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FREE VENICE BEACHHEAD

SINCE 1968



MAY 2011

#355

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Lest We Forget

Japanese-American Memorial Marker Groundbreaking



69 Years Later: Returning to the corner of Venice and Lincoln Blvds on April 25, 2011, Japanese-American camp survivors and friends gather to launch a reminder of their ordeal. **Top row (standing):** Noboru Kamibayashi, Linda Lucks, Hideyo Takimoto, Mitzi Takimoto, Brian Maeda, Bill Rosendahl, Scott Pine, Arnold Maeda, Suzie Yamato, Aya Masada, Hiram Ohta, John Marumoto, Yosh Tomita, Emily Winters, Suzanne Thompson, Phyllis Hayashibara, Nikki Gilbert, Jim Smith. **Middle Row:** Yuri Amamoto, Ikuko Kiriya, Mae Kakehashi, Ms. Yamato, Lily Kamibayashi, Maguerite Tanaka, Nancy Nishi, Ahyeong Im. **Front Row:** Beatriz Lopez, Alyssa Valencia, Paola Arias, Yadira Orozco, Rocio Lopez, Elisa Mendez.

Photo: Karl Abrams

Depleted Uranium strikes friends and foes alike in Libya

By Karl Abrams

High in the skies of Libya, NATO jets, equipped with uranium bullets and uranium-tipped missiles, are probably being used to assist Libyan rebels in toppling the regime of Muammar Gaddafi.

France, Great Britain and the US regularly employ concrete bunker-busting uranium weapons and have consistently blocked UN proposals to ban them. They won't admit they're using them, but they do acknowledge the use of jets that always seem to carry them. When used in jet machine guns, high-density uranium bullets as large as 30 mm (and 70% more dense than lead) can be shot at an astounding rate of 70 bullets per second. This often cuts an armored vehicle or tank in two.

It's no wonder that such kinetic energy penetrators are called "Armor Piercing Incendiary." Upon incandescent penetration, such bullets and missiles ignite ordinance stored in the armored vehicle. The resulting toxic explosion decomposes the uranium into a white oxide powder that quickly moves across the wind-swept desert terrain into cities and lungs of the Libyan people.

The dust is uranium dioxide. The uranium in it ultimately comes from uranium ore that is unusable by nuclear reactors. Such uranium is considered un-

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Bumpy Ride on the Roadmap to Homes

By Roger Linnett

On April 19, The VNC held a special meeting at Westminster School for the sole purpose of voting on Councilman Rosendahl's proposal to use part of the Penmar Golf Course's parking lot as the third leg in his "Roadmap to Homes" pilot program.

After Councilman Rosendahl gave a short introduction, his chief of staff, Mike Bonin, spoke about the process that led to the site's selection. He, along with LAPD Lead Officer Skinner, visited all the public parking lots in the Venice area, which one by one failed to meet the specifications for site selection.

The most consistently cited reason for disqualification was the program's mandated 150-foot buffer zone, increased from its original fifty feet, to separate the program's participants from nearby residences.



Stop Killing Children in Libya

The police requested the lot at the end of Venice Blvd. be disqualified because it has a history of crimes and shenanigans facilitated by the vestigial end of the Grand Canal and its walkways, which pass under the lot between North and South Venice Blvds. The LAPD claims the underground passageway attracts shady, nefarious types and miscellaneous no-goodniks.

A quick and easy solution to that problem would seem to be fencing off both ends of the passageway, thus ending its use and making the whole area safer. But, it seems this idea has never been proposed, or occurred to, the proper authorities.

So, by process of elimination, Bonin explained, Penmar was the only seemingly available option left.

Rudy Salinas, the head of PATH (People Assisting The Homeless), the organization charged with

-continued on page 10

LIBYA:
114 Bombing Casualties

AFGHANISTAN:
1,563 U.S. Dead - 49 this month

IRAQ:
4,452 U.S. Dead - 11 this month
33,023 U.S. Wounded
Iraqi Dead: Up to 1.4 million
Cost of wars: \$1.18+ trillion

costofwar.com • antiwar.com • icasualties.org



Beachhead Collective Staff: Karl Abrams, Greta Cobar, Don Geagan, Mary Getlein, CJ Gronner, Roger Linnett, Jim Smith, Erica Snowlake, Alice Stek.

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

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Westminster and Charter Schools

Dear Beachhead,

As the presenter of the motion concerning Westminster Elementary School and its resources, I would like to make clear that this was in no way a referendum on charter schools and certainly not about Green Dot. It was solely about what parents and teachers thought best for their students at Westminster. At neither the Education Committee of the VNC nor the VNC meeting did I ever express any opinion about Green Dot's qualifications to educate children. Their record speaks for itself. In fact, many parents at Westminster signed the petition to bring a Green Dot Middle school to Venice. They were surprised to learn that their elementary school might be the site for the school.

This was about giving a neighborhood school every chance to excel, especially a neighborhood school that has shown consistent improvement. I questioned the right of LAUSD to take away these same resources, the rooms for math, art, music and the library and the Parent Center, that are imperative for that success.

Teachers have enough to do with their responsibility to give these students the best education; they should neither be jeopardized to do that nor should they have to fight for that right. As a volunteer at Westminster and active in the Venice community, I felt that a resolution from the neighborhood council might help the school in protecting its resources. Nowhere does that motion disparage an organization that in its way is serving the Los Angeles student population with a distinct and successful voice.

Sue Kaplan

Swami X

Dear Beachhead,

Oh wow! The wonders of this internet age. I am amazed and delighted to find that you are still kicking. I hypothesize that they may not want you in Heaven. Never realized that God was so easily intimidated. Nonetheless, I thank you for my lifelong commitment to Tantra. And I am delighted to be able to read your poetry. Perhaps we will meet again.

Luv Ron Grubaugh

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 Raffle ends June 1

May Day 2011



Walter Crane's Children's Illustrations for the Cause The Workers' May-Pole (1894) From Cartoons for the Cause

When the law is wrong it turns the police into thugs

By Clay Clairborn

Last December our city council representative Bill Rosendahl has brought into Venice a special squad of 21 LAPD officers for the expressed purpose of vigorously enforcing LA MC 85.02, which forbids "living" or sleeping in a vehicle parked on the street. He has been doing this at a time when America is enduring its worst economic crisis since the '30s. He has been doing this in a year in which as many as 2 million families nationwide will lose their homes in foreclosure. He has been doing this at a time when an increasing number of the less fortunate among us find that their safest option is to sleep in their vehicles.

But there is a problem with 85.02. There is no humanity or justice in what it mandates. Sometimes the law is wrong and the people are right. Sometimes a law has no moral right to exist. When that happens, the people opposing the law become the righteous ones and the law enforcement agencies become thugs. Chief of Staff Mike Bonin wrote in the December 2010 Venice Neighborhood Council Newsletter: "At the councilmember's request, Police Chief Charlie Beck assigned 21 additional officers to the area. LAPD formed a Venice Homelessness Task Force, ... City prosecutors are training cops to build evidence against people violating laws that prohibit living in vehicles."

You are not allowed to sleep in your car here. You are, however, allowed to sleep on the sidewalk between the hours of 9pm and 6am. I have occasionally slept in my car, although never in Venice. In Venice, my car is parked in its spot and I sleep in my bed under my roof. I never thought it a good idea to get out of my car and sleep on the pavement as the LAPD demands. I always knew that I would be safer, more comfortable and better protected from the extremes of weather if I slept in my locked car than if I slept on the sidewalk. Just don't try that in Venice.

In Venice, with this Venice Homelessness Task Force in the lead, the LAPD has been very busy and successful in finding people caught napping in their vehicles and arresting them for violation of 85.02. While these "criminals" are in jail their RV, van, truck or car is ticketed and towed; often to a city lot in Sylmar, 38 miles away. Any pets are taken to a pound somewhere else. While they are getting bailed out of jail and finding their pets, the towing and storage charges start growing beyond their ability to ever catch up. This is how some members of our community that are already experiencing "hard luck" get "trouble" added on to the pile thanks to the LAPD and 85.02. This is how some lose their last major possession. So impoverished, they need to look for a shopping cart for their few remaining possessions and are forced to start sleeping on the street.

And that is what the Councilman intends. He is using the law to run poor people out of Venice and 85.02 is one of his tools. That is why he is putting additional LAPD resources into the vigorous enforcement of 85.02. He has the support of wealthy and influential developers who see poor people in Venice as a factor in lowering property values. I've heard enough stories about threats and beatings, and seen the bruises, to know that the LAPD is resorting to the tactics of thugs in their effort to run poor and homeless people out of Venice.

This is not the first time a reconcilable contradiction has existed between law and justice. For the first 80 plus years of this nation's history slavery was the law of the land. In that case the contradiction between law and justice was so sharp that a bloody and protracted civil war had to be fought to set matters right. But before that law had been overthrown, slaves that "ran away" and those that helped them were branded "criminals" and everyone in the United States law enforcement was expected to add capturing "runaway slaves" to their long "to-do list."

I'm sure the Venice gentrifying folk type, back in the day, rallied behind the demand for vigorous enforcement of the slave codes with the simple demand "It's the law! Enforce the law!" To do otherwise would have lowered "property" values. But I think that "law" had no moral foundation, and as a result the police that caught runaway slaves turned into thugs. We know from the historical records that they acted like thugs, and that the runaway slaves and those who supported them were the righteous ones.

Similarly, I think those that fight and have fought to see that women have safe abortions on demand, even when it was illegal, have been the righteous ones, and those that attempted and still attempt to jail people for exercising that right are thugs.

Another example of the contraction between the law and justice can be found closer to home and nearer to the present in PC 286, California's law against anal penis contact ("however slight") which was not overthrown until 1976. Maybe before 1976 there were city officials that called for special squads of LAPD to bust into Venice bedrooms and enforce PC 286 because "it's the law."

I know some people thought like that back then, but I think they were wrong. The law had no moral foundation. I think the people that said the law had no business telling consenting adults how to have sex or who with were the righteous ones and the enforcers of that law were the thugs.

Under the concrete conditions of today, in which: 1.) Many people are being made homeless as a result of circumstances over which they have no control and 2.) Neither they nor the city can provide them with a safer or healthier place to sleep than their vehicle, a law which demands that these people sleep "legally" unprotected on the sidewalk lest they be jailed and have their vehicles towed is without moral foundation. There are no proclamations of judges or councilmen that can give it one. Under these circumstances those that enforce the unjust law become thugs and those that fight it are the righteous ones. It is as simple as that. Overthrow 85.02! ☸

Vera Davis Center: The Plot Thickens

By Jim Smith

When is a Community Center not a Community Center? Venice may soon find out if the Vera Davis-McClendon Youth and Family Center is absorbed by the city's Cultural Affairs Dept., which only recognizes and funds art and culture.

