

Our 41st Anniversary Issue

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Photo by Greta Cobar



Hundreds enjoy a communal dinner on Westminster Avenue thanks to the giving spirit of our community
—story on page 3

Monday Nights Working With The Beachhead Collective

By Krista Schwimmer

In the spring of 2008, I came home one day to find a phone message on my machine from a pleasant sounding woman named Della Franco. Although I had not met her, I knew she was part of the Beachhead Collective. She said she had really enjoyed one of my recent poetry submissions. Would I be interested in helping the Beachhead? I was so excited that someone from this legendary newspaper not only liked my work, but actually wanted me to help, that I did a little dance of elation, witnessed only by my birds. I called back, explaining to her that I would love to help. There was a bit of a catch – I could only come later, after some

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Medical Marijuana Debated in Venice – and L.A.



By Maureen Cotter

VENICE – On November 5 the public was invited to join the Neighborhood Council (VNC) for a debate on new regulations controlling medical marijuana. It was held in the Westminster Elementary School on Abbot Kinney Blvd. The subject matter attracted a full house. While we waited for the meeting of the Venice minds to begin, I sampled the food provided by J's Kitchen. What, no pot brownies? The muffins and other delicious food provided by this organic restaurant would have to do.

Mike Newhouse, VNC President chaired the meeting. He explained the public's input was needed in helping to adopt some guidelines regarding medical marijuana dispensaries. Anyone who wished to speak had up to two minutes to express their thoughts.

De De Audet, past president of VNC, posted a sample of the city of Los Angeles' fourth attempt at an ordinance on this subject.

Councilmember Rosendahl's Deputy, Arturo Pina, spoke on his behalf: "It is the

view of the Councilman that the chronically ill should not be deprived of their medicine. It should be regulated and taxed."

Assistant City Attorney Jane Usher reminded us that the rules change almost daily, "This is a murky cesspool." In 1996, in

—continued on page 3

LOS ANGELES – The City Council was still debating a medical marijuana ordinance at press time. However, it appears that most of the draconian measures that might have forced the closing of all Venice dispensaries have been dropped. These include requiring dispensaries to grow the pot they sell. "Contributions" may end up as a euphemism for sales.

Also at issue are capping the number of dispensaries, and defining how far they must be from churches and schools.

According to Nate Kaplan in Bill Rosendahl's office there may not be a final ordinance until next year. Call Rosendahl at 311 if you have input.

CASUALTIES IN AFGHANISTAN:
928 U.S. Dead - 20 this month

IRAQ:

4,367 U.S. Dead - 14 this month

31,572 U.S. Wounded

Iraqi Dead: 1,339,771

Cost of wars: \$937+ Billion

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Beachhead Collective Staff:

Karl Abrams, Greta Cobar, Amy Dewhurst, Carol Fondiller, Don Geagan, Roger Linnett, Lydia Poncé, Krista Schwimmer, Jim Smith, Alice Stek

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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Was it murder?

Dear Beachhead,

I am writing you regarding your feature article of this issue. "Murder on Venice Blvd".

I am really shocked that your paper would write something that irresponsible. I have been reading your paper for at least 30 years and am a Venice local.

I am very liberal and am not a huge fan of the LAPD, however what happened on Venice Blvd was a horrible accident.

It was involuntary man slaughter. No one intended to kill that poor girl. To put a title like that is so tacky. It is poor journalistic tactics to say the least. Sensationalism to the fullest. You really need to check yourselves!

Isabel Moritz

Dear Beachhead,

Murder, as defined in common law countries, is the unlawful killing of another human being with intent.

Your article about the death in Venice by a cop is horribly irresponsible. Please stick to something you fuckin lunatics know down there on the boardwalk like rollerbladding and step away from the pen.

Thanks, *Name Withheld*

The Writer Responds:

Hi Isabel and Anon,

As the writer of the article, "Murder on Venice Blvd.," I feel that the headline was entirely appropriate. "Intent" is not needed to establish a crime to be murder.

Here's a "common law" definition of third degree murder (from answers.yahoo.com): "Third degree: killing that resulted from indifference or negligence. Usually there must be a legal duty (parent - child), but can also include crimes like driving drunk and causing a fatal accident."

Certainly if you or I had been driving at 60 mph on Venice Blvd. at night with our lights out, we would have been arrested on the spot and charged with third degree murder. In spite of their irresponsibility and recklessness, the driver of the police car and his partner have not been subject to any punitive action.

Thanks for your comments.

Jim Smith

Correction to Murder Article

Dear Beachhead,

Thank you for your article on the tragic death of devin Petelski. It was really well written. I must ask that if possible can you make an alteration "According to a family spokesperson, Christopher Medak, Is not atrue statement Although I am aclose friend of the family I am not their spokesperson. That is the Lawyer. I am simply a vocal friend who since her death have questioned and sought out the truth behind the attempted manipulation of the truth. I spoke as a outraged friend and citizen. Thank you

Christopher Medak

A Voice from the 70s

Dear Carol and Beachhead,

An old friend of mine who lives in Venice sent me the current Venice Beachhead, and it brought back a ton of fond memories for me. In the old days, I remember the both of us and several others who worked on the paper using the "cut and paste" technique for all our typed articles. It was way before computers and we always walked away with a bunch of glue all over us.

I actually was able to dig out copies of back issues including the December 1972 issue (almost 37 years ago) and it was terrific to read some of the issues. I have included a copy of a portion of that issue. It is hard to believe that I am almost 70 years old and the Beachhead is still going strong.

A big warm thank you to everyone who has been part of the Beachhead and all of those people who have kept it going for over 40 years! What an incredible accomplishment by volunteers! Talk about sustainability!

In peace,

Joanne Zazzi (formerly Joanne Curtis)

Medical Marijuana

Dear Beachhead,

I attended the Venice Town Hall meeting, Nov 5th, regarding Medical Marijuana. The participants were invited to offer suggestions to the representatives of the City of Los Angeles. Here are some of my observations:

The representative from the City Attorney's office appeared very guarded, and even torn when addressing the crowd;

The participants overwhelming agree that marijuana (cannabis, in fact) should be available;

A majority at the meeting believed that cannabis should be sold not just offered under the current legislature as a not for profit venture;

The town hall seemed to have large representation from the compassionate caregivers/providers community;

Many suggested that the number of providers be determined by an measurable space, (250 to 1,000 ft) or by the "free market";

Some even suggested that Venice be excluded from the Ordinance being drafted by the City of Los Angeles, and enter a pilot program which might include offering cannabis for sale at the local farmers market (you've got my vote);

The community was engaged and offered other suggestions in an mostly healthy spirit of finding a way to advance the moment to free hemp. I would like to see more of the patient community engaged, offering solutions going forward, along with participants that do not choose to engage in marijuana as a health remedy.

I'm a relative newcomer to the Venice, CA community though I understand why Venice should remain Venice and therefore work side by side, old and new, to keep Venice Free.

With that said, the ordinance in process, should be approached with due diligence, much consideration, and without an idea that more law is the only option. Each of us, providers, patients, and other stakeholders within the community have a responsibility to be accountable, and in balance with our actions.

Let's be aware that any ordinance, could further criminalize cannabis users. Also, I subscribe to a fair market approach not a free market view which implies, conscious production and consumerism with a holistically sustainable "balanced approach." For example, stop hard selling on the Venice Boardwalk, compassionate caregivers. Do not adopt the ways of the keepers of the corporate globalization methods that are devouring our resources (human, nature, and all other beings). You're offering a herb that brings balance to the body, mind and soul, and the offering should reflect that from the germination to the exhale.

Also, I do not subscribe to idea that, we the people, have never crafted a way of life before, as paraphrased by the City Attorney representa-

Hundreds Eat At "Feed the Beach"



By Roger Linnett

What started out as a neighborhood potluck dinner three years ago has grown into a legitimate Venice event the likes of which distinguish the Venice community for its outreach, charity and citizenship.

The Third Annual "Feed the Beach" free Thanksgiving Dinner went off with-

out a hitch on Thursday, November 26, thanks to a special, dedicated group of sponsors, around 200 volunteers and a few key people that stepped up to help satisfy local city requirements. From 12 noon until a little after 3 p.m. any and all who stopped by Ocean Front Walk at Westminster Ave. were served up a complete turkey dinner with the works.

The original sponsors of the "Feed the Beach" events are the 12 local food merchants that line Westminster Ave. from OFW to Speedway, four in the Waldorf Building and eight in the International Food Court across Westminster. They were also the same group that initiated the short-lived "Third Wednesdays" events, that were shut down by the city and the local police over permit and insurance issues this past summer. "Third Wednesdays" began with the same idea as Abbot Kinney Blvd.'s "First Friday," said Fruit Gallery owner James Merced, namely to help increase business for a few hours along their little piece of the boardwalk. And just like the "Third Wednesdays," this year's "Feed the

Beach" event seemed targeted for oblivion on the scrapheap of city bureaucracy. But then something marvelous happened - local officials with clout got in the game.

The Venice Neighborhood Council's vice president, Linda Lucks, interceded with the city, with the help Arturo Pena and John Gregory of Councilman Rosendahl's office to find the funds to cover the costs of the permits and insurance needed to green light the feast. "We only got our permits on Tuesday, although they had been in the works for some time" said a grateful Merced, in light of the "Third Wednesdays" fiasco.

"We estimated there would be around 300 to 500 people," said Nina Merced, co-owner of Fruit Gallery and wife of James, "but we figure we fed almost 700 people." "We intended to finish at 2 p.m., but we had people in line until about 3:15," she said. And remarkably there was still enough food to feed them all.

The Venice-Marina Rotary Club, led by treasurer Tom Ryan, supplied 25 cooked turkeys and helped prepare and serve with a group of Rotary volunteers. The owners of the Waldorf Apts. contributed \$250 and a local apartment manager, Frank Lutz, who had opposed the "Third Wednesdays" events, contributed \$100 and a couple of turkeys. Several businesses stepped up with food donations this year including Big Daddy's, The Sidewalk Cafe, Danny's Restaurant and Whole Foods. Musical entertainment was provided alternately by guitarists Vinnie Caggiano and Michael Jost.

