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March  
**2011**  
#353



Art by Marina Valentina

## 100th Anniversary of International Women's Day

By Greta Cobar

As we are celebrating the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of The International Women's day this March 8, let's look around us and see where women stand this day and age in our society.

California Democrat congresswoman Jackie Speier gave an emotional speech February 19 in Congress against the amendment passed by the House to cut off all federal funding to Planned Parenthood. Targeted because of the abortion services it provides, Planned Parenthood would be forced to cease all of its operations if federal funding were cut off. It might not matter that none of the federal funds are actually used for abortion services, that Planned Parenthood only spends three percent of its total budget (which also includes state funds) on abortions, or that 90% of its budget is used for Sexually Transmitted Disease (STD) testing, birth control, cancer screenings and sex education mainly geared towards low-income, minority women.

It's sad to see our society going 40 years back in time and consciousness. And it's sad to see an additional 12 states trying to pass similar anti-abortion legislation that would make women's lives so much more difficult than they already are. On the other hand, it's nice to see a woman being able to take over the House floor and speak her mind, express her own experience of having to go through an abortion when she was forty years old, 17 weeks pregnant and her fetus moved, according to her, from "the vagina to the cervix." That type of move would be impossible. Although I don't intend to minimize her greatness for making it that far into American politics and for having the guts to share such a personal story with the world in an effort to stop the amendment, I do have to say that it is somewhat embarrassing to see an educated, powerful woman not understand basic female anatomy and physiology.

Can we blame her and us women in general for our lack of comfort with certain parts of our bodies, or should we blame men instead, like we would ordinarily? According to Eve Ensler, author of "I Am An Emotional Creature" and "The Vagina Monologues":

"Vagina is the most terrifying word, the most threatening word, in any language of any country I have ever been to. Even when the vagina is worshipped in theory, as the yoni is in India, it is denigrated in practice. It is more reviled and feared than words like plutonium, genocide and starvation. In many



countries the word for female genitalia is so derogatory or disgusting, it cannot be spoken in public. In a few places, there is no word in the language for vagina at all."

A similarly ignorant statement was made recently by (surprise!) none other than Sarah Palin. According to her, Michelle Obama needs to make breastfeeding pumps available because the price of milk is so high. Although I do pity women who look up to Palin as a role-model, it is a shame that she raised five children, the last one of whom is still a toddler, and failed to understand that feeding regular milk to infants results in failure to thrive, which is fatal. In my opinion she and all other women should be better educated when it comes to all females issues, from the position of the cervix to the need for baby formula in infants. And of course breastfeeding pumps should be provided free of charge instead of being secretly embellished into a tax deduction that the very vast majority of people do not qualify for.

Going back to the concept of blame, whom do we fault for our ignorance and discomfort relating to women reproductive health issues? Why not pick on education? Since the 70's all High School students have been required to pass a Health class in order to obtain a High School diploma. Judy Elliott, Chief Academic Officer of the Office of Curriculum, Instruction and School Support issued a New Reference Guide on May 7, 2010 stating that "High School

## A Victim of Gentrification

By Mary Getlein

They called Patty Warivonchik, "Blue Bus Patty," until her bus burst into flames in the Ralph's parking lot. She lost everything she owned in the fire. Then a camper was given to her and she lived in that for 11 years. I saw her at the Westminster school meeting about what to "do" with the homeless in RV's. Rosendahl said: "go into my program or go to jail – that's it!"

She went up to the mic and exploded, a volcano in the shape of an irate woman, her arms waving in the air: she announced she was homeless and she wasn't about to be evicted from the streets. She compared the eviction to the removal of the Roma in France, and said they were the "Northern American Gypsies" and were about to become extinct. "You care about a fish, a moth, a frog?"- we're human beings, man, you can't do this to us!"

She was magnificent in her fury. But Rosendahl put the program in place, and one by one, RV's and their owners were arrested and dragged away. Patty was safe, parking in a church parking lot in Ocean Park. Then one day, as she drove through Venice, she was pulled over and threatened with arrest, and confiscation of her vehicle, if they ever caught her in Venice again. For driving her vehicle. In Venice.

Patty was a street artist in Venice. She danced in the drum circle, she sang and danced on the boardwalk, she sold her pottery on the boardwalk, she loved telling stories and jokes to people. She fed homeless people and freely gave of herself. So what, you ask? So she's gone, man. She left to go back home to New Jersey, to escape the daily harassment and intimidation of LAPD. It gets really old to hear the daily stories from other people of getting harassed and pushed around by LAPD.

Picking on poor people who want to live by the ocean, too. Picking on people who can't fit into the role that society has ready for them. Picking on people who have no one to back them up. Meanwhile – there are crimes going on around here, aren't there? Why aren't the resources of LAPD being used in the way they advertise on their cars: to protect and serve? How many people have you protected today? How many people have you served?

Patty made beautiful pottery and enriched a lot of people through art. She was never afraid to voice her opinion about anything. She came here when she was 19 and stayed for thirty-five years. We watched a lot of sunsets together and shared a lot of songs and laughter. She will be missed.

**CASUALTIES  
IN AFGHANISTAN:  
1,485 U.S. Dead  
17 this month**

**IRAQ:  
4,439 U.S. Dead - 3 this month  
32,987 U.S. Wounded  
Iraqi Dead: Up to 1.4 million •  
Cost of wars: \$1.1+ trillion**

costofwar.com • antiwar.com • icasualties.org

graduation requirements were amended to provide students with an alternative to taking a Health class to meet the Health requirement." By completing five hours of Comprehensive Sexual Health and HIV/AIDS instruction in Biological Science and Physical Education, all Los Angeles Unified School District students can now obtain a High School diploma

—continued on page 3





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# 100 Years Ago The Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire, March 25, 1911

On that day, mostly women garment workers were locked into their workplace on the eighth, ninth and 10th floors as usual.

On March 25, a fire broke out. The Fire Department arrived, but their ladders only reached to the sixth floor.

Sixty-two workers jumped to their deaths to avoid being burned to death. A man and a woman were seen kissing before they both jumped to their deaths. In all, 146 people died in the fire.

The owners survived by escaping to the roof.

The tragedy at the Greenwich Village, New York factory resulted in women flocking to labor organizations, including the Women's Trade Union League and the International Ladies Garment Workers Union (ILGWU).

The fire also inspired strong health and safety laws in New York state and elsewhere.



TRIANGLE FIRE PLAQUE

On this site, 146 workers lost their lives in the Triangle Shirtwaist Company fire on March 25, 1911. Out of their martyrdom came new concepts of social responsibility and labor legislation that have helped make American working conditions the finest in the world. INTERNATIONAL LADIES' GARMENT WORKERS' UNION

Photos by Jim Smith  
 The Triangle building today.



Athol Fugard's

# Valley Song

The life of a young woman who embodies all the enthusiasm of a post apartheid youth, eager for change and opportunity, while her grandfather struggles to let go of the scars of the past.

March 4th through 20th  
 Thursdays, Fridays, Saturdays 8:00pm  
 Sundays 2:00pm

www.electriclodge.org  
 1416 Electric Avenue  
 Venice, CA. 90291  
<http://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/154242>

electriclodge

www.electriclodge.org

1416 Electric Avenue

Venice, CA. 90291

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## Rosendahl Kills Peninsula Bike Path

Dear Beachhead,

For those of you that don't already know, on February 9, Bill Rosendahl voted against a considerable group of community voices and the Venice Neighborhood Council and their unanimous endorsement to include the completion of the Venice Beach Bike Path in the L.A. Bicycle Master Plan.

It was quite apparent that the argument that staff was directed to give against the plan was pretty weak and that pressure was applied, again, to ensure a private beach on public lands.

While no arguments were made about unwanted riff-raff, four community members spoke of the tremendous benefits to the Joint Committee (Transportation & PLUM).

It was sort of amazing to see Bill's eagerness in his NO vote after staff requested if action was needed on the inclusion. Staff stated that they were going to look into helping with improving the dangerous conditions along Washington Blvd.

Jon Nahhas

Pacific Resident Theatre honors the Legacy Family of Venice

# The Tabor Family

Featuring John Quincy Tabor at 90!

Wednesday, March 2, 2011 — 7:00 pm

Single tickets available at the door

NO RESERVATIONS • \$5.00 Donation at Door

703 Venice Boulevard in Venice • 310.822.8392

www.PacificResidentTheatre.com



# The Sudsy Sexist World of TV Ads

By Lynne Bronstein

What year is this? 2011? Was it only back in 1963 that Betty Friedan wrote *The Feminine Mystique*? If you look at television (or movies or magazines) you would never know that all this time has passed. It's the 1950s except for the technology.

To wit: here's a TV ad for a cable service. This is a major communications company and all of us probably pay into their profits somehow. The ad shows two young pretty females (one Caucasian, one Asian-American, just to demonstrate cultural diversity) having trouble with their washing machine. It is foaming over. One woman screams to her friend about ways they can try to fix it but the other one doesn't know where anything is on the washing machine. First female then uses her high-speed Internet connection to call Daddy. Daddy appears and suggests that the twosomes try turning the washing machine off. Voila! It works. "I'll call a plumber," says all-knowing Daddy.

In 2011, TV advertising copywriters believe that only women do the washing. But that's not the whole point. In 2011, TV ad writers-and the companies they work for-think that women are also inept with all kinds of machinery and only a MAN can give them the advice they need, even if that advice is as simple as turning the danged thing off!

The most amazing thing is that these people think they can sell me their product by insulting me, a woman. Hell, they don't just think so. They've tested these commercials on focus groups. This is what works, they tell us. This is what women want and that is what men want. Everything that is sold to us is marketed in pink or blue, often with a soupcon of

## 100th Anniversary of International Women's Day —continued from page 1

without completing the semester-long Health class previously offered to them.

Of course this change comes about just as overweight and obesity rates are skyrocketing, with childhood obesity being the most alarming factor. Although we have a long way to go towards the attainment of our sexual revolution, sexual education provided both in the classroom and by Planned Parenthood did prove to be effective, as 61% of High School students reported having used a condom the last time they had sex in 2009, compared with only 46% in 1991.