In two separate meetings last month, Oakwood and Venice residents expressed in no uncertain terms that they will fight to keep the Vera Davis Community Center open and assisting low-income Venetians.

A meeting of the Venice Town Council was held, April 21, at the Vera Davis Center to plan support for the community center. In addition to a full house of local residents, two city officials, Cliff Weiss and Sheldon Cruz, turned up to give the city's side of the story. After hearing from the officials, the Town Council unanimously passed several motions which insist on keeping the building functioning as a community center, mobilizing other organizations, soliciting support from local political officials and collecting petitions.

A few days later, at a meeting of the Venice Neighborhood Council (VNC) a number of people spoke out in favor of the Community Center. They included Lydia Poncé, Steve Clare, Stan Muhammad, Jataun Valentine, Kendra Moore, Jim Smith, Ivonne Guzman, Lisa Green, and Ian Dean. The city was represented by Weiss, Cruz plus Arturo Pena, representing Councilmember Bill Rosendahl and Saul Romo from the Cultural Affairs Dept. The VNC meeting was for information only. It did not take a position on the issue. It was unclear if and when the VNC would take a position to maintain the Community Center services.

Rosendahl's aide, Pena, claimed that as of June 30, its Community Development Department will no longer have funds to continue operating the Community Center, and it would close. Rosendahl apparently brokered a deal to have it taken over by the city's Cultural Affairs Dept. There was no community input nor announcement but news of the change gradually filtered out (see last month's Beachhead).

Romo, of Cultural Affairs, said a Request for Proposals (RFP) would be issued, probably in May, in which interested organizations could apply to run the Center. However, it could be a number of months before the RFP process runs its course and an opera-

tor is picked. Meanwhile, who would run the center after the CDD leaves?

Since the Cultural Affairs Dept. is obligated to fund programs only relating to arts and culture, it is unclear how it would fund the multitude of social service programs at the Center. Since Cultural Affairs would have no money for programs for the poor as they are outside its mission, Venetians want to know how it would be able to keep the Community Center functioning any longer than would the Community Development Department. The answer that emerged from the VNC meeting was that there was funding for arts and culture but not for the current programs which include twelve-step programs, gang intervention, regular food distributions, free computer access and food stamp applications. In addition, the Tech Team, which provides computer training to low-income students, was recently reinstated after having been booted out last year. At that time, its office space was turned over to Venice Arts, which is run by Jim Hubbard.

A number of supporters of the Community Center told the Beachhead that they feared an agreement had been made between Rosendahl's office and Hubbard to turn the building over to his organization. This concern was also brought up in both meetings.

Hubbard, who was the losing candidate for Neighborhood Council President last year, and was defeated, has been under fire from a number of community members for his hostile attitude toward homeless people and RV dwellers. He has promoted his views under the name, Jimmydale, on a local blogsite, YoVenice.

At this point, the city's financial woes and mismanagement seem to be taken out on low-income people in Venice. The nearest similar Youth and Family Center, between LaBrea and Fairfax on Pico Blvd, is an impossible distance for many homeless or low-income Venetians to travel on a regular basis.

Meanwhile, the Dept. of Cultural Affairs is having its own troubles. On March 18, the City Administrative Officer recommended abolishing the department, thereby saving the city \$10 million per year. It's functions would be merged into the Public Works Department. Perhaps the Vera Davis Center should stay put until L.A. stops the musical chairs routine. As Don Geagan put it at the Town Council meeting, they owe us for all the oil revenue L.A. took out of Venice in past decades. ☺

Vera Davis Tile
on the Peace Wall
at the
Community Center



How You Can Make Your Voice Heard

Speak up for keeping needed services in our Community Center:

Call: Councilmember Bill Rosendahl: 213-473-7011, and/or his aide, Arturo Pena: 310-473-7016; Saul Romo, Cultural Affairs: 213-202-5533

Email: Bill.Rosendahl@lacity.org; Arturo.Pena@lacity.org; Saul.Romo@lacity.org

Download and circulate the petition: www.venicetowncouncil.org

Blogger Jimmydale – Jim Hubbard's Alter Ego Sounds Off

Jan. 21, 2011, 9:54pm

... It has become obvious that LL (Linda Lucks-ed.) should not be representing our community, or any other, in any way, shape or form. Based on solid insider information from Heidi, and many others, including my own experiences with her, she needs to do us a favor, remove herself from VNC, and resume the role of merely a citizen with access to free speech. She has done enough damage and many Venetians believe she is actually a snake dressed in granny clothing.

9:30 am January 22, 2011

... Being able to respond to these clowns with that thing called free speech on this site is great fun. Peter, the lawyer, cracks me up bragging about the weight of his credentials. Then, someone posts his credentials (if this is the same atty) and we learn he is just another run of the mill shoplifter, kleptomaniac. What fun YoVenice provides and all using free speech.

This political amateur hour VNC crew is pathetic, albeit entertaining, in a dark sort of way. Only problem is, and I have said so since the formation of neighborhood councils, the real, elected and paid city officials/politicians, mayor, council, sit high and dry while we are focused on the amateur, ineffective, neighborhood councils when our attention should be focused on the real power players, who are shielded by NC's. Their performance or lack thereof should always be examined and when they are ineffective

and not adequately representing their constituency, more often than not. They need to feel the public's wrath and we should be in their faces and posting about their incompetence on blogs rather than wasting our time on the meaningless, in our case, VNC.

5:28 pm January 22, 2011

... Oh yes. If these three VNC reps continue on any course to shut down the blog(a news and information site) and usurp free speech then there are many who will move in many directions to prevent this insane possibility. Of course a complaint to the Bar would be first. They, the three named VNC'ers, have apparently had secret VNC meetings, perhaps with other board members, about YoVenice and in defiance of the Brown Act, and pursuing an action to close down a free speech blog thousands in Venice read and use both for information (journalism) and op ed essays(journalism). We will fight for our free press and free speech and defy these totalitarianist whatever they are.

January 14, 2011; 4:03 pm

I find it out of the realm of possibility, even reality, for LAPD to be singling out the Guzman woman when in fact we have proof from the video posted today on Yo that the LAPD prefers to single out the other and more interestingly whacked out LL, Lindsay Lohan, not whacked out Lucks, as proven when viewing five or six LAPD escorting Lohan out the back of Hal's and onto Abbot Kinney Blvd. The ranks of crazy women in Venice keep swelling.

January 14, 2011; 4:13 pm

I'm glad Guzman wrote her complaint to the mayor as he can put it on the pile of other complaints, the one with the Bickhart complaints. If it goes on that pile, called the To Be Ignored pile, Guzman can get in the line with the rest of us for a response that will never come. I do love the part where she actually believes she is a civil servant, whatever that is.

12:24 pm January 24, 2011 ... I listened to Lucks on the radio. She is starting to show her true nasty colors, although I believe she is an idiot with possible dementia, which could explain her mind set, as she does not recall the most infamous past of Venice.

Summer Violence Hits The Beach – Months Early

By Greta Cobar

Violence preceded summer this year in Venice with a shooting, a stabbing and several mass fights. As a result, the LAPD will substantially increase its patrol officers' presence at the beach starting the first weekend in May.

Six gunshots were fired April 16 around 6:30pm on OFW and 17th Av. One 23-year old male from the South LA area was struck twice, in the head and torso, and was taken to the hospital in critical condition. Then several fights involving groups of people broke out throughout OFW on April 17 around that same time, and the crowds were dispersed. The following weekend, April 24, a stabbing occurred at the drum circle, again right before sunset.

No suspects were apprehended in any of the three aforementioned confrontations. In addition, all three of them involved visitors, not Venice locals.

On April 16 there was a group of hundreds of teenagers standing by the basketball court closest to the police station. Alexandria Thompson, of Venice311, was the first to report the gathering as a "gang-related" "flash mob" promoted through Twitter. Mainstream media soon followed suit with dozens of headlines blaming the gathering and the eventual gunshots on Twitter.

However, as first pointed out by Bret Miller of YoVenice, a simple search on Twitter does not yield the hundreds of tweets that Venice311, the LAPD and mass media allege. An email sent to Twitter asking whether the posts were deleted and by who was answered by an automated response stating that "due to the high volume of requests we receive, unfortunately, we are not able to respond to many inquiries."

Just because the tweets are not available at this time does not mean that they never existed. However, I have personally seen similarly dressed, similarly aged, and similarly sized groups of teenagers peacefully congregate on the beach on several previous occasions and as recently as April 1. If Twitter were responsible for their April 16 gathering, then it would have played a part in the past as well, a fact that has never been previously reported.

What can easily be found on Twitter right after the time of the April 16 shooting, however, are hundreds of tweets featuring media headlines concerning the Twitter-created gang "flash mob." Not surprisingly the following day, April 17, hundreds of other inner-city teenagers flooded the beach, acting "as if

—continued on page 10

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6:52 pm January 13, 2011 Does anyone have another photo of this person Yvonne Boozeman as the photo posted mostly obscures the identity due to the emphasis on the overdeveloped area from the neck down to midsection. If it is true she hates the cops it is important that we know who she is so she doesn't do any unnecessary damage to the community she and others have already done.

7:42 pm December 6, 2010

Big surprise. We knew this RV lifestyle in Venice was the perfect cover for a pedophile (criminal) and I just saw several RV's parked next to Broadway Elementary. A person would have to be out of their mind to deprive the taxpaying citizens of Venice knowledge of who is living in a sh-box on front of our homes. An outrage and now we have ample reason to have any RV dweller living on the streets illegally in Venice to be forced to produce their identification so as to run criminal background checks.

6:44 pm January 18, 2011 I agree with tired of disrespect and urge Tony to video tonight's VNC spectacle for our viewing pleasure. Please Tony, show us everything, Yvonne's injuries, and all the verbal tantrums that may erupt. ☺

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Photos by Jim Smith



Earth Day Rally at the Santa Monica Airport

A rally on Earth Day, April 22, at the Santa Monica Airport protested the use of leaded gasoline in all propeller planes flying out of the airport.

Lead has been banned in automobiles and paints for years, yet it is required and tolerated in prop planes. Lead is especially harmful to children. There are over 16 schools in the flight paths that the flight schools use over Venice and Mar Vista. This number does not include pre-schools or the many schools affected by propeller planes in Santa Monica. Currently, there are six flight schools using this airport.

The flights out of these schools account for 40 per cent of all the flights from SMO. The Santa Monica Airport currently directs ALL prop planes to fly over Venice and Mar Vista in what they call their "Fly Neighborly" program.

