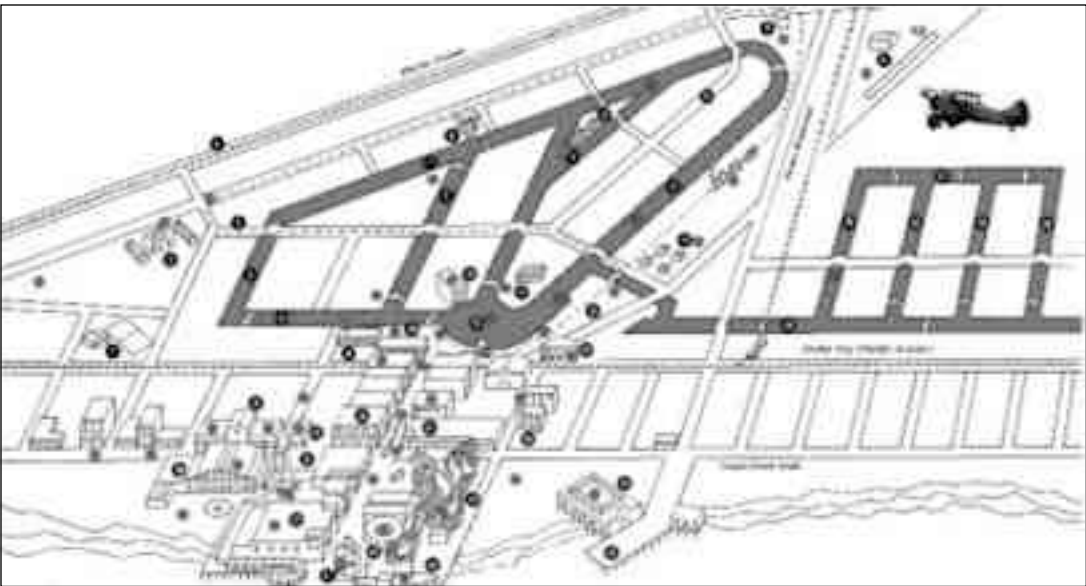
cular Venice Lagoon where so many exciting events took place in earlier years became a traffic circle, with the Venice Main Post Office built on the west side where the roller coaster once stood. The only canals that escaped the fill-in were the minor ones on the south side of town beyond Venice Boulevard. I have only sketchy memories of Venice in those glory days with all the gondolas and gondoliers plying the waters through the heart of Venice since I was a very young kid at the time. My memories are mostly of the six smaller canals that escaped the fate of the others and are still there to this day. Which brings us to the point of this story of the early 1930's.



Above: Ray, Leland and Cal on the raft, 1929
An Example of Expert Raft Construction

Nightingale School was unique in that it was built on sand. Our playground was sand. All games were played on sand: baseball, kickball, dodge ball, touch football and all the rest. It was here that I achieved

fame and glory by capturing the school championship in high jumping by catapulting myself off the concrete walkway and over the cross bar at an unheard of height and landing in the sand beyond. Because of this sandy



Above: Original 13 Canals. Only the Six Small Canals on the Right Remain Today.
Our School was at Far Right on Grand Canal.

My friend and classmate Bob lived in one of the original bungalows on the waterfront of Carroll Canal, fourth from the right on the map. I lived on the beach in Playa del Rey a few miles south of Venice. Our school was the Florence Nightingale Elementary School built on the sand near the corner of Washington Boulevard and the beach. We attended there from 1929 to 1935, kindergarten through sixth grade. On school mornings I often made my way to Bob's house from my house on the big, red Pacific Electric Streetcars that ran along the coast, or by being dropped off by my father on the way to his office. Bob and I would then journey to school together. The usual method was to walk the half mile or so to school, but we devised another method that was surely more fun but took a good bit more time; we built a raft. We gathered up boards and planks and scraps of lumber from the neighborhood and managed to put them together with ropes and nails into quite a seaworthy craft. A couple of sturdy bamboo poles were utilized for forward propulsion and we were ready to go. To reach school we would pole toward the ocean on Carroll Canal and under the car bridge at Dell Avenue, and then under the foot bridge just before we took a left turn on what remained of Grand Canal. Down Grand Canal we would continue poling until we passed Linnie Canal, and then under another foot bridge before reaching Howland and Sherman Canals. Grand Canal then passed directly behind our school toward its final destination beyond Marina del Rey (which was then a swamp) and on to Ballona Creek where it flowed into the ocean. All we had to do was beach our raft on the muddy bank behind school and we were there.

environment it was commonplace for some of the kids who lived along the beach to come to school barefoot. My mother saw to it that I always wore shoes to school but one time it was fortunate that the above custom was acceptable. Not far on our journey down the canal from Bob's house one morning my bamboo pole got stuck in the muddy bottom and would not come loose, and by not letting go of said pole I ended up in the water with it; and with my school clothes on. Back to Bob's house we went in order to doff my wet clothes and don some borrowed duds from Bob. I looked ridiculous since he was much taller than I. But as for his shoes, none would stay on since they were many sizes beyond my proper fit. Thus I became a barefoot school boy, albeit temporarily, but I realized then why so many of my classmates preferred this way of life.

All of this was over 75 years ago. The school is gone, hasn't been there for some sixty years. The area is now completely crowded with shops and restaurants and high-rise condos, and the boat marina itself. Bob's original bungalow is still there on Carroll Canal, but it is alone and surrounded by large, beautiful, modern homes with luxuriant landscaping. This is considered to be one of "the" places to live on the west side. Even the star and his son of the TV series Baywatch lived on the canals in the show.

One thing hasn't changed much, and that is what's left of the Grand Canal itself, beautiful and spruced up in the residential section but not looking so grand at all in other places. In fact it hasn't changed a bit where it flowed behind Florence Nightingale Elementary. We could easily beach our raft on the very same muddy bank today. There the canal looks much the same as it did in 1905 when the gates were first opened and water rushed up the dry bed on its way to join and fill the dozen other canals in the heyday of Venice of America.

Like what you see?
Sustain the Beachhead!
www.venicebeachhead.org

John Johnson of Change-Links will be missed

By Clay Claiborne

It seems like forever that whenever the first of the month rolled around I would be looking forward to new issues of two local papers that weren't very thick but were very deep, they were the Venice Beachhead and Change-Links. If you are reading this you are already familiar with the Beachhead. Change-Links is the monthly calendar of events and news that provided much of the glue that held the progressive community in Los Angeles together for the past 20 years. The front page always had topical and insightful articles about the issues of the day, but its heart was the calendar section that covered all the up coming programs, meetings, film showings and scheduled demonstrations. It was like a program for the movement in L.A. Every month you would have to seek out your Change-Links to know what was happening.

John Johnson, who like Ron Kovic, was born on the 4th of July 1944. He protested the Vietnam War and was a member of Students for a Democratic Society in the 1960's. He was an activist for peace and justice for the rest of his life and was perhaps best known for publishing Change-Links.

In January 2013, John had heart surgery and as a result, there was no paper version of Change-Links for about six months. I don't think his health ever fully recovered but his spirits and activity did and we all got complacent about getting out Change-Links every month as usual again. Then two weeks ago he had a stroke and fell. He also had a very bad MRSA bacterial infection that got into his bloodstream, On

Sunday, 13 April 2014 he died.

However, his work, Change-Links, will live after him. After a well attended memorial service for John Johnson on April 2014 in Santa Monica, a group of Change-Links volunteers got together to plan the future of the on-line and paper versions of Change-Links. They are now putting together the July edition of Change-Links as a memorial to John. They will be trying to publish it every month. If you would like to help John's work continue send an email to: changelinks2@gmail.com or call: 951-638-9259. This is the best way to remember him.

There will be a potluck mailing party for the July issue of Change-Links on Sunday, July 6th - 11:30 AM to 1:30 PM at the new Peace Center - 3916 Sepulveda Blvd, Culver City 90230. Free parking in back.