The current amendments in our legislature are set to undermine instead of empower women. From denying us the reproductive health services provided by Planned Parenthood, which serves 3 million patients a year, to getting rid of High School courses that are meant to teach teenagers about things like menstruation and wet dreams, ignorance is promoted while power is taken away. Teacher unions are slaughtered in Wisconsin and slowly killed elsewhere with the unavoidable result of eliminating the middle class, which will affect women disproportionately more than men.

It's always nice to recognize the advances that have been made concerning social status, income, education and so on. However, the battle for true gender equality is far from over: in 2009 women still earned 22% less than men. And it is discouraging to see rights that we have long fought for in danger of being taken away from us. What does that mean? That we have to fight harder! And that the battle should encompass external as well as internal forces. Some of our issues can be blamed on our patriarchal system, but at the same time we have to take charge of our self-confidence and grow from within as opposed to waiting for society to allow us to be who we are. ☺

• Filet • Salmon • Ribs • Prawns •

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Heated Patio • Dining • Take Out • Delivery

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Everyone's Raving About Marla's Café!

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Tuesday – Friday: 11:30 – 9 p.m.

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Salads

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Pasta

Sweets

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• www.marlascafe.com •

gender-biased humor. The slightest deviation might cause a dip in sales.

All household products are sold only to women. Even though single men and men who live with other men and men who are willing to help their wives or girlfriends with the housework are doing that housework, it is the women who worry that their kids are getting enough fiber in their diets (from "whole grain" products that contain a lot of high fructose corn syrup). It is the women who scrub their kitchen counters and their shower stall walls. Men sometimes appear to tell women how to clean off the mildew. Props here to CLR Household Cleaner, the only household product that has a commercial in which a man is seen doing house cleaning on a weekend (he received the "Honey Do" list from his wife but at least it proves that men sometimes do this work).

But it's the ads that have nothing to do with the housework that are really puzzling. Mucinex is a cold remedy. Would you believe that ads for Mucinex show drops of animated personified mucous and even the Mucous People conform to gender roles? Mrs. Mucous vacuums the carpet while Mr. Mucous sits reading the newspaper and praising his wife for her housewifely expertise.

In another cable-communications ad, a family has "peace" because everyone has their own TV that they can watch in a separate room and everyone has separate cable and HD access. Or something like that. At this point I would not be surprised if they all had their own little holodeck rooms and transporters. But at the dinner table, the family "peace" is indicated, among other things, by the father and daughter complimenting the mother on her roast. "It's not too well-done?" she asks. "It's a job well-done," says the father.

# Women Run for Congress

Jane Harman, congressional representative for Venice and the 36th district, has abandoned her position, effective Feb. 28. Gov. Jerry Brown was expected to announce a special election to replace her. The election will likely be held on June 7, in conjunction with several budget initiative that will be on the ballot.

At least three Venice candidates have said they will file for the election. They are Debra Bowen, Maria E. Montañó and Paul Whitehead. Also running are South Bay candidates Janice Hahn and Mike Webb and Santa Monica resident Marcy Winograd.

Debra Bowen is the current California Secretary of State. Her campaign material says she lives in Marina del Rey, however, she actually lives in the Oxford Triangle, which is part of Venice. Bowen and Hahn are considered to be the leading Democrats in the race. Both, at Hahn's urging, have signed a "Support for Israel" statement which includes support for a \$3 billion security aid program, opposition to a Palestinian state unless sanctioned by Israel, hostility toward Iran, and opposition to anti-Israel speech. The last item is apparently aimed at Marcy Winograd who ran against Harman in 2010 and was critical of unqualified support for Israel. It may have prompted Winograd to get into the race on Feb. 26.

The entry of Winograd would be welcomed by Hahn since Bowen and Winograd would likely split the progressive Democratic vote, leaving Hahn a clear field with the supporters of Jane Harman.

Maria E. Montañó is the Peace and Freedom candidate. She is a nearly life-long resident of Venice and daughter of immigrant parents who become a Doctor in Education. Montañó is a former state commissioner of parks and recreation and a former commissioner of education for LAUSD. She is currently a national certified teacher who works in the L.A. Unified School District.

Paul Whitehead has run as a Republican for Assembly and Congress. However, he has now switched parties and will run as a Democrat.

Janice Hahn is a Los Angeles city council member who has been endorsed by several mainstream Democratic officeholders, including Ted Lieu and Bill Rosendahl. She and Bowen are top contenders for the job. The two women also have in common that each will soon be termed out of her current office. Hence the attempted jump to Congress.

Mike Webb is a Redondo Beach Republican attorney and likely the first of several Republicans to jump into the race. Before the next regular election in 2012, the district will be reapportioned, perhaps splitting off the heavily Democratic northern section,

Of course weight-loss products are all aimed at women. Again, reluctant kudos to Yoplait for an ad featuring a man who is eating Yoplait to lose weight (again due to the example of his wife-and it's because of the delicious flavors rather than from his vanity). Too bad Yoplait is also full of high-fructose corn syrup. I checked the ingredients.

What can be done about this? You can boycott the products but it is necessary to inform the sponsors of the reason *why* you are not buying their products. Write or email them and tell them that they are selling you old-fashioned images of the genders and you want to see alternatives-including same sex couples and same-sex headed families, couples who share housework, men who are also concerned about health and physical appearance, and women who want to be healthy and look good in order to give a presentation at a business conference. Note the irony of all the futuristic gadgets in commercials where the people are living in the Stone Age of feminist consciousness. While you're at it, mention the hypocrisy of using high fructose corn syrup in low-calorie foods.

And I don't really want any of the Mucous People in my nose anyway but Mucinex could evict them and show healthy hippie-commune micro-organisms that are supposed to be in your nose. Okay, this is getting a bit picky, excuse the pun.

I just want to see a different paradigm. After all these years and with current feminist activists so busy trying to save choice that they haven't much time to move forward on other issues, those of us who have worked and dreamed for 50 years to see gender equity, don't want it to see it go down the drain in a flood of sex-stereotyped suds. We want to feel that ours is a job well-done. ☺

including Venice. This would leave a new South Bay district that would be friendlier to Republicans seeking to get elected.

## Harman's Surprise Departure

An unsolved mystery is why Jane Harman has abandoned Congress only three months after getting reelected. She has been a leader of the conservative "blue dog" caucus in the Democratic Party, and a member of the Trilateral Commission. What prompted her to take a non-political job with the Woodrow Wilson Foundation instead of finishing her term in Congress?

In 2006, Time Magazine reported on a year-long Justice Department and FBI investigation of Harman's connection with Israeli agents and the Israel lobbying organization, the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC). The magazine stated that the Justice Dept. was looking into whether Harman had enlisted foreign help in her campaign to chair the House Intelligence Committee.

In 2009, tapes were released that purported to have recorded a conversation between Harman and an "Israeli agent." according to the Jewish Standard, "The "agent" asked Harman to intervene in the case of two former AIPAC staffers who had been charged with handling classified information.

Harman agreed to "waddle" into the matter, "if you think it will make a difference," according to the reports. The "agent" then said he would advocate on her behalf to keep Harman in her spot as the top Democrat on the Intelligence Committee. Harman said, "This conversation doesn't exist" and hung up.

Dean Boyd, a spokesperson at the Justice Department, had "no comment" on the current state of the investigation. ☺

—Jim Smith



Jane Harman: "I Quit"



# Recommendations For Yet Another Election (this time the city's) On March 8

By Jackie Goldberg

On March 8, there will be almost “secret” Municipal and local elections throughout California. Many important issues will be decided, city council members, school board members and community college board members will be elected, and only about 15 percent of those eligible to vote, will cast ballots, mostly by mail.

Your vote in such an election counts more than usual. So, I am going to list recommendations for some of these races.

## LOS ANGELES COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT:

Seat No. 1—MONA FIELD

Seat No.3—STEVE VERES

Seat No. 5—SCOTT SVONKIN

Seat No. 7—MIGUEL SANTIAGO

## SANTA MONICA/MALIBU BOARD OF EDUCATION: LAURIE LIEBERMAN

## CITY OF LOS ANGELES MEASURES

Because the City of Los Angeles is a Charter City, many issues can only be resolved by the voters, and changes in the Charter. On the March 8 ballot, there are 10 ballot measures, designated by letters G-Q.

All of the measures were put on the ballot by the City Council, and signed by the Mayor. Most are NOT CONTROVERSIAL, and deserve an OK. A few are controversial. Here are my recommendations, and the reasons for them:

**Measure G:** This measure adds a new, LOWER PENSION TIER FOR CITY POLICE, and FIRE FIGHTERS. It was negotiated by the Police Protective League, United Firefighters of L.A. and the City, and so has no opposition.

You probably should vote “YES” on this, as it is a negotiated agreement, and thus should be honored. It will pass easily, but I personally will vote “NO” on it, as I want to protest the assault on Public Employee Pensions currently being waged nationwide by the right wing on behalf of the corporate oligarchy that seems to be running everything in America these days.

**Measure H:** This measure has much to recommend it.

It will restrict campaign contributions from, and fundraising by bidders on behalf of Council Members and the Mayor on some of the contracts voted on by Council Members and requiring the Mayor’s approval.

It also calls for greater contribution disclosures for bidders.

It also bans from bidding, those who violate these provisions.

It also lifts the maximum balance in the City’s matching fund for political candidates, and requires the City to add \$3 million annually (unless there is an Emergency) to the fund.

This deserves a big “YES” VOTE. The so-called “pay-to-play: environment in City Hall was why I personally refused to accept donations from Developers or Lobbyists. Council Members have “life and death” power over projects. If they make mistakes in what they approve, it should be because of errors in judgment, but NOT because they worry about losing major campaign donors. The arguments against Measure H are made by those who benefit from “pay-or-play.”

**Measure I:** This measure establishes a Dept. of Water and Power Office of Public Accountability. They are supposed to provide a “public independent analysis of Department actions as they relate to water and electricity rates.”

The new City Dept. will cost an estimated \$1 million per year. I am of mixed views on this measure because right now, Los Angeles DwP ratepayers have the most reliable service for water and electricity in the State.