The Los Angeles City Council, at Bill Rosendahl's initiative, passed a resolution changing the flight path so it would take planes over Santa Monica, not Venice. Santa Monica, not Venice, reaps the tax revenue from the airport while sending the noise and pollution over Venice. The City Council also called for the closing of the six flight schools. The resolutions will have no immediate effect but will add to the pressure for changes at the airport. Others are calling for the closure of the airport, and its replacement by parks and low-income housing.

The Venice Neighborhood Council's Santa Monica Airport Committee sponsored the Earth Day rally.

HAARP: Death Rays In the Hands of the Evil Empire?

By Erica Snowlake

The U.S. has three ionospheric heating facilities, the HAARP (High Frequency Active Auroral Research Program), the HIPAS near Fairbanks and the Arecibo Observatory in Puerto Rico. Europe operates one in Norway, and Russia hosts the SURA facility. Although thirteen facilities exist worldwide, the HAARP at Gakona, Alaska, is considered the best of its kind in frequency capability and beam-steering agility.

In 2002, a report by the State Duma (Parliament) of Russia warned, "the U.S. is creating new integral geophysical weapons that may influence the near-Earth medium with high frequency radio waves." The HAARP facility at Gakona consists of 180 antennae 72-foot-high linked together and is capable of transmitting 3.6 million watts (the largest radio station transmitter operates on 50,000 watts).

HAARP, infamously referred to as "the Moby Dick of conspiracy theories," is funded by the Office of Naval Research and the Air Force Research Laboratory. Bernard Eastlund, a physicist who developed some of the concepts behind HAARP, proposed using high frequency radio waves to beam large amounts of power into the ionosphere, energizing its electrons and ions with charges sufficient to (blow up things) disable incoming missiles and disrupt enemy satellite communications. Eastlund's patents

also detail possibilities of "weather modification by altering solar absorption." Others in the scientific community term HAARP a "Scalar EM (electromagnetic) wave weapon."

In 1995, Nick Begich, Jr. published "Angels Don't Play with this HAARP: Advances in Tesla Technology" which claims HAARP in its present stage may be used for "geophysical warfare." Hundreds of YouTube videos feature testimonies asserting HAARP's ability to induce earthquakes, enhance hurricanes and effect floods and droughts, and further associate it with scalar waves, chemtrails, contrails and a mysterious holographic experiment called Project Blue Beam. Both Alex Jones in his controversial www.infowars.com series and Benjamin Fulford present cases citing the use of HAARP to cripple and force nations to "comply" with the New World Order's demands....

On March 9, 2011, two days prior to the Japan earthquake, Intellicast.com, an on-line "authority in expert weather" predicted a severe earthquake would occur in the North Pacific, according to their interpretation of so-called HAARP signature rings appearing on their weather-related radar maps.

Is HAARP a Weapon of Mass Destruction? Why did Venezulean President Hugo Chavez accuse the U.S. of "playing God" in manipulating the 2010 Haitian earthquake? Is Tesla, (who reputedly used scalar wave technology resulting in 3 earthquakes in Alaska in 1899) rolling in his grave (actually, no, Tesla was cremated in 1943 and his ashes placed in a golden sphere.) Do governments/corporate powers/evil empires orchestrate EVENTS resulting in environmental devastation and the loss of hundreds of thousands of human lives for economic and geopolitical gain?



Juan's Hats #1





Protected Bike Lanes Come to Long Beach. Why Not Venice?

Long Beach is getting its first protected bike lanes (also called buffered bike lanes) where auto traffic and bike traffic has a barrier between them. L.A. traffic engineers say it can't be done. Yet here it is. With the rapidly growing amount of bike traffic in Venice, we deserve our own protected bike lanes, on Venice, Lincoln, Abbot Kinney, Rose, Main and many other streets. Long Beach is also putting in bikes-only and autos-only streets. Be the first in your neighborhood to volunteer to make your street bikes-only (except for residents). photo by Joe Linton.

\$1500/month

By Greta Cobar

Would you pay \$1500/month for the use of a parking space from the hours of 6pm to 8am in Westchester, West Los Angeles or Penmar? What would you think of someone who did?

I live in a nice little apartment (parking included) four blocks away from the beach and I pay \$1000/month. So paying 50% more for 95% less does not make a whole lot of sense to me.

Yet Bill Rosendahl's Roadmap to Housing Program makes just as much sense. People Assisting the Homeless (PATH) was given \$650,000 to provide 24 parking spaces (eight at each of the aforementioned locations) for the duration of 18 months. You might

need a calculator, but not too many brain cells to figure out that Rosendahl is paying \$1500/month for a parking space only.

The ridiculousness of it all is just getting started, too. First off, \$750,000 came out of the Venice Area Surplus Real Estate Fund, Rosendahl's Street Furniture Account and other sources, but \$100,000 somehow got lost in the transaction from the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) to PATH, who ended up with only \$650,000. Second, before Rosendahl came up with his Vehicles to Homes program, which later became Roadmap to Housing, the official count of RVs in Venice was 252. And he stood during the September 23, 2010 Venice town hall meeting and said that he will help everyone willing to be part of his program. He went on to say that anyone unwilling to be part of his program would go to jail.

He made it clear, time and time again, that the only two choices available are his program or jail. Yet his program is only providing 24 spaces. What about the other 228 RV owners?

Are they really given a choice other than jail? Sadly, that question has already been answered time and time again over the last seven months. No program has been put into place, no parking spots were provided, and yet the number of RVs in Venice has been reduced from 252 to less than 20.

Rosendahl can keep saying that he is trying to help the Venice RV dwellers, but his actions prove that he is trying to get rid of them. First he mobilized the LAPD to harass, tow and imprison RV residents, then he supported height and length parking restric-

—continued on page 10

María E.



VOTE May 17

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The World's Greatest Wino

By CJ Gronner

Bobby Brown ("No, not like the singer, he's like ME!") is better known as The World's Greatest Wino on Venice Beach. I sat down to talk with him this morning ("Let's sit on a bench in the sunshine."), and can assure you that he lives up to his title. Except that he's sober, and has been for 12 years.

Bobby was born in Georgia, lived in Florida and New York, until making his way to the West Coast in 1978 to get away from a crazy ex-wife (among a few). That's also when he began drinking himself into oblivion - to forget about the bad marriage. He has children (two sons ... and a new baby (!) living in the Philippines!) and grandchildren, but he doesn't keep in touch with them anymore, as there were a lot of rough years, and when his Mother died, the link to the rest of the family died with her.

The World's Greatest Wino routine began when he lost the title of World's Greatest "Flatfooted Panhandler" in a contest with THE Greatest Panhandler,



in New Orleans. He still hates that he lost. His beat used to be walking the sidewalks between The Hollywood Athletic Club and The Cat and The Fiddle, yelling, "Support your local Wino!" It occurred to him then that whatever you're going to be, you should be the best at it - hence The World's Greatest Wino was born in 1993.

He brought his bit to the Boardwalk, with all its foot traffic, and kept up the heavy drinking until a little stint in jail for "being a pharmacist." An excellent Parole Officer (named Aaron Davis, "my Eskimo", who Bobby wanted a shout-out to) was physically responsible for getting him sober and into AA meetings. Bobby had been drinking until he was sick - throwing up blood sick - and that was that. It dawned on him that if a sign and a cup (to collect his tips) could keep him drunk, it could help him do a lot of other things.

He said, "I've drank up 747's, and now I fly in them." He saves up his collections and travels now instead of spending it on the sauce. He's been all over Europe ("Though I never got to Istanbul. My fantasy was to sit in the Casbah and smoke hash."), South America, and more recently, The Philippines and Thailand - where he has a 22 year old young lady (He showed me a photo. He's heading back over the holidays. Yep.) currently "driving me nuts, emailing me all the time." For the record, Bobby is 72. And he's replaced his drinking vice with the ladies, or as he put it, "I'm a Sucker. Ladies IS my problem now." Yeah, but they likely help keep him young and at it, working the Boardwalk, bellowing his trademark song, "Jingle bells, Jingle bells, Help me get drunk!" That's exactly what he's singing right here.

And he IS going to get drunk - just not until the year 2209. That's a date he chose to sit on the hill by the Skatepark and finally drink his favorite - Remy Martin - out of a brandy snifter in the sunshine, because "You don't know" - you don't know how long you're going to live, and all he can think about is TODAY, for not getting drunk. But you always have to have something to look forward to. Asked if he's false advertising a bit, he answered, "I hate a liar



more than anything. I'm not lying, I'm asking for the MEANS to go to the liquor store - but the liquor store sells a lot of things." He gave me his business card, and I said, "This is a fresh card." He gave me a sly look, and said, "I AM fresh!" Again, he does not lie.

He alternates his signs (his favorite: "Dr. Kind Love, S.O. {Sex-Ologist} - Sex Counselor and Happiness Dispenser") and hats (his current one is all about our champion chasing Lakers), and has a million songs and jokes to entertain the crowds with. Like this one ...

"I was in Hollywood and saw this giant guy with a little tiny head. I asked him how he was so huge, and had such a tiny head, all out of proportion. The guy told me that he had woken up in a hotel room and a Leprechaun was there, with a Fairy Princess. The Leprechaun said the Fairy Princess would give him anything he wanted, and the Guy said, "How about a little head?"

We shared a laugh and a firm handshake, and Bobby Brown, World's Greatest Wino, carried on down The Boardwalk, dispensing his own special brand of happiness. ☺

Viva Pachamama! – Bolivia Celebrates Law Granting Rights to Mother Earth!

By ENS and Erica Snowlake

La Paz – Bolivia marked the International Day of Mother Earth, April 22, with a ceremony in the Plaza Murillo, the center of political power.

An ancient ritual shared center stage with speeches in which authorities in this Andean nation extolled the Law of Mother Earth - the world's first legislation that grants to all nature rights equal to humans.

President Evo Morales, the first indigenous leader of Bolivia, is the architect of the Law of Mother Earth. Supported by politicians as well as nongovernmental organizations, the law is expected to easily pass the National Congress where Morales' ruling party, The Movement Towards Socialism, has a majority in both houses.

The first article of the Law of Mother Earth says "Mother Earth is a living being" and that every human activity has to "achieve dynamic balance with the cycles and processes inherent in Mother Earth." It defines Mother Earth as "a unique, indivisible, self-regulating community of interrelated beings that sustains, contains, and reproduces all beings."

In parallel, a fair was held to raise awareness about global-warming and its effects, and the Bolivian-led crusade for nature protection. Minister of the Presidency Oscar Coca affirms Bolivia has the "conviction" to promote awareness of the climate change program in all nations across the planet.