The family of John Johnson presents the showing of his artistic works at the UnUrban Coffee House in Santa Monica, CA from July 26th thru Aug. 21st, 2014. The show is titled *60s Perspective: Oil Paintings by John Johnson*.

A gallery opening event will held on Saturday, July 26, '14 from 8 pm to 11:30 pm. The gallery opening will be a celebration of John's life and works. Entertainment and commentary will be on hand, along with the planned free distribution of a commemorative issue of *Change-links* in John's honor.

The UnUrban Coffee House is located at 3301 Pico Blvd., (at 33rd Street) in Santa Monica, CA 90405. The UnUrban's owner and staff will cater this event's gallery opening night. Call 310-315-0056 or visit unurban.com on the internet for more info.

A Parade Was Planned

By John Johnson

What could have uplifted the spirit of a besieged community more than a Fourth of July Independence celebration? A day to show our independence and to reaffirm in our own way our desires and duties to free ourselves from our besiegers.

The Free Venice Organizing Committee (FVOC) decided to have a Fourth of July parade to kick off our drive to free Venice, relating the independence of the colony of Venice from the Empire of Los Angeles to the independence of the American Colonies from the British Empire. The parade would have traveled north on West Washington, across Rose to the Ocean Front Walk, and then south to Windward where our Declaration of Independence would be read.

The police recognized the threat of a community parade with children, flags, and balloons from the very first. Before they would grant Free Venice an application form for a permit, they wanted a downtown conference with many attendants and secretaries at which they requested all the vital information about Free Venice along with maps and multi-colored descriptions of the gala event.

The application was submitted on a Friday (the next Monday being too late) and was promptly refused acceptance in a manner typical of bureaucratic harassment – inaccuracies, they claimed. After a further attempt at submissions on Saturday when no one was there, the application was finally accepted disguised as a registered letter.

On June 18 the Police Commissioners' hearing on the parade permit was held. Six Free Venice members along with a lawyer went down to participate in the spectacle. Our parade stood out on the lengthy program – it was the only item recommended for denial.

FVOC spokesperson Jane Gordon stepped up first to speak on behalf of the parade. After being subjected to several questions about the FVOC, she objected, maintaining that such questions were irrelevant and suggested that they start discussing the parade. She was told to be seated.

Rick Davidson then took the stand and told the commissioners that FVOC was a group formed to solve community problems and that the parade was to celebrate Independence Day, a traditional national holiday. Rick gave a thorough description of the parade, carefully explaining how the parade had been planned to give minimum interference to emergency traffic. The head commissioner, with his copy of BEACHHEAD in hand, asked Rick if it was true that a celebration would be held along the route even if the permit were not granted. Rick replied that that was true.

Then the barrage of imported complaints began. Various police, firemen, and ambulance drivers read their lines about how the parade would interfere with emergency traffic (the planned police parade) and how it was on April 20. The emphasized point was that there was a reported feed-in to be held on the beach which would attract about 30,000 people and that the added traffic from a parade (of at most 700 people and a few cars) would grossly interfere with emergency vehicle access. It was also stated that we couldn't have vehicles on the Ocean Front Walk since it was not constructed to support vehicles.

The only complaint from the community who was present was William Bestor of the Venice Tram Company, who said that the Fourth was one of only 16 days in the year on which the Tram Company showed a profit and the parade would cut deeply into the profits for the day.

After stating blatantly that it was not the goodness or badness of the organization at issue (even though nothing had been mentioned on that subject) the head commissioner called the vote. No one voted for the parade.

It was suggested that we go back and re-apply but we decided against that obviously futile process. Instead, we began putting out leaflets advertising a sidewalk parade which would obey all traffic regulations and which the police had already assured us was completely legal with no permits required.

Meanwhile, we wanted to deal with the problem of the Tram Company and the reported feed-in. It seemed that the complaint from the Tram Company was due solely to a lack of understanding. Consequently, three Free Venice members met and talked with the Tram manager and secured not only his understanding but also one of his finest trams to lead the parade down Ocean Front.

The feed-in was being put on by Green Power, headed by Cleo Knight. After weeks of unsuccessful attempts to talk with him, we were finally able to persuade him to come to a meeting. We discussed the Fourth, pointing out to him that he was coming into a community (unlike Griffith Park) where there already existed an undeclared war with the police. We told him that we thought that his plans for bringing tens of thousands of unsuspecting persons to an anticipated slaughter without any preparations for first aid, lawyers, or bail money was irresponsible. Furthermore, we informed him that by not complying with the wishes of the community, he was making our problem more difficult. But he chose to proceed with his plans anyway.

Capping the parade preparations was a press conference at which a total of 14 news agencies, including four TV stations, were represented. It was explained that the parade organizers wished to avoid a confrontation with the police at any cost. Favorable coverage of the parade brought Venice's secession efforts to the notice of millions of Los Angeles residents, many of whom have similar hopes of freedom for their won communities.

At a Wednesday night meeting, July 2, last minute plans were drawn up. Already numerous reports and rumors of a giant police build-up had been brought to our attention, including several remarks from police officers which were very threatening to both the parade and the community. At the meeting's end, however, we still planned on following through with our celebration that Friday.

This is a re-print from the July 1969 Beachhead

& Cancelled

By Jane Gordon

Thursday started after an all-night rap session among the parade organizers. We had been getting steadily more reports and rumors about what the police had in store for beachgoers on the following day. Nothing we could "prove," or we'd have taken it to court long before. Just second-hand stories about numbers, preparations and intentions. One cop's kid was heard crooning, "my dad's gonna break a lot of heads on Friday, nyah nyah ..." Material for barricades began appearing on street corners. Reports of huge trailer-size mobile stations for the pavillion. The lady at the Recreation Center advised us not to plan on using the grassy area on that day. When asked why, she was "not at liberty to say." There were several reports that the police were hoping to start an incident with the people in the parade and then use that as an excuse to bust everyone on the beach. Police were telling people

they were expecting dangerous "revolutionaries," who wanted to "take over Los Angeles." And on and on.

The all-night session produced the decision to postpone the parade, to hold a silent vigil at Venice City Hall, and to put out a statement clarifying where the blame lay – with the police. We regretted having to concede the beach to the cops on a day which should have been for the people, but we felt positive that canceling the parade and warning people to stay away from the beach was the only way to avert a gigantic police club-in. We felt it absolutely essential to point out to people that we have a lot of work to do before we can control the actions of the police in our own community, and that physical confrontations could only harm our ability to proceed with that work.

We got the statement run off (FREE VENICE WARNS OF VIOLENCE JULY FOURTH) and started calling the press early Thursday morning. We kept it up all day, delivering copies and reading it over the phone. We ran off leaflets with a more graphic version of the same message and began getting them around on

the Ocean Front, in the canals, at the library, all over. Police were later seen tearing them down.

People started calling to find out if the parade was really canceled as they had heard on the radio – we explained that it was postponed until we felt we could celebrate independence without intimidation and illegal police activities. We also encouraged Venice residents to participate in our silent vigil at the Venice City Hall to mourn the fact that our community would be occupied territory on Independence Day.

Thursday evening at the last meeting of the parade committee, we went over our plans and worked out details. Some participants decided to warn of the police trap by making signs which they planned to display during the morning at all major streets leading into Venice. The meeting adjourned and the sign painters went to work.

Anticipation was high, but we were not dejected. We had done all we could to ruin police plans for a bloodbath. We hoped it would work.

