

FREE VENICE SINCE 1968 BEACHHEAD



January
2008

#315

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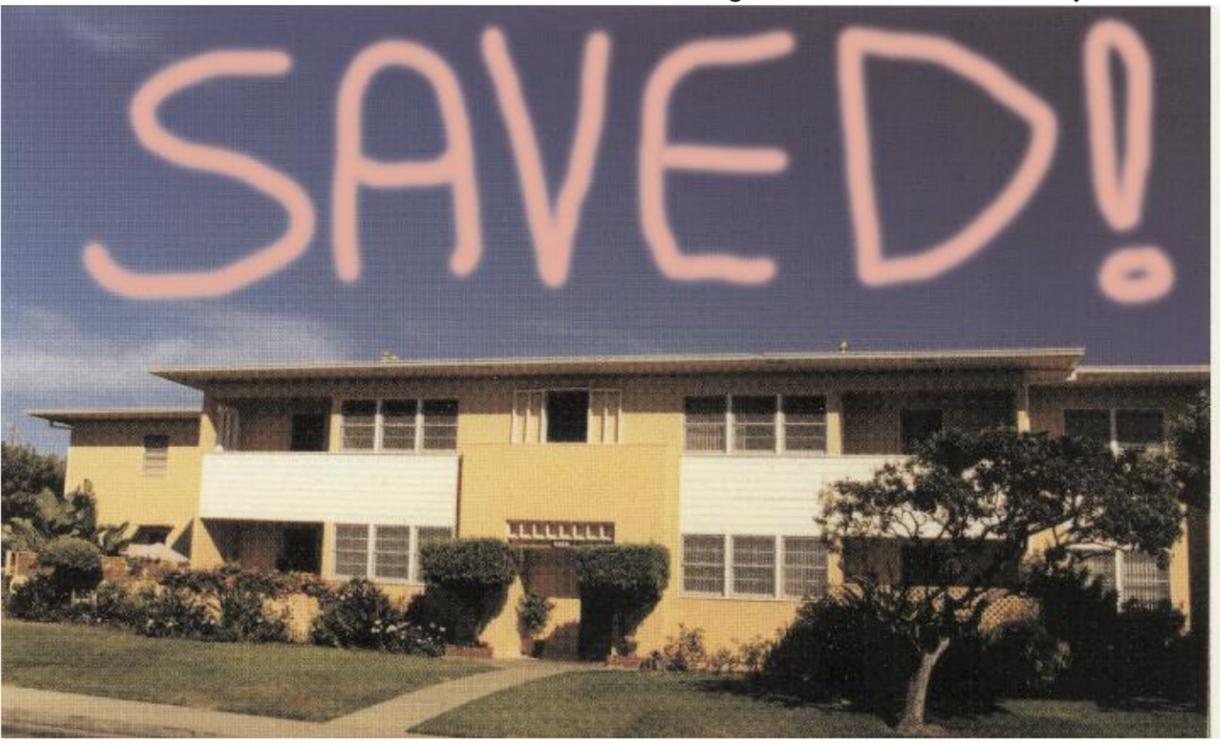
State Supreme Court Deals Double Whammy to Developers

California's Top Court Supports Lincoln Place Tenants, Playa Vista Environmentalists

The Supreme Court of California, last month, refused to hear appeals by AIMCO (the corporate owner of Lincoln Place) and Playa Vista. The Court's action left standing decisions that should allow evicted tenants the right to return to their Lincoln Place homes, and in Playa Vista's case, will stop further construction on the wetlands.

Playa Vista's \$1.1 billion Phase 2 construction has been stopped in its tracks by the successful court action, led by attorney Sabrina Venskus. The Supreme Court let stand an appellate court ruling that PV's environmental review was deficient in several respects.

Lincoln Place tenants still have more legal hoops to jump through, including having a judge return legal possession of their apartments to them. The tenant association now has momentum with them. Their case was precedent setting for tenant rights. AIMCO's scheme to build luxury condos at Lincoln Place appears more dubious with each tenant victory.



Beautiful garden apartments at Venice's Lincoln Place can still house up to 700 families for moderate rents thanks to court decisions and support by L.A. City Councilmember Bill Rosendahl.

When Jack Kerouac Came to Venice

By John Thomas

Jack I didn't know. Never met him. Only saw him once -- not much more than a glimpse, then. And he surely wasn't at his best that night.

What night? Back in 1959 -- late summer, if memory serves me. In Venice. I was running the Gas House and cooking free meals twice a day for some twenty artists, sculptors, writers. Well,



Jack Kerouac by S.C. Jones

Bill Riola came bopping in from the Ocean Front, looking even more amped than usual.

"Hey, man!" he said to me. "Kerouac's out there!"

"Kerouac? Really? Where?"

Bill drew me to the front door and pointed up to the Match Box, a

lesbian bar a block away.

"See 'em all up there? They been drinking their way to Larry Lipton's pad. Wanna go to Larry's? Come on!"

And it was Jack, with a few hangers-on. They were obviously drunk. Jack was shit-faced.

He was trudging along, swigging wine from a half-gallon jug. White port and lemon juice it was, by later report. As they headed north towards Park Avenue and Larry's place, he periodically burped loudly and yelled out into the night.

"I'm a genius! I'm a fuckin' genius!" Over and over. "Listen, I'm a genius!"

They disappeared into the Match Box, only to emerge again, cursing, in a New York minute. Scotty, the double-tough night bartender, would serve no man. The only time I'd gone in, she'd hefted a machete. God's truth. After that I drank (when I drank) at the Bamboo Hut. Peaceful. Just outlaw bikers.

"Well, fuck you too!" Kerouac shouted as they left. "You just eighty-sixed America's greatest living writer! I'm a genius!"

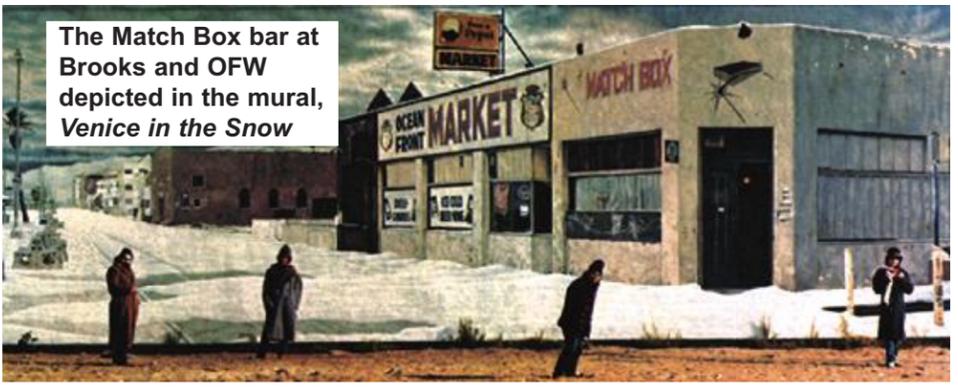
I turned and headed back to the Gas House kitchen, where I'd been cooking barracuda chowder.

"I'll pass, Bill, but you go ahead. You can tell me about it tomorrow."

Which he did. And since Larry Lipton taped everything, I heard the entire evening months later. Not inspiring. Essentially it was Larry asking lame questions and Jack repeating (you knew already, right?), "I'm a fuckin' genius!"

Later, I did try white port and lemon juice. Just once. I don't recommend it.

But let me lay three truths on you. Truth: I loathe most drunks. I detest them. A personal prejudice I can't overcome. Truth: Kerouac brought a great new spirit to America ... and reading him surely changed my life. Truth: he



was -- at least in several of his books -- a lovely writer. As he yelled to Scotty that summer night, Jack was a fucking genius.

Jack Kerouac, author of *On The Road*, was the leading inspiration of the Beat Generation. John Thomas was the bouncer/cook at the Gas House Coffee House at Market Street and Ocean Front Walk. He was one of the great Venice West poets and, later, husband of Philomene Long.

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The FREE VENICE BEACHHEAD is published monthly by the Beachhead Collective as a vehicle for the people of Venice to communicate their ideas and opinions to the community at large.

The Beachhead encourages anyone to submit news stories, articles, letters, photos, poetry or graphics of interest to the Venice community. The staff reserves the right to make all decisions collectively on material published. There is no editor on the Beachhead. The printing is financed by ads 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. If return of material is desired, a stamped self-addressed envelope is required. No payment is made for material used.

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5 Rose Avenue Apartments

Dear Beachhead,
This letter was sent to our Councilmember, Bill Rosendahl.

I am writing to you so that in the future you as my representative may have a window into the daily life of one of your constituents here in Venice. I am a 30-year-old woman married to a disabled man who still works as an artist. We chose the building on 5 Rose for serious reasons. I am an epileptic and have not driven for five years because of uncontrollable seizures. Since I work for Santa Monica/UCLA Medical Center, I like the accessibility of the public bus system as much as the affordable rent compared to apartments closer to the hospital. When my husband was working, he was able to ride his bicycle instead of drive, which saved on gasoline and other expenses. The building was a community within itself that offered a neighborly atmosphere as well as security. Overall, the building made life convenient and comfortable, the things that a home should be.

Things here have changed. Since the new owners have taken over, the rent has increased and it has been made clear that it could rise higher. One of my neighbors has received an eviction notice after paying rent late, despite a history of timely payment in all previous months. The lack of understanding during his appeal made it clear that pushing him and rest of us out was their ultimate goal. Security cameras have been placed throughout the building and there is a growing sense that we, the residents, are the ones that are being watched. I have informed all friends and family not to visit us here at 5 Rose in order to circumvent any possible reason to find fault with us.