"President Evo Morales says the planet can live without humans, but humans can not live without the planet and reminds the world today that the rights of nature should be equal to those we, ourselves, enjoy," Coca said. The Morales government intends to establish a Ministry of Mother Earth to implement the Law of Mother Earth, which will establish new rights for nature, including :

- * the right to maintain the integrity of life and natural processes
- * the right to not have cellular structure modified or genetically altered
- * the right to continue vital cycles and processes free from human alteration
- * the right to pure water
- * the right to clean air
- * the right to balance, to be at equilibrium
- * the right to be free of toxic and radioactive pollution
- * the right to not be affected by mega-infrastructure and development projects that affect the balance of ecosystems and the local inhabitant communities

The law promotes "harmony" and "peace" and "the elimination of all nuclear, chemical, and biological" weapons.

At the same time, President Morales is set to announce on May 1 that he will be "dismantling the privatization model," thereby expropriating privately owned zinc, silver, and tin mines. Soon after his election as President in 2006, the Morales government took over gas and oil refineries, all in a bid to have the government control the country's natural resources. As a result of these policies, foreign investment in Bolivia has plummeted.



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4 O'Clock in the Morning

By Roger Linnett

This month serves up a sweet little visual treat for our enjoyment; 4 of the 5 planets visible with the naked-eye will all rise together in the eastern pre-dawn sky. Plus we're going to encounter a meteor shower, those fiery, cosmic sprinkles, which peaks the first week of the month, and for the metaphorical cherry on top - a crescent new Moon joins in the planetary "flash mob" at the beginning, and again at the end, of the month.

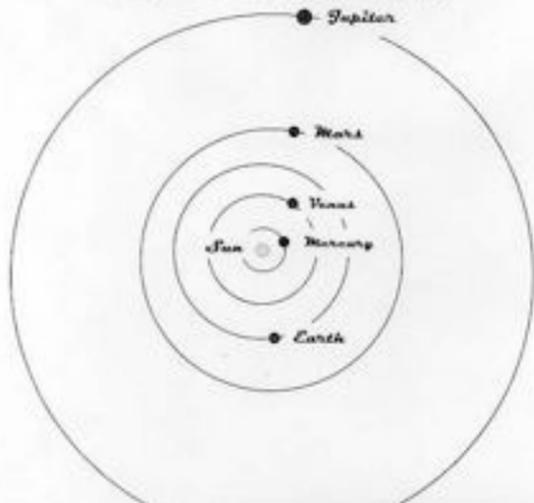
Mercury, Venus, Mars and Jupiter will all be within a few degrees of each other from our line of sight on Earth; their most compact grouping coming on the mornings of May 11 and 12.

You will need to have a clear view of the eastern horizon, or be able to get high enough to see over the neighbor's rooftops. Of course, the darker the location, the better: try to avoid having street lights, etc., along your line of sight as they inhibit your eyes adjusting to the night sky.

Mercury will definitely be visible with binoculars, and possibly to the unaided eye, all month. It's very low in the sky, below Venus, "the Morning Star," the brightest object in the early morning sky. Mercury shines only one-fourth as bright as Venus.

Mars will be the hardest of the group to see. It begins the month hidden in the Sun's glare, and may be too low in the sky to see without binoculars until mid-May.

Inner Solar System as seen from above North Pole
(All planets revolve around the Sun counter-clockwise)



Jupiter is also very low at the beginning of the month, but rises quickly, and on the mornings of May 11 and 12 is a mere half of a degree (the apparent diameter of the Moon) above Venus, and a little dimmer.

If you follow the quartet from night to night, notice the way Mercury moves relative to Venus. At the beginning of the month it sits just below Venus. It moves a little to the right each night until the 11th, and thereafter moves back to the left, catching Venus on the 19th, and then leaving her behind in their age-old promenade around the Sun. This apparent back and forth motion is an optical illusion similar to passing a car on the freeway. The car appears to us to be moving backwards, but we know it's not.

Mars is positioned below and left of Venus and Mercury. Its pinkish cast, enhanced by our atmosphere, makes it easy to differentiate from nearby celebrities.

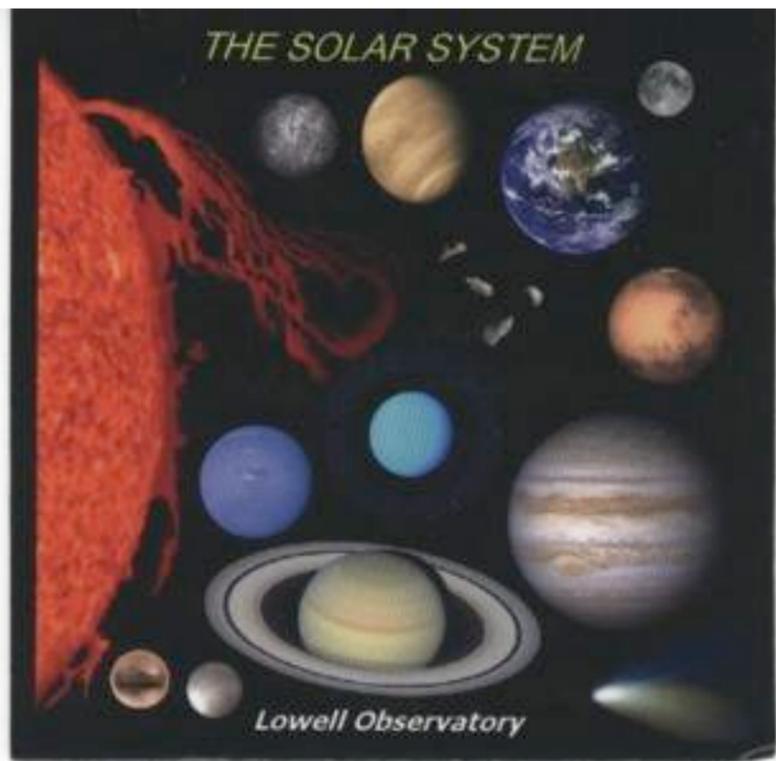
After their brush with Jupiter, Venus and Mercury close in on Mars as it rises out of the morning twilight. It moves steadily higher with each passing night.

Jupiter moves noticeably from night to night, again due to an optical illusion caused by the relative motion of the planets in their orbits.

After it passes Venus on the 11th, Jupiter continues to move up and away as Venus and Mercury pursue Mars, coming closest on the 23rd.

As the month ends, Mercury and Venus sink down into the Sun's glare, as they pass behind it, while Mars and Jupiter climb higher each night, rising earlier each month, and will be visible at night for the rest of the year.

The Eta Aquarid meteor shower, which peaks this year on the morning of May 6, is the first of two showers that occur each year as a result of the Earth passing through the trail of dust left by Halley's Comet; the second being the Orionids, which we will encounter during the second half of October. You should be able to see 12 to 15 or more an hour during the peak, but some meteors will continue to arrive for a few weeks thereafter.



These meteors are, in fact, just grains of sand and dust blown off the comet as it plows through the so-called "solar wind," which continuously streams from the Sun.

Their bright trails are the result of hitting our atmosphere at an amazing 30 miles per second -- over 100,000 miles per hour!

The meteors appear to originate in the constellation Aquarius, near the seventh brightest star, designated Eta, hence their name, which rises about 3am at this time of year, a couple of hours before morning twilight.

Looking to the east, locate the Square of Pegasus; the four bright stars form a large diamond. Aquarius is the area of sky to the right. The meteors' trails will point back toward that spot, but can appear from just about anywhere above and to the sides of that general direction.

Bundle up good and warm, take a thermos of something hot, clean your binoculars, break out a lawn chair or chaise, kick back and enjoy the show. These planets don't get together for family pictures very often, so take advantage of this rare opportunity. ☺

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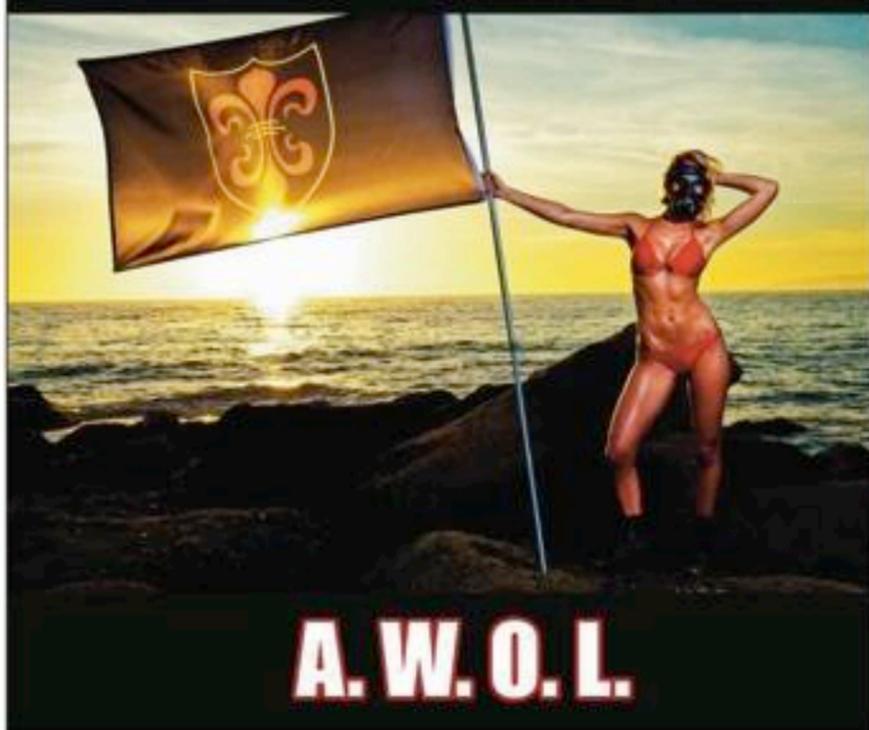
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Book Review:

John Thomas: Venice Poet Extraordinaire

By Fred Dewey

John Thomas, perhaps Los Angeles' greatest underground poet, was a big man with a wise and lined countenance, piercing wit, deep, resonant voice, and always slightly stunned, gentle eyes. Inseparable from his wife, poet and filmmaker Philomene Long, his Muse, Thomas radiated a passion for books and poetry, watching from a respectful distance all that transpired around him.

This fueled the poetry; it was as if he, with Philomene, filled with life that lost and real realm behind the cliché we call the bohemian life. John and Philomene had withdrawn from ordinary society, following their vow of poverty, forming a compact with each other outside material considerations and virtually all practicality. They were like intertwined trunks in a single, majestic, flexible, and bending tree.