This is a re-print from the July 1969 Beachhead

BATMAN OF VENICE

By Krista Schwimmer

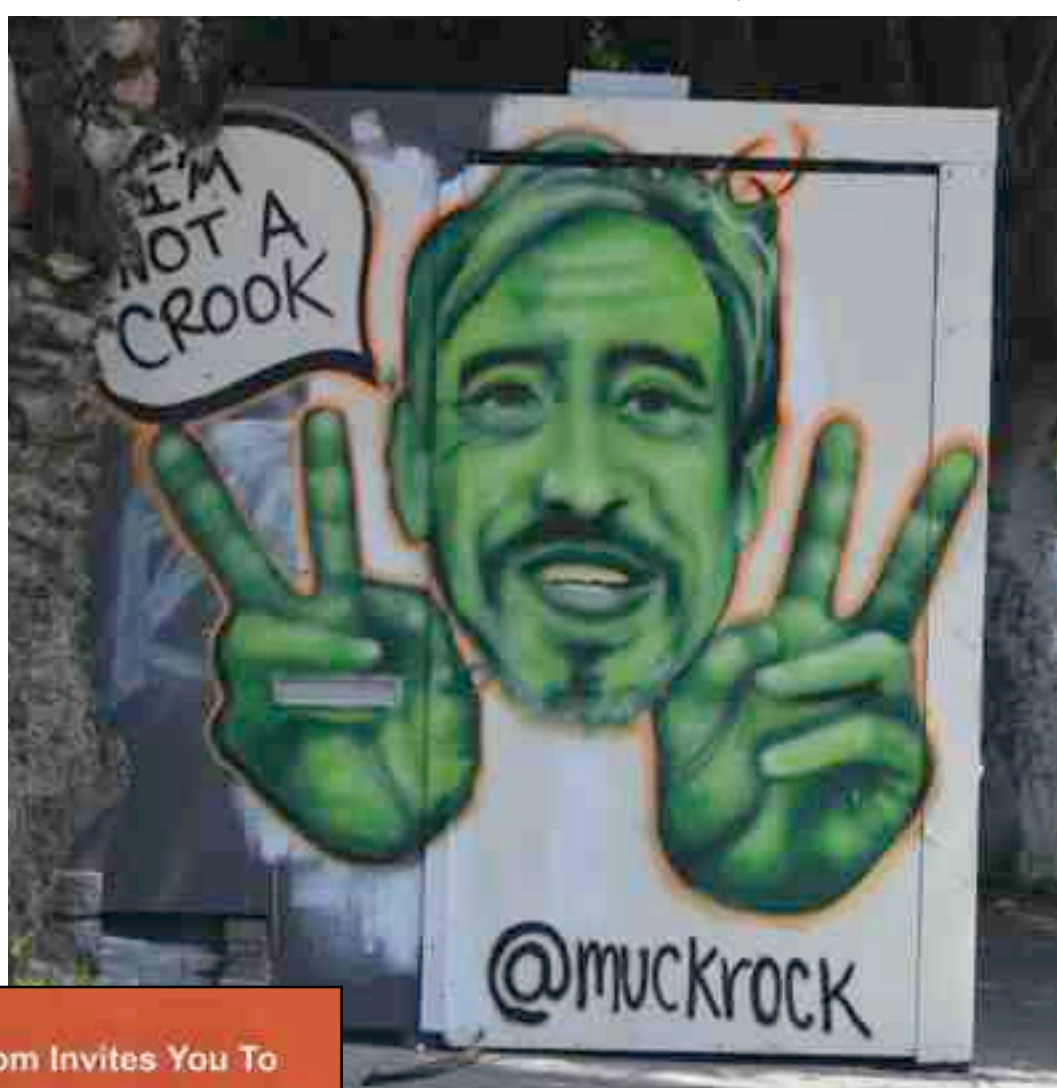
On the evening of Friday the 13th, I was home alone, preparing to take a delicious, soothing bath – (yes, I do know there's a drought going on – so this was a bit of a selfish splurge.) I had just returned from a depressing meeting in Huntington Beach: the California Coastal Commission. Although the company I had gone with was delightful, the meeting itself was demoralizing and depressing. Property after property in Venice was set for demolition, no matter what anyone said. One Coastal Commissioner, Martha McClure, really began to question things – to the point where she even wanted to go back and change all of her votes to “no”; but she could not. And so, I was in sore need of some comfort when I returned home.

As I was undressing, I heard a horrific voice over the sound of my window air conditioner. “Get out of here you trespassing piece of shit,” the voice screeched. My newly acquired dove, Sister Clare, looked at me, perplexed and startled. I myself felt compelled to determine just who this piece of shit was. So, after considering running outside stark naked, I determined I should protect my neighbors and don some clothes.

I raced outside, easily determining the direction the voice was coming from: the homes where the development, 1414 Main Street, had hit a major snafu due to a well-organized, protest of the neighbors living in the Lost Canals District. Standing in front of the garishly painted 202 Horizon building, I immedi-

ately recognized George Francisco. He was grasping a baseball bat as he kept his eyes on a tall, bearded old man with a cane, stumbling away from Francisco.

I asked Francisco, “should I call the police?” “No, thank you,” he replied, then turned and went back into the house he was evidently protecting. I then rushed over to the old man and asked him if he was hurt. “No,” he replied, but then proceeded to tell me how he just did not understand what had happened. He said that his friend had told



Above: George Francisco, by Jules Muck
Photo: Krista Schwimmer

him it was alright to sleep there. In fact, he had the night before. He had no idea who this guy, Francisco, was. Still confused, he crossed Main Street and disappeared into the full moon night.

Well, dear reader, if you are like me, you are probably much relieved that our neighborhood now has a new hero, a man that not only is a recently elected Community Officer on the Venice Neighborhood Council, but has even been elected to Co-chair the Adhoc Public Health and Safety Committee. After seeing him in action myself, I am fully convinced that we have our own super hero in our midst: the Batman of Venice.

You may ask yourself what led to this brave conversion by the Venetian, George Francisco. Could it have been the altercation he experienced only a few weeks earlier when, in broad daylight, he came across a different trespasser, a man passed out on the front porch of 202 Horizon?

On Monday, June 2, Michael Wamback was parking his car on Horizon Avenue around 1:30 pm when he heard shouting back and forth at the apparent flop house, 202 Horizon Avenue. Soon, police and fire truck appeared, including a helicopter. Another passerby, who wishes to remain anonymous, said he heard George Francisco taunting the drunken trespasser before the actual fight. This person later saw Francisco with blood on his face.

Was it that Francisco was detained by the police that led him to his superhero conversion? Or was it that he let down Jason Teague, the mastermind behind the stymied development 1414 Main? A man who, after calling the neighborhood blighted, may very well now be proceeded with creating the blight himself?

Who know what lurks in George Francisco's heart.

But rest assured, in his own statement made before the VNC elections, George Francisco, plans to “actively engage with as many residents and stakeholders as possible; (and) promote more civility and professionalism in our political process”.

And so, fellow Venetians, never fear! Batman of Venice has arrived – bringing civility, blow by blow, to the neighborhood as he protects the residents of the Lost Canals against the dangerous old man with a cane from sleeping in a compound where, only months ago, elderly tenants not only paid to sleep there, but actually kept the place neat and tidy.

Thanks, Batman! I'm glad to see that your sense of civility only extends to the political process, and not to the neighborhood. Now, I can sleep better at night, knowing that across the street from me, you weld a bat and are prepared to use it to engage with new stakeholders daily.

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Wild and Wonderful Windward

By Marty Liboff

When I tell people I grew up on the Ocean Front they always say, "You must have seen a lot of changes?!" Well, I sure have ... I will write some personal memories for you of old Ocean Park and Venice in coming months. I thought I'd start with old Windward Ave.

As a young man, Abbot Kinney traveled to Italy and Egypt and was captivated by the architecture. He tried to recreate these wonders in Venice and nearby Ocean Park. In 1905 he built a great amusement pier and miles of canals that started in a large bay where the Venice Circle is today. He put a small train that started at Windward and ran around the canals. There

was a tram that ran along Ocean Front Walk from Windward to the Santa Monica Pier, it ran until the 70s. The Venice pier was being demolished when I was born and much of the canals were filled in, but Windward Ave. and the adjacent streets still looked like old Venice Italy when I was a kid.