"If it keeps going like this, next year we'll need to get better organized about our use of space between Ocean Front and Speedway," said Merced, "but being seen as legitimate by the city and all, that really makes everyone involved feel good because we don't have to fight city hall to do something good."

Medical Marijuana Debated in Venice

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the state of California, we voted to allow medical marijuana to be provided to the chronically ill. It was to be provided by a collective of at least four people and this did not include sales for profit. She pointed out it is against state and federal law. But within this cesspool, the city is trying to adopt some guidelines. At this point in time the Los Angeles D.A.'s office and the City Attorney want to shut down the dispensaries.

The audience was asked by Newhouse for a show of hands of those favoring legalizing marijuana. Everyone in the room raised their hands. Then he asked who was not in favor and not one hand went up. A collective laugh could be heard. A man shouted, "That's why we live in Venice."

At the present time, there are four dispensaries in Humboldt County. San Francisco has 22. Venice has 30, eight are licensed. Los Angeles has an estimated 800 to 1,000. There are about 15,000 liquor stores. When asked how many doctor certificates have been issued, Usher responded she had no idea, as certificates are not recorded. How many dispensaries should be allowed? The general consensus was to let the market decide.

Hours from 10 am to 8 pm were debated. It was pointed out that other retail stores are not held to the same restrictions. Most agreed the stores should be kept at least 1,000 feet away from a school. The current city ordinance would limit the number of plants at a dispensary to 100, or five pounds, and a video camera must be running at all times. Records must be kept. The records and video must be turned over to the police if asked, without a search warrant. Most attendees frowned upon the idea of each dispensary using only pot grown on its premises.

The two hour discussion was conducted without people getting angry and all suggestions were recorded. Hats off to Mike Newhouse for the way he conducted the meeting. I went home to watch it on the Channel 11 news. Get ready Venice, may the best dispensaries win.

Swami X Speaks



Swami in the 1970s
Photo by Lance Diskan

The meaning of life is beyond the mind and revealed within, in a moment that embraces ecstatic timelessness. We are something more than our mind, body, and emotions, all of which fulfill various legitimate and worthwhile needs and goals.

We are all on a ladder of understanding; awareness and spiritual unfoldment. I have reached the top of my ladder, and it was up against the wrong wall. Misunderstandings occur when those on other rungs attempt to convince others of



Marc Saltzberg rises to make a point at the Town Hall on medical marijuana, Nov. 5

something or other. Forgive my namedropping, however, God, Brahman, Allah, Jehovah, Ahura Magda, etc. and so forth, is Cosmic Consciousness, that pervades and transcends the Multi-Universe. God is Light, Life, Love, Truth, Good, Beauty, Consciousness, Existence, Bliss, Absolute, if you will forgive my language.

One might say everything is a manifestation of the Ultimate Effulgent Reality. It may, however, be a challenge finding someone to say that, too. Yes, I know they're out there, but I'm not getting around that much any more. P.S. No longer climaxing, let me sum up: I believe everybody gets what's coming to them, which clearly explains why I always walk fast, keep my head down, don't look back, rarely

answer the telephone and wear a ski mask when I saunter through the neighborhood, gracing all children with esoteric candy.

Nevertheless, it is reassuring to have understood that It never had a beginning, and never will end, and that we are all It. It is all connected, and that truth sustains the law of Karma. Ecstasy is our essence, and creativity is its cosmic motivation; if you'll forgive my language, and God bless Tiny Tim.

I do want to wish everyone the inspiration of the spirit, health in mind, body and heart; the discovery of creativity in your mind and soul; light in your third eye to guide and share your life.

Love, Swami

Monday Nights With the Beachhead Collective –continued from page 1

surgery I was having. She totally understood.

So, in September 2008, I found myself strolling up to a home on Rialto Street, just 5 minutes walking distance from where I live. I located the house easily, one sure clue being the September issues of the Beachhead in a plastic slot on a fence for anyone to take. I walked into a small, patio area with a mix of chairs to one side and an empty square table to another. A thick, Thai door with a Green Man fountain spewing water beside it, welcomed me. Above me, I huge palm loomed. I knocked hesitantly.

The man who answered the door oddly reminded me of Mr. Badger from "Wind in the Willows." He greeted me warmly, introducing himself as Jim Smith. As I entered the home, I noticed a long, rectangular wooden table that easily fit 8 people. Above the table, a chandelier hung almost touching the table itself. Sitting in a wicker chair, a woman with brown hair hovered over a large sheet of paper, reading intently. A few minutes later, she got into a passionate argument with Jim and stormed out of the house. I watched awkwardly. Karl Abrams introduced himself. His manner immediately put me at ease.

That first night they were proofing the October paper before sending it to press. Most of the work was done. Still, Jim gave me a few pages to proof. He told me to come back in two weeks, as the Collective usually took off the Monday following the printing of the current issue. At the second meeting I attended, not only was I voted in as a member, but I learned the basic organization behind the monthly publishing of the Beachhead.

At the beginning of the month, the members of the Collective meet at Jim's home. The first task is to review the recently published paper, checking to see how it looks, as well as looking for errors missed in the proofing. Then, people begin looking at ideas for the upcoming paper. Distribution and fundraising are talked about pretty much at every meeting. Submissions are read whenever they come in. The submissions are decided by majority vote – though after working with the collective about six months, I did learn that if a member truly objects to a piece, this piece can be quashed by a veto. In case you are wondering, I don't recall any vetos since I have been there.

The most challenging part of working on the Collective for me is the monthly fundraising. The paper costs a little over \$800 to print each month. Then, there is the mailing to our sustainers and subscribers. Fundraising meant learning to call past sustainers and ask them to renew; looking for advertisers (something I am truly bad at!); and helping organize fundraisers. Each month as we approached the deadline for printing, I would worry out loud about the lack of finances; Don Geagan would invariably say "Don't worry! The money will come! It always does." Well, so far, he is largely right!

One of my favorite parts of attending the regular Monday meetings is reading the submissions out loud. Members take turns reading the different submissions. Karl almost invariably reads the Swami submissions as he has the best impersonation of Swami himself. Plus, he can decipher Swami's handwriting. Collective members usually read their own work. (Though once, Peggy read one of my poems to folks when I announced it was not a very nice poem. She laughed and said, "Let me read it!")

Anyway, there is something so lovely about reading out loud, as well as being read to. Granted, you may not understand the writing or even sometimes be able to read the submission itself (we are probably one of the only publishers in the entire world that considers handwritten submissions on coffee cups.) In a society filled with "Facebook," "Twitter," and other amazing but isolating technologies, there is something soulful about adults sitting around a big, wooden table, reading out loud to each other.

Besides the weekly Monday meetings, collective members meet at the end of each month to proof and then, to distribute the 8,000 plus papers. Delivering the paper can be fun itself. People are often excited to see the new paper, commenting on articles they had read in the last one. It can also be a history lesson if you ride around with someone like Jim. One Saturday, when delivering on Ocean Front Walk, he showed me the building where my favorite Venetian poet, Philomene Long, once resided.

Although I have only joined the Beachhead recently, I already have vivid memories of meetings. Like the time the Beachhead was helping the fight

against the overnight parking districts. Despite the fact that we were all on the same side, some meetings around this issue found members sparring with each other. Still, the Beachhead successfully published stories about this fight and helped win that round for the homeless. Or the time, when somehow I got the job of organizing the International Women's Day Beachhead Event at Beyond Baroque without really knowing much about it myself. Nothing like dipping a somewhat politically ignorant card-reading woman into the cauldron of seasoned feminists. Which woman did I not annoy somehow??? Needless to say, the event went fairly well; more importantly, I lived to conjure another poem.

When I see the latest edition of the Beachhead fresh from the press, I still get a thrill! I like to peruse it on my front porch amidst the squirrels and wild birds I feed daily. Never mind that by the time I hold the hardcopy, I have already read most stories, poems, and exclamations 2 or 3 times. Still, I read the entire paper, cover to cover. I look to see what little last minute graphics Jim may have added that are either humorous or thoughtful (like the little cars at the end of the book review on rising gas prices); or what reprint from an old Beachhead I may have missed. Of course, I look at the poetry page, one of my favorite parts of the Beachhead. It was the poetry section that first drew me to the Beachhead. There, I discovered the Venice Beat Legends, as well as current poets such as Hilary Kaye.

Working with the Beachhead has opened me up to parts of the Venice community I knew nothing about – like Oakwood or the Lincoln Place Apartments – as well as the people who fight for the rights of others in those areas. That's not, however, what keeps me returning to the Monday meetings. What keeps me going is the experience of collectively creating a new paper each month: an effort that involves both the community outside of the Monday night meetings as well as the people who take the time to meet together, around the long table. The Beachhead Collective may not be the Inklings; but we sure give it all we have. From politics to poetry and back again, the conversation continues. Let's keep it that way!

Celebrate the Beachhead - 41 Years Old!

Beachhead Poets Read
plus Open Mic
7:30 PM, Sunday, Dec. 6
at Beyond Baroque (Old City Hall)
681 Venice Blvd.

Jim Smith
Hillary Kaye
Krista Schwimmer
Karl Abrams reading Stuart Perkoff

Celebrate the Free Venice Beachhead's 41st Anniversary with readings by these Beachhead poets: Krista Schwimmer, Jim Smith and Hillary Kaye, plus Karl Abrams will read the poetry of Venice's great beat poet, Stuart Perkoff. He was the founder of the Venice West Cafe Espresso and, along with Tony Scibella, Frankie Rios, John Thomas, Lawrence Lipton, James Ryan Morris and others who defined the beat experience in Venice in the 1950s and 60s. Perkoff's poems appeared regularly in the Beachhead in the 1970s. \$7.