When you entered their book and quote-lined refuge at the Ellison on Paloma, off the boardwalk, you felt like you were enveloped in an incredible force; they made it safe again to talk about meaning. "The poem" bound them and permitted no rivals.

Generally, Thomas spoke very little: he seemed more often like a bystander perplexed by extraordinary and sometimes horrible times. Two things were never in question: deference to the Muse—Philomene—on all matters, and tending to a precious cargo, carried, I suspect, from an early visit to Ezra Pound at St. Elizabeth's.

I believe this was one of the grounding premises of his life's work. It required constant attention, learning, and a storyteller's sensibility that, the mundane and not so mundane, the reassuring and entirely embarrassing, the profound and very light, and all his companions, real and unreal, in this rich journey, be brought forward and told.

With works ranging from *Epopoeia* and the *Decay of Satire* and John Thomas to the late chapbook, *Feeding the Animal*, Thomas became the raconteur, generator of epigrams, tall tales and haiku, a restless experimenter with language, subject matter, tone and purpose, always acting, or as he said "pretending," as if "he doesn't care." Charles Bukowski, a close friend, and one never given to pretension, admired Thomas for his poetry and for digging. As with Bukowski, there was always simplicity, the appearance of an ordinary person talking: direct speech, proposing a single, almost koan-like thought in each poem, as in this from "Ah But the Poem": "the pearl in the palm is the poem, no / the knowing."

Thomas first drew attention in the ferment of Venice West and the Gas House during the 1950s and '60s. He described events with a detached, bemused eye, the same eye he brought to bear on childhood trips past Poe's grave in Baltimore and the first, crucial encounter with Pound.

Thomas drew on things without cultural idolatry or any sense of respecting traditions, traditions that were, to be honest, shattered anyway. He merely said "I love Edgar Poe," or, in thinking of the great philosopher Michel de Montaigne—inventor of the essay as philosophical self-examination—that "hot tears spring to my eyes" "that I never saw him, never knew him, / never heard his lazy Gascon accent."

Montaigne was a fitting model, because a free and ranging mind always seems a scandal for society. "Venice California is a very murky universe for / man—alone and no god around." No incarnation or salvation is to be found, because "to live in Los Angeles, a minor poet of some local repute: surely this satisfies any interpretations of the doctrine of Sufficient Disgrace. Well, for many, nothing has ever proved sufficient. The fatal flaw, amigo."

Thomas' fusing of braggadocio, self-criticism, minimalist experimentalism and the far-fetched up-ended genre and rhetorical categories. Even as his imagination takes us elsewhere, he declares, without hesitation, "I am this ruined elsewhere." The language is beautiful, then utterly, quite deliberately, dismissible, then not. "The tenth of March is the anniversary of Adam and Eve's expulsion from the Garden." This is said with perfect conviction. "Some of this — no a lot of this — is recalled inaccurately, / but I don't care. How accurate was Cervantes' Latin guidebook?"

One early image is stuck in my mind: Thomas squeezing out of their tiny, classic Volkswagen beetle in front of Beyond Baroque, for the debut of Stuart Perkoff's posthumously-released *Voices of the Lady: Collected Poems*. The couple had been close to Perkoff, Philomene as Perkoff's partner at the end, Thomas as his friend.

Thomas, like Perkoff, preferred to follow the poem into the lowest depths. The ego blocked knowing, and fame and money were distractions. There is "the Great World...we'll never see / and this other

world, visible and audible of (who trained them?)... parrots." Then, in another place, speaking of a grievous mistake he may have committed, says of mistakes, "How do I remember that? / because everyday of my life, I've made at least one." Thomas doesn't waver: "I take / the entire burden of blame." Then he says: "You will think that I labor under some delusion. Perhaps I do, considering the infectious hysteria of this country from which I write. But the delusion is not a morbid one, it is a wholesome action of the mind, reasoning on actual occurrences."

His wife would repeat proudly, and often, one of Thomas' great epigrams: "Go naked, take nothing." And so Thomas' last poem, a love poem about giving Philomene a crown of violets, aches: "While you read this, love, please turn your back on me." Thomas dedicated his late work to his wife, in the last bone-aching years that became the true test of the vow of poverty. It was for these poems that Thomas wanted to be remembered. His life and work, courageous, multiform, infuriating, and wondrous, are summed up in words now engraved on the walls of the Venice boardwalk: "Even the barrel of my pen / is full of the ghosts of uncouth poets. They are the bitter crackling sound I hear / when Philomene brushes her hair. / In case you wondered, / they are the small transparent parasols / all of us stroll beneath."

Fred Dewey was director of Beyond Baroque Literary / Arts Center in Venice from 1996 to 2010 and was curator of the Venice Poetry Walls. This tribute is excerpted by the Beachhead, with permission, from his longer introduction to the newly issued Selected Poetry and Prose of John Thomas, edited by Pegarty Long (Raven). ☪

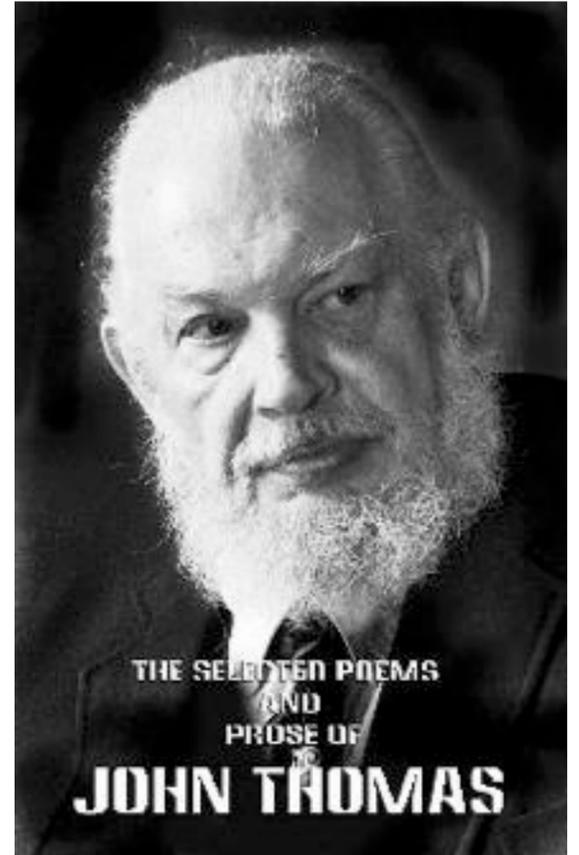


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Film Review:

Venice West and the LA Scene

By Mary Getlein

On April 17, *Venice West and the LA Scene*, by Mary Kerr, was shown at Beyond Baroque. It is part one of a two-part documentary covering the Venice and San Francisco Beat scene in the '50s and '60s. The film showed the lives of local Venice poets and artists: Stuart Perkoff, John Thomas, Philomene Long, Frankie Rios and Tony Scibella, among others. The artists represented included Wally Berman, John Altoon, Artie Richard and Saul White, among others.

Venice was very cheap then and people could afford to live somewhere and work on their poetry and art. A lot of artists felt that their art was just for themselves and would give it away to their friends. They didn't have the desire to do commercial art. It was very innocent in that respect.

Wally Berman was a very influential artist in the Beat scene — he was the one who coined the phrase "Art is Love is God." He was arrested on a pornography charge in the Syndale Studio, the first gallery that would show Beat artists' work. He was arrested for a small drawing representing two people having sex. Two plainclothes policemen came in, found the drawing, arrested him and took him to jail. He was eventually bailed out, but it was quite traumatic for him.

Colorful John Atoon was professionally trained as an artist, and became an Abstract Expressionist and influenced many artists around him. He was one of the few that held down a job, as an art teacher, and also did his own art. Most artists and poets lived in voluntary poverty and worked odd jobs here and there to pay the rent and buy food.

Another artist who was important was Artie Richards, who was not allowed in his own shoe at Ferris Gallery. The owners of the Ferris Gallery were afraid of how he would act once he started drinking, and didn't want him to offend potential clients. So Artie and his friends went to the back of the gallery and built a make-shift bar out of some wood planks and set up shop there, in the alley.

Stuart Perkoff was a major poet of the '50s. He was very careless with his poetry, would perform it and then crumble it up and throw it on the floor. He was known for writing line after line of poetry and not stopping, as if he was in a trance. After his death, a big book of his poetry was published, at the urging of Allan Ginsburg. Stuart got heavily into drugs, which lead to him going to jail and his early death.

There is a scene in the movie where John Thomas, Philomene Long, Frankie Rios, Tony Scibella and Saul White were gathered around the table talking about the good ol' days. Of the five, only Frankie is left. Tony, John and Frankie talked about the relief they felt of discovering they could write poems — that this was their profession. Discovering the talent that was buried under the rough exterior.

The concept of "the Muse" was discussed by many poems. The Muse was about finding the inspiration inside yourself. It was necessary to open yourself and receive the inspiration to do poetry and art. An artist or poet should keep themselves pure — you didn't do art and poetry to make money. Stuart Perkoff felt the Muse would take away your inspiration and ability if you allowed yourself to be corrupted by the capitalist culture. Many people would use drugs or alcohol to as a way to be open to the Muse — this might work in the beginning, but by the end you couldn't write anything at all. This happened to many poets and artists, among them Frankie Rios and Stuart Perkoff.

The film includes footage from the Gas House and Venice West, where people used to go and listen to poets "blowing" their poems and musicians playing their music.

The beatniks were dropouts from regular society, which was primarily described by conformity. America was in the prosperous '50s, when people were encouraged to move into the suburbs and the men would go to work and the women would stay home and raise their children. Everyone looked the same, dressed the same and aspired to the same goal: success.

Or you could drop out, run away from your pre-described role in society and go to New York, San Francisco or Venice and hang out with madmen and crazy poets. Venice was cheap then, and you could practically live on nothing. Some poets were given rooms above the Gas House.

Philomene Long talked about becoming a nun and at the last moment deciding to be a poet. She was already wearing black, she had already embraced poverty, she spent all day staring at the sky, so she was already a poet. She said that when she met Stuart Perkoff, after a minute of knowing him it was like she had known him a thousand years.

Mary Kerr tied all the pieces together in this engaging film of young voices emerging from the strange hold of the '50s.

In the Q&A after the movie, Mary said the movie was especially encouraging to art students, who feel that deep pull to do art, while everyone around them are telling them not to.