One gem of Abbot's was his grand Saint Mark's Hotel. Most think the building with the great murals and deli is the St.Marks, but when I was young this was only the small back annex. The beautiful headed pillars and walkway that are still there in the remaining buildings, lined Windward and the surrounding streets, making a wonderful walkway protecting visitors from the rain and sun. Shops lined both sides. As

a small child in the early 1950s, I loved to wander along the archways. The St.Marks had amazing winged lions above guarding Kinney's palace. There was a drug store in front and I loved an old 5 and 10 cent store my mom would take me to for her sewing supplies that had a wonderful rack of 10 cent toys. I ventured there often when I could get my greedy hands on a dime. In 1958, Orson Welles made his movie, "Touch of Evil" and used the Windward area at night, pretending it was Tijuana Mexico!

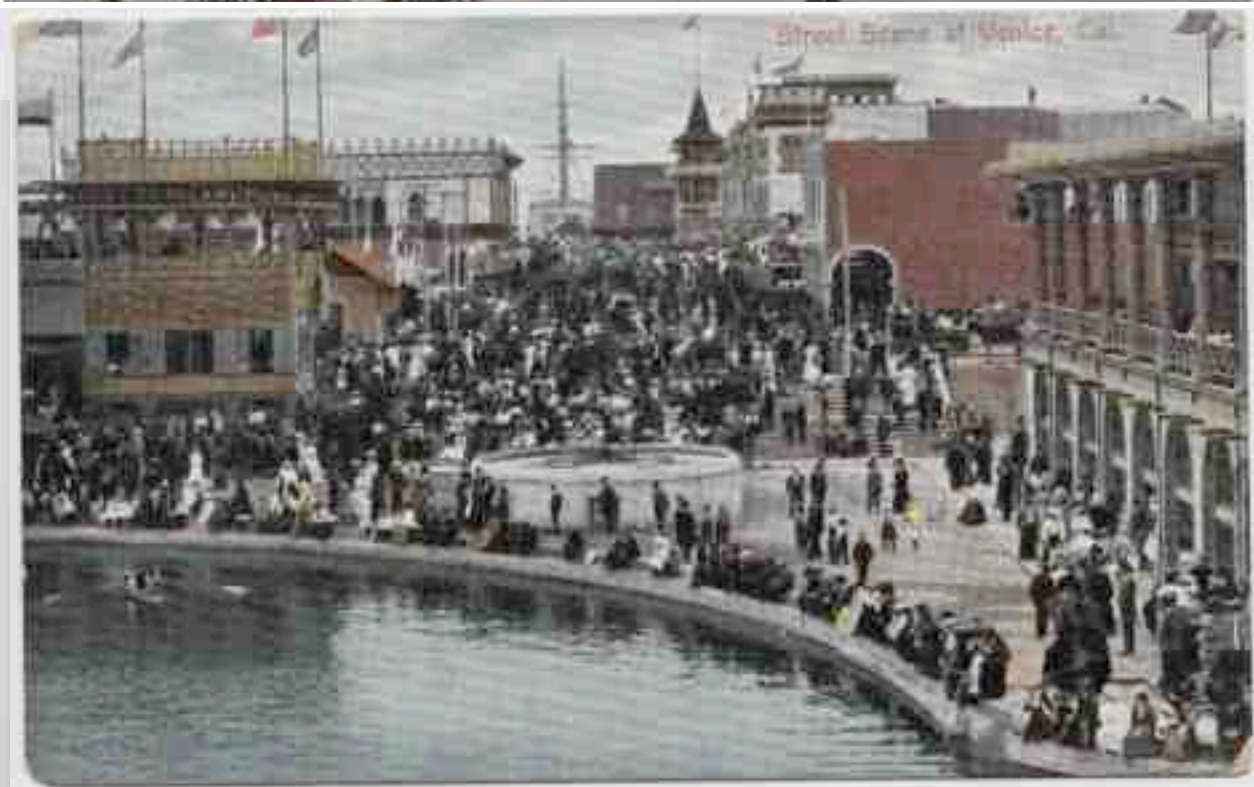
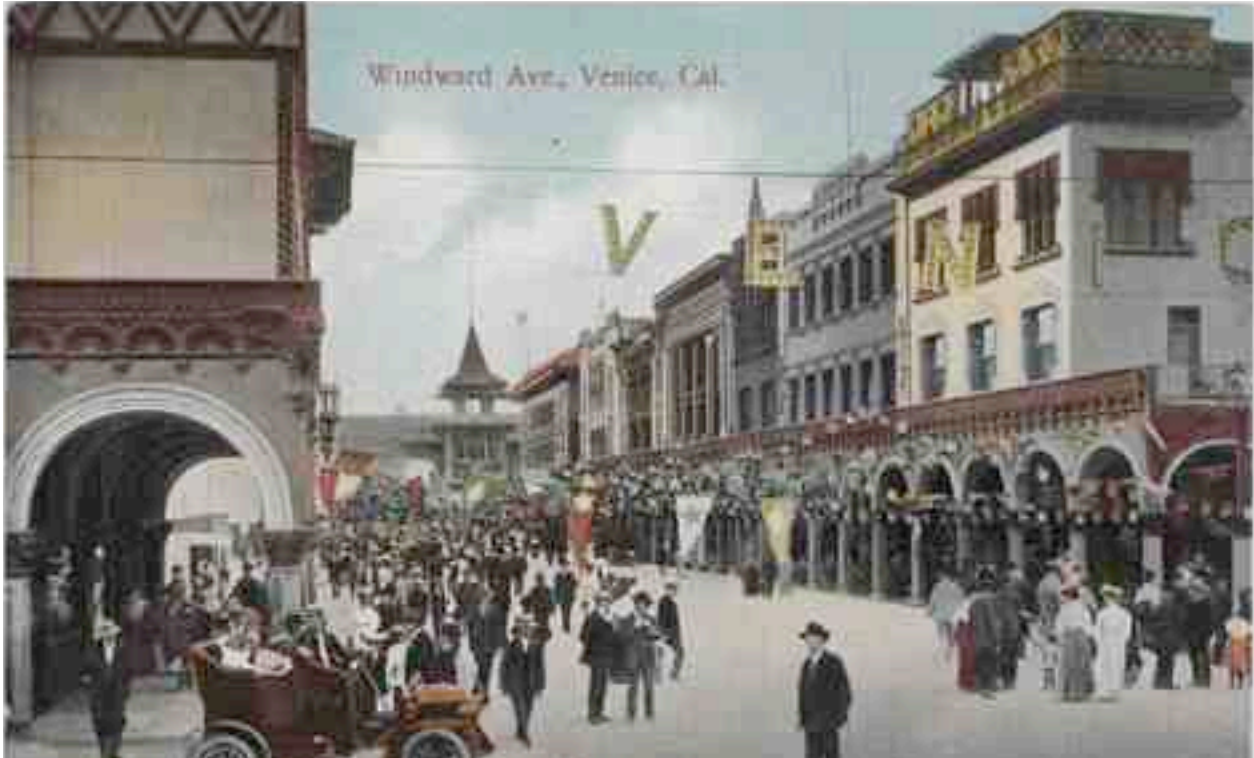
Venice went into a decline after the city forced the closure of the pier in 1947, but was still a vibrant community. My mom used to say that when the city made them close the bingo parlors the money left the beach. In the late 1950s, Venice had a revival of sorts with artists and beatniks moving in. John and Anna Haag opened their beat hangout, the Venice West Cafe on Dudley Ave. The beatniks rented one of the old Venice style buildings near Windward on the Ocean Front and called it the Gas House. It was real cool man, and it was like a gas, dig it? It was a communal happening of like crazy beat artists. In the front display windows I especially loved some small sculptures of people in different settings. One had a group of little men sitting at a table playing poker. It was a nice era for Venice. Rents were cheap and artists flocked here. Later the hippies slowly replaced the beatniks and another new time came.

Our city politicians hated those dirty beats and hippies. Even then they were trying to gentrify Venice. In 1962 they condemned the fabulous St.Marks and the Gas House and soon condemned many other of Abbot's marvelous buildings. Santa Monica had already torn down most of old Ocean Park and planned dozens of high rises along the beach. L.A. also wanted to redevelop old Venice and get rid of the poor and the hippies. Much of old Venice around Windward was torn down.