And we, who are served by DwP have the lowest rates for both water and electricity as well. This is all because we have a city-owned and run Department, which unlike Edison, and other for-profit providers, is a NON-PROFIT entity.

So why do we need this million-dollar new unit? It has been a semi-competitive indoor sport to bash the Dept. of Water and Power.

The L.A. Times in particular hates the Department, and tries to embarrass it at every turn. While there is NO OPPOSITION TO THIS MEASURE, and it will pass easily, I personally will vote “NO” on the measure.

**Measure J:** This measure will require the Department of Water and Power to submit its Preliminary Budget to the City Council, only for “Informational Purposes.”

More importantly, the measure would “define and establish procedures through which the DwP Board could withhold its consent to transfer surplus money from the Power Revenue Fund or the Water Revenue Fund to the City’s General Fund Budget.

This measure arises from a recent fight between the Board of the Dept. of Water and Power, and the L.A. City Council and Mayor over how much “surplus” was actually in the Power Revenue Fund or the Water Revenue Fund.

These two Funds are established annually based on efficiencies accomplished by DwP employees and managers, and the transfers to the City Budget HELPS PAY FOR ESSENTIAL CITY SERVICES.

I am NOT sure this measure is necessary, but there is NO opposition and I will vote “YES” on this measure.

**Measure L:** This measure calls for guaranteed funding for the City’s Public Libraries, over several years until it reaches 3/100 of 1% (0.300%) of the City Budget. Currently the Charter allocates just less than 2/100 of 1% of the City Budget (0.0175%).

The plan is to gradually raise the amount over several years until 2014-15. At that point, the funding should permit the Library Dept. to RESTORE HOURS, AND REOPEN CLOSED LIBRARIES that have been cut severely by the current budget mess.

**I URGE A “YES” VOTE IN THE STRONGEST POSSIBLE MANNER.**

This is the only measure on the ballot that will positively affect the lives of children and families throughout our City. Please vote YES on this measure, no matter what else you do on March 8.

The “opponents” of the measure say that funding for Libraries will reduce anti-gang efforts, hurt public safety, reduce firefighters, kill parks and street services, blah, blah, blah. Hogwash!

**Measure M:** This measure would provide for a 5% tax on Medical Marijuana. It would provide a new source of funds to the City’s hard-pressed General Fund. The opposition worries about lawsuits, and the costs required to collect the tax. Nonetheless, I am a supporter of the measure, and will vote “YES” on Measure M.

**Measure N:** Campaign Finance is the subject of this measure. Last year the United States Supreme Court reemphasized is notion that corporations are ‘People’ and entitled to the same free-speech rights as you and I.

This was called the Citizens United case. This right-wing, anti-democratic decision by an activist U.S. Supreme Court means that any corporation can donate to political campaigns without limit, and more importantly to them, without revealing to anyone that they are funding the campaign.

The City of Los Angeles has real campaign finance reform.

Measure N will eliminate those measures that: currently restrict how much a candidate can give him/herself; currently restrict any person’s contribution to an “independent expenditure committee” to \$500 in City elections, and \$1,000 in School Board elections; and currently lift contribution limits on candidates opposing self-financed candidates until they have raised contributions that equal the amount of personal funds used by those self-funded candidates.

These changes are tantamount to saying that City of L.A. candidates will be the “best that money can buy.”

Though these changes will probably have to be made, after lawsuits are pursued, I will nonetheless support the notion of a more fair and demo-

cratic campaign system, and will vote “NO” on Measure N.

**Measure O:** Simply put, this a \$1.44 tax per barrel on oil removed from the ground in the City of Los Angeles.

It should raise about \$4 million annually for the City’s General Fund Budget. Such “oil depletion” taxes have long been in place in Beverly Hills, Seal Beach, Inglewood and Long Beach. It is long overdue in Los Angeles, and all of us should vote “YES” on the measure.

Interestingly, the opposition “looks like” it is from small business, and Latino and African American Chambers of Commerce, and from senior citizens. But I suspect that they are “fronts” for the BIG OIL COMPANIES, WHO HAVE DEFEATED ALL SIMILAR MEASURES TO TAX THEM IN LOS ANGELES.

Do Not be Fooled. This deserves a “YES” vote, and will NOT harm any of the above mentioned groups of people!

**Measure P:** This measure would REQUIRE the City to have an Emergency Reserve Account within the City’s Reserve Fund, with an annual amount in it of not less than 2 ¾% of General Fund income.

It would also require a 2/3 vote to not save that much money, and any money taken in such a fiscal emergency would have to be repaid in the next budget year.

This is already Policy in the City of Los Angeles. So, why put it into the City Charter, where money would first go to a reserve, and not to: saving City jobs, City Police and Fire services, City Parks, City street resurfacing, etc.

I do NOT think it is a good idea to restrict Council Members and the Mayor on budget matters such as Reserves. The policy exists now, and is a good one. We do NOT need to put it in the City’s constitution (Charter).

I recommend a “NO” vote on this measure.

**Measure Q:** This measure expands the automatic civil service exemption for ALL Deputy Chiefs in the Fire Dept., limits the number of people to be tested and “certified” as eligible for appointment.

It also clarifies and standardizes the probationary period for police officers in the Airport, Harbor and General Services Departments; lengthens “emergency” appointments to 1 year; and permits retired City employees to work for 120 days instead of 90 days without increasing their pension benefits.

The first part of the measure streamlines the civil service testing process which sometimes tests literally hundreds of candidates and certifies them for employment when there are few or even NO openings for that position. All that costs a great deal of money.

The other items would standardized the probation period for ALL types of City Police officers; and that current City retirees would be more likely to get some work for the City, without the extra cost of adding to their existing pensions. All of these are a good idea.

I recommend a “YES” vote on this measure.

### TO SUMMARIZE:

**“YES” ON MEASURES: H, J, L, M, O, Q.**

**\*”NO” ON MEASURES: G, I, N, P.**

\*(Reminder: These measures will undoubtedly pass. The “NO” votes represent one sort of PROTEST regarding the political situation in our City and nation.

Jackie Goldberg is a former member of the L.A. City Council. She was President of the Los Angeles Unified School District and was a member of the California State Assembly. At UC Berkeley, she was a leader of the Free Speech Movement. ☺



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# Let Us Now Praise All Women Writers – or Not!

By Krista Schwimmer

March is designated “Women’s History Month”, a designation that began first as a week. In 1978, the “Education Task Force of the Sonoma County Commission On the Status of Women” started a Women’s History Week, choosing the week of March 8 to coincide with International Women’s Day. The idea caught on. So, in 1981, Senator Orrin Hatch (R-UT) and Representative Barbara Mikulski (D-MD) co-sponsored the first joint Congressional Resolution proclaiming a “Women’s History Week.” Six years later, the National Women’s History Project successfully lobbied Congress to declare the entire month of March as National Women’s History Month. Every year, a Presidential Proclamation is issued to launch off this celebration.

This year the theme for Women’s History Month is “Our History is Our Strength.” I have been mulling over the fact that women still seem largely missing from mass consciousness in many walks of life. I have also been thinking a lot about prizes and awards. So, I decided to take a look at two of the most well-known and prestigious prizes – the Nobel Prize and the Pulitzer Prize – to see how women have fared in them. Being an avid reader, I was particularly drawn to literature. I decided to look at only the Nobel Prize Winners for Literature and the Pulitzer Prize Winners for “Letters, Drama and Music.”

The Nobel Prize for Literature has been awarded 103 times to 106 Nobel Laureates, beginning in 1901. Only 12 of these recipients have been women. With the Pulitzer Prize, I looked at the 8 categories under “Letters, Drama and Music” which were: Biography or Autobiography; Drama; Fiction; General Non-Fiction; History; Music; Novel; and Poetry. According to my calculations, the totals for men and women under the category of “Letters, Drama, and Music,” were 389 individual men and 92 individual women. There were eight shared awards given to groups of men; two others shared by a man and a woman.

Well, one could argue, what does a prize matter anyway? There were many men on the Nobel Prize Literary list, (such as Jacinto Benavente, 1922 winner for his contributions to Spanish drama) that I have never heard of, let alone read. I cannot say literary

prizes affect me much. They are far too subjective to amount to anything. In the United States, however, a country where people participate in ridiculous television reality shows for money and notoriety, I believe it matters. If nothing else, a well known prize such as the Pulitzer or Nobel, gives a writer a chance to get his or her work out to the world over a longer period of time. It doesn’t hurt either that a Pulitzer prize winner receives \$10,000; and in 2010, the Nobel Prize winner, a fat \$1.5 million.



Toni Morrison

Women fared better in certain categories more than others. For instance, combining the Novel and the Fiction Category (which replaced the Novel Category in 1948), 27 women and 57 men received awards. Interestingly, in the History Category, men received 85 Pulitzers and women, only 7. (Hmmm – could this be why women have been written out of history at times?) Similarly, under Biography and Autobiography, the voices of men over women were heard 82 to 12.

If prizes such as the Pulitzer and the Nobel reflect a deeper attitude towards those we value, then we still have a long way to go when it comes to recognizing the written words of women. So this

month, make it a month of reading the works of women from all walks of life. Read them to yourself in the bath; read them out loud to your lover and friends. And when you find a treasure, pass it on to those you love. After all, it is not a prize that makes a work great; it is the way the work resounds within you.

## The 12 Women Nobel Laureates for Literature

1909	Selma Ottilia Louis Lagerlof
1926	Grazia Delede
1928	Sigrid Undset
1938	Pearl Buck
1945	Gabriela Mistral
1966	Nelly Sachs (shared with Shmuel Yosef Agnon)
1991	Nadine Gordime
1993	Toni Morrison
1996	Wislaw Szymborska
2004	Elfrieda Jelinek
2007	Doris Lessing
2009	Herta Mull

## How Women Fared In All the Nobel Prize Categories (including the Prize in Economic Sciences) From 1901 to 2010:

These prizes were awarded 534 times to 840 people and organizations. A total of 813 individuals received prizes; 20 organizations. Nobel Prizes were awarded to only 41 WOMEN IN TOTAL, with Marie Curie receiving it twice.