Elaine Trotter was the editor of the film. Jimmy Z, Theo Saunders, Ben Perkoff and, Si Perkoff (son and brother of Stuart Perkoff, respectively) performed the music in the film. Mary is planning a two DVD set that covers Venice and San Francisco. She needs money to help produce it and has a website: beatera.org, and indigogo.com, where you can go and view parts of the movie and donate money. The title of the two documentaries will be "Swinging in the Shad-ows", part one: "Venice West and the LA Scene" and part two: "San Francisco's Wild History Group." ☪

Revolution in the Mind

Fate,
Sweet, sweet fate
You have given me
A life sublime.
A mystic anarchy
So divine,
Like a revolution in the mind.

Sun,
Dear, dear sun
You have shown in me
A light defined.
From
A violent anarchy
Defused inside
To a revolution in the mind.

Long,
Long away,
A tragedy is being replayed
In a mother's eyes.
As she silently absorbs
All out lies
While another child dies.
But, from the chamber
Of her many sorrows
Wisdom lights a flame
In her brain,
Of revolution
(in the mind)

Time,
Strange, strange time,
You have haunted me
In and out of rhyme.
A cosmic anarchy
So sublime.
Like
A revolution
In the mind.

—Marty Noel-Nivoli

19:30 Saturday, April 23, 2011, Oakwood and California.....Resisted I, the urge, until just now. In total silence, hidden. Then, the glow Came through the cracks, began to roll, the stone. I knew, just then, that I was not alone. A month had passed, my isolation pressed Upon me with such gravity. I passed Through unknown levels, deeper did I sink. Oblivion refused to let me think. Somehow, I seemed to manage to hold fast, To see that crimson glow along the west, And suddenly I knew the curse was gone, Was lifted from my shoulders and was done. And so I end my silence, and I know, An angel has passed over me just now.....Roger Houston

I Am From

I am from laughter
From hot sand and cold waves
I am from the many music cultures pumping from large speakers
(it felt like what comfort would be if it were a sound)
I am from palm tree's
A community of old friends
Who's lifestyles were anything but ordinary,
Were extraordinary and intriguing and I am a piece of it

I am from orange juice and surfboards
From skateboards and scrapes
I am from the unique characters
And the radicals
From try this! And don't be shy!
I am from follow your heart
Because dreams come true
And we'll be right behind you the whole way

I am from Kathy and James's cloud,
Tamales some days and mashed potatoes others
From the people my grandmother healed in the war,
The knowledge my father passed on

Walls covered in sepia toned memories
Of familiar faces and some unknown with interesting stories
Of how they interwove in to our families history
Warm moments captured
I am from those faces and scenes
A being of concentrated memories, feelings and hopes,
The next generation to pursue

— Janei Lujan Valentine

The right word at the right time
can be the right tool to connect the you and I
into the big equation of we.
Those little words like love and hate
can spark forest fires in our hearts and minds
and ignite the forces that govern us.
They can commit the slipshod crime of verbicide
or they can compress and expand our time together.
They can cause us to liquefy flux and flow together
into the very stream of consciousness,
or they can implode and obliterate us into anti-matter.
Better to choose our words carefully,
especially the little ones, with love.
The ones that warm us, connect us, equate us,
expand us and transcend our consciousness into one.

—Douglas Lamarthe

The First of May

By Jim Smith

Welcome home
May Day!
It's so good to see you.
You've been gone a long, long time.
Marx knows, we tried to carry on
while you were away.
But it was always the same old people.
It became a reunion for tired old lefties.
We mourned you, May
thought Joe McCarthy's thugs
had run you off for good.
Now you're back in all your power and glory.
A million people marched in L.A.?
Hundreds of thousands gathering
at the most unlikely cities.
Even Chicago, where it all began.
I'd say you are definitely back.
And who is turning out on May 1st?
It's workers, nearly every last one.
Just like in 1890 when we celebrated
the fight for the 8 hour work day
right here in the USA.
Back then, lots of us were immigrants
come to seek a better life,
but finding out we had to fight for it.
Some things never change.
¿Que No?
Not only that,
we're still fighting for an 8 hour day!

First Step

for Lucy Navarro

She took a step, then one more
Then more and more and more
She looks up and laughs
We all clap our hands
She claps her hands –
a big moment in her history and ours.
It will be forgotten years from now
but right now it is so amazing to us
you can see her brain ticking away
behind those big brown eyes
her cheeks are fat and full and rosy
her mood is funny and laughing most of the time.
When she talks she speaks in pixie:
we don't understand it and she does understand us
but can't talk it back yet
so we exist together
a very young member of our race
and the older members, looking at her, wondering,
remembering their babies walking for the first time
feeling joy and wonder once again,
living in that present moment that babies provide.

—Mary Getlein

God is Truth, Good, Beauty, Light, Life, Love and a Mystery. She is also Everywhere and Omni Everything. All our problems and challenges have their origin in the ego. The ego is the "false little I" who knows everything and "can't really explain anything." The ego itself isn't bad, just awkward and inconvenient. Embarrassing, really. Most everyone has some ego, more or less. Not worth discussing when you reflect on all the great people and events that are happening right now. When people unfold peace within themselves and give expression to it in their daily lives, war will be history and a dying memory. Having a good time without hurting anyone and not getting caught is wise and spiritual and may someday be a religion. In the meantime we are beset by the 2 party system, propaganda impersonating the News and violence disguised as frustrated sexuality. We are living in profoundly changing times. We are evolving in love, creativity and spirituality. Believe it or not It is here now.

You are a creator with every thought and feeling of your being. Know ye not ye are God. It is time to get serious and still have your spirit hold a joyous smile. Life has its origin, sustenance and perfection in the Supreme Spirit. You are that. What more can I say? Your destiny is in Divinity.

God is Love and so are you; so now what in the hell are you going to do? God goes on forever and lives creatively in everything that is true. You are a Library Card for everything that exists. Joyous creative unfoldment into Absolute Bliss is why you eternally exist.

SWAMI X Speaks



Bumpy Ride on the Roadmap to Homes

—continued from page 1

implementing the program, followed Bonin and spoke at length, reciting and explaining the strict rules and regulations program participants had to agree to abide by under pain of expulsion from the program and laid out in detail the security arrangements and grievance procedures to respond quickly to any problem or infraction.

He also told of past successes their approach has had. There was even the offer of increased police activity in the area, but the dissenters in the audience were having none of it.

Apparently, the decision had not been widely publicized by the Councilman's office, and VNC Community Officer Mariana Aguilar, who lives in the Penmar area, upset at the lack forewarning of the decision and the quickly-called meeting, went door-to-door on the prior Saturday to raise the alert in the neighborhood.

Before the vote was taken Aguilar proposed a motion to amend the proposal, to wit: that Penmar's parking lot be excluded altogether from the "Roadmap" program. This was followed by a public comment period and each of the councilmember's input.

Many of the meeting's attendees were residents of the neighborhood around the Rose Avenue site, and were unanimously against the proposed solution. Many were obviously of the opinion that somebody was "trying to pull a fast one," by scheduling the meeting so soon after the decision to use the Penmar lot had been reached, and with no apparent public discussion.

During the public comment period, various residents came forward to speak of past problems visited upon the neighborhood by homeless and transient interlopers. There was also muttering about "that [unprintable] St. Joseph's," which is some distance away on Lincoln Blvd.

Others raised issues about the participants interfering in the golf course's operations, and the possible loss of revenue to the facility. Although no representative was present, Bonin did say that they were in contact with the city agency responsible for its management and the company that ran the facility.

Salinas explained that all three sites have specified hours of operation -- from 6pm to 8am, at which time all vehicles must leave the area. However, the residents, desperate to find something to sabotage the proposal, lamented that during the summer the course opens well before 8am and closes after 6pm, implying the distasteful possibility of having "them" intermingle with and the good and law-abiding citizen/golfers, who frequent the course.

Salinas offered that the hours were certainly flexible and that any special case adjustments could be amicably worked out between PATH, the Penmar management and any aggrieved parties. But, again the residents were not assuaged.

A number of Venetians complained that back in October, 2010, when the county (L.A. County's Beaches and Harbors Dep't.), which oversees the beach parking lots, restricted the size of vehicles allowed in the lots, it left the RVers no other option but to park on city streets. This, in turn, lighted a fire under already steamed local homeowners over the increased presence of RVs, which had no where else to go.

And then, before Rosendahl's nascent "Vehicles to Homes" program could find approved sites for these vehicles, the LAPD began its crackdown, turning up the heat on an already volatile situation, dividing the community still further and leaving both sides of the issue seething at Rosendahl. Meanwhile, the county, which exacerbated the problem, in particular, Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky, is nowhere in the picture.

Also at the meeting was the president of the Westchester Neighborhood Council, Cyndi Hench. During the public comment period, she stated that, since Venice seemed to be the epicenter of unlawful RV habitation, for them not to due their part by participating in the "Roadmap" program and establishing a lot in Venice, her members would be disinclined to allow the Westchester portion of the program to proceed. (Another of the proposed sites for the program is at Rosendahl's Westchester office.)

A letter from the president of the WLA Neighborhood Council who was unable to attend the meeting (the third proposed site being at Rosendahl's WLA office), was read by VNC President Linda Lucks. He voiced a similar lack of enthusiasm on his council's part should Venice absent itself from participation in the program.

For a moment Rosendahl's three-legged program looked kinda wobbly.

The last public speaker was Nancy Kapp, coordinator of the city of Santa Barbara's "Safe Parking Program," after which "Roadmap" was modeled. She excoriated members of the audience for their lack of human compassion and NIMBY attitude, especially in light of the "hoops" the participants had to jump through just to get into and remain in the program, which are intended to weed out the very type of character about which they were protesting.

She related how her program's participants were treated as part of the community and they, in turn, behaved as you would expect stakeholders to.

After the public and the council members had all voiced their opinions, a vote was taken and the motion was defeated. The Council then voted overwhelmingly to pass the proposal-- with Penmar included.

The "Roadmap to Housing" Program, designated LAMC 85.11, which will be offered as an amendment to the controversial LAMC 85.02 ordinance, is on the agenda of the L.A. City Council's Transportation Committee, chaired by Rosendahl.

But because of the start of budget hearings, the meeting, scheduled for April 27, had to be postponed. Rosendahl's office will advise constituents via e-mail as to when the item will go before the committee as soon as the information is available. To sign up to receive his advisories go to:

councilman.rosendahl@lacity.org. ☯

\$1500/month

—continued from page 5

tions that were put into effect without Coastal Commission approval, and then he provided creepy parking spots very far from Venice to only 10% of the Venice RV residents.

For \$1500 a month. And here's the punch line: PATH is a nonprofit organization! Why would anyone think that charging \$1500/month for the use of a parking space during certain hours would yield a profit?