One good thing that came with the Venice redevelopment was building the Venice Pavilion in the early 1960s on the beach side of Windward. It had a large covered auditorium and an outdoor stage and various athletic venues. For several years they had various shows, from my pal Joseph's amazing electrified oud music (an Arabic lute) with sexy belly dancers, to blues and reggae shows. I even saw our own Harry Perry's band playing there. By the 1980s the homeless called the Pavilion home and the city soon decided to demolish it.

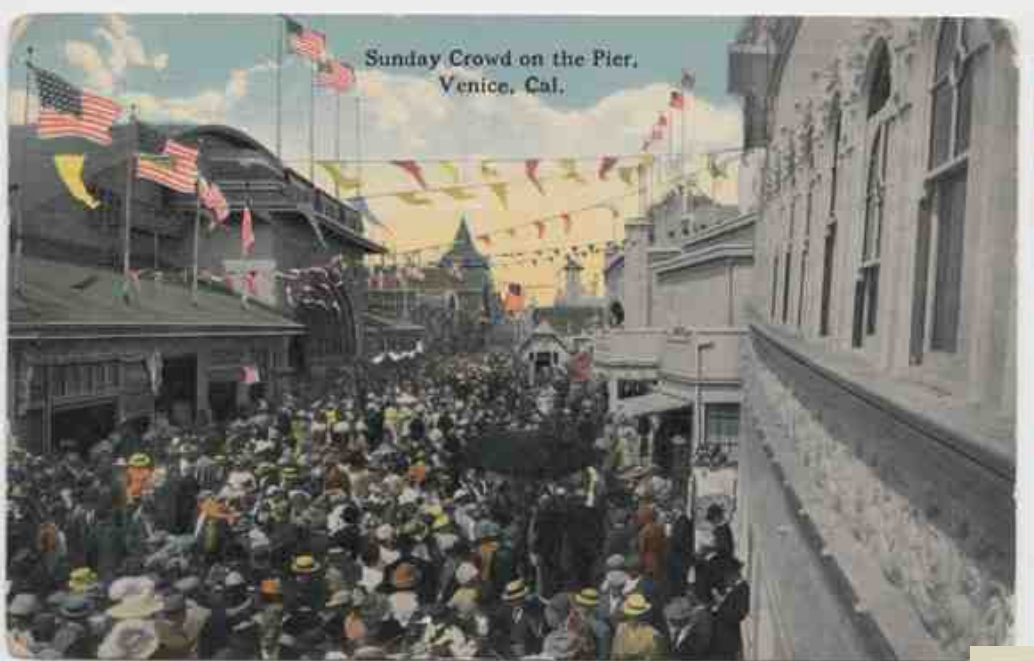
Today Venice is very much alive, but we sadly only see a tiny fraction of Abbot Kinney's magic kingdom or even the Venice and Ocean Park of my youth..

(For more history read: 'Venice, California: Coney Island of the Pacific' by Jeffrey Stanton)



Right: Marty Liboff and Pharoah. Many thanks to both for the images on pages 1, 8 and 9





Sunday Crowd on the Pier,
Venice, Cal.



A Gondola, Venice, Cal.



Beach Scene, Venice, Cal.



INDOOR SWIMMING POOL, VENICE, CALIF.



VENICE, CAL. Amphitheatre



The Ferris Wheel and Restaurant
Ship at the Pier, Venice, Cal.



"Ship Cafe," Venice, Cal.

"An Anchor Ship runs
to a Modern ship."
Ward McFadden, Prop.

A Song to Abbot Kinney's Venice

Me and Polly
Are gonna ride the trolley
To the Venice pier.
Abbot Kinney will be there
At his magical fair
With Charlie Chaplin & Laurel & Hardy
There's always a party
At the Venice pier.
On the canals of old Venice
We'll ride a gondola
And eat a piece a pizza
With extra mozzarella
Near the Venice pier.
The roller coaster will be a thrill
Then eat pastrami with a dill
And a hotdog on a grill
On the Venice pier.
We'll swim in the sea
And bathe in the bath house you & me
Then see fish in the aquarium
And dance in the auditorium
By the Venice pier.
On the Ferris wheel we'll kiss
And the merry go-round we can't miss
On the Venice pier.
We'll ride the tiny train
And make love in the rain
Then take the tram
To the Ship Cafe for eggs & ham
Near the Venice pier.
All this is gone
It doesn't seem so long
When me and Polly
Rode the trolley
To the Venice pier...

— Marty Liboff c. 2010

RIP: Eden Wingate Eastin Andes

for Eden

I wish it would rain
and we could run around in the rain
like children do –
we’re still playing children
behind the mask of age
you get old enough, you start losing friends
now we’ve lost you:
a crazy painter, singer, dancer, drummer
someone who laughed with all her heart
who enjoyed moments of joy, joyfully
an artist who never quit,
never took a break
who played in Ibrahim’s drum circle
who talked and talked until you were
overwhelmed by all the words and ideas
pouring out of her mouth
the last time I saw you,
we talked about accession, going home
I hope you’re singing and dancing in the clouds
on a rainy day in heaven
I know you’re up there somewhere
having fun...

love,
Mary

Eden was a dear friend of mine. She was an
artist, an activist and a mother to many. I’ll
miss our long, deep conversations.

– Lisa Green



Above and Below: Eden Wingate Eastin Andes
Photos: Peggy Lee Kennedy

Eden Wingate Eastin Andes Sister and Venice Food Not Bombs Comrade

Born 6/25/1956 with first address as 29 Horizon, Venice.
Passed into the Spiritual infinite Love 6/22/2014.
Eden is survived by her brother Earl Wingate Eastin,
her life partner Natividad Martinez, and dog life compan-
ion Juni.
Eden is predeceased by her parents, Eleanor Mary Butter-
field and Rodney Eastin and also by her dog life compan-
ion, Smedley (Juni’s brother).

Eden was a kind, forgiving, accepting, obstinate woman
who fought to oppose unjust and unconstitutional laws.
She lived in vehicles for many years in Venice. In her
life’s beginnings, she could find work and afford to pay
rent in Venice. She wanted to be housed again in her
home – Venice – a final wish unfulfilled.

– Peggy Lee Kennedy

Eden Woman of Venice, Biker Girl, Artist, Activist, Food
not Bombs collective member. We parked together in our
vans, shared food and stood up together against the abuse
of the authorities. I met her one rainy, foggy night on
Hampton in Venice and we have been friends for 20
Years. She inspired many in the Venice of America to live
for a Free Venice.

– Calvin Moss

21:18 Wednesday, June 25th, 2014, Adullam Just
learned today. A text from Peggy Lee. Informed that you
have found eternity. We both knew it would come.
But not so soon. Had hoped that I'd run into you this June.
It hasn't hit me yet. The parking lot. United Methodists.
The battles fought. The lives lived in a van. Caring for
dogs. A step ahead of sidewalks. Barely rags Served to
conceal our nakedness. I thought You'd surely survive me.
What have I got To say to you, dear sister? Waning moon
Has taken you away. And much too soon. I search my
soul. Count to infinity. Remembering dear Eden. Absently
..... Roger Houston, post-beat romantic

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Eden in Venice

The first time I remember encountering Eden, it was at a meeting some five or six years ago. The meeting was organized by the indefatigable Peggy Kennedy, and another great anti-war friend, Calvin Moss. The meeting was at the Venice United Methodist Church's Community Hall. Peggy and Calvin had an office there for "the Venice Justice Committee." As best I can now recall, the meeting was for street-people to discuss some strategies to organize our own self-help projects: like an outreach food line; and some monitoring of the increased tickets that we were then starting to get. This was all just as Venice's gentrification was now starting to get kicked-up --and by several big notches. Eden was with us in this group.

It struck me then --how clear it was that Eden was the kind of person who was caring; and very committed to doing something. She was a great woman that was clearly fully engaged in opposing the harassment of us poor street-creative people in Venice. It was also interesting how she could, apparently --also always find a very unique angle --upon which to see every single thing that we discussed that entire night.

