

Peace in '88.
Just say 'Yes!'

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FREE VENICE

SINCE 1968

BEACHHEAD



January, 1988, No. 217, P.O. Box 504, Venice, California 90294, ISSN- 0884-9641, Circulation 10,000, (213) 823-5092

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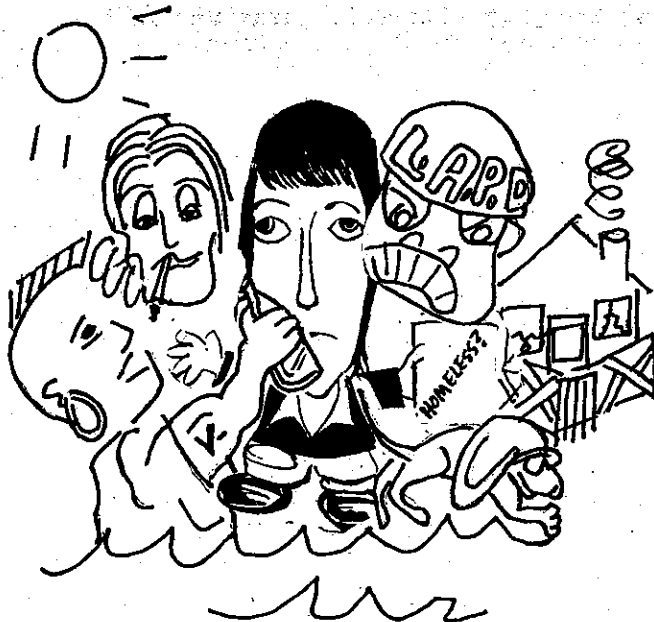
By John Haag

The passage of Councilwoman Ruth Galanter's ordinance that prohibits overnight camping and sleeping on the beach has dismayed many of Venice's most passionate advocates for the homeless. It violates our sense that social problems cannot be solved by police measures and our commitment to the idea that Venice homeless should be housed in Venice, not just jailed or shipped off somewhere else for a couple of weeks.

To conclude, however, that Ruth has somehow joined the other side, solely on the basis of this ordinance, is to ignore everything else she's done so far as well as how city government operates and what its limitations are.

I couldn't disagree more with Ruth in regard to this ordinance, but at the same time I have to put it in context. With every other decision Ruth has made about our community that I know about, I agree either wholeheartedly or with only minor reservations. That's a good enough record for me to believe that she will continue to make generally the right decisions for our community, including the homeless, if encouraged to do so.

There are going to be disputes between different ways of doing things or whether to do them at all. Our side simply isn't going to win all the time. The other side has all the big money, enough to buy press coverage and hire advocates. Invoking police power is the easy way out, and in our society people supposedly "understand" that kind of solution.



Well, where were we during the months the other side was putting on the pressure for a police solution on the beach and Ruth's office, as I understand it, was standing in the way

of a total sweep until it was at least legal? Without Ruth's intervention, I believe the police would long since have swept everyone off the beach, law or no law.

And she did withdraw the ordinance's urgency clause, thus delaying enforcement for about five weeks, which is what some of us originally asked her to do.

And she did have the service trailers brought back, which will ease the transition for some at least before enforcement, due January 17th.

Sure, she hasn't yet solved the homelessness problem, but who has? There are too many homeless who don't qualify for services or prefer to tough it out. But to hold Ruth responsible for all of that is either expecting miracles or not seeing the forest for having bumped into a tree.

Recently, too, Ruth got blamed when the Oakwood Recreation Center suddenly became an emergency cold-weather shelter for the homeless without prior notice to Oakwood activists and parents preparing for a children's Christmas pageant. It turns out that she did not make that decision and therefore it was not her office that was responsible for not notifying people. We assumed at first that Ruth was responsible, rather than Mayor Bradley's office, precisely because Ruth has been in the forefront of the effort to aid the homeless.