And why would anyone go after PATH for violation of non-profit status when Rosendahl himself is breaking the law by spending 2/3 of the Venice Area Surplus Real Estate Fund outside of Venice, when by law (Los Angeles Administrative Code, Section 5.121) it has to be spent within Venice only. ☯

Violence on the Beach

—continued from page 3

they came here to fight, they just wanted to fight," said an OFW shop owner who chose to remain anonymous. He went on to say that "the police had problems breaking up the fights, there were so many people involved."

Although it cannot be verified that Twitter created the April 16 gathering because those tweets did not exist following the shooting, it can be inferred that it inspired the April 17 crowds and violence. At least eight mass fights were reported during that afternoon on OFW and at the drum circle. Reinforcements of officers in riot gear were brought out and were ordered to walk in a line, in a soldier-like manner, to evacuate the beach.

Only a week later, on April 24, a 20-year old was stabbed at the drum circle and taken to the hospital in stable condition.

And summer has not even started yet. Venice is now not just a major tourist attraction, but also the cheapest. The current large crowds will become even larger as the economy shows no signs of recovery, people are broke and cannot afford the other tourist destinations, most of which charge hefty admission charges.

I will go on further to say that the sluggish economy is to blame not only for the large crowds, but for the incidences of violence as well. Unemployment, poverty, cuts in social services and lack of prospect drive people to aggression. The solution is not to create a police state by adding more officers, but to generate a more equal distribution of wealth in the so-called richest country in the world. ☯

Depleted Uranium strikes friends and foes alike in Libya

—continued from page 1

usable or "depleted" because it is not radioactive enough to drive a nuclear power plant. For this reason, it is called "depleted uranium" or DU, and is primarily made up of U-238, a form of uranium that's heavier but less radioactive than the more radioactive U-235 that is used in nuclear reactors.

But its DU name is conveniently misleading. According to the military, DU is a "mild health risk" outside of the human body. And this is what soldiers and pilots are told. What is generally ignored, however, is what happens when the dust enters the body. By drinking, eating or breathing it in, DU radiation severely damages bone marrow and cellular chromosomes by internally emitting sub-atomic "bullets" known as alpha particles. This causes lung, lymph and brain cancers as well as mutagenic effects such as unusually high rates of leukemia and fetal radiation damage that cause grotesque birth defects. Uranium contamination also permanently impairs kidney, heart and liver function.

Ever since the 1960s, the corporations that own nuclear power plants safely stored tremendous amounts of DU, on average 20 tons/yr. Surely, their CEOs must have wondered more than once if this DU could turn a profit by selling it as a high-density armor-piercing bullet or missile. After all, production cost of DU is cheap -- only \$2 per kilogram.

Their chance came in the 1970s when the Soviet Union developed tanks with armor that could not be penetrated by ordinary weapons. The Pentagon then developed and perfected DU weapons. The price of DU increased 10-fold, creating a multi-billion dollar industry.

Fortunate for corporate profit motives, first-world war-makers -- be they French, British or American -- apparently have no problem using DU weapons and spreading poisonous uranium oxide dust into the environment. After all, it does the job nicely and doesn't hurt the soldiers or pilots who use it, pro-

vided they are a "safe" distance away from the DU dust.

While the World Health Organization is vehemently against it, NATO's war makers are not. They know but don't seem to care that the half-life of DU is over 4 billion years. This means that half of the DU released into Libya's environment will, by definition, linger for that same incredible amount of time. In other words, the DU will contaminate the people of Libya forever, or 4 billion years, whichever comes first. How does NATO pretend to help the Libyan people by permanently poisoning them and their precious water supply and farmland?

DU is considered a long-term poison because it is both a heavy metal contaminant and a radioactive alpha-particle emitter. This creates a deadly "cocktail effect". Both are deadly to combatants and civilians alike, and both should be viewed as a crime against humanity. According to the International Coalition to Ban Uranium Weapons (ICBUW), DU needs to be immediately and internationally outlawed along with dum-dum bullets, poison gas, and cluster bombs.

Developed by the Pentagon in the 1980s at a cost of hundreds of billions of dollars, it was first used in the Iraq invasions of 1991 and 2003 and probably used in the Balkans and Afghanistan. According to conservative estimates, about 1 in 8 soldiers who served in Iraq have been poisoned by DU, which manifests as Gulf War Syndrome. That's about 100,000 soldiers who may need life-long medical care.

The UN has dramatically called for a ban on the use of such nefarious military DU weapons because it violates the Geneva Convention. Germany, Belgium, Italy and all Latin American countries refuse to use it. The French, British and US militaries still refuse to ban it. What do we tell the Libyan people when the DU dust settles? ☯

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Community Events - day by day

Monday, May 2

- 7-10pm - **MoZaic Monday**. Talking Stick. Free.

Wednesday, May 4

- 4pm - Children's author **Laura Lacamara** reads. AK Venice Public Library. Free.
- 7-10:30pm - **Miss Jessica and the Sugar Shack Attack**. Danny's Deli. Free.

Thursday, May 5

- **Cinco de Mayo** - Celebration of Mexican victory at the battle of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1862.
- 3:30-4pm - **Toddler Storytime with music**. 3-year-olds and under. AK Public Library.
- 7-10pm - **An Evening with Larry Hankin & His Comedy Short Films**. Talking Stick. Free. "The Outlaw Emmet Deemus"



Friday, May 6

- 6:15pm - **Java With Javelyn: Indie Music Nite Event**. Talking Stick. \$3.
- 6:30-9pm - **Artist Reception** w/ **Eric Hanson** and **Greg Downing** and Venice photographer/explorer **J.J. L'Heureux**. G2 Gallery. \$5.
- 7pm - **First Friday on AKB**. Open shops, food trucks and lots of people. Free for all.

Saturday, May 7

- 10am-5pm - **Venice Garden & Home Tour** - 821-1857 or venicegardentour.org
- 11am-7pm - **Inaugural Venice Spring Fling** music/art festival. Windward Plaza Park. Free.
- 1pm - **Songs of Ourselves** as read by the students of Marshall School. Beyond Baroque. \$7, Seniors/Students \$5.
- 7:30pm - **Carroll Kearley & Beth Ruscio** read. Beyond Baroque. \$7, Seniors/Students \$5.
- 8pm - **Juke Joint Gang**. Talking Stick. Free.

Sunday, May 8

- 2pm - **Mothers' Day with the Sunset Poets**. Beyond Baroque. \$7, Seniors/Students \$5.

Monday, May 9

- 7-8:30pm - **Comedy Stick**. Talking Stick. Free.

Tuesday, May 10

- 7-10 pm - **A Night of Festive Musical Goodness**. Talking Stick. Free.

Wednesday, May 11

- 7-10pm - **Suzy Williams**. Danny's Deli. Free.

Thursday, May 12

- 7-10pm - **Six String Night**. Talking Stick. Free.

Friday, May 13

- 7-10pm - **Breast Cancer Awareness celebrating April Samuels**. Talking Stick. \$5 Donation.
- 7:30pm - **Dan Rader** and **Amy Gerstler** read from their own works. Beyond Baroque. \$7, Seniors /Students \$5.

Saturday, May 14

- 6-10pm - **Grassroots Acoustica**. Charity Fund-raiser. Talking Stick. Free.
- 7:30pm - **Los Angeles Electric 8, "Expanding Listening and Musical Vocabulary"** 8 guitarists reclaim classical music for the electric guitar. Beyond Baroque. \$7, Seniors/Students \$5.

Sunday, May 15

- 4pm - **Nina Corwin**, Chicago-based poet reads. Beyond Baroque. \$7, Seniors /Students \$5.
- 4:30-6:30pm - **That Time of Month**. A female

comedy storytelling show. Talking Stick. Free.

- 7-10pm - **It's Blues Time** featuring Tom Gramlich with **Mystic Miles**. Talking Stick. Free.
- 7:30pm - **Tribute to R.L. Greenfield** by Linda Albertano and Amélie Frank. Dr. Cleatus Rattan and Peter Gimpel. Beyond Baroque. \$7, Seniors/Students \$5.

Tuesday, May 17

- 7-10pm - **VNC Board Meeting**. Westminster Elementary School Auditorium.
- 7pm - **Poetry in Motion** - Eve Brandstein presents an unusual array of Hollywood writers. Beyond Baroque. \$7, Seniors/Students \$5.
- 7-10pm - **Stefani Valadez, Steve Moos & Company**. Talking Stick. \$5.
- 7-10pm - **Open Mic Night** - Hosted by Tom Byron. Sign up at 6:30pm. Talking Stick. Free.

Thursday, May 19

- 6pm - **Venice Art Crawl**. Find the map at OFW and Windward. Free.

Friday, May 20

- 7-10pm - **Mozaic** - Spoken word, Poetry, Music and Art. Talking Stick. Free.
- 7:30pm - **East Meets West: Poets from NYC and SoCal**. Beyond Baroque. \$7, Seniors /Students \$5.

Saturday, May 21

- **9am-3pm - Poet's Yard Sale - Beyond Baroque** Come sell your stuff, and donate 10%.
- 11-3pm - **Venice/Marina Emergency Preparedness Expo**, Burton Chace Park. Free.
- 6-10pm - **Suzy Williams**. Talking Stick. Free.
- 7:30pm - **Spring Concert, "Synchrony in Blue-Violet"** with ensemble, the **Midnight Winds**. Beyond Baroque. \$7, Seniors/Students \$5. Non-member admission \$10.

Sunday, May 22

- 12:30pm - **Church in Ocean Park** hosts **Mar Preston** reading from her new book, *No Dice*. 235 Hill St., Santa Monica. Free.
- 7-10pm - **World Music Night**. Hosted by **Stephani Valadez** with **Conjunto Jardin** and **Ron Meza & AfroBEAT**. Talking Stick. Free.

Tuesday, May 24

- 7-10pm - **Forever Young: Bob Dylan's Folk Years - 1961-64, A 70th Birthday Celebration** hosted by Ross Altman. Talking Stick. \$10.

Thursday, May 26

- 7-10pm - **Speakeasy Night**: Dutch Newman & the Musical Melodians. Talking Stick. Free.

Friday, May 27

- 7pm - **The Three Amigos**. Talking Stick. Free.
- 7:30pm - **Mujermosa Dos: An Evening of Latina Poets** with gallery showing by "Azul" Parra. Beyond Baroque. \$7, Seniors/Students \$5.
- 7:30-10pm - **Subversive Cinema**. 212 Pier. Free.

Saturday, May 28

- 7pm - **Poetry Rodeo** with **Ellyn Maybe** and **Her Band**. Bring up to 5 minutes of poetry, and the band will improvise. Beyond Baroque. \$8, Students/Seniors \$5. Members Free.