And well, that was Eden --you learned more about that once you got to know her. Her great gift to always have her own unique, and heartfelt, angle --on just about anything and everything in Venice. Once, later on --and long after the meeting that night, an all-new minster brought into that same church apparently just couldn't handle one of her deeper theological questions one day. It all started after one of his dubious male-privilege loaded sermons --that he apparently likes to ladle out to the book-thumpers --now whitening up the sepulchers there.

Well, of course, Eden could go on; and so all ludicrously frocked-out --he, this new pastor to Ven-

ice, just suddenly gagged --wailing that she was a 'witch' for her questioning of his mighty, male authority.

To which Eden chirpply replied, "Well, of course I am!" "I'm a Wicking, to be exact!"

The guy immediately demanded a wiley, squeaking, 21st-century exorcism. All this was going to be seriously maxed by him with his favorite United Methodist 'holy water,' and crucifixes.

Rather than an exorcism, living on the street in Venice, all she probably needed from the Methodists here was a home. But to us dude, it was just the holy confirmation --of Eden's Venice Beatification.

'Cause she could make you laugh with glee.

But with Eden, if you were ever tempted to think, therefore, that she was just the kind of person who would just talk on and on; and never actually do anything --you'd soon find out just how wrong you were. Eden simply had heart. And it was always fully expressed --always. It seemed that whenever there be a hand to be lifted; some work to be done; someone needed --to hand out fliers; or collect signatures; or help in cooking; or loading; or to help tow or jump someone's broken-down vehicle --she was always around.

Truth is, Eden would usually show up even early --to do her part in lending to the community any hand, whatsoever --it needed. Every week. All the time. You could always count on Eden being there if there was some community-work that needed to be done.

She had been rich once. She had been homeless. She had been beautiful; and she had been ugly, beaten, and decrepit. She had a freed spirit.

And she could tell stories. She'd tell you about being 16, and on Sunset Blvd., the night of the so-called 'Sunset Riots.' They were mis-labeled 'riots' in the media --when thousands of LA hippy kids, just

peacefully walking up and down Sunset Blvd., and having exuberant fun, so freaked-out the button-downed squares of General Chandler's LA --that they called out the Sheriffs to bring in buses and mass-arrest them. It was the turning-point that inspired the Buffalo Springfield song, 'For What it's Worth.' And Eden could tell you about being a mini-skirt-wearing, emotionally-wafish 16-year-old; a long-legged blond; endowed with incredible curves, and hanging out at a cafe there back then called Pandora's Box. Or, she'd tell you about the homeless Venice dog; that used to sneak into the market on Rose St. and stand there; in front of the dog-food can isle, until some customer in the store would buy it a can of it's favorite dog food. The owner of the store would always be trying to keep the dog out. And the dog just always knew how to get in --when the owner there wasn't looking. It's name was Obie, or something.

Eden grew up in Venice from the time she was a kid -and she was a living saint: one who knew every suffering and sick and broken down person in Venice; The wealthy kid who was homeless, and creative, and lived in the crawl space under a Venice house; just to keep his wealth from contaminating his soul. The skitzo alcoholic women who collected mountains of stuff in carts on the Boardwalk. Bikers who drifted in and out of Venice. She was groovy. She married a man once. Rumor was that she had been pronounced dead seven times --drowned, knifed, car accident, heart attack... Rumor is she is still alive; and here in Venice.

And I will simply always believe this.
Eden always read the Beachhead. So hi Eden --we love you.
Be Groovy.

– Remembrances of David Busch



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Volunteer Recognition for Free Storage Venice





LAPD Steps Up Harassment of Boardwalk Patrons

By Clay Claiborne

Sunday, June 29th, the LAPD introduced a new tactic designed to clear what they consider "undesirable" people from the Venice Boardwalk, As has become almost a Sunday summer tradition, the Doors tribute band "Peace Frog" was playing at the Venice Bistro. The club has an open front and many find the music sounds best outside the club, so as has also become a tradition, several dozen people who either couldn't afford the cover charge, didn't want to drink, or simply wished to remain outside, had gathered in front of the Bistro to listen and dance.

I was also there as usual when four LAPD cars entered the boardwalk from Rose Ave about 8:30pm and did something I have never seen them do in many years living in Venice and listening to bands at the Bistro. They drove two abreast very slowly down the boardwalk all lit up like Christmas trees. Their lights were flashing like they were rushing to an emergency but it was clear they were going nowhere slow. They were clearly intend on forcing people to move from in front of the Bistro so I approached one of the lead cars to ask what the ruckus was about. I spoke briefly to the lead officer, Sgt. Y. Moreau [badge #26116] who told me that they had just broken up the drum circle [down by Brooks Ave] and some of the people had come down here so they were clearing them out of here as well.

From their lights down on the beach, I had seen them break up the drum circle but I saw no influx of people from that joining us in front of the Bistro. In any case, in the hour before the arrival of this police task force, I had observed no drinking outside, no

fights, no disruptive behavior at all, certainly nothing requiring police intervention; and neither did they, because they never got out of their cars. In spite of Sgt. Y. Moreau's attempts to connect this action to shutting down the drum circle, it was clear that it was directed at everyone in front of the Bistro and while the business owners might like to see the LAPD stop people from enjoying a free concert, there were no public safety issues that warranted this sweep. Harassing people into either paying the Bistro or going home is not a proper use of police powers or resources.



Above: Venice Bistro, Ocean Front Walk

Opening

Gumbo
Rinney

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Venice. Burning to be Restored

– Continued from page 1

By Philomene Long

*Venice, city conceived in imagination for imagination
With body intact –the canals, the welcoming houses
The people came. It happened – the magic – unexplainable
Venice becoming the city imagined
A city like no other city on earth
Its community of Venetians giving her a soul
Bright. Transcendent. The soul of Venice
A gift, which cannot be bought nor stolen
This is the gift out right, freely given
To those open to receive it; for those who listen
But Venice transcendent still needs a body
It can be, has been, wounded
It can die; live on only in history
So we here today, as with previous Venetians
Welcome all as neighbor; loving freely
At the same time preserve and protect our radiant city
With magic and practicality
And with the hope of a pale green egg
That resolve passed on from those that have gone before us
For them as for ourselves, and for those that will follow
Will stand here where we stand today
And who will walk upon our footsteps into the next century
That the light of Venice not be extinguished
Nor diminished, nor simply be maintained
But that light burn, burn, burn into a boundless Luminosity!*



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A CREATION MYTH

(In honor of Venice-of-America’s 109th Birthday)

In a time that was,
(And in a time that was not)
Abbot Kinney hid in a bin to safeguard his life
From Turks bayoneting all infidels found
Oh, how the blood of Christians
Spilled onto the dock that day

A carmine blood delta flowing to the sea.
And Abbot Kinney said his prayers to the cosmos
He knew his life was over
But it was not, it was not....
Destiny had other plans for Abbot Kinney
And he escaped in a small boat to Africa
With only his life
HIS life!
And Abbot Kinney now Knew
Oh, the preciousness of life!!

That very day, his soul vowed never to trivialize
The significance of his life
With mundane endeavors of any kind
And his heart heard...and knew the truth of it
And his intellect heard and knew the truth of it
And thus sanity was born in Abbot Kinney
And Abbot Kinney returned from Africa
An integrated man, enveloped within his own intuition...



Fast forward to another lifetime in Ocean Park
A partner dies, a partner buys
The usual arguments of money and greed emerging
Abbot Kinney calls a meeting of the partners
To trade all of his holdings in their developments
For a mosquito swamp to the south
A sump deemed as unsuitable for habitation
The investors gleed in their greed
Oh, the wily Kinney has gone mad, he’s mad!
They celebrated their good fortune and their wealth
And signed the papers oh so quickly
Deeding the marshland to Kinney
Before the asylum could come to
Claim the insane Kinney and drag him away.