(Note: All prize statistics obtained at [www.pulitzer.org](http://www.pulitzer.org) and [www.nobelprize.org](http://www.nobelprize.org))

# Water Crisis: The Delta and Us

By DeDe Audet

Living, working, and playing here in Venice gives us environmentalists more in common with the California Delta than it is comfortable to think about. I am no exception. It gives me great pleasure to respond to criticism by saying “I have been saving water, power, and nonrenewable fuel by taking two-minute showers, heating my household water on the roof by the sun, driving a Prius, and covering the whole front yard with bricks set in sand to let rain water percolate through.

But learning about the rising seas and California’s water crisis makes me uneasy. Maybe it is time to face up to the problem. Venice CA was a swamp before canal lots first sold for \$5 down and \$5 a month. The California Delta was also a swamp.

Disappointed goldseekers turned to farming and began building levees to reclaim Delta swampland in the 1850’s. Today it brings in an average \$2 billion in crops per year and provides 12 million visitors with 290 shoreline recreation areas, 300 marinas for launching sportfishing, and 500,000 boaters.

But the Delta rests on shaky ground: a bad earthquake will shake loose more than one of the hastily thrown together levees. No one knows when that quake will occur.

On the other hand we do know the sea rises a bit more each year. Even a little rise will affect the California Delta and our community of Venice. What are we doing about that? Has anyone come up with suggestions to build dikes against the oceans about to engulf us? Of course not.

## No one wants to believe it.

Sea rise is too big and too costly to think about. (Consider please, if you still think global warming can be averted, on how to shut down the coal mines of China in time.) So, instead of planning for sea rise, Californians argue about the environment of a little fish called the Delta Smelt.

One bunch of Delta farmers hired lawyers to shut down the pumps bringing water to the farmers in the southern regions of the Delta and Southern

California. They were successful in showing a Federal judge in 2008 that changes in the Delta water flow caused endangerment of the Delta Smelt. So the judge closed the pumps during breeding season.

Then the deprived group of Delta farmers contested the closure by bringing new information to the court. In December 2010, the judge reopened the case saying “The 2008 (biological opinion findings) are arbitrary, capricious, and unlawful, and are remanded to Fish & Wildlife for further consideration in accordance with this decision and the requirements of law. . .”

## What?

Now, in February 2010 comes this. “The U.S. Department of Interior (boss of U.S. Fish and Wildlife) today announced a new policy aimed at ensuring the integrity of scientific and scholarly activities it uses, and appointed a Scientific Integrity Officer to coordinate the new policy’s implementation.”

Could this be a response to criticism of the techniques of determining risk to environmentally challenged species? I addressed the use of risk techniques in 2008 when LADWP commissioned a study that “Used state-of-the-art analytical techniques (Stochastic modeling) to calculate the expected cost of LADWP owned solar projects (Measure B).”

Stochastic analysis modeling was originally called the Monte Carlo system, useful in predicting risk. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife findings in the first Delta Smelt case predicted 0 to 40% risk of extinction might be found for the Delta Smelt. (Now you know why the judge found the biological opinion findings

capricious.)

But who needs a model to tell us the sea is rising? Every year someone measures it and tells us the sea measures higher than where it was the year before. Yet, like arguing how many angels can dance on the head of a pin, Californians persist in spending time and money arguing suitable environment for a little fish that is sure to get lost when saltwater flowing through the Golden Gate engulfs the Delta.

Right beside my computer is a map produced by the California Institute. It shows what will be covered by saltwater in our area when the sea rises 1.4 meter (55inches). Most of Venice and all of Playa Vista will be under. Whether it will occur in forty, fifty, or 100 years from now is unknown. But we can predict it will happen.

As long as Southern California depends on the Delta for water to drink, there is little comfort knowing the Delta will probably go under saltwater before we do.



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# It's A Small World After All

By CJ Gronner

For years I've sent people to what I believe is the best book store - for sure in Los Angeles, but maybe even the country - Small World Books. I've loved it so long, but just finally got to sit down with owner Mary Goodfader and hear about how they came to be. Located right in the heart of the Venice Boardwalk, Small World is a complete haven from all the noise and tourist folly happening just outside the door.

Small World was first located in Marina Del Rey, started by Mary's mother, Mildred Gates, in 1969. They catered to a largely boat-ing clientele in those days, and then the lease came up and it was time to relocate. Mary's late husband, Robert, went all around looking for a new location, when he saw a big space on the much more gnarly then Venice Boardwalk, boarded up and full of graffiti ("Stop Bombing In Cambodia!"). He knew he had found the spot for the family business.

The Goodfader's thought they should have a little take-out cafe to go along with their book store, so the doors of The Sidewalk Cafe opened in June of 1976, and Small World Books soon followed, right next door, in September of the same year. This was right around the time the roller skating disco craze was kicking in, and Venice Beach was THE spot. Other vendors soon followed, and both the cafe - now world famous as a premium people watching spot on the Venice Boardwalk - and the book store have been welcoming customers every day since.

The Cafe is now managed by Mary's son, Jay, and daughter, Deb Loucks, helps oversee Small World with Mary. Small World is pretty much a Women-run operation, which makes now a great time to celebrate it, as March is International Women's Month (which kind of annoys me that there has to be a special month to acknowledge any certain group - we are all one, and to separate anyone out implies that we are not ... but I digress ...). Their store manager is Bonnie Reynolds, who has been with them for 27 years. There is very little employee turnover, as it's a true family style operation. Where many independent book stores have struggled to survive in recent years - or simply died - Small World continues to thrive. Mary gives just credit to the Sidewalk Cafe's success

(and the fact that they own the building, so the rent isn't going up at all) for helping to keep the books coming for Venice and visitors through ups and downs.

It's such a calming effect to leave the sidewalk entertainers, out-of-towners, Kush Dr's, pan handlers, etal, on the Boardwalk behind to enter Small World, and its rows and rows of art and ideas. I am an old school book nerd, one who can completely immerse myself in the pages of a (good) book and not even

know (or care) that anything else is going on around me. For me, Small World is a pure treat, every time. I use it as a reward for myself, actually, that's how much I love and revere it. Staff recommended books (with their fun and insightful notes included on a book-mark) line the front counter, sharing space with the latest releases, and

as they say, "If you've heard of it, we have it or we will find it for you!" They mean it. I know a friend's Aunt who lives in Pasadena, and she ONLY gets her books from Small World. That's dedication. I feel the exact same way, sans the drive from Old Town.



all sorts of classics on it, all reissued with new artwork on their covers, and they really are just stunning to behold. I almost get a panic attack in there, as there are just so many books to read in one lifetime!

"Venice is a great community for a bookstore ... you can't pigeonhole Venice," said Mary, which makes it fun (and somewhat biased) for her to order all the merchandise for the store. She can't keep tattoo books or books on growing weed in stock anymore - they all kept getting stolen. Venice. She won't be ordering the latest Ann Coulter book - "Ever." Venice. No George W. Bush memoir here, as she said, "No one in Venice would buy it." Amen! Mary



Photos by CJ Gronner

Left to Right: Mary Beth Bolin, Deb Loucks, Mary Goodfader, Bonnie Reynolds, Janice Mall

Mary and I sat on the floor among all the beautiful books and discussed our feelings on books, Venice, and Kindle-type deals vs. Books ("A Kindle is an electronic device. A book is a work of art." - Store Employee, Janice Mall). We are both firmly in the BOOK camp. As Mary said, "Some people still want to hold a book." Yes, we do. There was a shelf with

loves literature the most herself, fiction specifically. "Bukowski is our biggest seller, forever and ever." Except for the time someone stole an entire ROW of Bukowski books off the shelf, forcing them to keep the old guy right up by the counter now. Venice again.

Daughter Deb does the greeting card ordering, and Small World stocks some of the nicest quality and funniest greeting cards around - my favorite being the one featuring "The Artist Formerly Known As The Little Prince," with Prince on a little planet like *The Little Prince* cover. Classic.

Right near the door there is a revamped gumball machine, selling Seed Bombs instead of gum, and again, very Venice (though one guy who had to be from somewhere else did try to eat it like gum. Sigh).

And of Venice, Mary, who has lived here with her family since 1974, says she has not seen a lot of change over the decades, as "Venice fights very hard to stay the way it is." True back then, true today. Both Mary's kids, Jay and Deb, also live in Venice, so theirs is a true family and Venice oriented business. The store has always had a cat, and nowadays it's Conan the Librarian, who could not be found for a photograph, but I'm told he likes to sit at the front table of the Cafe, like he's a paying customer. You can't blame him ... there's a lot to take in out there.

Small World Books was just featured in a book called *Peaceful Places: Los Angeles*, which couldn't be more true, or more amazing, considering its proximity to the wild and craziest of Los Angeles right out front. Sometimes I think I have super powers of manifestation, because two of my all-time favorite things in life are Book stores and the Beach. To have the very best one around RIGHT on the beach where I live is just magic. As Deb said, "We always have sand on our counter." To me, nothing could be more perfect. 🚲







*Oh No! Another Invasion by the Picts? No, it's Venice's Mardi Gras Parade. On Ocean Front Walk, Noon Saturday, March 5*

## CANaIABYSS

By Mary Lou Johnson

*Come on, come all  
All you hippies, have a ball!  
Now's the time, today's the day  
Lose your blues, pay no dues  
Style your life, discard your shoes.*

In the process of a much needed desk cleanup, I came upon the above piece of doggerel jammed in the back of a drawer. Something I'd amused myself writing when I first moved to the canals. Even then it had a faint aura of nostalgia about it. THE CANALS! What emotions those words have evoked in me over the years; curiosity, fear, desire, passion, anger, sorrow.

My first experience of the canals was many years ago when I was in my early twenties. I had picked up (Or allowed myself to be picked up by) this guy in a bar who took me to his place for a night-cap. It's all a very vague and boozy memory of California moonlight and jasmine, and walking over an incredible bridge and a funky, little house. (Although "funky" was not then a hip word, but a word used by Blacks meaning a bad smell.) And it was all a magical mystery tour that lingered dimly in my memory.

Years later I moved to Venice. I lived in a house trailer (not a mobile home), and I had been politely informed that my presence was no longer desired. This kept happening to me in all the trailer parks in Santa Monica.