Sunday, May 29

- 12:30pm - **Poets and writers collective reading**: 30 to 40 poets read new works. Beyond Baroque. General Admission \$5.

Sponsor a Westminster Elementary School Student Art Banner!

All proceeds go to the non-profit Westminster Endowment Group to fund: The WE Garden, Student Field Trips, Classroom Improvements, Computer Lab Upgrades, Campus Beautification Projects, and so much more! Your neighborhood school needs your help!

For more information please contact westminsterendowmentgroup@gmail.com or call Katie at 310.430.8812

Location Guide

- Abbot Kinney Public Library, 501 S. Venice Blvd, 310-821-1769.
- Beyond Baroque, 681 Venice Blvd. 310-822-3006.
- Burton Chace Park, 13650 Mindanao Way, marinadelrey.lacounty.gov
- Danny's Deli, 23 Windward Ave.
- Electric Lodge, 1416 Electric Ave, 310-306-1854 - electriclodge.org
- G2 Gallery, 1503 Abbot Kinney Blvd 310-452-2842.
- Hal's Bar and Grill, 1349 Abbot Kinney Blvd., 310-396-3105 - halsbarandgrill.com
- Oakwood Recreation Center, 757 California Ave.
- Pacific Resident Theatre, 703½ Venice Blvd. 822-8392 pacificresidenttheatre.com
- SPARC - Social and Public Art Resource Center, 685 Venice Blvd. 822-9560 x15.
- Talking Stick Coffee Lounge, 1411c Lincoln Blvd. 450-6052 - thetalkingstick.net
- United Methodist Church and Auditorium, 2210 Lincoln Blvd. (at Victoria).
- Vera Davis Center, 610 California Ave. 310-305-1865.
- Westminster Elementary School, 1010 Abbot Kinney Blvd. (enter auditorium from Westminster Ave.) 310-606-2015.

Ongoing Events

Music

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

Movies

- 5:30pm - **Abbot Kinney Public Library Thursday Movie Night**. Call 310-821-1769 for title.

Kids

- 6:30pm - **Abbot Kinney Public Library Children's Pajama Storytime**. Second, fourth Tuesday evenings. Free.
- 6-8pm - **McLuhan-Finnegans Wake Reading Club**. Lloyd Taber - Marina Del Rey Library, 4533 Admiralty Way. First Tuesday of the month. Free.

Miscellaneous

- 7-10pm - **MOM: Meditations On Media**. 3rd Wednesdays. Beyond Baroque. Free.
- 6-10pm - **7 Dudley Cinema** - 3rd Mondays at Talking Stick. Free.
- 11:30am-2:30pm - **The Venice Oceanarium** (a museum without walls). Venice Pier. Every Sunday, weather permitting. Free.

Computers

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

Food

- Vera Davis Center. 12:30pm - 2nd and 4th Thursdays - **Free Food** Distribution.
- Vera Davis Center - Sign up for **Food Stamps** (EBT Cards). Call for date and time. 310-305-1865.
- 1st Baptist Church: 5-7pm Mondays - **Hot Meals**; Pre-packs: 2-3:30pm Saturdays, Westminster & 7th St.

Venetians Hear From Our Next Member of Congress (And Lots of Pretenders)

By Jim Smith

It's not often that voters anywhere in the country get to choose a new Congressional Representative. In most cases, the incumbent does everything possible to stay in office. There are no term limits. But thanks to Jane Harman's abrupt resignation, we can pick someone new.

The showdown in the election took place on April 27 at Westminster Auditorium, as far as Venice is concerned. More than 200 people packed the cavernous hall to hear 12 of the 16 candidates regale the audience about their achievements, credentials and plans.

Unfortunately, those in the audience was reduced to mere spectators as no questions were permitted from the floor. The overly-structured questions,



MARIA MONTANO

which were supposedly sent in by email before the forum, focused on foreign and domestic policy and the budget. What could have been a lively give and take between candidates and audience turned into a semi-boring love fest between the contenders. Many of the questions were no brainers, such as: "When is it o.k. to

assassinate a foreign head of state?" and "Are you opposed to eminent domain?" What's more, only four candidates were allowed to respond to any one question, often leaving out the expert on that issue.

There were no questions on what would you do to retain the Venice Post Office building, what's your homeless policy, what do you think of the pledge Janice Hahn and Debra Bowen signed on Israel, but at a time of controversy and chaos in the public education system, it was not worthy of a question. Their were no questions geared to concerns specific to the Venice and Mar Vista area (both neighborhood councils sponsored the event). And there were no questions about the propriety of bombing the hell out of Libya (and using depleted uranium, as Karl Abrams points out in another article in this issue).



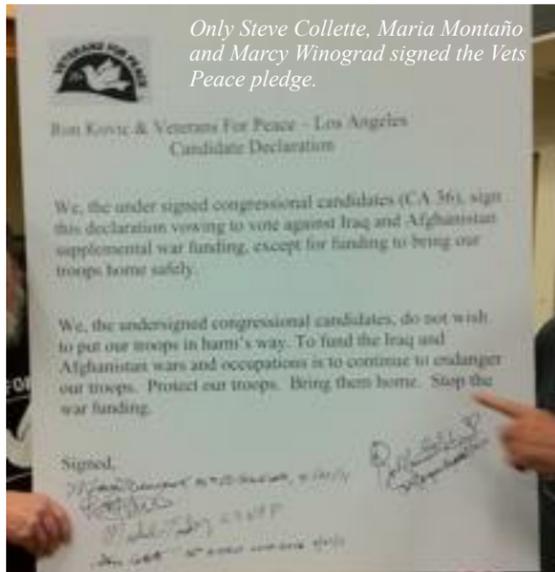
DEBRA BOWEN

Even so, there were high points and low points during the evening. In this reporter's opinion, Marcy Winograd out-classed her opponents with sharp, clear answers

backed up by facts and figures. Mike Chamness was similarly impressive. Everyone has an off-night, and it appeared that both Hahn and Bowen were having theirs in front of 200 voters. Both were lackluster and seemed anxious for the evening to be over.

Chamness was the only candidate to attack the new election law, know as the "Top Two," which nearly guarantees big-money Democrats and Republicans will dominate the general election. Third parties will become extinct as one of the ways they have renewed their ballot status has been to win at least 2 percent of the vote in a statewide general election. In addition, the new law does not allow for write-in votes. They are tossed in the trash.

Some of the candidates seemed as if they had come straight from a crash course at Toastmasters. "Take the mic out of the podium and stand in front of it," "start with a self-effacing joke," "seek the lowest common denominator." On occasion, these tactics



Photos: Jim Smith

backfired, as when Craig Huey, a millionaire, evangelical business man and Tea Party candidate, said as he stood in front of the podium, microphone in hand, in response to a question on health care, "I know one thing, socialized medicine is not the answer." For his effort, he received the loudest boos of the night. Huey, who lives in a mansion on Palos Verdes must not get to Venice very often.

Republican candidates, including Michael Roozee, Kit Bobko, Stephen Eisele and Mike Gin, clearly struggled trying to make their right-wing rhetoric palatable to Venetians. The best at establishing a rapport with the audience seemed to be Mike Gin, the Mayor of Redondo Beach. Gin seems to be a liberal Republican, although he might not want to embrace that label in the South Bay. Gin is also of Chinese ancestry and is gay.

Both before and after the event, Veterans for Peace, including former Venetian Ron Kovic, asked candidates to sign a pledge that they would vote against funding bills for the war/occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan. The Vets were able to separate the hawks from the doves much more clearly than did two hours of off-point questioning. At the end of the evening, only three candidates had signed: Libertarian Steve Collette, Peace and Freedomite Maria Montano and Democrat Marcy Winograd.

The moderator of the forum was Brian Watt, a journalist with KPCC in Pasadena. The African-American moderator stood in sharp contrast to the overwhelmingly white group of candidates. Of the 16 on the ballot, only two are people of color, Mike Gin is Chinese-American and Maria Montano is a Latina.

The candidates face several more forums around the 36th district, including one sponsored by the League of Women Voters on May 2. However, most voters will form their impression of the candidates after receiving endless mailers from those able to raise hundreds of thousands of dollars. ☺



MARCY WINOGRAD



MIKE CHAMNESS

From the Beachhead Collective:

Take A Look At These Candidates Before You Vote on May 17

The Beachhead is not making an endorsement in the Congressional race. However, we believe there are several candidates who merit your consideration.

In this election, it is highly unlikely that any candidate will win outright by receiving 50 percent of the vote. Therefore, you can feel free to vote your conscience. A runoff between the "top two" will be held in July.

The candidates we think deserve special attention are, in alphabetical order: Debra Bowen, Mike Chamness, Maria Montano and Marcy Winograd.

Debra Bowen has a long association with Venice. She was the attorney of the Venice Town Council when it stopped a mega-shopping center from being built on the Hughes Aircraft site (now COSTCO). As the Democratic Secretary of State, she got rid of voting machines that were too easy to rig. We're troubled by her signing a pledge to support Israel, at the expense of Palestinians, and by her refusal to sign the Veterans for Peace pledge to vote against more funding for the wars. However, she is a competent and dedicated public servant who, we believe, would be supportive of local issues, such as keeping the post office where it is.

Mike Chamness is the only candidate who has made electoral reform, including getting rid of the unfair "top two" law a major part of his campaign. Chamness, a former Green who is a Coffee Party (the opposite of the Tea Party) member, sparkled at the candidates forum at Westminster Auditorium. He was knowledgeable on all the questions thrown at him and had common sense solutions. He doesn't have a chance of winning, but a vote for him will bolster his effort for electoral reform.

Maria Montano is a star teacher making her first run for political office. The major issue in her campaign is education reform. Unfortunately, the candidate's forum in Venice did not touch on this all-important issue. Her personal story of rising from a low-income working class immigrant family to becoming a doctor of education shows that she has the tenacity to battle the political establishment in Washington. As the only Latina running in a sea of white candidates, she brings a perspective that is not heard nearly enough in Congress. Even less heard, but needed, is the Peace and Freedom Party's resolute opposition to war and militarism.

Marcy Winograd is a hero to many in Venice for her primary battles with Jane Harman. Now that Harman is gone, many who wouldn't dare challenge the incumbent are jumping into the race. Winograd is a dynamic and persuasive speaker, as she proved at the candidate's forum. Whether she could sway a staid Democratic caucus in Congress is debatable. But it is better to try and fail than not to try at all, and Winograd would certainly give it her best shot. Considering the current state of the House of Representatives, it could use an agitator on the left as much as it could use just another lawmaker. Winograd certainly has the credentials to go toe to toe with John Boehner, or Nancy Pelosi.