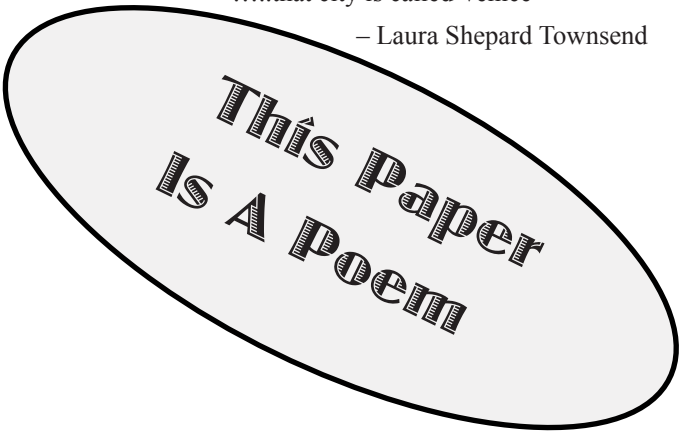


But Abbot Kinney had walked those bogs
And marshlands to the south
He had felt an energy harbored there
Oh, yes, we still sing the song of those spirits
In Venice to this very day!
Nothing to be done with marshes, but canals
And so it was on the first day of dredge
As steel blades of chuffing bulldozers
Pushed dank Cambrian ooze to formulate banks
Abbot Kinney saw faint illuminations of vapor
From the foaming mud primordial
An interred Goddess emerged



The workmen saw the apparition not
But it was The Goddess Venus
Come to ply Abbot Kinney with visions
Golden tresses bewitched by the
Breaths of her attendant deities and fairy folk
And then Venus began her songs of creation
In altered states of melodic harmonies
Goddess songs of sites ancient and mythical
She sang of past cities of magic and golden light
To enchant Abbot Kinney with the land in his keeping
And ply his mind with visions of a creation
And its significance to the Earth and to the World
Abbot Kinney, smitten, changed the name of the city
To Venice to honor the Goddess Venus
Venice -- a place of learning and enlightenment
Venice -- a haven of harmony and inspiration for artists
Venice – a perfumed sensory experience
Venice – where transformation would be guided by Muses
And Abbot Kinney continued in his creation of a city that
Venus sang as revelation to him
A city that he fiercely loved with all of his heart
A city he gave to the world for all time...

.....that city is called Venice
– Laura Shepard Townsend



Sometimes

She loves me stuck with me
years upon eons
partially dug my poems
And refused a dedication
on my chapbook page
what means that
I slip her initials in and
survived a coupla fuck you's
she defends turf well
Throws adequate sparks
likes my hands
other parts unremarked
She has a honey-combed laugh
a 9.5 in body construct
with dancers elegant stride
Plus electric-socket power
coursing her sedate facade
She nearly 100% gold though
sometimes signs need for
more space elsewhere
My silent huff turns me dull-grey
that's already annoying eh making
Eh whose perfect may be asked
– Pano Douvos '14

The Empty Aisle

By Pasquale Trellese
I feel the soft strain draining me
Word by word
Reigning in sleep
Spinning my mind
Forever spinning
Discomfort surrounding anticipation
Anxious
Yet fearful of its end
Its loss of the pen
Its usage
Its meaning of life and only reason
I curse the turmoil
The toil it takes
Knowing its existence
Understanding its compromise
Accepting its fate
The self-hatred for having its gift
Honor
Yet scared to abandon
The ink of life
Its message
The proud moments of thought for being
I extoll no virtue
No clarity of soul
Or rightful place
No preaching pulpit
Or empty pew
I feel the passion exiting
Note by note
Melody lost
Wounding my skin
With scars in tow
Heading down the empty aisle. . . .

Biography:
Pasquale Trellese was a Venice Poet of the early 21st century. In his spare time, “Artie”, as he was known around town, served happily as handyman, art installer, and tender of bar at the infamous Sponto Gallery.
When Pasquale discovered he had only a short time to live, he dedicated his precious time and dwindling energy to writing and publishing his poems. A true Poet, he was still courting the muse with his dying breath.

Happy 109th Birthday, Venice!

MORE OR LESS?

More money, more power, more friends, more food, more time, more space, more fun, more love, more guns...the list goes on; and, of course, MORE BUILDING PERMITS FOR VENICE!

Prime examples of this bloated appetite are evident across the globe...and right here, in our own backyard. *More* - isn't that what we all want?

Does anyone remember the '76 presidential campaign when Gov. Jerry Brown ran with slogans like "Small is Beautiful", along with solar energy and "our space-ship Earth"? Which, he got from Buckminster Fuller, the father of the geodesic dome and other contemporary trend-setting ecological concepts that have since been buried under a mountain of *MORE*.

Take the subject of "*more* building permits in Venice" which equates with: *more* restaurant/bars, *more* upscale boutiques, *more* big-box houses, *more* cars, resulting in *more* money - for some - and plenty *more* stress for the local residential community, the infrastructure, and (last but not least) the environment. Where will it end?

Let's take a couple of examples. For instance, 320 Sunset Avenue. A highly contentious development at the moment, currently stalled, but soon to be reviewed by the new Land Use & Planning Committee. Here we have a restaurateur, famously of Gjelina on Abbot Kinney Blvd., Venice, a trendy hotspot - a "destination" - who has inflicted himself on the adjacent neighborhood, causing untold grief to those who have been subjected to the constant onslaught of Gjelina customers (and now GTA, next door - a fast food takeaway) for the past seven years.

So what's wrong with this, you say. He's on a roll - the guy's a success. Nothing wrong with success - so long as you don't step on too many toes on the way up, right? What's an American Dream for one man, has become a Venice Nightmare for a whole neighborhood, living adjacent the restaurant, who just want to have what most of us want - *more* peace.

Now that same restaurateur is planning to open another eatery at 320 Sunset Avenue. With a full-line alcohol bar plus takeout beer and wine sales, and an outdoor dining patio. Opposite Gold's Gym and just up the road from Google.

Some may think that sounds like a great idea - but not in this location, which is within a stone's throw of a large residential area, in back, and has very inadequate parking, on a narrow street at a busy intersection that is a designated coastal access route to the beach.

Sign the petition to oppose 320 Sunset:
<http://chn.ge/1rL0man>

From a neighborhood resident: "The applicant, who also owns Gjelina's on Abbot Kinney and next door, GTA, has caused serious problems to the surrounding neighborhood for the past 7 years!

He exploits the neighborhood for his own financial gain, and has no regard or concern for how to be a good neighbor...and it looks like he's planning on do-

ing the same and possibly MUCH *more* in this quiet corner of Venice, one of the last original Venice artist communities.

He has misled the neighborhood from the start, leading them to believe he was opening a local "bakery", while ALL ALONG he was planning a fully licensed restaurant seating 90 people, with outdoor patio dining, and a staff of 30 employees per shift.

He plans to open 19 hours per day, from 6AM to 1AM, with full bar AND OFF-SITE (takeout) beer & wine sales. A fact that was NEVER divulged to the community by him or VNC/LUPC, which will drastically change our neighborhood FOR THE WORSE.

His restaurant will have an open air patio at the rear of the building, on the 12 ft alley which backs immediately onto apartment buildings abutting the alley on residential Vernon Avenue. This out of character development will ruin residents daily lives due to noise pollution from patrons, equipment and traffic.

Not to mention the acute lack of parking which all the neighbors experience...and he has no intention nor obligation to provide any!" Go here for *more* and to sign the petition: <http://chn.ge/1rL0man>.

But some people want *MORE* because they CAN, and will take *more*, no matter the cost!

And then of course, we have the "big-box" houses that are mushrooming everywhere - changing, forever, the landscape of Venice; dwarfing their neighbors, totally out of sync with the community character.

Worse yet, developers are subdividing single lots into three; planning tall, tiny houses that block the sun (just like big-box ones do), and the fresh sea breeze that keeps us cool in the summer, all the while tearing out trees and vegetation. A concrete jungle.

These tall, tiny houses are an eyesore. The architects try to hide their ugliness, and the fact that they are squeezed in tight together, like sardines in a can, with barely any space between them. Some think that this is a way to make housing *more* "affordable" - but what a joke that is.