For those of you who do not know about trailer parks, they are monuments to conformity and prejudice, and are microcosms of the worst that our society offers. Anyway, here I was in a trailer park in Venice, jumping off spot of the nation. (You would never know by looking at that black elephant, Washington Square, that where it now stands housed at one time a couple hundred happy low-income people in their trailers.)

I had read about Venice - All Bad - and heard from my friends about Venice - All Bad - but, I had no choice. My first impression confirmed all these "all bads." When I stopped in the Saucy Dog (The Pelican's Catch to you nouveau-arrivees) most of the customers looked like they were waiting for a fix or a trick.

After cowering in my trailer for a couple of weeks, I finally ventured out to Hinano's for a beer, and met some people who didn't carry switchblades or brass knuckles, and the fear gradually dissipated, but THE CANALS were something else; Bikers and Dopers and Blacks and Chicanos and Pollution and Poverty, and Knives and aborted babies floating in the water and Dope . . .

Eventually I moved out of the trailer park and lived on Ocean Front Walk. (Just to make you pea-green with envy, I had a perfectly elegant apartment for \$125 a month, utilities included!) My daughter was completely happy at Florence Nightingale

School (now Anchorage), even though my friends had told me, "You can't send Johanna to school in Venice." I considered myself really privileged to live on the edge of the Pacific Ocean.

Johanna was told not to go to THE CANALS, but one day she came home dripping wet because some kids had pushed her into THE CANALS in a market basket. I was sure typhoid and pelegra were the mildest eventualities to be expected from this excursion, and examined her closely for rashes and open sores for weeks afterwards.

One day a couple of years and moves later, she came home breathless. "Mom! They're having a big party in the canals, and it's real neat, Mom, and it's okay and everyone is invited and please, Mom, come with me. They've got music and corn on the cob and watermelon and come on, Mom, it's real neat!" So I went and it was real neat and that was the first Canal Festival.

By then the pinch, which was later to become a squeeze, was starting to be felt and we were gradually being pushed away from our beloved Pacific. But after that first festival, a sneaky thought had entered my mind. "If all else fails, I can move into THE CANALS." I wonder how many others who had been even unaware of their existence, or thought about them as a pox on Venice, also entertained this thought - after the hippies hipped us? Sort of like the old song, "Don't Tell Your Best Friend About Your Old Man."

Anyway, the day finally came when I had to move again. The pinch became a squeeze became a shove, and through the machinations of some canal friends, I became a resident. My second day here, I was awakened by a loud banging on my door and was told to "get my ass down to the vacant lot at the end of Howland because they're cutting down the Sapote tree!" "When in Rome" and all that, and I rushed down to see people defying bulldozers and chainsaws, to save some dumb-looking tree. But it was all into the vortex of canal activism. Scarcely a day went by without some community activity - some political, some poofery.

There were campfires and Coastal Commissions; volleyball and Venice Town Council, pot lucks and police confrontations, media and meditations. I raised chickens and rabbits and my monkey roamed free and I was inspired by the belief in self-determination. It was glorious and exhilarating and I really believed our strength and unity and dedication to the common good would have results. Venice was the vanguard and THE CANALS would show the way. Power to the People was there for the taking!

Oh sure, there were troglodytes - Myrtle Wilson and the Dufays and that weird looking one with the short hair - but no one could take them seriously. We were smart and strong and hard working. We had Ron Guenther, as reliable as a priest at Mass, who would be at the Coastal Commission every Monday morn-

ing; we had Steve Claire, who was so bright you knew logic must prevail; we had Judy Weiner - "Ms. Ecology" herself; we had gentle, loving people interested not only in their own preservation, but dedicated to sharing with those less privileged. And, we had fun!

Then, one by one, as if planned, these people sold out from under them. Each representative of the Area Council was engaged in a struggle to remain in the area. Energy for political work was diverted into a struggle to survive. People left the canals and new people, who were attracted by the canal's mystique, tried valiantly to pick up the torch, but to no avail.

BY the eighth year the Canal Festival degenerated into a commercial tourist attraction, with young people coming from Pacific Palisades, playing "hippy for a day" stoned out on downers, pissing on your lettuce! Canal people started closing their doors, and realtors started opening their offices. The stampede was on. Get your little canal fixer-upper, artsy-fartsy, cutesy-pie here! Can't lose! Bound to increase in value! THE CANALS are IN! . . .

The next year a last gasp effort to raise consciousness was made when the festival was decently laid to rest by the Canal Festival Funeral of 1976, the year of the Bicentennial. The route of the funeral procession was dictated by the permits before the Coastal Commission, for development of some 25 lots in THE CANALS. The police stopped at my house in the morning to get black armbands to wear to the funeral. I was touched. Later that day I found out these same hypocrites has amassed an army of patrol cars and motorcycles.

Provocateurs and collaborators laid siege to the canals; denied citizens their rights, beat people in full view of national T.V. cameras, confronted and menaced children. (Who in the true spirit of Venice kids, managed to pop a few wheelies behind their backs when they were making like the Gestapo.)

*I awaken to the sound of Hammers  
Mother Mary comes to me,  
Speaking words of wisdom:  
Realty.*

*(First appeared in the Free Venice Beachhead's  
100th issue April 1978.)* ☸





The Diary of Dang Thuy Tram

# Last Night I Dreamed of Peace

Book Reviewed by Jim Smith

The definitive book about the Viet Nam war has been written by a twenty-something Vietnamese woman. This may be hard to believe for those raised on a diet of male-oriented sagas of hard fighting, hard loving and hard living American soldiers that dominate the U.S. book market and big screens. Even veterans of Viet Nam don’t know the full story of the war until they read, *Last Night I Dreamed of Peace*, the best-selling (in Viet Nam) diary of Dang Thuy Tram.

What was the Viet Nam War really like? It was not just the experience of bomber pilots carrying out their missions miles above their intended victims. And certainly it was not the experience of policy makers 10,000 miles away in Washington. Perhaps the best book on the combat experience by an American soldier is Ron Kovic’s *Born on the Forth of July*. *A Rumor of War* by Philip Caputo also has its fans. Histories of the conflict also abound, as do fantasy films like *Apocalypse Now*.

What all of these books have in common is that they tell the story from the invader’s point of view. In a relatively poor country like Viet Nam, there are few writers and few publishing houses. This is why Tram’s diaries written from 1968-70, “under the gun,” in Quảng Ngãi province are so illuminating.

Quảng Ngãi province, which lies about half-way from Hanoi and Saigon, was a hotbed of support for the National Liberation Front, called the Viet Cong. It was the sight of numerous bombings and sprayings of Agent Orange, as well as sorties by U.S. infantry, Marines and helicopter gunships. Dr. Tran’s field hospital hid under the forest canopy while enemy soldiers on patrol came within a few feet of it. Quảng Ngãi province was also the sight of the My Lai massacre where soldiers of the Americal Division under Lt. William Calley murdered between 350 and 500 mainly women, children and old men.

The diary became public only in 2005. Within 18 months, it had sold nearly half a million copies in Viet Nam. Most books there have press runs of 5,000 copies. The Diaries have caught the imagination of a

generation that never knew the war. Two-thirds of Viet Nam’s 90 million people were born after 1975, when South Viet Nam was finally liberated.

After Dr. Tran’s death at the hands of an American soldier in 1970, the Diaries had come into the possession of an intelligence officer, Fred Whitehurst who took them back to the U.S. Whitehurst later joined the FBI and became a well-known whistleblower over the FBI’s investigation of the 1993 bombing of the World Trade Center. In 2005, he gave the Diaries to another veteran who was traveling to Hanoi. The Tran family was tracked down and the book was quickly published. The young doctor is now a national hero.

The Diaries reveal the innermost thoughts of a young woman’s insecurities, loves and crushes, and her desire to serve her people. Dr. Tran – known as Thuy (pronounced Twe) – often talks to herself and criticizes her failings and weaknesses: “Oh, Thuy! Are you pessimistic? Look around you, there are so many comrades, so many young men, who have sacrificed their youth for the revolution. They have fallen without ever finding happiness. Why do you think only of yourself?” (Dec. 21, 1968).

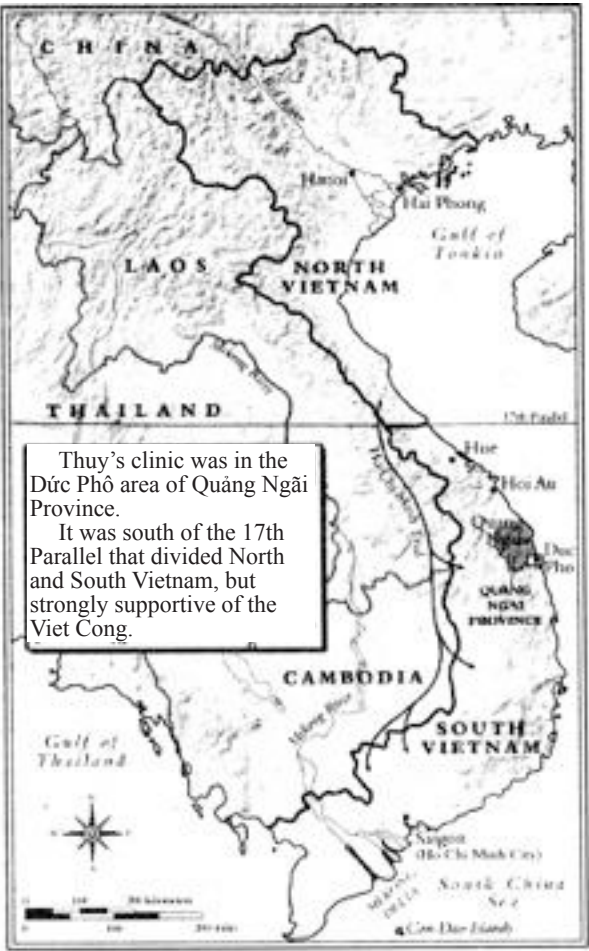
It struck me when I was reading the diary of this heroic young woman that she and I were nearly the same age. Born a world apart, our lives were so different, yet so similar in many ways. I, too, was in the army when her diary begins. Yet I was not there by choice, having been drafted in 1966. Thuy, on the other hand, had turned down a safe assignment in a Hanoi hospital when she graduated from physician training. She wanted to go when she would be most needed, in the war zone, where men and women her own age were suffering bullet wounds and dying. It was up to this young doctor to save them.