There has been construction on our building and when another neighbor complained of the fumes and dust in his apartment, quick retaliation in the form of another eviction notice came to him for being on the fire escape. If the fire escape is not safe, is it not a hazard that should be repaired?

A common area in the building known as the Recreation Room has been taken away. When we asked for an explanation in writing, the response was vague and ambiguous. It seems we must wait until after the holidays to know what the plans for our Recreation Room are. We are paying for the use of this space and our request for compensation has been ignored. There was a loading area in the rear of the building that the tenants used for grocery drop off and 15 minute parking (since parking is such a hassle in this neighborhood). So many of us are disabled and elderly and it is impossible to bring a full week's worth of groceries from two or more blocks away.

Since the purchase of the building, however, the space where the manager used to park is now gated off and therefore she is forced to park in the loading zone. When we addressed

Beach Access for All

To Beachhead and Venice Neighborhood Council:

In the matter of overnight parking in beach area, it is important to remind people that the beach belongs to everyone – beach access must not be denied to anyone, no matter how they might look to you.

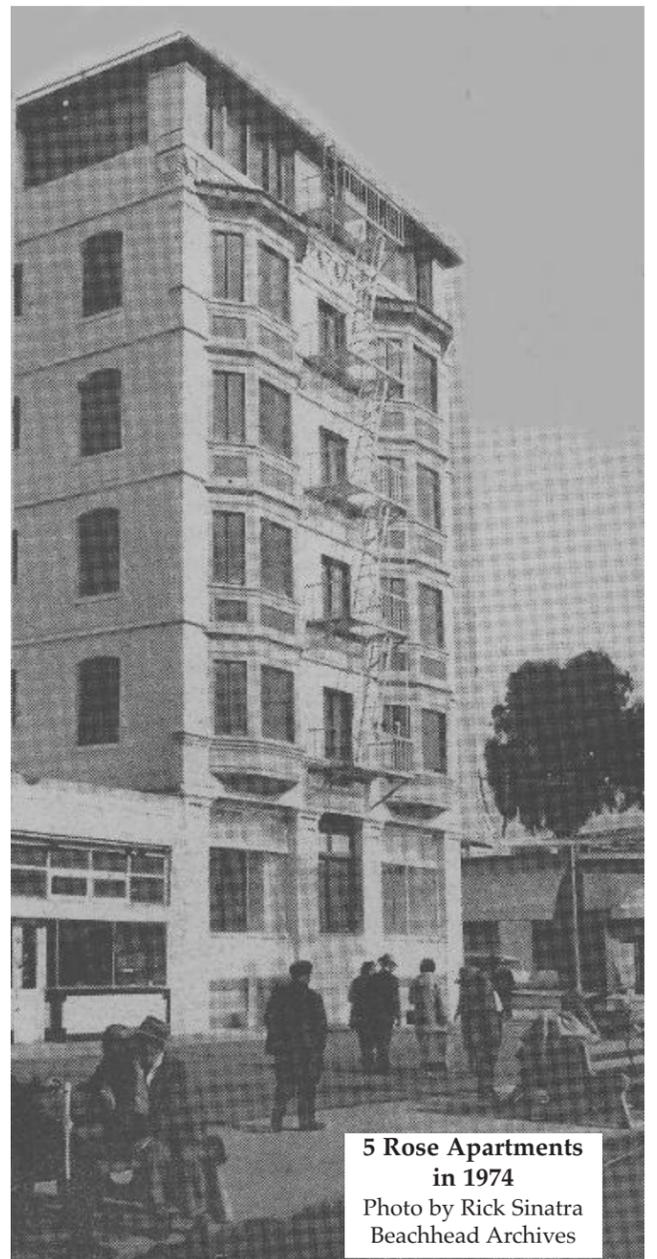
Sincerely, C.V. Beck, Lincoln Place

this in our letter to the new owners they asked for make/model and proof of disability for the tenants who want to park there. Many of us, including myself, find this request moot. If the manager cannot park where she used to park what good can come out of supplying a company in Calabasas information about what kind of vehicle I own?

There have been an uncommon amount of "inspections" since the building has been taken over. During the first few months I was dismayed to discover there were photos taken of the inside of my apartment without my approval. This was during a time when my husband was dealing with a lot of pain and was under a lot of prescription medication. I cannot ask legal questions of a patient in the hospital under the influence, what gives them the right to interrogate him about our belongings? I was forced to remove a lot of the collectable items that we own as well as art reference books to appease the utilitarian expectations of the new owner. The space I pay for is not my own to live in comfort anymore.

I refuse to leave out of sheer annoyance. I have been saving for a house so that I can be a homeowner in this community and if that dream is squashed by this new company's greed then I have nothing else keeping me in Venice. If I am evicted then UCLA will lose an employee and the city will lose a taxpayer and voter. The worst part of it is I will not be replaced. This building's future is unclear. What is certain is the empty apartments in our building are not being filled. I speak with my neighbors in this community and my situation is not isolated. The middle and low income professionals are being squeezed out for an enigmatic vacuum of "luxury" that nobody can afford. As my representative, I am telling you that is not what I want for this community. I want a neighborhood filled with real people, not vacant real estate and LLCs.

Respectfully, Shirley M. Anderson



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It's 2008 – Run for Your Lives!

By Jim Smith

The new year, 2008, is likely to be a fateful one for all humanity. It may well be the last chance we have to affect climate change without waiting for thousands of years to see the results. Good luck to us all with George Bush and gang running the country. Sad to say, but big business and the military seem to be firmly in control of the Congress as well. Setting things right with the climate will involve stepping on some very big toes, the auto industry, the coal industry, the oil industry, the military-industrial complex and many more.

Yes, Dr. Kevorkian is out of prison, but this is no time to use the services he advocates. We need every person, able-bodied or not, to enlist in a citizen's army that will take on the polluters and war mongers at every turn. Unfortunately, the oligarchs seem to have become successful in numbing the overwhelming majority of the populace with TV, sports, video games, and other trivia. All we need are plug-ins a la Matrix to make it complete. So long, breathable world.

Meanwhile, George W. Bush is scheduled to remain as President (and Dick as VP) for the entire year of 2008. But waiting in the wings is a crew of Democrats that won't pledge to have all troops out of Iraq by the END of their four-year term. With candidates like that, who needs an election? Besides, it is written that a Clinton will replace a Bush. Barring any last minute name changes by the other candidates, that leaves

Hillary as the anointed one. Who will be the Republican chump who runs against her? Hopefully someone who acknowledges the possibility of evolution.

No matter who is elected in November, the control and monitoring of us undesirables (that includes you and me) will continue to be ramped up. You'll be urged to put the names and personal information for all your friends on the internet, where all your personal information already resides. You'll be on camera at least 100 times a day as you go about your business. Your cell phone and your car will betray your every move. In 2007, you can't go to Mexico or Canada without a passport. The way things are going, in 2008 you won't be able to leave your house without an official identification card. We must fight terrorism, you know.

A devastating economic crash is likely in 2008. It will cause hardship and suffering for billions of people around the world. When it is over, we'll wake up to find that we live in a third world country. On the plus side, perhaps worsening economic conditions will push people around the world - and us - to say enough is enough, and throw out the petty thugs and punks who control most countries by force and terrorism. And first among these are our own Bush and Cheney who should be shipped to The Hague to undergo a trial for war crimes and crimes against the people. More than one million Iraqis - men, women and children - and nearly



2008 is getting off with a bang in the wake of the assassination of Pakistani candidate Benazir Bhutto.

Lakota Nation Declares Independence. Can Venice Be Far Behind?

By Erica Snowlake

Haumikole! Hello my friend!

On December 19, the Lakota Freedom Delegation announced unilateral withdrawal from all U.S. treaties to a small group of Press and well-wishers in the Plymouth Congregational Church in Washington, DC. The same church hosted the American Indian Movement in the 1970s.

Delegates Mni yuha Najin Win, Phyllis Young from Standing Rock; Oyate Wacinyapin, Russell Means, Pine Ridge; Canupa Gluha Mani, Duane Martin Sr., Hill City, Black Hills; and Tegihya Kte, Garry Rowland, Wounded Knee, made presentations, sang and drummed traditional songs, and cut up their driver's licenses.

The delegates have been in discussion with traditional treaty councils across Lakota in the communities of Pine Ridge, Porcupine, Kyle, Rosebud, Lower Brule, Cheyenne River, Standing Rock, and Flandreau. The withdrawal is said to be vested on the power of the Lakota people and their children, in accordance with the Strongheart Warrior Society and its Grandmothers.

Citing provisions of the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty which have never been upheld, the Lakota have been subject to colonial apartheid conditions, an ongoing catastrophe on the Reservations of alcoholism, drug abuse, unemployment, and extreme poverty, suffering high incidences of diabetes, tuberculosis, infant mortality, and teenage suicides, possessing one of the highest incarceration rates in the nation, and the lowest life expectancy of any country in the world.

Further, "Lakotah, have waited at least 155 years for the United States of America to adhere to provisions of the treaties, whose continuing violations have resulted in the near annihilation

of our people physically, spiritually, and culturally." These violations have been in breach of Article VI of the United States Constitution rendering all treaties made "the Supreme Law of the Land."

The five-state area of Lakotah encompasses North and South Dakota, Montana, Wyoming, and Nebraska. It's all now Lakotah! The mineral-rich Black Hills, the Paha Sapa have always been held as sacred ancestral land by the Lakota.

Invasions into the Paha Sapa by gold-seekers in the 1870's provoked the so-called "Red Cloud's War" leading to the legendary Battle at Little Big Horn, 1876, where George Custer was defeated, and the subsequent infamous massacre of hundreds of unarmed Hunkpapa and Mniconju men, women, and children with Si Tanka (Chief Big Foot), at Wounded Knee in 1890.