If you want contact information: 310-399-8685 - www.freevenice.org - Beachhead@freevenice.org



Made for Each Other: The Story of a Town and a Newspaper

By Jim Smith

How is it possible for a newspaper to survive these days without massive advertising from big corporations? And while we're at it, how is it possible for a Venice identity to survive nearly 85 years after it lost its legal standing as a city? There may be a connection.

The Free Venice Beachhead is the largest - and only - newspaper in Venice. It's true that a number of papers from Santa Monica, Los Angeles, as well as some of unidentifiable origin, dump their excess copies on Venice. However, coverage of Venice is definitely an afterthought except perhaps for the Marina del Rey Argonaut and the Santa Monica Mirror. Those of you who haven't yet unsubscribed to the Los Angeles Times may detect a note of hostility toward Venice on the rare occasions that it stoops to writing about our fair city. This is nothing new, the Times Mirror Corp. has never tolerated our anti-establishment attitude, much less understood it. Radio and TV generally ignore Venice, and that includes the progressive nonprofit FM station KPFK. Websites and blogs exist in Venice, but most are mainly concerned with selling something. An exception is YoVenice.com which often gets the jump on Venice news.

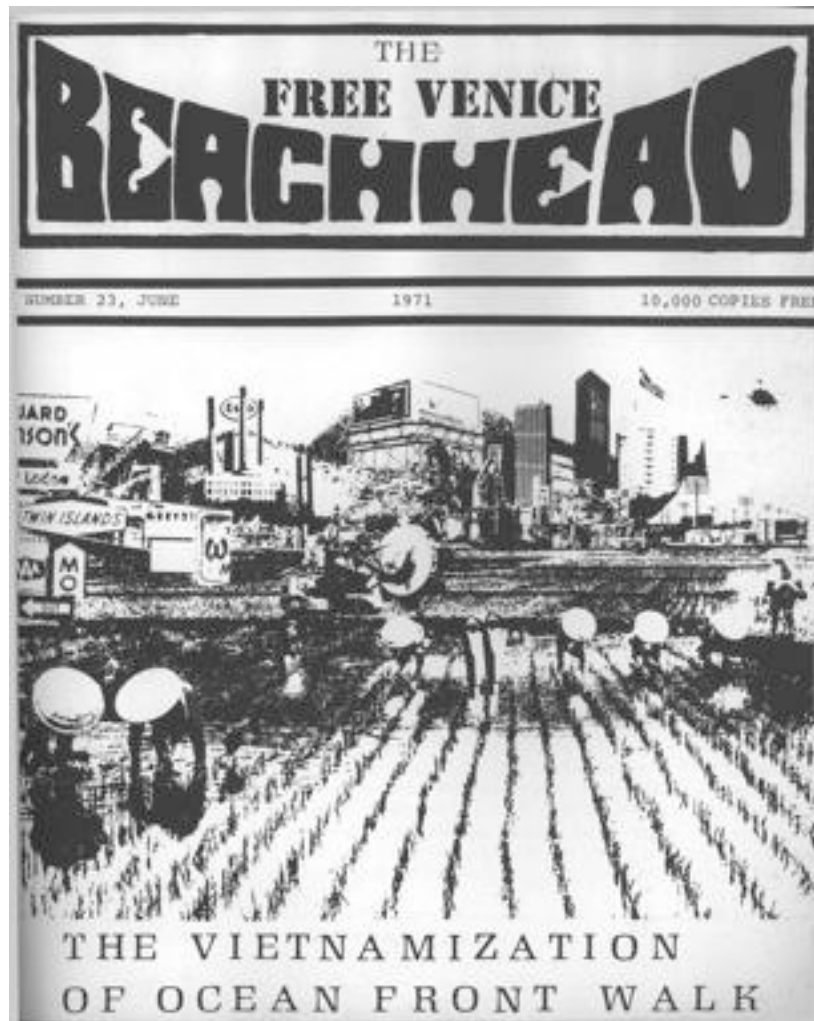
The Beachhead has been the paper of record in Venice for 41 years now. We're interested in getting every issue on the internet to give everyone a fuller understanding of what's happened here since 1968. If you would like to help fund this project or have the technical facilities to scan the Beachheads, please let us know. Meanwhile, all issues since 2002 are online at www.freevenice.org. At this web address you can read every article, or look at the layout. Articles from some earlier issues are on Pat Hartman's website: virtualvenice.info.

Back in Venice's earlier days it had its own daily newspaper, the Venice Vanguard. In its pages are the history of Venice from its inception until the mid-1940s, when it was bought by the Culver City News. From then until 1955, there were a few Venice articles in what was essentially a replate of the Culver City paper. What happened between the end of the Vanguard in 1955 and the beginning of the Beachhead in 1968? Nobody knows. Well actually, a lot happened - the Beats, the counter-culture, The Doors, the destruction of many old buildings by the city of L.A. - and much more. Researchers can dig out the details and many people still live in Venice who experienced much of this time period. But there is no one place, a newspaper, to dig into all the events of the time.

Without a newspaper, some of the collective memory is lost. The first issue of the Beachhead explained to 1968 Venetians who Abbot Kinney was and what he had done. Some people already knew the story, but others didn't have a clue (who was that bearded man on the post office mural?). When the Beachhead began publishing in December 1968, there simply wasn't any other media source for the people of Venice. Oh sure, there was the Santa Monica Evening Outlook - called the "Evening Out-

rage" by Venetians - that vilified Venice in nearly every issue. The Los Angeles papers, The Times and the Herald-Examiner, mostly ignored Venice.

Venice did have informal methods for disseminating local news. They included the Lafayette Cafe at the corner of Ocean Front Walk and Westminster, Juergen's no-name restaurants, which were identified by preexisting signs on the outside of the buildings, including "Da Driftwood" and "NuPars." Other good places for news and rumors included the benches that lined Ocean Front Walk, the old wooden Pagodas and the Boardwalk, itself, especially around sunset.



There was Val's Pharmacy, a drug store in the big brick building that's east of Pacific and south of Windward. When Moe Stavnezer became the pharmacist, locals came in just to find out what was going on. Moe seemed to know everything that was about to befall Venice. He became Venice's pre-eminent expert and activity with the California Coastal Commission and rallied the community many times to defeat big and ugly projects planned for our town.

This was before hordes of tourists descended on Venice. In the 60s and early 70s, most people wandering the Ocean Front Walk were Venetians who were familiar with one another, if not by name, then by face. Nowadays, many Venetians avoid the Walk, especially on summer weekends unless they have out of town company visiting that wants to see "the sights."

Where were all the tourists, if not at the beach, in the old days? For one thing, it was harder to get to Venice after the Red Cars stopped running and before the freeways were built. Venice was just a foggy derelict at the far end of Venice Blvd. A "slum by the sea," as Larry Lipton called it. In addition, it had a bad reputation, even though it was probably safer then than it is now. No self-respecting kids from the Valley would come to Venice. They'd go to Zuma or some other Malibu beach. Inner-city kids would

come down, but they were always at risk of being hassled by the police. We had two motorcycle gangs - the Hells Angels in the canals and Satan's Slaves on the Boardwalk. But they'd pretty much leave the locals alone.

Probably the main reason why Venice was avoided was that it was integrated, at least as much as any American city could be 50 years ago. Back then, and to a lesser extent today, Black people scared the hell out of suburban whites. Since then, the proportion of African-Americans in Venice has been declining, although not fast enough for many speculators, real estate agents and developers. Venice has also had a long-time Chicano community, going back to the Machados, who owned Venice by virtue of a land grant from the King of Spain. Latinos also scare white people, who think they are all knife-wielding gang members just waiting for the opportunity to cut their throats. The ubiquitous V13 artwork helped to keep Venice for the locals.

When the Beachhead began in 1968, more than half the population of Venice was under the poverty line. For Blacks and Latinos, this was due to institutionalized racism. For the white poets, artists and occasional workers, this was a lifestyle.

Beginning in the early 1950s, the disaffected veterans, gays, intellectuals and malcontents ended up in Venice where they created their own Beat community, which was probably more authentic, and underground, than those in San Francisco and New York. It was natural that the 60s generation found fertile ground among the Beats of Venice. Just as the Beats did not call themselves "beatniks," the 60s generation did not call themselves "hippies." For the most part, if we called ourselves anything, it was "freaks" or "heads." Hence the *Beachhead*. You won't find the term hippie in the early Beachheads, unless as a derogatory term used by a "straight," as we called those who didn't get it.

There was always a strong anarchist tendency among Venetians. This is not surprising since most Venetians of that time were well-read and often came from non-conformist families whose parents might have been communists or bohemians themselves.

Life in 50s and 60s Venice revolved around the local community. Most of us avoided Los Angeles unless we had business with The Man - social workers, courts, police, etc. We had everything we needed or wanted - which wasn't much - in our foggy city by the Bay. Even with low rents, we sometimes had to venture into the the straight world to earn some money. My

-continued on page 14

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Swine Flu: Nothing To Sneeze At

By Greta Cobar

Flu season is in full bloom, but most of us are still pondering about what to do. The dilemmas surround not only the regular flu shot, but also the swine flu shot; not only seeing the doctor or sitting at home, but also taking Echinacea or antibiotics.

It's funny how sophisticated we are and how intelligent we think of ourselves, and yet a virus, something that can only be seen with an electron microscope and is seen by many as too under-developed to even be considered a form of life, can cause so much pandemonium.

The flu is caused by viruses. Because viruses are really tiny and under-developed, they can't survive on their own. What they do is invade our cells, make us sick for a few days, and provide us with life-long immunity against all identical viruses.

Meaning that once you get sick with a virus, you are pretty much protected from ever getting sick with that same virus again. That is why you only got chicken pox one time. And also, if you didn't get it, you are still at risk.

As nasty as flu viruses can get, it's nice to know that we can only get them one time. However, the bad news is that a different flu virus comes around every year, and so that is why we pretty much get the flu once a year.