Thuy had to operate on wounded soldiers in nearly unimaginably primitive conditions. She often was without drugs that could save her patient’s life. Anesthetics were sometimes missing in critical operations. Through it all, Thuy seems to suffer as much as her patients.

In 1968, I was able to leave the Army when my term of servitude ended. But for Thuy, it was a life and death struggle with the invaders. Defeat meant death. Victory was the only road to a normal life. As Thuy prophetically said in 1968: “So many people have volunteered to sacrifice their whole lives for two words: Independence and Liberty. I, too, have sacrificed my life for that grandiose fulfillment.”

The Vietnamese people did reach “the promised land,” as Martin Luther King called it shortly before his death. But Thuy did not get there with them.

When I visited Viet Nam last December, I saw an independent country at peace. Everyone seemed healthy, well fed and well dressed. Women seem assertive and active in economic and social affairs. I’m not an expert on Viet Nam, but I think Thuy would be



pleased with the progress made in spite of war, defoliation and lack of support from the outside world. The U.S. never made reparations for ravishing the country.

If Thuy had lived and could visit Venice today, I wonder what she would think. I’m sure she would disapprove of the selfishness of many young people who think only of themselves and their possessions.

What would she say to those of us who are trying to fend off the rich and powerful while helping the poor and homeless? What would she say to the many women around the world who are protesting against dictators and injustice? Perhaps she would say to us what she wrote to herself 43 years ago: “To live is to face the storms and not to cower before them. Stand up, then, oh, Thuy! Even when the rain and gale are rising, even when tears have flowed in torrents, keep your spirit high.”

Printed and ebook versions of *Last Night I Dreamed of Peace: The Diary of Dang Thuy Tram* are available from Powells Books<[www.powells.com](http://www.powells.com)>. An audio book is available from [www.audible.com](http://www.audible.com).

A Vietnamese feature film, entitled Don’t Burn, based on the diaries has been released. A clip can be seen on YouTube at <http://bit.ly/ihN49U> 🚲



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## SWAMI X SPEAKS

I think people think too much and take it too seriously. Not that I can’t enjoy a substantially vibrant joke with tits in it. Just watching your thoughts without getting personally involved is a healthy exercise. Generally, I feel agnostics have an edge on the rest of us but then again I am convinced everything is a manifestation of the Supreme O Wow. When you’re feeling good it’s easy to be philosophically accepting of everything; even terrorists and/or Republicans.

I believe in democracy, no matter whose in charge and is making all the money. The bottom line is Absolute Bliss, a third of the Supreme O Wow, the other two-thirds being Cosmic Consciousness and Eternal Existence. Winning a billion bucks at Bingo couldn’t make it any better. Of course, there are problems, challenges, heart and headaches; soul grows and unfolds, living Life.

It is not a big mystery why God is male, since our religions have been controlled by male priestcraft for generations, God bless us. It is now a significant time for the feminine aspect of the Godhead to manifest and be realized. In Hinduism, an early search for Brahman, a.k.a. God, there are more goddesses than gods. The feminine aspect of God is - the tender love, universal compassion, spirited sustenance, endless forgiveness, deathless creativity, never-ending understanding. God is both male and female and Beyond, and manifests one or the other more powerfully at different periods of spiritual unfoldment. 2012 ushers in a time of spiritual enlightenment and equality, if you’ll forgive my language.

Life is a mystical adventure originating in, sustained by and fulfilled in One Supreme Spirit. Tat twam asi. - Thou art That. 🚲

### Collected on Ocean Front Walk by Judy Lent

Hey, Swami, you ever been busted? Have I ever been busted? Did I tell you about the time I got busted? It was in Sausalito. I was hitchhiking. It had taken me all day to get out of Frisco, and there I was on that lousy corner when the cops pull up and bust me. The judge fined me \$36 for hitchhiking and \$6.50 transportation tax.

Give us the \$42.50 and we’ll let you go, they said.

Give you forty-two fifty!, I said, Hell, if I’d had goddamned forty-two fifty, I’d have taken a motherfuckin’ taxi!

(first published September 1978 issue)



A Cold Proposition

By Carol Fondiller

Outside, brittle cold shatters the fragile  
or gone dreams of Southern California  
into icy drafts that  
claw their way beneath the door.  
Inside, the heater growls  
Saharan breath on us.

Fingers laced beneath your head, as you lie at ease -  
You say, that those who study the  
vagaries of Earth on Her constant  
axis say,  
That a new Ice Age is just  
around the corner  
and faster than we think  
We'll be there to watch Hell freeze over.  
The lens in the camera's simulacrum eye  
cracks, unable to record the  
sight of rubble buildings  
that thumb'd their noses at the sky,  
the steel that girded them to stand  
erect and sway with Earth's  
erratic dance,  
now broken by a steely whim of ice.

Hard-edge artists and their lawyers  
shiver over frozen hot tubs  
plundered of their Condo-dreams.  
I listen to your talk of withered fruit  
shattering as it hits the frozen  
ground,  
aborting seeds before a  
Spring that will not come now for  
a thousand, thousand  
years.  
Vegetarian hordes storm zoos  
killing kinkajoes, camels, elephants,  
and wallabies,  
plunging chilled hands into  
the hot, still throbbing guts of  
wide-eyed deer and marmosets,  
koala bears, stately swans,  
shoving gobbets of soft bunny  
flesh into famine-bloated bellies.

My eyes trace glacial progress  
of blue veins across the  
country of your body.  
Your quiet voice goes on about  
the cold-crazed future.  
The muffled cadence of your heart  
counts off the time  
Until L.A., with its Jungian  
Reichian avocado incense primal surfing,  
Hare Krishna poem trees EST Macrobiotic  
encounter Zen group veggie-burger illegals,  
existential off ramps, interfaith healing  
communes accucolonc commie gay red  
neck sushi bars, and isometric muscle

building Synanon Kosher mandarin  
taco halfway house denim  
gas stations  
Congeals, unified homogenized  
at last under a thick white  
blanket  
that stills all  
shrill dissent and  
self advertisement.  
And oh, my honey, let's make love  
before the Sun withdraws into a sullen  
frigid star,  
before Cold shall take the fine  
grained sand, compress it  
in his fist to boulders,  
and shucks us in his hands  
of skin of breath of arteries.  
Our skeletons pressed like brittle  
gardenias between the pages of  
Browning's sonnets,  
becoming delicate fossils  
lacy Valentines to mark  
forgotten time.  
And oh my honey, let us taste our  
sweat and suck each  
other's funky breath  
and let us rub each other with  
ourselves  
'til we come in tropic hotness,  
melt the  
Polar Ice Caps  
and save the  
World.

(originally published in February, 1978 issue)

“when in the course of  
human events...”

By hillary kaye

california  
secede!  
separate  
from the  
union  
we don't need a president  
of the united estates of america  
we don't want a world government  
a slave nation or any other nation of  
slaves  
we want to be free  
demand  
to  
be  
separate  
from the  
shackles  
of a system  
from those in desperate need  
to those of enormous greed  
we stood by  
land of the fleeced, home of the knaves  
and watched reagan destroy our unions  
we stood by  
land of the fleeced, home of the knaves  
and watched clinton and nafta take  
away our jobs  
we stood by  
and watched in horror our country  
wage Obama war after Bush war  
we stood by and let  
our states be robbed  
land of the fleeced, home of the knaves  
our taxes our money  
born out of our own flesh  
was taken to kill others  
let us secede from this  
discord  
let us separate ourselves  
so we can face ourselves  
50 states owe 160 billion  
war costs 600 billion  
a better world is not only a necessity  
it is possible.

Lady Venice

Oh Venice,  
Sometimes you're such an old lady,  
groaning under the weight of change;  
And then, on an autumn afternoon  
you're a beautiful nymph,  
seductive in your pulsating energy  
and rich with colorful people who are;  
sipping cappuccino at The Sidewalk Cafe,  
skating at sunset on Ocean Front Walk,  
singing Simon and Garfunkel songs for  
a few tossed coins,  
shucking and jiving down the beach  
(most jiving),  
working out, biceps bulging near the  
paddle tennis courts  
where several bronzed residents are  
whacking the ball with studied vengeance,  
In this scene too are:  
down and outers (the usual older drunks  
and young stoners) unaware of the day,  
the time, the planet,  
would be shamans of the Holistic Age  
(post Aquarian) practicing T'ai Chi,  
exchanging knowledge of pressure points  
and herbal teas,  
street people selling their rags, rugs  
and miscellaneous treasures,  
artists and artistes;

All this on an autumn day at sunset  
(tangerinish pink),  
palm trees sharply etched against  
the horizon -  
this could only be Venice/West,  
everyone's fantasy at one time or  
another,  
temporary paradise, a place to dream  
where the very ground simmers with  
untapped energies.

—Myra D. Goodley  
(originally published in the April 1978 Issue)



Whale Song

for Hena Akter

When her spirit comes to me and my kind, I am startled.  
We are so different, you see. She is clothed simply,  
with long hair, dark like purple laver.  
I ask, “what do your people call you?”  
She says, shyly, “My name is Hena Akter. It means Gracious Star.”  
“You are young, Hena,” I tell her, “to be alone in my ocean sky. What brings you here?”  
Hena hesitates, and then whispers: “I do not understand why I am here.  
I only wanted to relieve myself at nightfall as I was taught.  
I do not understand what happened to me next.  
Can you tell me why my own relative dragged me into the forest and raped me?”

“I am sorry, young Hena, my tribe cannot explain such a terrible crime.  
Surely, though, when you told your mother, she took you up with her own body and kept you afloat?  
Surely your village sang a song of healing over you?”  
Hena sighs, and again says: “I do not understand what I did wrong.  
The clerics in my village decreed a fatwa of 100 lashings –against ME, not him.  
But I did nothing wrong, nothing at all.  
I tried so hard to take the beating, to find a way to live through the rape, through the fatwa.  
I am only a girl. I could not live through such pain.”