Legends live on, and the descendants of assassinated spiritual warrior leaders Sitting Bull, Crazy Horse, Dull Knife and Conquering Bear still cry for justice today and their cries will be heard.

Lakota have always maintained their insistence upon the return of the Paha Sapa, accusing the U.S. of violations ranging from Homestead and Citizenship Acts to forced relocations, disallowment of their religions, and truly, the intentional genocide of their race.

Emerging from the conflict in the Wounded Knee Occupation of 1973, the International Indian Treaty Council formed with more than 5000 delegates representing 98 Indian tribes and Nations from North and South America to create a Manifesto from the wisdom of the People, their Ancestors, and the Great Mystery. Acknowledged within the 1974 Declaration of Continuing Independence is "the historical fact that the struggle for independence of the Peoples of our Sacred Earth Mother have always been

4,000 U.S. troops have died because of their illegal invasion. They have shredded the Geneva Convention with their wholesale use of torture. There are many more charges awaiting a prosecutor.

Already too many families have seen their children and their friends disappear into prison for the crime of getting high, or disappear into the military, and never return. Just a generation ago, students in California could take advantage of nearly free college education to improve their lives over those of their parents. In 2008, they're living with their parents because they can't afford the cost of college, let alone the cost of an apartment. The main impact of the digital revolution so far has been to eliminate jobs and health benefits. In a humane society, it could have meant an unprecedented increase in the quality of life, including the end of poverty, hunger and homelessness.

Here in Venice, we can expect the corporate cookie-cutter to continue its work of homogenizing our pleasant oasis. That means more chain stores, more soulless cuboid buildings masquerading as homes, and more attempts to stifle the dissent for which Venice is known. Of course, it's really our fault. We Venetians allow our overlords downtown to make decisions that should rightfully be ours to make.

It doesn't have to be this way. Collectively, we have the power to stop the war in Iraq, end global warming and create a paradise on Earth. All we have to do is get off our collective duffs and refuse to let a small elite - including the Republican and Democratic candidates - run our lives for the benefit of corporate greed.

Happy New Year, and have a great 2008!

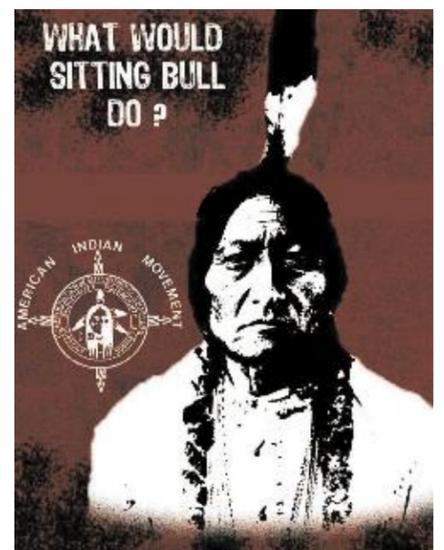
over sovereignty of land, historical freedom efforts involving the highest human sacrifice."

As international nations welcome and recognize Lakota independence, they will begin the adventure of birthing a new nation into Being. To this end they will issue passports, driver licenses, and a tax-free economy, provided residents renounce their U.S. citizenship. They will also begin to administer liens against real estate transactions made by non-Lakotas.

To celebrate and mark this autonomy, 44 people mounted horses on December 15 in Standing Rock to ride the spirit trail of Chief Big Foot and his people in the 21st Annual Ride. They will be joined by many others along the way, swelling their numbers to over 100 on the 13 day journey, returning to Wounded Knee a Free Lakota People.

"We are no longer citizens of the United States and all those who live in the 5 state area encompassing our country are free to join us.", declares Oyate Wacinyapin, Russell Means. We at the Beachhead commend this action and hope it may inspire Venetians to restore Venice cityhood, entering into a liberating independence from Los Angeles.

After visiting the embassies of Bolivia, Venezuela, Chile, and South Africa, the Lakota Delegates will continue on their diplomatic mission in bringing the good news of their freedom to the world.



Swami Speaks

By X Swami X,

People who don't know how to listen should be restrained from writing books. People who don't know how to listen should be restrained, and...made to watch television.

I'm not against genocide, I just wish they would stop calling it war. I'd like to be in a position to select the next group that is to go. Of course, we all go, one way or another. What's the fuss?

Pain, people object to pain. I don't blame them. I'm not big on pain myself. I feel most of

our pain is self-inflicted, in an effort to get back into our feelings, which are windows of the soul, if you'll forgive my language. If not, fuck you. I jest. I hope. Laughter makes for good blood and semen.

So far so good, as I continually respond to inquiries about my health and well being. To be honest with you, I would like to live in Disneyland until 2020, at which time I plan to have a monkey gland operation and fuck Paris Hilton into ecstasy and sanity.

I'm jesting you.

To be semi-serious for a moment, I am sending this message because I feel you are close to being a mature human being with possibilities for spiritual liberation, enlightenment and activity. I hope I haven't over-estimated you. There's alot of that going around these days, and especially in political circles--and squares.

So life is an endless journey, commencing and climaxing in ecstasy and then commencing again, endlessly.

Sounds monotonous, but it's not. It gets newer, richer and more real all the time. Just ask Harry Houdini when you see him. He's over there, on the other side, preparing a magic trick...for you.



Impeaching the Vice President – A Congressional View

By Robert Wexler (D-FL), Luis Gutierrez (D-IL), and Tammy Baldwin (D-WI)

On November 7, the House of Representatives voted to send a resolution of impeachment of Vice President Cheney to the Judiciary Committee. As Members of the House Judiciary Committee, we strongly believe these important hearings should begin.

The issues at hand are too serious to ignore, including credible allegations of abuse of power that if proven may well constitute high crimes and misdemeanors under our constitution. The charges against Vice President Cheney relate to his deceptive actions leading up to the Iraq war, the revelation of the identity of a covert agent for political retaliation, and the illegal wiretapping of American citizens.

Now that former White House press secretary Scott McClellan has indicated that the Vice President and his staff purposefully gave him false information about the outing of Valerie Plame Wilson as a covert agent to report to the American people, it is even more important for Congress to investigate what may have been an intentional obstruction of justice. Congress should call Mr. McClellan to testify about what he described as being asked to "unknowingly [pass] along false information." In addition, recent revelations have shown that the

Administration including Vice President Cheney may have again manipulated and exaggerated evidence about weapons of mass destruction — this time about Iran's nuclear capabilities.

Some of us were in Congress during the impeachment hearings of President Clinton. We spent a year and a half listening to testimony about President Clinton's personal relations. This must not be the model for impeachment inquiries. A Democratic Congress can show that it takes its constitutional authority seriously and hold a sober investigation, which will stand in stark contrast to the kangaroo court convened by Republicans for President Clinton. In fact, the worst legacy of the Clinton impeachment - where the GOP pursued trumped up and insignificant allegations - would be that it discourages future Congresses from examining credible and significant allegations of a constitutional nature when they arise.

The charges against Vice President Cheney are not personal. They go to the core of the actions of this Administration, and deserve consideration in a way the Clinton scandal

never did. The American people understand this, and a majority support hearings according to a November 13 poll by the American Research Group. In fact, 70 percent of voters say that Vice President Cheney has abused his powers and 43 percent say that he should be removed from office right now. The American people understand the magnitude of what has been done and what is at stake if we fail to act. It is time for Congress to catch up.

Some people argue that the Judiciary

Committee can not proceed with impeachment hearings because it would distract Congress from passing important legislative initiatives. We disagree. First, hearings need not tie up Congress for a year and shut down the nation.

Second, hearings will not prevent Congress from completing its other business. These hearings involve the possible impeachment of the Vice President - not our "commander in chief" - and the resulting impact on the nation's business and attention would be significantly less than the Clinton Presidential impeachment hearings.

Also, despite the fact that President Bush has thwarted moderate Democratic policies that are supported by a vast majority of Americans — including children's health care, stem cell research, and bringing our troops home from Iraq — the Democratic Congress has already managed to

deliver a minimum wage hike, an energy bill to address the climate crisis and bring us closer to energy independence, assistance for college tuition, and other legislative successes. We can continue to deliver on more of our agenda in the coming year while simultaneously fulfilling our constitutional duty by investigating and publicly revealing whether or not Vice President Cheney has committed high crimes and misdemeanors.

Holding hearings would put the evidence on the table, and the evidence - not politics - should determine the outcome. Even if the hearings do not lead to removal from office, putting these grievous abuses on the record is important for the sake of history. For an Administration that has consistently skirted the constitution and asserted that it is above the law, it is imperative for Congress to make clear that we do not accept this dangerous precedent. Our Founding Fathers provided Congress the power of impeachment for just this reason, and we must now at least consider using it.

To sign the nationwide petition to hold hearings, go to: www.WexlerWantsHearings.com

RESOLUTION

from Rep. Dennis Kucinich

Impeaching Richard B. Cheney, Vice President of the United States, for high crimes and misdemeanors.

In his conduct while Vice President of the United States, Richard B. Cheney, in violation of his constitutional oath to faithfully execute the office of Vice President of the United States... has purposely manipulated the intelligence process to deceive the citizens and Congress of the United States by fabricating a threat of Iraqi weapons of mass destruction to justify the use of the United States Armed Forces against the nation of Iraq in a manner damaging to our national security interests...Despite all evidence to the contrary, the Vice President actively and systematically sought to deceive the citizens and Congress of the United States about an alleged threat of Iraqi weapons of mass destruction.

Wherefore Richard B. Cheney, by such conduct, warrants impeachment and trial, and removal from office.

BEACHHEAD POLL

What should be done with the Venice Circle? Mark as many choices as you like.