The flu shot promises to prevent it by providing that same immunity that comes after having been sick. It puts into your body an inactive version of the virus that it is supposed to prevent. That way the virus cannot make you sick. However, almost more often than not the flu virus doesn't work.

Why is it that the concept of vaccine goes back all the way to BC, but modern medicine still cannot get the simple flu shot right? Well, what happens is the flu shot has to start being manufactured early in the summer, while the flu virus doesn't come around till mid or late fall.

And because a different flu virus comes around every year, they don't know in June which flu virus will come around in October. They decide which virus to put in the vaccine based on an educated guess, known as a hypothesis. It's almost no wonder that they got it more wrong than right.

While some of us might choose not to take the vaccine because of its questionable efficacy, others are afraid that the flu shot will make them sick with the flu. Ironically enough, the side-effects of the flu shot are extremely similar to the flu itself: runny nose, congestion, sore throat, fever, cough.

This year, because swine flu (or H1N1) is considered more deadly than the usual flu, some groups of people were urged to get vaccinated. However, more than half of all adult Americans didn't want to get the swine flu vaccine, with possibly dangerous side-effects being the main reason.

Swine flu came around for the first recorded time in 1918, when it killed 500,000 people in the US alone. Then in 1976, at the military base Fort Dix, in New Jersey, 14 people became sick with swine flu and one

person died. Because of memories from 1918, the government immediately launched a major vaccination campaign that immunized 45 million people in 10 weeks. However, the magnitude of the epidemic was extremely over-inflated, as nobody besides that one soldier at Fort Dix ever died. On the other hand, 25 people ended up dead and about 500 paralyzed because of the swine flu vaccine of 1976.

And that is why most people are afraid of it today.

As far as the virus is concerned, today's swine flu appears to be more serious than it was in 1976, but less than it was in 1918. So far, it is estimated that about 4000 people died of swine flu in the US in 2009, and the virus is thought to have reached its peak and be on the decline.

Overall, swine flu is similar to the seasonal flu as far as symptoms are concerned: fever, cough, muscle aches. What is different, however, is that swine flu is far more likely to cause severe illness in young, healthy people.

While vaccines were urged for swine flu prevention, Tamiflu was prescribed to blunt symptoms. However, Tamiflu cannot cure the flu. The only thing it can do is reduce symptom severity and duration of illness by about one day if taken within the first day or two of getting sick. Bad deal. And on top of it not being much help, its use was discouraged in people with only mild symptoms because of unpleasant side-effects present in a significant minority of the people who take it. So it looks like Tamiflu could actually make you feel worst instead of better.

Another thing that many people run after are antibiotics, which are only available with a prescription. Even though it is a known, undisputed fact that antibiotics do not work against the flu, doctors still prescribe them because they have nothing else to hand out to patients desperate for a miracle pill. If the doctor were to send you home and tell you the truth, which is that there is no cure for the common flu, that you have to stay home and relax, he would probably have one less patient.

We live in a pill-addicted society and we expect to be cured without having to take the time out to stay home and rest a little. Most people can't even afford to take time off, mainly out of fear of losing their jobs.

As innocent as a useless antibiotic prescription might seem, it can actually make us unable to treat diseases that we could easily get rid of just a few years ago. Over-using antibiotics, such as taking them when we don't need them (example: for the flu) creates bacteria that are resistant to antibiotics. This means that the antibiotic cannot kill the bacteria anymore.

And this is important because half of all antibiotic prescriptions in the United States are not necessary. And also because now, for the first time in 50 years, bacterial infections can kill us as our antibiotics are becoming useless.

Remember that every time you take a pill, someone is making money off of it.

It used to be that celebrities died from illegal drug overdoses, but now they're dying off prescription drugs instead. Yes, your doctor is your new drug dealer.

So instead of flocking to your doctor's office, where you are pretty much guaranteed exposure to nothing but germs off the other patients and side-effects off the medication, fight the power of advertisement by choosing to take no pharmaceuticals. A better way to prevent and cure the flu is to keep your body strong and healthy. The better shape your body is in, the least likely you are to get sick. So make sure you get plenty of rest, drink lots of water, eat fruits and vegetables, exercise and relax. You can also wash your hands and all that, but the flu virus is airborne, which means that you can get it just by breathing. Well, if you are feeling unwell with the flu, the best things to do

are stay home, rest and drink lots of liquids. Although many will swear either by chicken soup, orange juice, vitamin D, Zinc or Echinacea, none of those will be as good as rest and liquids. Your body has to fight off the virus, and rest and liquids are its best helpers.

So be brave enough to fight the flu on your own, with whatever you think works for you (your beliefs can also help or hurt you). My friend swears by garlic and oranges, and I am sure those work for him. My mom advocates hot baths in salt. I like Emergen-C, that fuzzy stuff with electrolytes. So follow your heart and your mind more than your doctor.



Political cartoon by Khalil Bendib

When it comes to over-the-counter pain killers such as Tylenol, Aspirin Cold and Flu or Advil, they won't help either. All they'll do is numb your nerves to ease the symptoms. That's why they're called "pain killers," but they are not able to prevent or cure anything. It is always better to find the cause of the problem and eliminate it than it is to mask the symptoms with pain-killers. Although they may make you feel better for the time being, they will not help cure your illness.

And don't forget about side-effects. For example, Tylenol is the number one cause of acute liver failure in the US, and about 100 people die of unintentional Tylenol overdose every year. Just because anybody can buy it just about everywhere, does not make it safe.

Venice Quiz

The Beachhead sent a questionnaire to our loyal readers who are on our email list to tell us who they are and what they liked about Venice. Here are the aggregated results. If you would like to be on the list (2 or 3 messages a month), send an email to Beachhead@freevenice.org.

1. How long have you lived in Venice?

Answers range from 5 to 47 years.

2. Were you born in Venice (not in a Santa Monica hospital)?

No one who responded was born in Venice. Were you?

3. Who's the oldest person in Venice?

Nominations included Navalette Tabor Bailey and Chuck Bloomquist. "The oldest ones whom I have known are no longer with us. I think they should be entered here. I think that there should be a graveyard in Venice for anyone who has lived here for more than 20 years. It should be most magnificent and noble place with 1920ies gravestones and standing right above Ocean Front Walk overlooking the ocean. Grass not kept too tidy."

4. Who's the most significant person in Venice history (excluding Abbot Kinney), and why?

- Rick Davidson or Steve Clare – they started/maintained institutions. Griot/poetry P&F Beachhead, Town Council, HCC carpentry collective, Development issues, VCHC
- John Haag, Steve Clare, Werner Scharf – their visions
- John Haag – he started the Beachhead, Peace & Freedom and everything Venice has become.
- John Haag. He founded the Peace and Freedom Party and The Venice Beachhead
- Jim Smith. The way he is determined to protect, to inform, to help ALL the people of Venice.
- George Carlin
- Olga Palo & Moe Stavnezer
- Rick Davidson
- Arnold Springer – major early Free Venice Beachhead Leader . . . (political activist) . . . instrumental in getting senior housing.
- Jim Morrison. Poet, singer, rock star.
- Marylou Johnson
- Irving Tabor
- Arthur Reese
- Stacy Peralta

5. What was it like in Venice in the 1930s? 40s? 50s? 60? (if you were here)

- Gritty, grimy, full of dreams, dog shit, blooming jasmine, quiet of joy
- 1960 – Colorful. Tourist-free; sunglasses + hat – booth-free on Boardwalk.
- The sixty time cool, compact village, everywhere you turn meet friends
- As my friend used to say when we lived on Sunset Avenue (1959 – 1961): "Some days you go out for a stroll on the boardwalk and everybody is beautiful and interesting. Other days it looks as though everybody crawled out from under a rock."
- I arrived in 1963. Venice was a "slum by the sea" full of low income families, retired folks, bikers, friendly neighborly folks. Very spacious in that there were many vacant lots and one story residences.
- Some would fish off the Venice Pier, take it to a fish market on "hamburger square" and exchange the fresh catch for fresh smoked fish . . . at that time Bonita was the general catch. Later we caught lots of crabs and we dug for clams in the ballona channel at low tide in the winter.
- The boardwalk on Ocean Front Walk was always empty in the winter and pleasant to walk on everyday.
- The 60's were a time of freedom because of new attitudes, pot, acid and low rents.
- 70's – hippies, Hell's Angels and elderly Jewish refugees owned the board walk and there
- NO vending of any kind. Heavenly.

6. When was the Golden Age of Venice?

Yet to come; 1960 - 1980; 1965 – 1975; Ahh . . . the 60's; Right now; 1970 – 1985; I say around 1978, during yearly Venice Canal Festivals; It could be now, if we take Venice back from the forces of gentrification & commercialization; Now is always the golden age; 1920s. 1905-25 (cityhood); 1968—75; For me? Mid 70's – post birth control, pre-aids; It is and always will be "The Now;" Early 1970s - Amazing Times. I don't think there was ever a Golden Age of Venice. I loved it in 1951 and in 1956 and from 1959 to this good day. It is always changing and we wail and gnash our teeth about gentrification and development and so on, as well we should, but in spite of all that one would and never will mistake Venice for Costa Mesa.

7. What's the best form of government for Venice?

- A Republic with a requirement of education in any issue you vote upon.
- Socialist – anarchist
- None.
- Messy Democracy
- I don't know if being a part of Los Angeles is ideal, but it's what we've got for now & for quite some time to come.
- Meritocracy, elected by Instant Runoff, hmmm benevolent dictatorship of the proletariat.
- Democratic...real democracy.
- Cityhood
- Living somewhere, where we operate as a community is already a dream.--I love the activism and
- Participation.
- Cityhood & Self-determination
- A dictatorship of the proletariat.
- A dictatorship with me as dictatrorix
- I suspect that Venice, as a separate entity, is ungovernable.
- Self government. Free Venice!