Her spirit floats closer to my pod, her arms open.  
I tell her, “Come, then, Sister Hena of the Stars. We understand your pain.  
We know what it means to have your children murdered before you, for no good reason.  
We will record your story as we must all such stories and carry it out to the world in song.  
For now, come ride with us to the sanctuary of the ghost whales.  
Let us be the mothers who buoy your spirit body up.  
Let us be the brothers who keep your spirit body safe.  
Breach this world and ascend with us to a haven where all spy hop and sing  
deep in the heart of the Milky Way.”

And Hena smiles, climbs on my ancient back, and grasps the barnacles there.  
As we start our ascent, I begin sounding out the Song of Hena  
telling all of our kind her tale, wave after wave  
telling all of your kind her tale, wave after wave  
so that her wounds may heal  
so that her spirit may rest  
so that no other little girl ever suffers  
like Hena Akter again.

—krista schwimmer





# Henrietta Leavitt - Surveyor to the Stars

By Roger Linnett

Henrietta Swan Leavitt's contribution to astronomy is acknowledged as one of the most significant of the 20th century, but, as is typical of women in science in this country, her name elicits only blank stares and shrugged shoulders.

Born in Lawrence, MA., in 1868, she enrolled in Oberlin College in Ohio in 1885, completed two years, and transferred to the Society for Collegiate Instruction of Women (later Radcliffe College) in Cambridge, MA. She graduated in 1892 at the age of 24. Her degree was a certificate that stated if she were a man she would have been awarded a Bachelor of Arts degree from Harvard.

In the late-1870s Edward C. Pickering, Director of the Harvard College Observatory had embarked on a project to produce a photographic survey; a photo-mosaic of the entire night sky. Pickering recruited as many as 40 women - the work was quite tedious and paid too little to attract any men - to work for him to reduce the stellar data from several thousand photographic plates. Pickering treated them with respect, and tried to make their jobs interesting and stimulating. These human computers were referred to, affectionately, as "Pickering's Harem."

When Henrietta first started working at the observatory, she was assigned the job of recording the magnitude of stars, using a microscope and measuring the size of the stars' disks on the photographic plates, and comparing them against pictures of stars whose magnitudes had been ascertained.

In the mid-1890s, she began the task that would become her life's work, and profoundly change the science of astronomy. She was asked to search for variable stars. These stars pulsate, as if they were breathing, growing brighter then dimming. Finding them was accomplished by a slick bit of photographic legerdemain.

Two images were taken of the same star field, but at different times, usually days or weeks apart. One of these negative plates was then converted to a positive plate. These two plates were then exactly aligned, and those stars whose brightness was constant were canceled out while those whose brightness had changed

stood out. Henrietta, it seemed, had a genuine talent for ferreting out the rare and elusive stars.

These pulsating stars were called Cepheid (See-fee-id) variables after one of the first stars to be recognized as having this unusual quality, Delta Cepheid (the fourth brightest star, designated Delta - the fourth letter of the Greek alphabet) in the constellation Cepheus, a king from Greek mythology.

In 1896 she spent two years traveling in Europe, and returned to Beloit, Wisconsin, where her father was a minister. During this period she started having health problems and her hearing deteriorated rapidly. She returned to Harvard in August, 1902, but was only able to work four hours a day. She was appointed to the observatory's permanent staff in 1903.



During the next few years she discovered 1777 variable stars in the Large and Small Magellanic Clouds, which are actually dwarf galaxies gravitationally bound to our Milky Way, but at that time they were believed to be part of it.

In 1908, she published her results in a paper which is now considered an astronomical classic. A subsequent paper published in 1912, "Periods of 25 Variable Stars in the Small Magellanic Cloud" elaborated on her 1908 publication.

It contained the observation that was to become the basis of one of astronomy's greatest discoveries: "A remarkable relation between the brightness of these variables and the length of their cycle will be noticed."

When plotted on a graph a Cepheid variable's changing brightness looks like a playground slide - a

quick, steep rise to maximum brightness (the stairs), and a slower undulating decrease of light output (the slide) back to its minimal state, which then repeats. And the graph of every such star produces the exact same figure, although they often differ in size.

This relationship became known as the Period-Luminosity Relationship. The importance of her discovery was soon recognized by others in the astronomical community as a new tool, called a "standard candle," with which to measure the distances to distant stars by comparing their apparent brightness against one another, that is, if one Cepheid was only half as bright as another, it must be twice as far away, and one only a tenth as bright would be ten times farther, etc.

In 1923-1924 Edwin Hubble - the guy they named the Hubble Space Telescope after - was able to compare photographic plates he had made of assorted "nebularities," cloud-like patches of light, and found Cepheid variables embedded in them that proved the "nebula" in Andromeda was in actuality a separate galaxy some two million light-years from the Milky Way.

Using the Cepheid method, astronomers were able to calculate distances out to an estimated three million light years, encompassing about 20 galaxies in what is now known as the Local Group of galaxies. Today, using the HST we can monitor Cepheid variables, as well as other very bright stars in galaxies, out to about a hundred million light years.

In 1925 the Swedish Academy of Sciences wrote to Leavitt concerning their intention to nominate her for the 1926 Nobel Prize in Physics. Sadly, she had died in 1921 due to stomach cancer. The Nobel Prize is not awarded posthumously.

In January, 2009, the American Astronomical Society passed a resolution recognizing Henrietta Leavitt's contribution to astronomy: "The AAS Council recognizes the 100th anniversary of Henrietta Leavitt's first presentation of the Cepheid Period-Luminosity relation, a seminal discovery in astronomy that continues to have great significance. The Council was pleased to learn of a resolution adopted by the organizers of the Leavitt Symposium in which it was suggested that this important relation now be referred to as the 'Leavitt Law.' Although we recognize that the AAS has no authority to define astronomical nomenclature, we would be very pleased if this designation were used widely."

One other honor has been accorded Henrietta, again posthumously. A crater on the Moon, crater Leavitt, has been named in her honor. 🚲

## Find Delta Cepheus in the Night Sky

Finding Delta Cepheus in the night sky is quite easy. Using the two "pointer" stars at the end of The Big Dipper, trace a line to the North Star, Polaris, and continue on that same line almost exactly as far to the other side of Polaris, and voila' - Delta Cepheus. If you observe over several nights, you will see that it appears to double in brightness. (Compare it against neighboring stars.) Its actual period for one complete cycle is 5 days 8 hours 37.5 minutes.



Political cartoon  
by Khalil Bendib



# CommUnity Events – day by day

Free Venice Beachhead • March 2011 • 11

Calendar By Karl Abrams

## Tuesday, March 1

• 3pm - “How to Train Your Dragon” film. Pull up a seat, be comfortable and enjoy the movie. Pop-corn’s on us. AK Library. Free

## Wednesday, March 2

• 11:30am - Toddler Storytime. Ages 0-3 years. Join us for stories, music, laughs and more. AK Library. Free.

## Thursday, March 3

• 7:30 - 8:45pm - Suzy Williams sings. The Fedora Room, 710 West First St, LA. 213-617-8555. Every first Thursday. Free.  
• 7:30pm - Will Alexander & Friends, readers and musicians. Beyond Baroque. \$7, students, seniors, children \$5, members free.

## Friday, March 4

• 7pm – First Friday on Abbot Kinney Blvd. Open shops and lots of people. Free.

## Saturday, March 5

• 11:30am - 10th Annual Venice Beach Parade, “Cirque De La Mer”. Parade Line-up at 11:30am Ocean Front Walk/Rose Ave. Costumes appreciated. Parade starts at Noon with Miss Jessica. Free.  
• 4pm - Sesame Street Puppet Show teaching preparedness for fires and earthquakes. Families and children AK Library. Free.  
• 7:30pm - Acclaimed humanist poetry of the special needs of children. Beyond Baroque. \$7, students, seniors, children \$5, members free.

## Sunday, March 6

• 5pm - First Sunday “open reading” hosted by Marie Lecrivain. Beyond Baroque. Free.

## Monday, March 7

• 6:15pm – Mozaic Spoken Word. Talking Stick. Free.

## Tuesday, March 8

• 7-10pm - A Night of Festive Musical Goodness hosted by Danny Moynahan. Talking Stick. Free.  
• **International Women’s Day.** Celebration at 533 Rialto. 6pm.

## Wednesday, March 9

• 7-10pm – The magic of Suzy Williams at Dannys Deli. Free.

## Friday, March 11

• 6-10pm – Opening Reception: Live painting by Van Saro. 1108 AKB. Free.  
• 7pm- Willis McNeil’s Smooth Jazz live at Danny’s Deli. Free.  
• 7:30pm - Youth Poetry joined by jazz-inspired musical friends. Beyond Baroque. \$7, students, seniors, children \$5, members free.

## Saturday, March 12

• 1-5pm – Uncle Darrows 11<sup>th</sup> Annual “Mardi Gras West”. Free.  
• 3pm - MESS with Filmmaker Bill Daniel. The Unurban. Free.  
• 7-10pm – Grassroots Acoustica. Fundraiser. Talking Stick. Free.  
• 7:30pm – Lots of really great poets. Beyond Baroque. \$7, students, seniors, children \$5, members free.

## Sunday, March 13

• 4pm - Political Oppression poetry featuring Argentinian poet Alicia Partnoy with emerging writers. Hosted by Xochitl-Julisa Bermejo. Beyond Baroque. \$7, students, seniors, children \$5, members free.  
• 7:30pm - 1911 Triangle Shirtwaist fire disaster galvanized the national social justice movement. Julia Stein hosts. Nelson Motta of United Steelworkers speaks on organizing LA car-wash workers. Beyond Baroque. \$7, students, seniors, children \$5, members free.

## Monday, March 14

• 6-10pm – Documental: Interview with Stan Warnow, also Raymond Scott’s “Deconstructing Dad”. Free.  
• 7-10pm - Folk-Rock ‘n’ Blues, classics and originals by Steve Moos on mandolin, guitar and piano and Stefani Valadez vocals. Special guest Don Kirkpatrick master guitarist with Rod Stewart. The Talking Stick. \$5 cover.