- Fill with water
- Leave the Circle as it is
- Closed to traffic
- Add a fountain
- Add more statues
- Remove the present statue
- Other: _____

To vote, go to www.freevenice.org. If you don't have internet access, clip this form and mail it to POB 2, Venice 90294.

Voting ends Jan. 25.

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Download the petition from the internet: www.CaliforniansforHealthSecurity.org

You must be a registered voter to sign and circulate the initiative petition.

For more information: 310-399-2215 • CHSinitiative@gmail.com

Interview with Venice Poet Frank Rios

An Interview with the Poet Frank T. Rios

Part 1

By Hillary Kaye

Beachhead: I'm nervous.

Frank T. Rios: Of course you are, you care.

Beachhead: Thank you for saying that Frankie. O.K. This is the Frank T. Rios interview. I'm in his home. Thank you Frankie for doing this interview.

Frank T. Rios: You're very welcome.

Beachhead: I wanted to ask you how you discovered Venice?

Frank T. Rios: Well I hitchhiked here in '54 from New York.

.....on the road type thing.... and came to Venice and spent a year. I really loved it. In January of '59 I

hopped a plane and came out here. And I think part of it in truth I was trying to escape.

Beachhead: Escape your past, your history?

Frank T. Rios: Well I was involved in a lot of gangster stuff. You know stick ups, that kind of stuff.

Beachhead: What area of New York were you from?

Frank T. Rios: The Bronx. But see I studied acting. And from acting one of the classes I had was doing the monologue and everybody was doing the classic monologue. But I found American poetry and within it I found "The Man with the Hoe" by Edwin Markham. And I had a really good memory. And I memorized the poem and it hit me like whoah so I started to write.

Beachhead: That's when you began writing?

Frank T. Rios: Yeah and the first poem I ever wrote was the "Ball" poem which is a beautiful poem. I mean it's right there. I don't think I changed anything. It just came out.

Beachhead: That's cool.

Frank T. Rios: So inside I knew, I didn't think that I was a poet but something had started to shift. So when I got out here---

Beachhead: So where did you study acting?

Frank T. Rios: Neighborhood playhouse.

Beachhead: With Sanford Meisner?

Frank T. Rios: Yes. I did some plays Tennessee Williams ...those kind of things. And I was pretty good.

Beachhead: You have a lot of presence.

Frank T. Rios: Yeah I had stage presence. And I had a really good memory so I could play with

it. And when I got out here in '59. You know I feel I was being guided. It couldn't be any other way because it's not like I'm thinking I need to go here or I need to do this.

Beachhead: I've always felt that about my life too, that I had no choice that I was being guided.

Frank T. Rios: Right guided. I was guided to Venice West. And it's a poetry reading.

Beachhead: That's when you first got there?

Frank T. Rios: Yeah. It's a poetry reading, and who's reading Stuart Perkoff. He's reading and I'm like, I know exactly what he's doing.

Beachhead: Yeah you're right with him.

Frank T. Rios: Yeah I'm right with him. So the next day I'm walking down the beach and I meet Stuart..

And we start talking, you know, and it was instant, the connection. So then I'm thinking I'm going to do a reading here. So I sat down and wrote about 50 poems.

Beachhead: It just came right out?

Frank T. Rios: Well it took me 4 months. And 90% of those stand up today. I was really receiving it.

Beachhead: That's great!

Frank T. Rios: And then of course I met Tony and it was the Holy Three.

Beachhead: The Holy Three!

How interesting.

Frank T. Rios: Yeah we got a little scared about that.

Beachhead: Because.

Frank T. Rios: Well ---

Beachhead: Right. (Rios laughs and then Hillary laughs)

Frank T. Rios: Yeah and then The Holy Barbarians came out by Lawrence Lipton.

Beachhead: What did you think of Lawrence Lipton?

Frank T. Rios: I never had any beef with him. He was scared of me. He thought I was a gangster and drug dealer. (laughs) Which I was, but not when I got to LA.

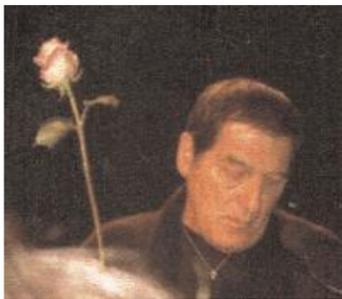
Beachhead: Right.

Frank T. Rios: And I moved to Venice. Cause I hung everything up.

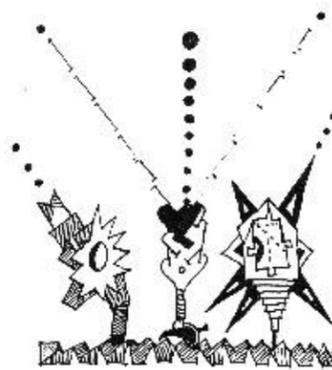
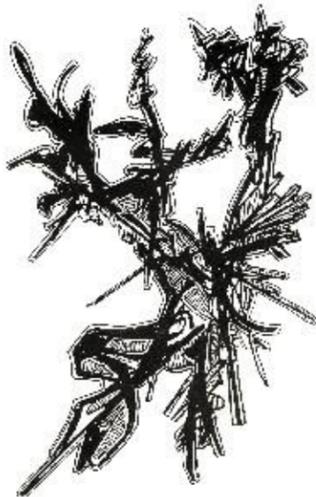
Beachhead: You did?

Frank T. Rios: But I was still using. We all were.

Beachhead: Everybody was using heroin?



Frank Rios reading at Philomene Long memorial, Dec. 7.



Art on this page by Frank T. Rios

Frank T. Rios: No.

Beachhead: You were using heroin?

Frank T. Rios: Yeah I mean. I hung up the bag for a while, and got out here, you know kicked, start taking bennies and smoking grass.

Beachhead: Right.

Frank T. Rios: You know downers. You know what was there. I wasn't running anything. I wasn't --

Beachhead: What was available.

Frank T. Rios: What was available, right. Tussar. We took Tussar.

Beachhead: Right.

Frank T. Rios: The whole thing then wasn't so much the drugs, it was the creative act. You know we were all totally broken open. I was ordained, in 1959 in Topanga Canyon by the Muse, the lady, by the poem.

Beachhead: Could you explain a little about that?

Frank T. Rios: Yes. I was sitting in this beautiful pad in Topanga Canyon where Aya was living. I was blowing. We had our stuff, crayons, pens and notebooks. Anywhere we'd go we had our stuff. Of course we moved around like that. And I'm blowing and blowing and like it's a beautiful. I get chills now just thinking about it. And I go outside and it's a beautiful night, like I'm there and I, I've found my path. And I'm elated. She comes to me, she comes right up to me and touches my tongue, and I burst into flames. And she tells me I'm ordaining you a poet and I'm giving you the ritual of the poem burning to honor me which is the invocation to the muse. So I fall back inside and I write this invocation. Oh God Lady Mother of the

Poem, it's coming out that way because she touched me. And I burned it.

Beachhead: You burned it?

Frank T. Rios: Oh yeah.

Beachhead: So you don't have a copy of that?

Frank T. Rios: No I burned it for her. It was just for her. All the poems I burn for her. No one else sees it. And I'm watching the poem burn down, burn down into a tiny black ash and the ash blows over me. And there I am on kind of a tongue of a mountain You know it's a mountain but there's this kind of a tongue coming out and I'm standing on the tongue and I'm an old man now and I've got the book under my arm. So for her after that anytime I do a reading, anytime I do marriages, anytime I bless a house. I do it through the poem, the ritual of the poem burning.

Beachhead: That's why you burned the poems at the Philomene Long and Tony Schbella memorials?

Frank T. Rios: Right. Nice, huh.

Beachhead: It is. I mean it's powerful.

Frank T. Rios: Yes you're really receiving it.

Beachhead: I see.

Frank T. Rios: It's elating, it's magical.

Beachhead: Right. It's all pretty clear.

Frank T. Rios: Very clear. So when I'm writing that before I become ordained, I'm finally writing it. Being a throwaway and all that stuff. I mean being alone and outside, and no mother, no father because she threw me away, it's like the tears, but I'm getting it out for the first time in my life.

Beachhead: That's why you burned the poems at the Philomene Long and Tony Schbella memorials?

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—continued on page 10

Beachhead Readings bring back the Venice West

A packed house at Sponto Gallery (aka: Venice West Coffee House), Dec. 15, turned out to support the Beachhead and hear readings by Collective and former Collective members.

The evening got started with a reading of Philomene Long poems by her twin sister, Pegarty Long. She also showed a video of Philomene reading *America* last year.

Long was followed by Erica Snowlake, Hillary Kaye, Jim Smith, Yolanda Miranda, Karl Abrams, Lynne Bronstein and Sherman Pearl.

After the reading, Eric Ahlberg and friends Phil Garaway, Freddie Ginn and Sam Clay cut loose with some great folk rock.

A video of the event should appear on

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Here Come the



By Karl Abrams

Whether it's a local red carpet event with cameras flashing or a Venetian bohemian reading poetry on the beach, the photographers of the Venice Paparazzi will probably be there, enthusiastically snapping spontaneous photos that are, if you have no objections, blended together into a beautifully crafted internet web site (venicepaparazzi.com) for all to see. Here you will have your instant place in Venice history and even--if you want-- a new sense of feeling like a celebrity.

The Beachhead recently interviewed the team members of the Venice Paparazzi. What became clear in the interview was their collective vision to make everyone in Venice feel important, in whatever they do. Each member of the paparazzi team seem to delight in this endeavor with artistic dedication.