8. Who is your favorite Venice poet? Venice singer?

Venice painter? Venice plumber?

- Singer – Suzie; Painter – Emily Winters; Plumber – Joseph Vince Lopez, Stewart Perkoff, Adrian Prober, Suzy Williams and S. Cohan
- Actor – Viggo Mortenson/Emily Winters, mural painter extraordinaire.
- Lawrence Ferlinghetti when he visited in 1967
- Bob Alexander/Sam Taylor.
- (Poet) Panos Douvos; (Painter) Billy Al Bengston – he gifted me a perfect ceramic cup that he made.
- Poets: Jim Morrison & myself (Hal Bogotch). Painter: my wife, Laura Lacamara.
- Poet: Linda Albertano; Singer: Suzy Williams; Painter: Francisco Letelier
- My favorite Venice writer/poet is Carol Fondiller. Although not really Venetian, my favorite poet associated with Venice is Charles Bukowski. My favorite singer is Suzy Williams and my favorite painter is Emily Winters. Favorite former Venetian musicians are Billy Harris, tenor saxophone, and Thomas Tedesco, guitar.
- POET: Philomene Long. SINGER: Suzy Williams. PAINTER: Robby Canal. PLUMBER: I've lived in Thornton Towers for 22 years and I have never seen one. Our handyman does everything.
- Singer Suzy Williams (Sylvia Kohan before she died)
- Poets: Philomene Long, Stuart Perkoff; Singers: Jim Morrison, Bill Crawford, Sam Taylor
- Suzy Williams: Painters: Judy Baca, Emily Winters, Rip Cronk, Frank Strasser
- John Haag; Jim Morrison & Gregory Hines; House painter – Women's painting collective – Johanna & crew; Carol Fondiller, master painter of words; A&B Plumbing
- Krista Schwimmer! Jimm-I V./Punk For Life: Chase: Dran-o.
- Philomene Long, Suzy Williams

9. What's your favorite Venice store?

- Just Tantau
- The Venice Nile Collective
- Pioneer Bakery was the best.
- Je ne sais pais mais El Camino Real was good back in the day
- Rose Café (When it stayed open late & had music, art shows and poetry readings) + Beyond Baroque Culture Center
- Mystic Journey Bookstore.
- Lincoln Hardware
- The Rose Cafe
- Bible Tabernacle Thrift Store
- Venice Department Store no longer in existence...Just Tantau
- Nice Cream, Manny's Bikes, Abbot's Pizza, Angela's Shoe Repair
- Small World Books!
- Venice Cruisers
- Abbot's Habit

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Meet The New Boss Same As The Old Boss?

Charlie Beck, was appointed LAPD police chief on Nov. 17, following the resignation of his patron, William Bratton.

Beck had auditioned in front of a Venice and Mar Vista audience, Nov. 10. The Deputy Police Chief was rushed to the head of the line, apparently at Bratton's urging and Villaraigosa's agreement.



Beck did well with the friendly crowd as lots of uniformed police stood silently. He said he would not do the federal government's job of enforcing immigration laws.

He expressed his sympathy to the family of Devin Petelski, whose life ended when she was broadsided by a police car, Oct. 15. However, the department he now heads may be involved in a coverup of police malpractice that led to the death of a 25-year-old innocent person.



Victim Blamed for Fatal Crash!

By Jim Smith

A police report on the investigation into the death of Devin Petelski on Oct. 15, when she was hit broadside by a police car, has been completed but is not being released to the public. The Beachhead has requested a copy under the state's freedom of information act.

According to the city attorney's office, the report blames Petelski for her own death because she pulled out in front of the police car which was traveling down Venice Blvd.

However, witnesses say the police car was "silent running," that is, without lights of any kind. Several witnesses say the police were also speeding. Will Yeagar, who saw the collision, told the Beachhead that the police car had no lights and swerved to the right at the last minute, hitting Petelski's car in the driver's door.

Police are claiming that the headlights, which were knocked out by the force of the impact, were still hot, meaning that they



Above: Devin's mother, Shaunnah; Councilmember Bill Rosendahl; Capt. Joe Hiltner

had been on when the collision occurred.

But another witness says that the driver of the police car turned its lights off when it turned on to Venice Blvd. from Lincoln Blvd.

The police investigation reportedly found that Petelski was at fault. The fate of the two police officers is confused. Detective Jesus Ravega told the Beachhead last month that they had returned to work, however, Capt. Hiltner told the marchers on Nov. 19 that they were on sick leave.

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100 for the BEACHHEAD

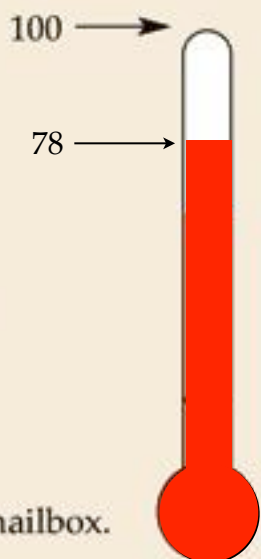
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Beachhead Poets Read
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681 Venice Blvd.

Jim Smith, Hillary Kave, Krista Schwimmer, Karl Abrams, Stuart Perloff, John Thomas, Lawrence Lipson, James Ryan Morris, Frankie Rios, John Thomas.

Celebrate the Free Venice Beachhead's 41st Anniversary with readings by these Beachhead poets: Krista Schwimmer, Jim Smith and Hillary Kave, plus Karl Abrams will read the poetry of Venice's great beat poet, Stuart Perloff. He was the founder of the Venice West Cafe Espresso and, along with Tony Scibella, Frankie Rios, John Thomas, Lawrence Lipson, James Ryan Morris and others who defined the beat experience in Venice in the 1950s and 60s. Perloff's poems appeared regularly in the Beachhead in the 1970s. \$7.

If you want contact information: 310-399-8685 - www.freevenice.org - Beachhead@freevenice.org

Whether or not the officers were answering a call at the time of the collision has changed several times. The first statement of the police stated that they were not on a call. Then another spokesperson said they may have been, but had not had time to radio in that they were. Now, police say they were definitely on a call.

What is Silent Running?

When the marchers arrived at the Pacific Station, they were met by Capt. Joe Hiltner. He told the crowd that he had a prepared statement. Incredibly, instead of responding to the marchers demands that silent running be stopped, he launched on a tirade against "irresponsible" statements in the press (see it on YouTube at: <http://bit.ly/5Cyo2G>).

When asked a question about silent running, he said he was "not familiar with the term."

While silent running is no longer officially condoned by the LAPD, it is a general practice of many officers, particularly when prowling streets where drug dealing or other crimes may be taking place.

The police report on the collision has not been released by the LAPD, but the city attorney's office has been leaking parts of it to gullible media, including the Times and the Weekly (KPCC-FM reporting has been much more balanced).

The L.A. Times quoted assistant city attorney Bob Pulone (whose name it misspelled) as saying the police car was barely speeding - 41 to 45 mph. The speed limit on Venice Blvd. is 40 mph.

Pulone further claimed that Petelski was at fault since he claimed that she failed to stop and failed to yield to a police vehicle.

See last month's Beachhead for two reports on the collision and aftermath - <http://bit.ly/5oLQws> and <http://bit.ly/4obAsb>



A March was held Nov. 19 against the police practice of silent running, which led to the death of Devin Petelski on Oct. 15. More than 200 people rallied at the memorial site at Venice and Glyndon, then 120 completed the 2.5 mile trek to the LAPD Pacific Division at Culver and Centinella. They were joined by Councilmember Bill Rosendahl along the way. Above: Part of the memorial to Devin Petelski.

THANK YOU VENETIANS - ALL OF YOU WHO HAVE SERVED ON THE BEACHHEAD COLLECTIVE THROUGH THE YEARS!

- | | | | | |
|-------------------------------|--|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
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at Beyond Baroque (Old City Hall)
681 Venice Blvd.

Celebrate the Free Venice Beachhead's 41st Anniversary with readings by these Beachhead poets: Krista Schwimmer, Jim Smith and Hillary Kaye, plus Karl Abrams will read the poetry of Venice's great beat poet, Stuart Perkoff. He was the founder of the Venice West Cafe Espresso and, along with Tony Scibella, Frankie Rios, John Thomas, Lawrence Lipton, James Ryan Morris and others who defined the beat experience in Venice in the 1950s and 60s. Perkoff's poems appeared regularly in the Beachhead in the 1970s. \$7.

If you want contact information: 310-399-8685 - www.freevenice.org - Beachhead@freevenice.org

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"I didn't say I'd rather die." The Beats in 1959 Venice

By Bill Fleeman

Long hair, beard, looking like Raskolnikov 'bout to kill his landlady, back in Baltimore I didn't fit. I read "On the Road" in '58, "The Holy Barbarians" early '59. Then I read a U.S. highway roadmap. Broke, no car, I bummed money from a friend and a ride out of town to I 94 West.

My friend said, "Why you wanna go to California, man? Get a job at the Chevy plant. Find a girl, get married, buy a house, have some kids. We could visit back and forth, go on Sunday picnics, get drunk together."

I didn't say I'd rather die.

My friend dropped me off at a good place to hitch a ride, drove up the road a ways, made a u-turn, then tore passed about eighty in a blur of teeth and a roar of wind. Then I turned my back to the morning sun, turned my face away from the city of my birth, away from my family, my friends, and my home, and set my eyes on the long, long road that vanished to a point in the west. 9:30 AM, August, 15th, 1959. I was nineteen years old, had forty dollars in my jeans. In the bottom of my battered suitcase, under my socks and shorts, lay my sketch pad, some pencils, a journal and a pen. Standing thumbout waiting for a ride, I thought of Thomas Wolfe. Inside my head I heard, "You Can't Go Home Again," and felt sad because I knew it was true.

Two rides got me to Chicago, where Route 66 began. Four days later, three nights at the weed hotel, I landed in L.A., then rode the bus to Venice.