## Tuesday, March 15

• 3pm - Join us for a film screening of “Alpha & Omega”. AK Library. Free.  
• 7-10pm – Venice Neighborhood Council Board Meeting. Westminster Elementary School Auditorium.

## Thursday, March 17

• Venice Art Crawl. Find the map at the end of Windward.

## Saturday, March 19

• Underground Jazz & R&B. Danny’s Deli. Free.

## Sunday, March 20

• 2pm - Open reading hosted by Ana Reyes and representing diverse/vital voices in poetry. Beyond Baroque. \$7, students, seniors, children \$5, members free.  
• 2-4pm - Armstrong, Ford and Smith Reading at The Church in Ocean Park is at 235 Hill Street. Donation, no one turned away for lack of funds.  
• 5-10pm – It’s Blues Time. Featuring Tom Gramlich & Mystic Miles with special guests. Talking Stick. Free.  
• 6pm - The Dark Kingdom of Kenneth Patchen: A celebration of the poet’s centennial. Beyond Baroque. \$7, students, seniors, children \$5, members free.

## Wednesday, March 23

• 7pm – The “Blues Dynamo” Kathy Leonardo, Venice’s amazing singer/songwriter, performing Jazz and her very own “Strong Woman Blues” with surprise guests. Danny’s Deli. Free.

## Tuesday, March 24

• 8pm – Opening: LA Women’s Theater-18th Anniversary Festival. Female artists in the disciplines of dance, music, theatrical performances, spoken word, and comedy. Awards bestowed. Electric Lodge. \$12 donation.

## Friday, March 25

• 7-10pm - Subversive Cinema’s “Last Fridays”. 212 Pier. Free.

## Saturday, March 26

• 7:30pm - New poets of the American west written in Spanish, Navajo, Salish, Assiniboiné, and Dakota languages with translations. Beyond Baroque. \$7, students, seniors, children \$5, members free.

## Sunday, March 27

• 2pm - Marc Smith, the godfather of Slam Poetry. Beyond Baroque. \$7, students, seniors, children \$5, members free.

## Thursday, March 31

• 7:30pm - Ellyn Maybe’s Poetry Rodeo: Open reading with Ellyn Maybe and Her Band. Bring up to 5 minutes of poetry, the band will improvise. Beyond Baroque. \$7, students, seniors, children \$5, members free.  
• 8-11pm - Paparazzi Comedy will host a Comedy Night of Stars on the last Thursday of every month. The Canal Club, 2025 Pacific Ave. If you arrive before 8, RSVP by contacting PaparazziComedy@yahoo.com to get free entrance. Happy Hour until 10pm.

## Location Guide

- Abbot Kinney Public Library, 501 S. Venice Blvd, 821-1769.
- Beyond Baroque, 681 Venice Blvd. 822-3006.
- Burton Chace Park, 13650 Mindanao Way, marinadelrey.lacounty.gov
- Danny’s Deli, 23 Windward Ave.
- G2 Gallery, 1503 Abbot Kinney Blvd 310-452-2842.
- Hal’s Bar and Grill, 1349 Abbot Kinney Blvd., 396-3105 - halsbarandgrill.com
- Oakwood Recreation Center, 757 California Ave.
- Pacific Resident Theatre, 703 1/2 Venice Blvd. 822-8392- pacificresidenttheatre.com
- SPARC - Social and Public Art Resource Center, 685 Venice Blvd. 822-9560 x15.
- Talking Stick Coffee Lounge, 1411c Lincoln Blvd. 450-6052 - thetalkingstick.net
- United Methodist Church and Auditorium, 2210 Lincoln Blvd. (at Victoria).
- Vera Davis Center, 610 California Ave. 305-1865.
- Westminster Elementary School, 1010 Abbot Kinney Blvd. (enter auditorium from Westminster Ave.) 606-2015.

## Ongoing Events

- 8pm-12am - Hal’s Bar and Grill features Live Jazz, Sunday and Monday nights. Free.
- 8:30pm - TKO Comedy’s “Open Mic” for comics, musicians, speakers and artists. 212 Pier. Free. Every Thursday.
- 12-2pm - Saturday & Sunday; Music at Uncle Darrow’s. 2560 Lincoln Blvd. Free.
- 6-8pm - McLuhan-Finnegans Wake Reading Club. Lloyd Taber - Marina Del Rey Library, 4533 Admiralty Way. First Tuesday of the month. Free.
- 5:30pm - Abbot Kinney Public Library Thursday Movie Night. Call 310-821-1769 for upcoming movie.
- 6:30pm - Abbot Kinney Public Library Children’s Pajama Storytime. Second, fourth Tuesday evenings. Free.
- 6-10pm - 2nd Thursday - Psychedelic Surf Rock. Mollusk, 1600 Pacific Ave. Free.
- 7-10pm - MOM: Meditations On Media. 3rd Wednesdays. Beyond Baroque. Free.
- 6-10pm - 7 Dudley Cinema - 3rd Mondays at Talking Stick. Free.
- 11:30-2:30pm – The Venice Oceanarium (a museum without walls). Venice Pier. Every Sunday, weather permitting. Free.
- 5-9pm – Venice Street Legends. Venice Bistro, OFW & Dudley. Every Wednesday. Free.
- 8am-3pm - Venice High School Collectibles Market. Faculty Parking Lot.
- **Every Third Thursday is the Venice Art Crawl.**
- Venice Library offers a variety of Free Computer Classes. Call 310-821-1769.

• **12:30pm - 2nd, 4th Thursdays - Free Food Distribution. Vera Davis Center.**

## 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.

## Celebrate the 100th Anniversary International Women’s Day

**A Program by Women with a Proclamation by Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa:**  
Poems, Music, Recitals, Art Show Celebrating Women, Pot Luck Food/Drink  
Everyone Invited

**6:30pm, Tuesday, March 8**  
533 Rialto Avenue • 310-399-2215





# Bohemia – Alive and Well on Abbot Kinney Blvd.

By CJ Gronner

Bohemian Exchange is a uniquely great store on Abbot Kinney, that is - get this - a non-profit store. Meaning, proceeds from items you buy there go to non-profit organizations like Heal The Bay, The Sierra Club, Tree People, The Surfrider Foundation, and the NRDC (Natural Resources Defense Council). How cool is that?

Tired of shopping on Abbot Kinney and finding dresses that were 75% off and still \$750, Deborah knew that she wanted to do clothes, and she wanted to be on Abbot Kinney. Timing and luck joined forces to enable Deborah to open Bohemian Exchange at 1358 Abbot Kinney, right next to the Liquor Store and across from Abbot's Habit, right in the heart of all the action.

The shop is lovely, filled to the brim with clothing treasures, jewelry and accessories of all kinds, and Deborah's two cats, Truffles and Kallisti, watching over the whole scenario.

Proprietress Deborah Lashever, born and mostly raised in L.A. (with a 10 year stint in Hawaii as a kid), has a background in fundraising for charities, mostly environmental ones. With the economy suffering as it has been, non-profits are hurting badly right now, and really need our help. Knowing this, Deborah decided to open a

The Closet, and went for it. Once bills are paid, 100% of the profits go to her chosen organizations, and get split up based on where the need is greatest.

Since Deborah opened her doors two years ago, the shop has evolved and blossomed. After seeing that she could help small designers get their designs seen on Abbot Kinney (and how much this helped them get noticed) she decided to go more local designer, less vintage. She swears she'll always have her "vintage rack in back" so customers that prefer vintage can always find a treasure or two.

Deborah is accepting new, bohemian clothing designers and artists

(call her first to make an appointment), so if you are a local designer, artist, or know an amazing one, get in touch! It helps the designer, the shop, customers, and you'll know that the sales will benefit the community we all love. As non-profits are struggling, so too are small designers, shops and, of course, everyday people.

Community - there's that word again. And it came up a lot while talking with Deborah, when we agreed that Community is exactly WHY Venice is so special. You can feel it, if you've lived here even just a little while, and it's why Deborah says Venice is her favorite place in all the world. We spoke about the sunsets lately, and how really we should all stop what we're doing at that time of the day and go down to the beach and watch it. Every day. Doing that, and knowing that you just got a fresh hat at Bohemian Exchange, and that the money you spent went to help preserve the ocean you're staring out at, I suspect will make the experience even sweeter.

I liked it when Deborah said she starts each day by thinking, "I wonder what magic is going to happen today?", reminding herself to be open and look



Deborah Lashever

for it. It can appear in so many forms, especially here in Venice, so if you start every day thinking like that, your life can't help but be pretty magical.

Bohemian Exchange has also gotten into hosting fun events at the store ... First Friday parties, Trunk Shows, and packed to the rafters Fashion Shows (the last one we couldn't even squeeze in the front door!), the next one being this coming up April 1 with local bohemian designer, Crow's Cloth.

As Deborah also said, "It's time to give back. We've done the selfish, taking thing, and it didn't work. It's time to give." So stop in, say hi to the cats, give Deborah a thumbs up, and find a treasure for yourself or a friend (But not the blue hooded cape. I want that). You can know that you've done some small thing to help improve the world. OUR world.



clothing store, specializing in new items from local designers and artisans, as well as accessories from Fair Trade organizations and select vintage and donate to the groups listed above. When the block has gotten so fancy and high-priced in most stores, it is truly a pleasure to find a spot that has its heart in the right place. You can feel good about your purchase, knowing that you got a cute dress AND helped out a local designer, and the planet a little bit too.

Deborah and I were chatting one day, and she made a really good point that non-profits are pretty much the only way to get real information these days. You can't trust mainstream media, so when you want to get to the bottom of a certain topic, it makes sense to go to the sources that advocate for themselves, right? So that makes it all the more important to keep these organizations alive and thriving in every little way we can.

Deborah always had the philosophy that it was cooler when buying gifts to get things that were unique and awesome from a local designer rather than something that everyone else around will be wearing. In the beginning, she started accumulating a whole bunch of vintage clothes and would go to Street Fairs and various Festivals to sell her treasures, always for charity. When she came up with the idea to have a store for non-profits, she looked at the business model of Discovery Shops and Out Of



Top two photos by Jim Smith; Bottom two photos by Karl Abrams

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