They are not the paparazzi that many people might picture however. They don't jump out of shadowy hiding places to scare the likes of Princess Diana. The staff of the Venice Paparazzi have a much different style and a way of making

everybody feel comfortable right away. And they don't bug you like a relentless mosquito, even though the word paparazzi actually means "mosquito" (in a dialect of Italian) and Fellini first used it as the name of a nervous photographer in La Dolce Vita.

Be it at art openings or business parties, weight lifting or skate boarding, competitive sports, or just hanging out on the boardwalk -- their photographs are about the people of Venice expressing themselves. Edizen Stowell and her team want their web site to become the first and foremost source of photographic information about the people that make up our one-of-a-kind community.

Edizen founded the Venice Paparazzi (VP). It originally started off as Edizens.com in May 2006. The name was changed 5 months later to VenicePaparazzi.com to make it easier for people to remember.

She explained how her team is determined to artistically document the evolving phenomenon of Venice on their online photo album.

Her husband Alex, a Soviet strength training

specialist and professional extreme metal musician is also a cofounder of the VP. Their photo careers began in 2003 when they opened their "photo booth" on the west side of the Venice beach boardwalk where they sold photo key chains and prints to locals and tourists alike. Alex sees their present web site as a natural extension of their photo booth. The web site offers photographs of the Venice lifestyle and culture, a Calendars of Events, Recommended Things to Do, Interviews and Spotlights, as well as local business and artist Directories. You can even download event registration forms for Venice Recreation and Parks.

VP now does video as well in a rather unique way. In the tradition of soapbox orators, VP brings a "speakers corner" to Venice where locals can express their opinions on current events. If you are interested in speaking your mind, visit the VP "Outdoor Studio" set up on the Venice beach boardwalk every second Sunday of the month between 1-4 PM. All videos will be uploaded on the VP site, You

the V
Papa

Jackie



Jackie E
Alex S

Sara
Aoy



J. Gra



Edizen S

Venetians in the Street

This month's question:
What are your hopes and dreams for the Boardwalk in 2008?

photos and questions
by Della Franco



Alicia Garcia de Leon is an artist on the Boardwalk for the last five years.

Permits are given to almost anyone and I think this is wrong. The lottery should be available only for those who create their own art or craft. Performers and people who practice self expression should also be available to be in the lottery. Jewelry making is also a type of art or craft therefore hand made jewelry should also be accepted and permitted. No commercial vending should be allowed. I think that after 12pm space holders should lose their space if they are not present.



Brian Mylius is a painter and resident of Venice.

I would like the public to be a little more aware of what happens here for us artists. The public does not know much about the struggles and problems that we have out here. And I would like to see more music. You can't find any music because of all the regulations they pass and I think that is really sad because it should be about art and music, not about commercial vending.



Michael Deane is the store manager at Ocean Blue and a resident.

I would like to see help to rehabilitate the homeless. Help clean them up and bring them back into society. I would like the ordinance on the other side of the boardwalk straightened out, and not allow them to compete with businesses who pay rent. The majority of the revenue that this area generates is coming from people in the shops.



Ra Ra Superstar is an Ocean Front Walk artist and resident.

I have been in Venice for 12 years and I would like to see the changes of more freedom and less police harassment. I would like to see people get better space opportunities without the lottery. Yeah, so I would like the lottery to end, and for it to go back to the way it was before, an open market, first come first served.



Sandra Edwards is homeless. She's been living on the streets in Venice for 15 months.

I would really like to see more facilities available for the homeless. Hot showers would be great. I would like to see them bring back the Hare Krishna Temple which used to bring vegetarian meals down to the boardwalk to feed the people in need. It would be nice if there was a hot meal delivered to the people who really need one at night.



Richard Wellington is a street performer.

What I would like to see happen is non-performers not be allowed in a performer's spot and that is about it.

the Venice Paparazzi!

Photos by Venice Paparazzi
Collage by J. Grant Buckerfield



the Venice Paparazzi:

Tube, and MySpace.

VP also uses video to highlight local businesses and organizations, as well as artists and community members. Other local photographers and videographers who share VP's love of the "Spirit of Venice" have been quick to join in.

J. Grant Buckerfield, Aoy Austin, Jackie Burke, Jackie Martin and Sara Gepp are four more photographers on the team who bring in their own special touch.

J. Grant's specialty is in graphic design, photography and film production. When he's not taking shots for the Venice Paparazzi, he's writing soundtracks for TV and film under the name "Big Noise" (www.big-noise.tv). The ex-BBC radio producer has written music for top TV shows and has worked with some of the UK's top DJs including Pete Tong and Fatboy Slim. His creative talents will help VP grow and evolve.

Aoy's specialty is public relations and sales. She is a venture capital consultant by trade and knows how to help the VP expand.

Jackie Burke holds a B.S. from East Carolina University in film production. Her expertise, creativeness and energetic North Carolina style works well with the VP team.

Jackie Martin, known to Venice Paparazzi as "Jaxx" is the host of VP and brings an upbeat quirkiness to interviews as she is very comfortable with people and cameras. She loves diving into the unknown. That and her ferocious imagination is perfect for the VP.

Sara Gepp is relatively new to the VP crew. She's a transplanted Minnesotan who first became enchanted with Venice Beach in 1991. Holding degrees in both fashion design and audio engineering, Sara lends a unique perspective on the Venice beach lifestyle.

Together, they offer full photographic services including red carpet events with roaming photographers, graphics expertise and layout design.

VP have also been getting enthusiastic support from local artists and musicians, as well as shop owners and boardwalk vendors. Even the Department of Recreation and Parks, the Rotary Club of Venice and the Venice Chamber of Commerce support the VP. Councilman Bill

Rosendahl has expressed his enthusiasm as well.

Although only in their first year, the VP have already been presented with a "Certificate of Appreciation" expressing the gratitude of the Los Angeles City Council and paying tribute to their first year of service to the Venice community.

Now, when the VP arrive at an event, people get excited. Here comes the Venice Paparazzi they say, let the party begin!

One question remains, however. How will future historians view the history and people of Venice as seen through the lens of the Venice Paparazzi? After studying the Paparazzi website of Venice photographs, will they get a balanced picture of the spirit of Venice? Will the homeless and the skateboarders, the artists and the poets and the beats get their recognition too alongside the upscale parties of the rich and famous? Only time will tell and the commitment of the VP to keep a balanced perspective of the uniqueness that is Venice. So far, so good. The Beachhead congratulates their efforts in being another unique way to keep the spirit of Venice alive for future generations.



An RV Fairytale

By Erica Snowlake

Against my friend's better judgment, I don't drive, have never owned and am loathe to even entering nasty, metal, polluting obsessions in which one miraculously floats while seated above asphalted earth at high speeds weaving humanity's frenzied chaos group mind death wish, blithely deluded about the importance of getting somewhere, no thank-you, I AM honing my skills for a spaceship and a road with no lines, i.e. a garden, nevertheless, I recently accepted a gift, a godsend I thought at the time, the temporary loan of a 1985 Chevy truck/camper.

You see I was planning on heading up north to work in the seasonal harvest trade, puffpuff, and wanted to provide a place for my now very ex to crash in if he found himself on the street. Note to self: never underestimate certain people's charmed capacity for attracting serial bleeding hearts!Nonetheless, this is a city of angels

and doing unto others is a noble and natural endeavor, giving one a chance to embody true Compassion, and, despite financial backfires, substantially frees up one's karma all around. This tale, however, is an oddball mix, demonstrating not

only the vast, portenous holes in my rationality, puffpuff, but exactly how magickal thinking can fuck you right up the jimmy as well.

Allow me to dig....grass.....hmmm, living in an RV in Venice is certainly a timely....controversy. Why? It could be all wine and roses, a cozy home on wheels, takes us back to the original ROM people, wandering together in horse-drawn gypsy caravans, gracefully putting to pasture in idyllic meadows outside town, setting up camps, harkening strange enchanted music, offering tinkerer's trades, exotic gemstones, fortune telling, bizarre yogic feats of skill, hey, sounds just like the Venice boardwalk on a good day without an ordinance!

The truth is, people in Venice, locals and visitors alike, are being downright persecuted and systematically harassed for choosing to live in their RVs, and are being methodically run outta town.



Again, Why? Zero Tolerance? Complaints based on Fear? Grumpiness? Envy? Status? What exactly is so wrong?

Disregard for personal effects? Based on what? the smell of piss? I honestly believe given current statistics most people living in RV's are law-abiding, mind-their-own-business, honest and responsible folks. Does their homes being mobile entitle their fellow kind to forfeit their rights or to withhold their respect?

—continued on page 10

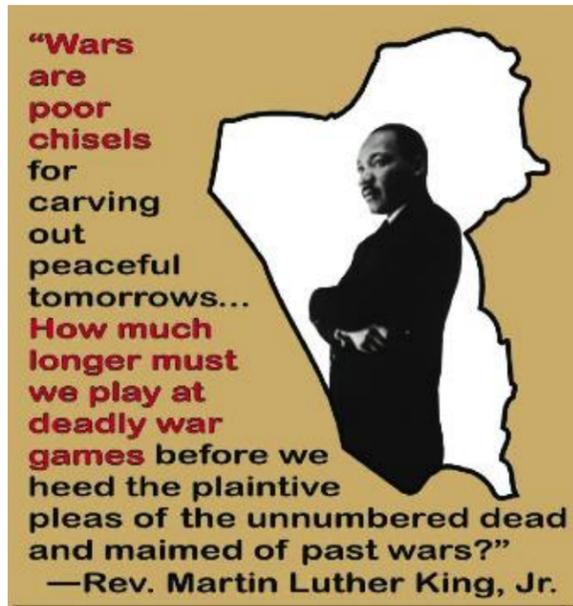
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Martin Luther King in his own words



“Man has the capacity to do right as well as wrong, and his history is a path upward, not downward. The past is strewn with the ruins of the empires of tyranny, and each is a monument not merely to man’s blunders but to his capacity to overcome them ...