At Pacific Avenue and Market Street, the bus squealed its air brakes, belched smoke, gave one final lurch, and opened its doors. I hauled my suitcase down the aisle and stepped out. Walking along the sidewalk under the plaster arches that held up the facades of the buildings along Market Street, I saw the crumbling genius of Abbot Kinney. Reaching the Promenade, I sat down on a bench to rest. Picking up my suitcase, I walked across the sand and stopped and stood at the edge of the surf—the edge of the continent, the end of the road. I saw the sea rising and falling like a living thing breathing in and breathing out, heard the roar of the waves crashing on shore, smelled the salty-sweet odor of kelp scattered on the sand in the sun, felt the steady west wind blowing from a thousand miles away, tasted the salt spray coming in off the tops of the breakers rolling in. The suitcase fell from my hand. I fell on my knees, and wept.

In 1959 the Venice West Espresso Café was at 7 Dudley Avenue. It was, to us, a holy place, where the Muse hung out, where we went to say our sacred poetry. It was where some of us slept when the cops roused us off the beach, or it was too cold to sleep on the sand. Stuart Z. Perkoff, greatest basso poet reader ever, created the Café. Tony Scibella painted the sign, Wally Berman

the first graffiti: "Art is love is god." John Kenevan was proprietor when I arrived, then John and Anna Haag till the Nazi council closed it down in '65. Deep-felt thanks, Sponto for resurrecting the place and keeping the spirit alive.

Standing outside looking in, this is what you saw through the window: Long, narrow room. Paintings hanging on lath and plaster walls. Mis-matched tables and chairs either side of a narrow aisle. Coffee-stained table tops, butt burned, candle dripped. Indefinable things embedded in the wax. School house lights shining down through smoky air thick enough to cut. Gleaming copper espresso maker standing on the counter, hissing and steaming like some kinda Jules Verne doomsday machine. Hi-Fi squatting on a high shelf bolted to the wall. There were almost fistfights caused by the tuning knob. Would it be jazz blaring full tilt boogie out of the box, would it be classical played down low? Jazz won because most wrists that twisted the knob liked Monk, hated Mozart.

John Kenevan, shrapnel-scarred painter poet pacifist hero of the Korean war, leaning elbows on counter willing to stake any beatnik landing broke on Venice Beach craving freedom, friendship, longing for a home, to a burger or one free night at the Grand Hotel. I made the scene same year, same month painter poet computer genius John Thomas appeared. Saw him one night at the Café sitting at a table alone, big as a lumber jack, brooding, bearded, chin in hand, staring into the candle flame. Back in Baltimore he'd helped build UNIVAC. When he saw they were going to build another one called MANIAC and make bigger bombs with it, he hitchhiked to Venice West. People played plastic chess late at night by candle light.

"Shush!" the Muse told me back then "You're too young, don't know nothin' yet. Listen. Watch." So when the poets read on

Friday nights, that's what I did. I listened, I watched. There was Stuart Perkoff, John Thomas, Frankie Rios, Tony Scibella, John Haag, Jimmy Morris, Maurice Lacy. Other geniuses too, but I don't remember their names. Some came later, after I hitchhiked back East August '63. Philomene Long came later. Ex-nun poet movie maker genius, Philomene busted out of the convent and landed on Venice Beach in time to nurse Stuart Perkoff through death by cancer. She held Stuart's hand till the Lady came to claim him. Then, only recently, she helped beloved husband John Thomas finish his earthwalk poet path. Reluctantly, she let go his hand. After reading, the poets passed the hat. People put in quarters and dimes. Instead of applauding, we snapped our fingers so the LAPD wouldn't close us down for making noise. Curtis Smith, a.k.a. Tamboo, made poetry on his conga drum. Larry Lipton all in gray wearing a laborer's cap sat in back and grinned.

John and Anna Haag took over the café in '62. Anna, sweet, sweet Anna. "Ciao! Bill. Ciao!" Coal black eyes, candlelight glitter. The night John Haag first read his poem "A History Lesson," '59 or '60, the seed that grew the Beachhead and the Peace and Freedom Party was planted in apolitical beatnik soil. Unlike Dos Passos, John Haag didn't turn sharp right at mid-life and disappoint us all. And Stuart's Lady the Muse who gave him words and moved his hand is still Queen of Bohemia, dressed in black like Philomene Long.

Except Frankie Rios, all of those Venice Beach Beat poets who didn't know they'd mentored me are all gone now—gone the way of all flesh like Butler said. But you'll hear the echo of their words bouncing off the brick wall of the Cadillac across the street from Venice West. You'll see their spirits moving like shadows down Promenade foggy nights.



Venice West, circa 1964. Photo by Charles Brittin

Venice Quiz

—continued from page 7

Letter on Medical Marijuana

—continued from page 2

tive of the City of Los Angeles. We do that every moment in life because life is about choices.

I have a medical marijuana card. Typically, I eat marijuana to curb my painful menstruation cycles, and as one of the ways to heal my body, mind and spirit. There was a time when I had breast cancer. I will never have cancer again because I've transformed my life. The mind shift includes but is not limited to meditation, exercise, rest, adopting a vegan lifestyle, ridding myself of toxic thinking and toxic relationships, laughing, loving and eating and smoking cannabis.

I support the sale of marijuana and full legalization of marijuana, along with production of industrialized hemp. Until then, I advise that the key participants in the movement to "Free Hemp" work together, and resist the urge to pick a side. The future is now.

Free Hemp. Free Venice.

Lisa Green

State Assembly candidate, 53rd District
Green Party of California
www.votelisagreen.net



10. What's your favorite book or film about Venice (or set in Venice)? Why?

- Feeding the horses to feed the sparrows - a moment in time
- You have to ask? Touch of Evil
- Venice Coloring Book b/c it was written & drawn by friends/family.
- The Beachhead for sure: the only source of truth.
- Feeding the horses by feeding the sparrows.
- Call Someplace Paradise
- I like the movie Harry and Tonto with Art Carney showing the good side of Venice, also the roles Venice played in the Orson Welles flick Touch of Evil for the more grubby side.
- INCISION. Because I made it, it has Philomene Long in it, the old pier in it, and it's damn good.
- No One Here Gets Out Alive (about the Doors)
- Southland Tales, because I am a neo-marxist revolutionary.
- Venice, Coney Island of the Pacific by Jeffrey Stanton; Kid in America by Tony Scibella (Venice Beats in the 50s). Films: Touch of Evil (Venice as Tijuana); Feeding the Sparrows by Feeding the Horses (Venice struggle for survival).
- "Number our Days", academy award winning short documentary about the people at the Israel Levin Center when Morrie Rosen was the director. Heartwarming and chilling.
- Dogtown & The Z-Boys...The Doors Movie ("Blood Stains The Roofs And The Palm Trees Of Venice")

11. And most importantly, how has the Beachhead influenced your life?

- Kept me connected to the community; kept me thinking, smiling, cursing, laughing MPS
- I worked on the first issue. My best friend & I designed the original Dove logo (out of green duct tape). (Gina Lee)
- The Beachhead was an important experience in collectivity and community
- Far too much for this questionnaire
- Provided me with cooperative extended family with ongoing history
- I love the Beachhead. A place where Socialism is not a dirty word. A place where Poetry is elevated to its rightful place (page 9). Keep up the good work!
- Excellent reporting on local issues; Passionate Journalism
- Helps me feel better informed.
- Been reading it since it started, I now understand what life is all about. Wow!
- I was a member of the collective from 1975-80 and participation helped learn how to work well with others without power relationships and to find my voice
- I worked on very nearly every issue of the Beachhead published from late 1977 through about 1982. Some of my best friends to this day came from that effort.
- I have always had a good deal of sympathy with Jefferson's remark: "Were it left to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers, or newspapers without a government, I should not hesitate a moment to prefer the latter," so when the Beachhead went "Up for Grabs" I signed up.
- The Beachhead has kept me informed for years on the goings on in Venice, and keeps me connected to the community so many fine Venetians who love Venice as I do. The Beachhead since 1968 has been Venice's advocate, has always been here for us to truly protect and to serve our beautiful, unique and historic town.
- If not for the Beachhead, where else would I spend my Monday Nights????
- It's given me a new way to understand community.

Even Steven

That big bare knuckle sandwich
made L's face black and blue
on island of the purple hills
pray hear G's point of view

A triple scoop of rocky road
oughta make G bow and scrape
L wants more attention
G needs to escape

The small fruit with a pull-ring
sez G's a grenadier
when L puts in two earplugs
nobody's safe 'round here

With conflict resolutions skills
our two can be as one
'til G steps back so rudely
and L comes all undone

A heartfelt frown and pouting lips
move G close to the door
when L's shoes dance a dervish twist
they wax the shiny floor.

—Hal Bogotch

left is always right

By Patrick Vincent

She mentions altruism
as if gossip's not her thing
and that the door will slam on you
if you don't see life her way
and she talks herself above you
'cuz she's learned too much to not prove,
that she knows it better than the rest
of women
men too

she's got a
bleeding heart for her purists
all of the feminists with a language for sex
and the real idealists
who votes in easy brands, and
left is always right.

and
she agrees that
the word 'prick' is inoffensive
thanks in part to common usage
but the word 'cunt'
sure gets her every time
every time

lesson learned
I guess...

left is always right.

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Krista Schwimmer
Karl Abrams reading Stuart Perkoff
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Eat Your Fill of Gold

By Mark Lipman

Rolling through the past,
into the future.
Those who do not read history,
are bound to repeat it.
Those who do not learn from their mistakes,
are bound to suffer,
rolling into the future.

A locomotive out of control.
Armageddon comes not too soon
for the computer age.

HURRY UP - FASTER

GET TO THE END.

The end is closer than you think.
Civilizations lost, in the blink of an eye.
Dinosaur men,
stampeding towards extinction.

Never once did Midas
consider the consequences.

Eat your fill of gold.

Your greedy lies.

Blind your eyes.