Maybe if you built three cabins on a single lot and charged an "affordable" rent, *maybe* that concept could work. But in this case, for example, as proposed for 664 and 758 Sunset Avenue, Venice - the goal is obvious: to capitalize on the "trendiness" of Venice (aka "Silicon Beach" - could that be interpreted as "Plastic Beach?") and sell these little monsters at top market value (which is increasing - in Venice - exponentially).

But there is a way to have *more* say in the "*more*" fest of Venice.

More people speaking up and demanding to be heard, *more* people attending VNC/LUPC meetings (and, sorry, yes, *more* work), demanding *more* transparency from VNC/LUPC and City Planning; and last but not least, *more* adherence to the law. Meaning, there are laws in place like: the Venice Coastal Zone

Specific Plan (often known as the VSP), the 1976 Coastal Act, the Mello Act and the Coastal Land Use Plan (LUP).

The one most significant to Venice is, of course, the VSP. Crafted by past Venetians to protect the community from excessive development - which is exactly what we have going on now. The VSP is supposed to be the Holy Grail for Venice planners and developers, including City Planners. Over the years, City Planning has consistently pushed the envelope allowing *more* "variances" and *more* "privileges" to developers, choosing to interpret the VSP broadly, to accommodate the developer, not the community.

In many cases, where the proposed development was deemed to be within the VSP, and/or other laws, a single individual at City Planning eg. Greg Shoop (recently relocated from his hot seat to a *more* cool location), is "signing off" on these projects, fast-tracking them to avoid the *more* transparent Planning review, and public input, normally required.

According to a local attorney:

There are 3 consistent and repeated ways that the City is ignoring and violating the Venice Specific Plan (VSP):

1. City Planning is interpreting the Small Lot Subdivision Ordinance (SLSO) to trump the Specific Plan, although the law says that specific plans always trump ordinances. The City is interpreting the Small Lot Subdivision Ordinance to allow more units on lots than the Specific Plan allows, and is not requiring any guest parking at all, and is allowing tandem parking that people often don't use, rather than side-by-side parking.

2. Allowing buildings to be constructed to the maximum possible size even when the proposed building is totally out of scale with the neighborhood i.e. three story buildings that block all of the neighbors' sunlight in a one-story or two-story neighborhood. The Specific Plan requires an evaluation of the compatibility of the mass and scale of the proposed building with the other buildings in the neighborhood. The Planning Department does not do this, and they have set up a process where there is no appeal.

If the Planning Department continues to get away with this, soon Venice will be all 3-story compounds with very little sun or air between the buildings.

3. The Planning Department is issuing illegal DIRs that blatantly violate the Specific Plan. Then the City says that there's no appeal because the 14-day deadline has passed. The community has no real notice and no opportunity to respond. The City refuses to send out a .pdf of the DIRs as they are issued, only a mailed copy which arrives too late.

That said, what about this slogan for Venice?
"Less is More"

— Spirit Of Venice

Property Rights

By Mark Lipman

Many raise the issue today that “You can’t tell someone what they can and cannot do with their property.” However, this is not true. We do it all the time.

For common sense and the safety of our larger community we set limits all the time. From speeding through crowded intersections to littering, 90% of our laws deal with property and the proper use of it. Where property rights end is when they infringe on the civil rights of others and the community rights of us all.

There is a reason we speak of scale and size and scope, of neighborhood characteristics. These are what make up our collective experience and quality of life. This gives us a common thread of our history and culture. Each time a bulldozer rolls down the street, we lose another little bit of our heritage and soul.

Too often these days, those with big wallets think they can just waltz into an existing community – trampling on the rights of families who have called a place home for generations – and just do whatever they want ... because they have money.

They buy off politicians who puppet remorse and crocodile tears every time a mom and pop shop, or community center, is forced to close its doors due to speculative investment, or a local resident gets an eviction notice due to no fault of their own, saying there’s nothing they can do, that “You can’t tell someone what they can do with their property,” when it is they who write the laws and handout the corporate subsidies and tax breaks to the very ones responsible for the gentrification we see today – clearing the path for the destruction of our neighborhoods, with our tax money.

In response, I say, “No.” Just because someone has money and owns property doesn’t mean they can just do what they want. With property also comes responsibility.

With that too comes accountability to the people of our local communities. If the system is rigged, then it’s up to us to rewrite the rules. If our selected officials are either unwilling or incapable of taking the necessary steps to protect our existing communities, then they need to be replaced with people who will.

No more sitting down. No more being pushed around. The people have rights. Our neighborhoods and communities have rights. It’s about time those rights be respected.



Above: People eating Gjelina food on crates on sidewalk, Abbot Kinney Blvd.

L.A. Living in Vehicle Law Found UnConstitutional

– Continued from page 1

The story of this unconstitutional law is not new, but the lawsuit starts with Councilman Mike Bonin's mentor and predecessor, Bill Rosendahl. He was champion for pushing through the OPD (Overnight Permit District) LA City law, specifically used to remove anyone living in a vehicle from a street – very often on streets with no residents, like by a park or a golf course.

It basically backfired. While we were fighting OPDs at the California Coastal Commission, because Venice is in the coastal zone and parking equals access, OPDs were going up all over LA and the vehicle housed people had less and less places to park. More people were becoming homeless and vehicle housed at the same time. Not such a smart move for Bill Rosendahl, considering the resistance. Mike Bonin, the current council person, was Bill's chief of staff at that time.

Not one parking space in Venice was offered to the vehicle housed in order to offset this push. But plenty of big talk from Bill about a safe parking program along with the money spent on some ridiculous consultant to create one. Not to mention how Bill was going to amend LAMC 85.02 so people could have a place to park! The law is gone, where the hell are those safe parking spots? It was all a bunch of S.H.I.T. and the City keeps putting up more "No Oversized Vehicles from 2-6am" parking signs everywhere. But I digress.

Anyway, Bill Rosendahl and his criminalize-the-homeless posse lost their battle for OPDs at the Coastal Commission again in 2010. Then began a never seen before war waged on anyone in what even looked like a live-aboard vehicle in Venice. Don't try to drive through, either. That is exactly what led to the Desertrain lawsuit. Very nasty stuff. I encourage everyone to read the 9th Circuit decision on line at: <http://1.usa.gov/1nnGEyz>. It is an easy nineteen-page read that might open your eyes a wee bit.

We are waiting for it to turn around. The money spent on these crazy homeless "clean up" sweeps and defending the other laws used to target homeless people in Venice is more of the same costly insanity, now led by Mike Bonin. Saying you are against criminalizing homelessness is not enough. In fact it is Orwell-

lian to say the words when outrageous city recourses are used for inhumane, non-solutions at the same time.


The City writes laws, often called Quality of Life Laws, and continues to enforce laws in a discriminatory way that affect homeless people disproportionately. Mike Bonin recently announced that his council district budget for prosecuting these types of laws had been increased. Not exactly the change we were hoping for.


The court determined that LAMC 85.02 was written and enforced in such a vague way that it encouraged arbitrary and discriminatory enforcement. Ninth Circuit Judge Harry Pregerson wrote in his conclusion, "For many homeless persons, their automobile may be their last major possession — the means by which they can look for work and seek social services. The City of Los Angeles has many options at its disposal to alleviate the plight and suffering of its homeless citizens. Selectively preventing the homeless and the poor from using their vehicles for activities many other citizens also conduct in their cars should not be one of those options."

Calvin Moss, with the Venice Justice Committee, commented that "The Judges just nailed it on this one, a classic historical constitutional decision." Our Justice Committee does not enjoy catching the City violating civil and human rights. People are being harmed. We are looking for real change and real solutions.



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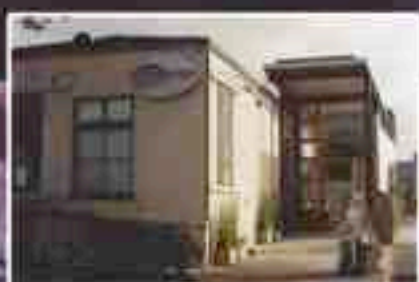

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