This is why I remain an optimist, though I am also a realist, about the barriers before us. Why is the issue of equality still so far from solution in America, a nation that professes itself to be democratic, inventive, hospitable to new ideas, rich productive and awesomely powerful?

The problem is so tenacious because, despite its virtues and attributes, America is deeply racist and its democracy is flawed both economically and socially ... justice for Black people cannot be achieved without radical changes in the structure of our society ... exposing evils that are rooted deeply in the whole structure of our society. It reveals systemic rather than superficial flaws and suggests that radical reconstruction of society itself is the real issue to be faced ...

It is time that we stopped our blithe lip service to the guarantees of life, liberty and pursuit of happiness. These fine sentiments are embodied in the Declaration of Independence, but that document was always a declaration of intent rather than of reality ... to this day, Black Americans have not life, liberty nor the privilege of pursuing happiness, and millions of poor white Americans are in economic bondage that is scarcely less oppressive.”

—Martin Luther King, Jr.

The Martin Luther King Kingdom Day Parade

has been celebrated for the last 20 years and over a million people take to the streets of Los Angeles to remember the life and works of the great man.

The 2008 parade, themed “30 Years of Continuing the Dream,” commences on Martin Luther King Blvd at Crenshaw and lasts for two miles until Western. It includes more than 150 floats, 20 drill teams, ten dance groups, and celebrities aplenty.

Local vendors and restaurants spill out onto the street in the carnival atmosphere. Streets around the parade area are closed off at 8.30am, so if you're planning to drive, you'd better get up early.

When: Jan. 21 – 11am
(King holiday)



California Presidential Primary is Feb. 5

Here is the list of candidates who will appear on the ballot

American Independent Party

Don Grundmann
Mad Max Riekse
Diane Beall Templin

Democratic Party

Joe Biden
Hillary Clinton
Chris Dodd
John Edwards
Mike Gravel
Dennis Kucinich
Barack Obama
Bill Richardson

Green Party

Jared Ball
Elaine Brown
Jesse Johnson
Cynthia McKinney
Kent Mesplay
Ralph Nader
Kat Swift

Libertarian Party

John Finan
Barry Hess
Dave Hollist
Daniel Imperato
Bob Jackson
Michael P. Jingoian
Steve Kubby
Alden Link
Robert Milnes
George Phillies
Wayne A. Root
Christine Smith

Peace and Freedom Party

Stewart A. Alexander
John Crockford
Stanley Hetz
Gloria E. La Riva
Cynthia McKinney
Brian Moore
Ralph Nader

Republican Party

Sam Brownback
John H. Cox
Rudy Giuliani
Mike Huckabee
Duncan Hunter
Alan Keyes
John McCain
Ron Paul
Mitt Romney
Tom Tancredo
Fred Thompson

For more information: www.sos.ca.gov

Ocean Front Walk Ordinance Still Being Debated

There is no ordinance regulating the west side of Ocean Front Walk. The old ordinance was thrown out by the Los Angeles City Council as the result of a lawsuit brought by ACLU Attorney Carol Sobel on behalf of Venice vendors and activists, including Food not Bombs.

At a court hearing last month, the judge told the city to draft a new ordinance that does not conflict with the U.S. Constitution.

The draft ordinance under consideration (LAMC 42.15) would divide the OFW into two sections, a P-Zone, for free speech activities, and an I-Zone, for vending.

According to the draft, the I-Zone would allow vending, as follows:

Any person may vend the following items: expressive items which have been created, written or composed by the person, or are inextricably intertwined with the message of the person vending the items. Such items may include, but are not limited to, books, cassettes tapes, compact discs, video digital discs, paintings, photographs and sculptures. For purposes of this paragraph, expressive items shall be deemed to have been created by the vendor only if they have been predominantly authored, performed, recorded, filmed, or otherwise made or assembled by the vendor.

The draft ordinance may be read at www.freevenice.org.

And Still They Come

Philomene Long’s death in August triggered an outpouring of tributes, sympathy, sorrow and creativity sent to the Beachhead from throughout the country. This month is no exception. This month’s contributions come from S.A. Griffin, contributing editor of *The Outlaw Bible of American Poetry* and John Dorsey, a poet in Toledo, Ohio.

My Dear Lady Nite

~ for Philomene Long

within that exalted dance of
time without time
do stars break &
churn inside of you
like Debussy's sonic sketches
curling into the sand?

cold crashes into shadow

barking gulls dive
for bits of poetry
like bread dotting the once
bohemian beach

bruised thoughts circle the sun

Lady Philomene,
within your book of sleep
does the word vibrate ecstatic
like a shivering rose
tipped with virgin dewdrop
celebrating the unimaginable lite of
your golden eternity?

is it written that the gift of genius
comes wrapped in madness
or that every good thing has at its
heart the seed of something sinister?

that sadness is a blessing & an art?

we continue living rear view
as we look out
grassy eyed

at all that is left of what
begins & ends
as a dream

– S.A. Griffin

poem for philomene long

in a past life
the sun invented dance
was hunted down and
made to suffer the
pleasures of women the
muse drunk on words

while you sister philomene
sang with beauty
drank cheap wine with
pride and invented the
outline of god

tonight the roman dead
stand sentry on the boardwalk
while you blow one last
cotton candy kiss to
your city now being
washed out into a
sea of dreams and ruins

they pray silently
may you join the
ghosts of venice west
for a pint of holy water
and a nugget of dank zen

a
feminine flower set on
fire

the only god
some angels have ever known

~ John Dorsey

this paper is a poem

Rise Venice Rise

(An open-source poem)

By Jim Smith

Venice

A dream so sublime
A fate so unfair

A planned city by the Bay
So unlike the city of the Devils

In 1905, we floated down the canals
Cars - you are not welcome here

We'll ride the trolley
We'll pedal the bi-cycle

We'll have streets for walking
ocean front Walk - no driving

But to the east, they despised our culture
The oil men said it was bad for business

So they faked an election, back in '25
And there our independence died

Rise Venice Rise

Venice, they filled in your canals, destroyed your pier,
They tore down your buildings, bulldozed your beauty.

They seduced the weak, and targeted the strong
And if you don't like it, take your protests -- down town

Rise Venice Rise

They came like vandals, waving court orders
They destroyed our dreams, and ruled like conquerors

They sent in their black-shirted army
Arrested our poets, our poor, and our dissidents

They built a big jail but even it became too small for them
Now amid the bars are paintings and murals of liberation

Rise Venice Rise

They swamped us with code enforcers and parking inspectors
They sent us their traffic, and kept the receipts

They drove our poor from their homes
and then harassed them because they were homeless

Rise Venice Rise

They prowled Oakwood
Planting their drugs and harvesting their criminals

They even came in the night to steal our statue
named Freedom, from our lonely circle

Rise Venice Rise

Even our pagodas weren't safe
Destroyed and replaced with plastic

They pulled down our buildings
And made a parking lot of beautiful St. Mark's

Rise Venice Rise

One morning we will come out of our homes
with picks and shovels and dig out our canals

We'll come with hammers and saws
and build homes for all of our Venetian family

We'll come with guitars and drums
and sing a song of peace and freedom

Our dead poets and artists shall guide us
and we will be as relentless as the sea

Venice will rise, Venice will rise

AUCTION

ITEM 1 - THE MAGNA CARTA
12th Century document, the foundation of Western law, fragile condition. Only American copy, the last one in private hands. Hurry, won't last.

ITEMS 2 through 11 - THE BILL OF RIGHTS
Cherished constitutional amendments. Guiding principles of the Republic, tattered but still legible. Ten in all, sold separately. Come early to acquire entire set.

ITEM 12 - THE LINCOLN MEMORIAL
Magnificent statue, speech on freedom and reconciliation engraved. Past president's glum expression can be modified to taste. Moveable to preferred site.

ITEM 13 - ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY
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ITEM 14 - U.S. ARMY
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ITEMS WITHOUT END - THE MOUNTAINS, THE PRAIRIES, THE OCEANS
of God-blessed America. All rich in resources. Inestimable value to the can-do entrepreneur. Assistance with regulations provided. NO REFUNDS, NO RETURNS.

—Sherman Pearl

Just once
For a warm summer morning
To last all year
And to always be
The first hour
When I wake up
When I fling the door open
And the softness of the beach air
Drifts over
Sans fog
Plus roses
Sans cars
Plus hummingbirds
No worry yet.
Just once
For worry
To turn out to be
Nothing to worry about
And a last sigh
Relieved
Before pulling the covers over
And closing my eyes to dream.

—Lynne Bronstein

The Sky

By hillary kaye

The sky talks back to us
it says blue is still possible among the rubble
blue is still there
blue is still calling out from the sky
saying now
not later but now.

**The Venice Beat Poets
– The Great River Outside
the Mainstream**

By Hillary Kaye

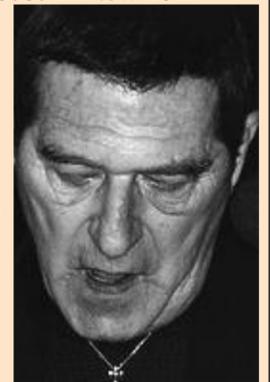
Frank T. Rios is a man who lives consciously in a world not only inhabited by form but by spirit. He makes it clear that his life is not his own, it is given over to the muse who speaks through him.

The path to his muse was not his choosing. He was first "guided" when he was studying acting with Sanford Meisner at the Neighborhood Playhouse in New York. American poetry rather than the usual classic soliloquies attracted his attention. It was his reading of Edwin Markham's "The Man with the Hoe" that inspired him to be a poet.