The womb is dead.

What good is a fortune
to the stillborn,
to a lifeless head,
to America,
owned by foreign investors.
Foreclosed.
Sold to the highest bidder.
Your dreams are now
made in China.

Junk bonds.
Junk food.
Junk life.

Landfill.

That is what you are,
what you have become.

Fear has consumed you
and left you with nothing.
Fear has killed you.
Fear has.
Fear.

Afraid to live.
Afraid to die.

Eat your paper gold.

EAT - EAT - EAT

your worthless fill.

CONSUME
EAT
SHIT
DIE

BUY NOW BUY

EAT
CONSUME
DIE

SHIT

Is that all?
Is that the best you've got?

A pile of shit
in your greedy hand.

BUY - BUY - BUY

SHIT

BUY - SHIT - NOW

EAT

CONSUME

DIE.

Old Friends

I have an old piano
with many teeth broken or not working
they stick and refuse to play
but I play around them, or through them.
I have old friends
who other people object to
who have many flaws
but they are my old friends
and I know where most of those flaws come
from
and I work around them.
Nobody's perfect, they say
me least of all
but they expect others to be perfect
without seeing the flaws in themselves.
I can't throw out my old piano
it was given to me by a beautiful lady
who turned out to be my very good friend.
And I can't throw out my old friends
who some started out as enemies,
but turned into my very good friends.
We sing out loud, very loud, at sunset
and no, we're rarely in tune or in harmony,
but we think we sound great, and we're still
singing.
Even if it's missing some teeth, old pianos
can still sing.

– Mary Getlein

at the tree at Glyndon and Venice

I did not come to gape at this, the site,
Where madness flung its head, nor question
right Or wrong, nor to cast blame, nor level
doubt About the circumstances; just take
note Of transitory life; a lovely girl, Just get-
ting off of work; fate would recall, And oc-
cupy her space, as to select A lamb for sac-
rifice. Who can detect Such danger when it
busts out of its stall? Without a trace of
warning, to impale The innocent and cause
a few to gloat With cocksure arrogance; fi-
nally brought To bear, a mighty hammer in
the night. I came to bask in her angelic
light.....R.F.Wagner, Jr., Venice.

Cast Iron

by hillary kaye

No more cast iron thought upon the door,
going nowhere.
I am not here to be a victory
to weigh against myself
The iron is too hot
it burns
Too much flesh has been taken
in the name of improvement
not mine to lie upon an open pit.
The charcoal is red like this room
black like this silence
This is mine
This paper no more no less.
I can not judge
or be forsaken
If I love.
The air the movement of your body
It is in my eyes my flesh
Who can take it from me.
I lie here
Darkness light they know my name.
Here between some barrier forbidden wall
of pain.
The cats sit quietly as I do no more no less
I know that I am dying while I rest.
There is so much behind any door.

Big Lots

is a great store
full of all kinds
of junk
that even
the poor can afford.

i wonder, though,
who buys
those garden figurines?
You know,
the elves & fairies
the santa's & angels
that posture & pose
in the air?

There are so many
of them
that i know
someone likes them
collects them
like antiques
or coins or even cats.

They must be
ashamed
of their habit
as i never see
a single person
standing in line
holding one.

And i don't
expect
i ever will,
do you?

–krista schwimmer

Come Home With Us

(a collaboration)

By Jim Smith

Is that you, Jim
Lying in the cold Paris ground?

We have a birthday present
for you this December 8th

We're taking you home to Venice
Back to the *chaos and disorder*

Paris says you can go
In fact, you've overstayed your welcome

Too many of your *children of night*
spoiling P re Lachaise's tranquility

Come home with us, Jim
Back to the *roofs and palm trees of Venice*

Come on, Jim, gonna take a little ride
Down, down by the ocean side

Thanks to The Doors
we've got a Gulfstream waiting

The Celebration is about to begin
We're going back to Venice

The town of your rebirth
where the Muse touched you

A tomb on Windward Plaza
Parked beside the ocean

Your songs and poems will play
softly all night and day

In the end, O Dionysus
Death makes Angels of us all

Come home with us, Jim
and live in Venice, once again

This Paper Is A Poem

Made for Each Other: The Story of a Town and a Newspaper

—continued from page 5

work record was typical: telephone installer, post office employee, welfare father, taxi driver, waxed boats in the Marina (ugh), sold lids, GI Bill and construction work. Women could usually find employment as cocktail waitresses and receptionists in the Marina, a place that most Venetians saw as a representation of all that was wrong with society. Signs were popular that said, "Venice is not Marina del Rey."

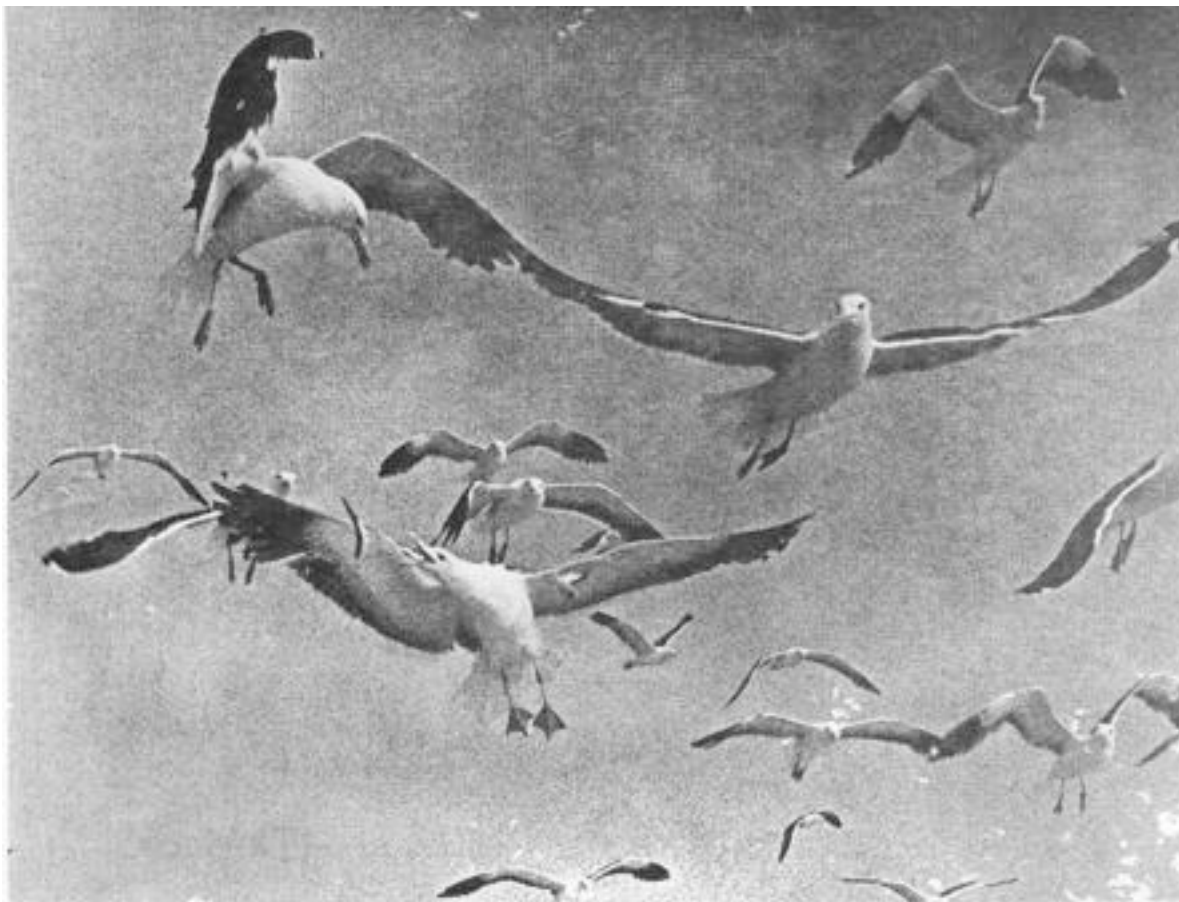
And then came developers. They were met by an aroused community that gathered together, first as the Peace and Freedom Party, then as its local manifestation, "Free Venice." This became part of the name of a number of organizations that took on one or another of the problems we confronted, or promoted our culture with theater groups, child care and food co-ops. The Beachhead was one of these Free Venice creations.

The early Beachheads were strident. Each issue usually raised a battle cry. Venice's very survival was at stake. Los Angeles' Mayor Sam Yorty famously said that Venice should be bulldozed in its entirety so developers could start from scratch. There were plans to turn the remaining canals into yacht harbors, run a freeway down Electric Avenue (thereby blocking Oakwood's access to the beach), and build hi-rises along Ocean Front Walk. These were no idle threats. In the early 60s, between 25 and 40 percent of Venice's Ocean Front buildings were leveled, including the beautiful St. Mark's Hotel at Windward. Others had their top floors chopped off, by order of L.A.'s Code Enforcement Department. The "strategic hamlet" of Ocean Park was destroyed. Blocks were bulldozed and replaced by hi-rises. This object lesson was not lost on Venice activists.

Venetians rose to the occasion and defeated all of the schemes to turn Venice into a haven for the rich. Developers had to back off and become content with incremental encroachment instead. The Beachhead chronicled these new forays by speculators and the community's fightback. The paper

educated and agitated with each issue. From the beginning, poetry was a part of the Beachhead, just as it is part of Venice.

Our sleepy community was discovered by mass media in the early 70s. It became an era of roller blades and boom boxes. What had been the most deserted part of the metropolis became the hottest place for TV



news. Those who had recently been turning up their noses at Venice, now had to be part of the scene. For the first time since Abbot Kinney's day, wealth intruded on our happy slum. The cohesion of our community was never quite the same. While some moved in with plans to drive the "bums, beats and hippies" out of Venice, many of the newcomers ultimately joined with the old timers in the struggle to preserve Venice as a unique community. Today, they are the old timers.