In 1954 to escape the street drug scene he was involved with in New York, he hitchhiked "On the Road" style across the country to Venice and immediately fell in love with it. When he returned in '59 everything seemed to fall into place at Venice West Cafe.

Frank Rios, Stuart Perkoff and Tony Scibella became "The Holy Three," a trio of poet seekers on the boardwalk. They were "broken wide open" and totally dedicated to poetry. A mystical realization of this came in Topanga Canyon when the muse appeared to Frank, touched him on the tongue and ordained him a poet. A ritual offering of a poem which was written for the muse was then burnt, finishing the ordination.

Frank has written 11 books of poetry including the following poem from "The Kid in the Woods" which is available at Beyond Baroque. *An Interview with Frank T. Rios appears on page 5.*



Frank T. Rios

The sun is all things
lighting its way
burning flesh
separating the bark
from the tree

the Kid must
write
on wood
put his naked hand
to its naked face

they threaten
to put it all on the Internet
sun & moon
man & woman
the giant oak
the poem is spattered against

O Lady
of the woods
give me power
to keep the poem
human
& the hands naked
against the giant oak

We ran this poem last month but attributed to the wrong person. It was written by D.T. Jenkins. The Beachhead regrets the error.

reflection

I looked for you, you were not there.
All the birds flew away at sunset. Were you awake then?
Seemed everything got really quiet. I was well aware of the approaching insanity.
I've seen tomorrow, so how to live today?
Pull me down and I will bless you as the saint.
Big men, with big talk have less to say. In fact they said "it's over."
But if you scream at the sun, we can hold our position in time. Rip its hands off, laugh at the day.
We will eat tomorrow and sing the songs to commemorate what she said.

Douglas Eisenstark salutes the Beachhead for its coverage of the Lincoln Place crisis.

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Interview with Venice Poet Frank Rios *—continued from page 5*

Beachhead: That's very moving.

Frank T. Rios: So after that then I get ordained and the cleansing happens and she's able to touch me. Yeah that's why I still do it.

Beachhead: Are you still writing?

Frank T. Rios: Yeah I started a new book. I write at night.

Beachhead: Are you a night owl?

Frank T. Rios: No I'm up till 11. I'm up at seven, work out.

Beachhead: You keep in good shape

Frank T. Rios: I try. I'm 72 you know.

Beachhead: When did you meet Philomene?

Frank T. Rios: I met Philomene when Stuart died. She was with Stuart.

Beachhead: At the end?

Frank T. Rios: Yeah. I was in Denver.

Beachhead: You had left Venice.

Frank T. Rios: We all were in Denver. Stuart came too, but his parole officer wouldn't let him stay and he had to come back.

Beachhead: How did you happen to go to Denver?

Frank T. Rios: Well Jimmy Marrios was the first one who went to Denver.

Beachhead: And you all followed?

Frank T. Rios: Yeah he started the Mile High Underground. Denver was virgin territory. We stepped in and took over. Real poets. So we had the bookstores, recordstores, and we were hooked into the theatres.

Beachhead: What a great scene.

Frank T. Rios: Yeah, we had a really beautiful scene. We had the bar. The Lido lounge. We gathered

and we would get insane and write poetry.

Beachhead: How many years was it that you were in that scene that went from Venice to Denver and then back to Venice again?

Frank T. Rios: There's no break. I'm still doing it, the location doesn't matter. Like that picture there was Denver, I mean it was an apex of it.

There was a Venice apex and then a Denver apex and then Venice again.

Beachhead: But when did that Venice scene --

Frank T. Rios: That original Venice scene broke around 63.

Beachhead: So you were aware at the time what an ephemeral and magical situation you were in.

Frank T. Rios: Oh yeah.

Beachhead: And you all were?

Frank T. Rios: Oh yeah. There was no doubt. The three of us were in the throws of magic. And ritual and a certain kind of illusion, of course embodied with the creative act.

Beachhead: Right.

Frank T. Rios: You see we were madly just receiving it.. And some great stuff came from there.

Beachhead: Now in terms of women was Philomene the only female present?

Frank T. Rios: Philomene wasn't there yet.

Beachhead: She wasn't there yet. So it was all men.

Frank T. Rios: No there were women.

Beachhead: I mean there were women, but were there women poets?

Frank T. Rios: Yeah, oh yeah. Of course there wasn't just a circle in Venice, you see it was America, because actually the circle wasn't that big, so we were connected to San Francisco with all those guys and then we had Wally Berman and George Herms, John Altoon. It goes on and on. Everyone's connected. Cause you wind up anywhere, any day. You know what I mean. You wake up in the morning and you got no idea how it's going to unfold. We ain't got no money. It's not like we got plans. The only plan I've got is I've got my notebook and my stuff. I ain't looking out see, I'm looking in.

Beachhead: Right. So is that how your life is today? Are you still in that state, or are you more engaged in the world?

Frank T. Rios: No, more engaged in my recovery

and my relationship and my relationships. I mean everybody knows I'm a poet, Frankie the poet. I write and do my thing. That's just automatic. What's different today is I'm not pressed against it. I don't got to write. You know what I mean.

Beachhead: Yes I know what you mean. Is that your painting?

Frank T. Rios: No, that's Bryden's, he lives in Taos.

Beachhead: Interesting painting.

Frank T. Rios: Yeah he's a good friend. I once shot him. He was across the room, it was a long room. And I had a piece under my pillow and he wanted something, he wanted a bag, a bag of heroin. He kept bugging me and bugging me and there's this huge painting on the wall.

C'mon Frankie give me something, and I just (blam) and the bullet went right above his head.

Beachhead: That was close.

Frank T. Rios: Yeah I missed him by that much (indicating an inch). We made amends. And he's clean too, you know a long time.

Beachhead: That's all behind you---

Frank T. Rios: Yes I'm sorry, thank God I missed him.

Beachhead: Do you paint in color?

Frank T. Rios: No.

Beachhead: Collage and black and white.

Frank T. Rios: Yeah and I draw a little bit.

Beachhead: I love your drawings in "The Kid in the Woods". Is that rapidograph?

Frank T. Rios: It's just a pen.

Beachhead: Did you ever go to art school?

Frank T. Rios: No.

Beachhead: What artists do you like?

Frank T. Rios: Well you know Jackson Pollock, Altoon. I love Franz Kline you know, the ash can school all those guys.

Beachhead: Why "The Kid in the America" and "Kid in the Woods" What is the thing with kid?

Is there a connection that both you and Tony Scibella had a title with that in it.

Frank T. Rios: Yeah I think there is. I was never sure because I just received it, you know, because "The Kid in the Woods" is he's drawn to the giant oak. See the giant oak is where the lady is splattered against, and the lady holds all the poems, so he needs to go into the woods.

Beachhead: Right.

Frank T. Rios: Right. And that The kid probably a subconscious thing was from Tony since he worked on the thing so long with "The Kid in America".

Beachhead: I never quite asked you what you thought of Philomene Long. I interrupted you I think. You met her after Stuart died

Frank T. Rios: You know when she came, you know being with Stuart and that whole thing that was so heavy. So heavy Stuart died.

Beachhead: It must have been.

Frank T. Rios: Also Stuart dying closed the door for us.

Beachhead: What do you mean closed the door for us?

Frank T. Rios: I mean he was our front man. He had a way of getting into the acknowledged poets and artists. I could never do that, since I was the gangster poet and Tony was very quiet, so Stuart was the guy.

(Frank goes to answer the phone. He returns)

Frank T. Rios: So what was I saying?

Beachhead: I'm lost, oh yeah, he was the leader, the one who opened the doors.

Frank T. Rios: Yeah Stuart opened the doors. So Philomene was there with him. And gone with him. So that's how I met her. And of course she went with John, John Thomas. I knew John from '59, all the way back.

Beachhead: What did you think of them together?

Frank T. Rios: They were like a dedicated beat couple who would live in poverty for the rest of their lives and write poems and be Zen.

Beachhead: Are you Zen? You seem like a very spiritual person. I can see that in your writing. Are you religious or are you spiritual?

Frank T. Rios: No I'm not religious, I'm spiritual. Probably leaning more to being a Buddhist, higher self and that stuff.

Beachhead: Right, I see.

Frank T. Rios: But I have my muse.

An RV Fairytale – *continued from page 7*

I am all for simplifying Life, downsizing possessions, and hitting the road in wanderlust, even if all one can swing these days happens to be parking curbside until things perk up.....so where exactly is that affordable Venice-by-the-sea RV park hook-up facility with supervised maintenance, hot showers, clean public washrooms, and campfire sing-alongs?

Meantime, back to my story. My ex nixes the RV, passes it to Mark, a mechanic acquaintance currently living in his jammed-full truck on 4th and Rose. He "needs more space", promises he'll move it on street cleaning days. I head off, his number becomes unreachable, one can only pray.....two moons later, I'm searching up the proverbial Rose..... nothing on 4th, panic, loan, remember? On 5th the white elephant appears, parked, looming, all wobbly-like, yes, I admit, a megalith of an eyesore in the neighborhood. A ventured knock is opened by two fine gentlemen, whom: a) make their dough recycling and b) happen to enjoy being typsy ALOT. Introducing Ron Garcia and Ezekiel. Ron I've seen plenty on the boardwalk waving a giant old glory while weaving some dandy dance improv, Zeke's a lion-like master of many trades..... PEACE! BROTHERS.

Assuring me they love me they launch into the unknown whereabouts of Mark, on a bit of a lam, conveniently taking the one ignition key with him. Handing over a parking ticket, they swear it's the only one. The smashed windshield and triangular side window are explained in more tall tales, involving bricks, and being chased and beat up by a big, scary skinhead with spiderweb tattoos. Don't get me wrong, I already love these guys, immensely relieved and grateful the truck is even there, glad they've had shelter for a few, but it's obviously gonna cost me.....(and guys? why'd you involve me in that funky wild goose chase?)

So follows a two-week long saga of repair, I call in Elisabeth, the owner of the truck, a sweetly angelic lady who doesn't bite my head off, or the

guys. Together we get a new key made, (AAA - \$120), replace the dead battery, fix the broken starter motor, spend hours going downtown with my friend Rippley to find a \$35 windshield at U-pick autoparts, climaxing in an exciting just-beating-the-rains-coming grande finale in the 99 Cent Store parking lot securing the fit of the lockbead seal.

Total value of my wacked lesson in misguided divine providence? \$300, a mere monetary output paling in comparison to the sum total of all our love and energy, the feeling of completing a herculean-like task with the true camaraderie of total strangers, the jokes, the bible quotes, the cantankerous b.s., gads of useful? truck lore, our precious time and emotions turning to silly putty..... The CARING! the SHARING! meeting the homeless, limping, shot up in nam sarge-friend of the guys, who, between rolling smokes and laudable john wayne impressions, relived the moment he brought home ALIVE! all seven men of his company to their families waiting at the San Diego air force base, aaaiiiyyee! That was a tear jerker.

And who can forget the sound, Praise Jesus!, of the motor finally turning, and yes, adding yet another gas-guzzling stinkbomb on the road but now this one felt kinda sentient-like from its journey, like it grew a heart there on fifth and Rose, transforming itself into a heavenly metaphysical home for us angels/freaks. Then, suddenly like the wind, without getting too overly sentimental, the best ephemeral gypsies in town all got their groove on moving on.

Moral of the story? Everybody - HAVE SOME RESPECT! RV Dwellers - Keep circulatin', park in less residential sites, above all DO NOT PISS on thy exorbitant rent/mortgage-paying "neighbor's" daisies. The rest of you? Meditate on Compassion while driving. Me - I'm walking, (following the Pied Piper).

CommUnity Events — by the numbers



Sunday, January 6
 • 9:30-11am – **Lincoln Place Tenant Association** monthly meeting - Penmar Recreation Center.

Monday, January 7
 • 7:30pm - **MAX 10 Performance Lab.** A place to do brave work, experiment and risk failure. Electric Lodge. \$8.

Tuesday, January 8
 • 9-10am - **Westminster Elementary School** celebration of the completion of the its new playground.

Wednesday, January 9
 • 8pm - Sneak preview of Clay Claiborne's documentary of the Vietnam conflict. Sponto. Free.

Thursday, January 10
 • 4-6pm - Teen Council - **Design-a-Mask workshop** - All teens welcome, Abbot Kinney Library.

Saturday, January 12
 • 8pm - Rock 'n Roll Made in Mexico: **From Evolution to Revolution.** Ppremiere of Lance Miccio's exciting history of Mexican Rock. Sponto. Free.

Monday, January 14
 • 8pm - **Bill Brown Films:** The Other Side. A 2000-mile journey along the US/Mexico border reveals a geography of aspiration and insecurity. Unurban Coffeeshouse. Free.

Thursday, January 17 - 19
 • 2008 Dance/USA Winter Forum: **Marketing and the Use of Technology.** Electric Lodge. More information: www.danceusa.org/meetings/#forum.

Saturday, January 19
 • 7pm - **Paradigm Poets.** 235 Hill St., Church in Ocean Park - Sliding scale \$15-\$5. No one will be turned away.

Tuesday, January 22
 • 6:30-9:30pm - Town Hall Forum on **Santa Monica Airport** impacts on the surrounding communities. Daniel Webster Middle School Auditorium. 11330 W. Graham Place, West L.A.
 • 8:30 and 9:30pm- Suzy Williams and Her Solid Senders. Live Jazz and Jump blues. Temple Bar. \$10.

Wednesday, January 23
 • 7pm - **Land Use and Planning Committee** of the Venice Neighborhood Council - Westminster School Auditorium - www.grvnc.org
 • 8pm - **Experimental Films** by Robert Branaman. Sponto. Free. Plus 7pm live poetry with Milo Johnson and S.A.Griffin.

Art by Bob Farrington

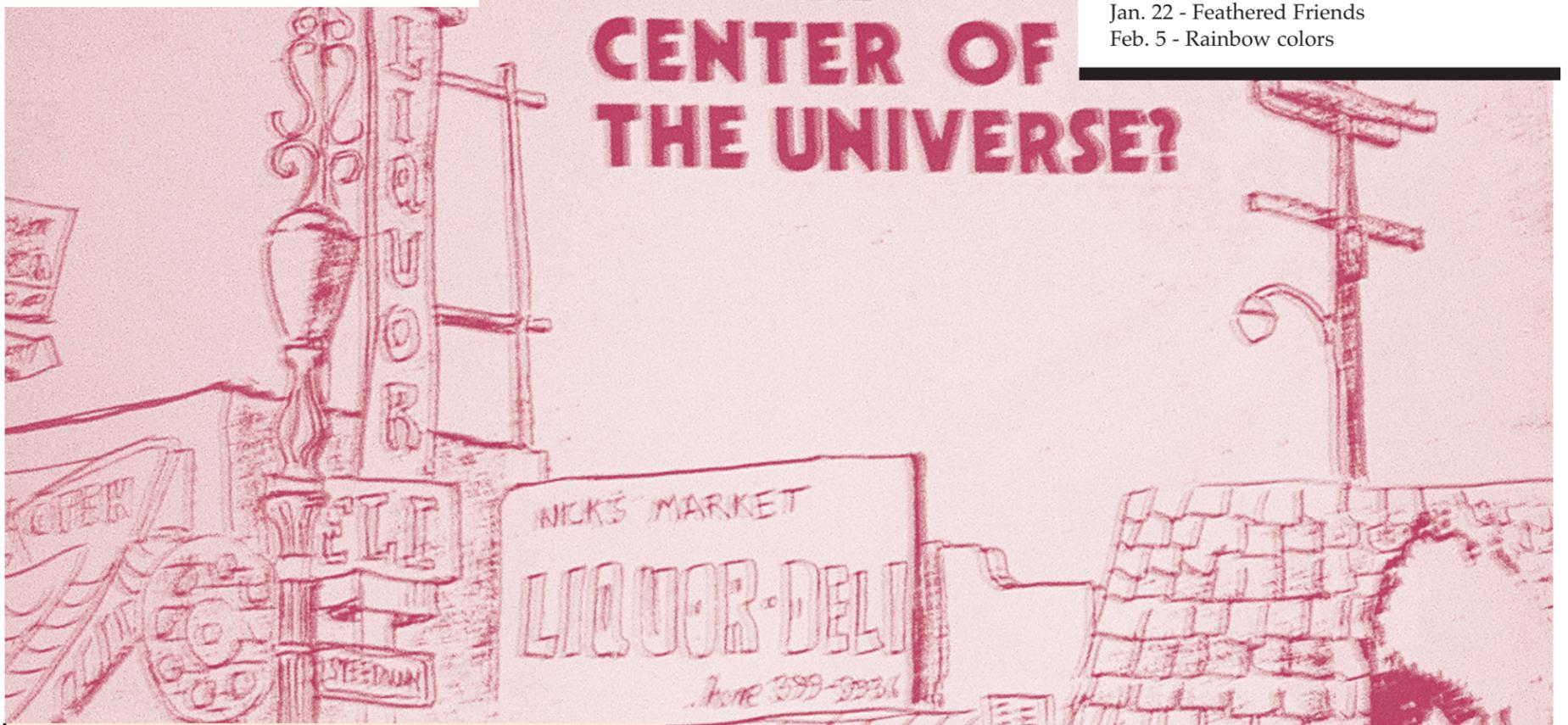
**VENICE:
CENTER OF
THE UNIVERSE?**

Location Guide

- Abbot Kinney Public Library, 501 S. Venice Blvd, 821-1769
- Beyond Baroque, 681 Venice Blvd. 822-3006
- Electric Lodge, 1416 Electric Ave, 306-1854, max10@electriclodge.org
- Hal's Bar and Grill, 1349 Abbot Kinney Blvd., 396-3105 - www.halsbarandgrill.com
- Pacific Resident Theatre, 703 Venice Blvd. 822-8392 - www.pacificresidenttheatre.com
- SPARC - Social and Public Art Resource Center, 685 Venice Blvd. 822-9560 x 15.
- Sponto Gallery, 7 Dudley Ave, Free, 306-7330, pfsuzy@aol.com
- Westminster Elementary School, 1010 Abbot Kinney Blvd. 310-606-2015

Ongoing Events

- Wednesday, Jan. 16-26 - **Resisting Loss Weaving Tradition.** The weavings of Oaxacan artist Pantaleon Ruiz Martinez. SPARC. Free.
- **Toddler Storytime** – Stories, songs, and laughs - Tuesdays at 10:30am, Abbot Kinney Public Library.
 Jan. 8 - Simply silly
 Jan. 22 - Feathered Friends
 Feb. 5 - Rainbow colors



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Venice Swimmers Brave 70 Degree Temperatures to Take a Dip on New Year's Day



Ready, Set, Go!



Lifeguards stand ready to pull swimmers from the frigid water



Big waves greet the hearty souls who dare start the year with a swim in the Bay.



Left: Snorky's brother, Norky, got cold feet before the swim.



Right: They've been doing this since 1958?



Swimmers and spectators trudge back to Windward to begin a new year.

All photos on this page by Alexandria.

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