Some of them even found their way on to the Beachhead Collective. The paper thrived during the late 70s and most of the 80s. Even today, we have to marvel at how issues running 30 or 40 pages could have been put together by an all-volunteer collective - and without the help of computers.

The Beachhead helped elect a Venetian - Ruth Galanter - to the L.A. City Council in 1987, after months of ragging on the incumbent, Pat Russell, who was pro-development. Galanter's election meant access, even appointments to staff positions, for Beachhead types. Many old-time activists were now part of the Establishment. It became more difficult to maintain, let alone expand, community organizations including the Beachhead. The

new Collective at the Beachhead included those who didn't like to compromise with developers, or Playa Vista, even if Galanter was at the helm. Venice activists became split between those who thought Galanter was part of the solution and those who thought she was part of the problem. The paper began appearing less frequently. By the mid-90s it had gone into a coma from which it didn't revive until 2002.

In 2002, two old Beachhead hands - John Haag and Carol Fondiller - and two new ones - Yolanda Miranda and Jim Smith - decided that Venice desperately needed a monthly Beachhead. Development was increasing, the neighborhood council system had been formed, the L.A. city council was planning to impose an unelected council-member on us and the arts were lagging badly. A new Collective was formed consisting of Chuck Bloomquist, Mimi Bogale, Sherry Chovan, Carol Fondiller, Vessy Minkovski, Yolanda Miranda, Calvin Moss, Jim Smith, Alice Stek, and Suzy Williams. Over time, some people left and new people took their places, while three of us continue to plug away.

Has the 21st Century Beachhead been helpful to Venice? We believe we have a "fan base" unlike nearly any other newspaper. When we distribute the new edition to 125 locations around Venice, we always run into people waiting to tear a copy out of our hands. We only wish that more of those "fans" would become part of the Beachhead, at least, distributing it on their block, or writing an occasional article. No matter what, the Beachhead continues to be an important part of the lives of thousands of Venetians. We hope to keep it that way as long as the community continues to support it financially and look forward to reading it.

**White
Chihuahua
For Sale
Best Offer
5 month old
male
310-392-2162**

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CommUnity Events - day by day

Free Venice Beachhead • December 2009 • 15

Tuesday, Dec 1

- 8:15-11:15pm - **Suzy Williams Sings**. Angels, 2460 Wilshire & 25th. Free.

Thursday, December 3

- 7pm - **Burroughs' Subliminal Kiddin'** - live poetry & film. Beyond Baroque.

Friday, December 4

- 7pm - **Arts & Crafts Fair**. California & Electric. 393-1046.
- 7pm - **First Friday** on Abbot Kinney Blvd. - stores open late, snacks, music
- 7:30pm - **The Influence and Impact of William S. Burroughs**, with film by Marc Olmsted. Beyond Baroque. Q&A session follows. Free.
- 8pm - **The Whippoorwill** - a short play by Micah Hales. The Electric Lodge Theater. \$10 online, 15 at the door.

Saturday, December 5

- 1 am - **Groundbreaking on path from canals to the beach** - Avenue 25 and Pacific Ave.
- 12-3pm - **Open House - featuring United Farm Worker's posters**. Center for the Study of Political Graphics. 8124 W. Third Street. Free.
- Noon on - Marathon reading of **William S. Burrough's Naked Lunch**. Prelim sign-up through website is recommended. Beyond Baroque. Free.
- 2-4pm - **War, Media and the Plight of Veterans with Scott Ridder** (former UN Weapons Inspector), **Robert Sheer** (journalist/ author), **Peter Richardson** (author) and **Georg-Andreas Pogany** (Iraq Veteran). Venice United Methodist Church. \$10 suggested donation to benefit The Veterans Project.
- 6pm - Twilight Bridge Lighting Holiday Party.
- 6:30-9pm - **Jingle Bell Rockers** (Venice based singers) - Santa Monica Main St. Extravaganza. Free

Sunday, December 6

- 7:30pm - **Beachhead Poets Read** - Hillary Kaye, Krista Schwimmer, Jim Smith with Karl Abrams reading from the great Beat poet Stuart Perkoff. In celebration of the Beachhead's 41st Anniversary. Beyond Baroque (Old Jail House). Refreshments/wine. \$7.
- 11am - **Minivan Kids Series**: Grammy Award nominated artist Peter Himmelman. Air Conditioned Supper Club, 625 Lincoln Blvd., \$10/adults & \$5/Kids. (Under 2 free). 230-5343.

Monday, December 7

- 6-10pm - **PXL THIS** - 19th Annual Toy Camera Film Festival. Unurban Café. Free. 7pm sign up - **Open Mic on MoZaic Monday** with Zebra Party house band. Hosted by Matt Sedillo, Nickie Black and DJ Noj. Talking Stick. Free

Wednesday, December 9

- 7:30-10:30pm - **Suzy Williams** at Danny's, 23 Windward. Free.

Friday, December 11

- 7:30pm - **Beyond Baroque 40th Anniversary Reading**: Ghasem Batamuntu (saxophonist, drummer, percussionist, and poet, and musician who leads an international ensemble and Will Alexander (poet, novelist, essayist, playwright, and visual artist). Beyond Baroque. Free.
- 8pm - **Christopher Hawley Rollers** from Venice - Rocky mountain/Melodic troubadour songs evoking Fogerty, Cash and Weir. Trip, 2101 Lincoln Blvd. \$8
- 8pm - **Channing Sargent's "Legacy"** - the "excitingly different" LA debut biographical story of her Morman lineage. Also playing 12/12 at 8pm and 12/12 at 2pm. Electric Lodge. \$15.

Saturday, December 12

- 9am-Noon - **Tree Planting Preparation and Soil Moving Project**: please bring wheelbarrows, trucks (if possible) and parents/kids with garden gloves and shovels (big fun). Westminster Elementary School. Corner of Main & Westminster. Snacks provided.

Sunday, December 13

- 10am-1pm - **Jingle Bell Rockers** (Venice based singers) - Santa Monica Farmers Market on Main & Ocean Park. Free.
- 11:45am - **Venice Canals Boat Parade** - Venice Canals (where else). Free.
- 7-10pm - **World Music Night with Stefani Valadez Ensemble** and David Osborn on pan flute. The Talking Stick. \$10 cover plus one drink minimum.

Tuesday, December 15

- 7pm - **Venice Neighborhood Council Board** meets - Westminster School.

Friday, December 18

- 7-10pm - **Subversive Cinema** - Experimental and political films. "The 212 Pier" (old Novel Café) at 212 Pier. Free.
- 7pm-on - **"Winter Celebration"** with Mike the Poet, Zebra Party house band and many others. Hosted by Matt Sedillo, Nickie Black and DJ Noj. Talking Stick. Free.

Saturday, December 19

- 7-10pm - **Jazz Funk Fest** - Live music and poetry. The Talking Stick. Free.

Monday, December 21

- 6-10pm - **7 Dudley Cinema** Experimental Film with live music. Talking Stick. Free.
- 8:15-11:15pm - **Suzy Williams** sings with Stormin' Norman. Angels, 2460 Wilshire & 25th St. Free.

Location Guide

- Abbot Kinney Public Library, 501 S. Venice Blvd, 821-1769
- Beyond Baroque, 681 Venice Blvd. 822-3006
- Danny's Venice Bistro & Bar - 23 Windward.
- Electric Lodge, 1416 Electric Ave, 306-1854, max10@electriclodge.org
- The Good Hurt, 12249 Venice Blvd, www.goodhurt.com
- Hal's Bar and Grill, 1349 Abbot Kinney Blvd., 396-3105 - www.halsbarandgrill.com
- Oakwood Recreation Center, 757 California Avenue.
- Pacific Resident Theatre, 703 1/2 Venice Blvd. 822-8392 - www.pacificresidenttheatre.com
- SPARC - Social and Public Art Resource Center, 685 Venice Blvd. 822-9560 x15.
- Talking Stick Coffee Lounge, 1411c Lincoln Blvd. 450-6052 www.thetalkingstick.net
- United Methodist Church and Auditorium, 2210 Lincoln Blvd. (at Victoria).
- Unurban Coffee House, 3301 Pico Blvd Santa Monica.
- Vera Davis Center, 610 California Avenue.(310) 305-1865. Fax 305-0146.
- Westminster Elementary School, 1010 Abbot Kinney Blvd. (enter auditorium from Westminster Ave.) 606-2015

Ongoing Events

- 10:40am-12:10pm - Saturdays - **AfroCaribe Dance Class** taught by Kimberly Mullen. \$15.
- 12-2pm - Thursdays - **Blues at Uncle Darrow's** featuring "Joe Banks and Friends" 2560 Lincoln Blvd. 310-306-4862. Free.
- 11am to 4pm - December 1 thru May 30 **Skateboard Evolution & Art Exhibit**. Admission \$8, kids under 12 free. California Heritage Museum, 2612 Main St., Santa Monica.
- **Thorton Wilder's Our Town**. December 3, 4, 5, 10,11,12,at 8pm and Dec 6 & 13 at 3pm. 707 Venice Blvd. For reservations call 323-460-2508.
- **Orson Bean's adapted A Christmas Carol**. December 18 at 7:30pm, Dec. 19 & 20 at 5:30pm. First Lutheran Church of Venice, 815 Venice Blvd. No reservation required.

Get Your Local Event Listed

Email your time, date and a brief description to Calendar@freevenice.org by the 20th of the month.

Support Your Local Nonprofit Newspaper

The Beachhead Calendar is a public service to the community of Venice. Our goal is to list free events within Venice. If you charge for your event, please consider taking out a \$25 or larger advertisement.





Happy Holidays from the Beachhead Collective

Left to Right: Karl Abrams, Don Geagan, Amy Dewhurst, Abbot Kinney, Krista Schwimmer, Greta Cobar, Jim Smith.

Absent: Carol Fondiller, Roger Linnett, Lydia Poncé, Alice Stek.

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