A Councilperson's decisions are not made in a vacuum. On the contrary, there's the sound and fury of citizen complaints, requests, lobbyists, expert witnesses, etc. It is up to us, who are committed to our community, to make ourselves heard in those circles, speak at hearings, write letters, make phone calls, whatever.

We cannot expect Ruth to represent our interests unless we are visibly there, asking her to represent us. How

'City Hall' continued on Page 6.

Venice, California: Walden Pond West

VENICE CALIFORNIA: AN URBAN RETREAT
OR A MIAMI BEACH WEST

By Rick Davidson

I have always felt that Venice of America represented an urban Walden Pond; that little lake on the outskirts of Concord, Mass., where in 1845 Henry David Thoreau built his cabin as a retreat from the world of his day. A retreat where time was his to do with as he pleased...a place to study and enjoy nature in all her wonderments...a place to be at home in...a place to live life, not just endure it...in his own words, "I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived." He longed for a room of his own and felt that nature could provide it.

Another analogy that I think of is the Venice Ocean Front Walk as an extension of the John Muir Trail. That trail at the top of the Sierras named for John Muir who walked and loved that area so much -- a place to walk free from the woes of city living. There's also a lesser known walk Muir took before he came west. It was his

longest walk in 1868, just after the Civil War. He began in Kentucky, south through Tennessee, North Carolina, Georgia, and Florida to the Gulf of Mexico. Except when staying with acquaintances he met along the way, most of his sleeping was done under the stars. While in Savannah,

"Another analogy is...the Venice Ocean Front Walk as an extension of the John Muir Trail...a place to walk free from the woes of city living."

Ga., he stayed five nights in a graveyard which he described in his journal: "Though tired, I sauntered a while enchanted, then lay down under one of the great oaks. I found a little mound that served for a pillow and rested fairly well. On rising I found that my head had been resting on a grave, and though my sleep had not been quite so sound as that person below, I arose refreshed."

I am partial to Muir's southern walk because I spent many summer nights sleeping under the stars in the mountains of north Georgia where he walked through in 1868. And in 1947 while on

my own journey across the country I too spent a night in a graveyard outside Williams, Arizona. During the 1940s there were still 'hobo camps' outside many towns and cities -- camps where people with little or no money would pass the time as they traveled through life as best they could.

I mention Thoreau and Muir because they are perhaps our country's most respected 'homeless' citizens; and reflecting on them might give us pause to think about the homeless of our day. "Yea, but they were homeless by choice," I hear someone saying. That's exactly my point. Today's homeless are without shelter by choice also...the rub is that it isn't their choice, but their government's.

"But Venice as an urban Walden Pond? are you kidding?" Why not? Venice has always been home to the homeless, be they homeless economically, socially, politically, mentally, and in recent years, physically. If one has to be homeless, i.e., without shelter, Venice is a good place to be. It has an easy climate, an accepting community (for the most part), all sorts of odd jobs that might last a month, week, day, or a few hours -- enough to earn money for a little food, oh sure, and a little booze. "Booze!"

'Walden' continued on Page 6.



FREE VENICE BEACHHEAD
SINCE 1968

Diane Nickerson, Patrick McCartney, Kathleen Alvarez, Carol Fondiller, Kathy Sullivan, Kelly Ball, Memphis Slim, Malcolm Tent, Victor Wightman, Sara Omari and Beth Miller.

Dear Editor, The divided heart...

Misery is never "looked at", lest one also takes on the pain. I've lived long enough to observe that all very big cities have their hands full, in crises of enormity. When these occur, the desire to back away is apparent. It is a value problem: too many souls, with too many beliefs, biases and fears. Thus, hope is but a 4-letter word. It's all like a merry-go-round: one cannot touch the rider ahead; one stays on one's horse til the end; no communication. Well. We're also on one planet. Perhaps, that is a better lesson in commonality... A much better New Year for all! On, to 1988!

Sincerely, Joseph P. Krengel

THE VENICE LIBRARY by Beth Miller

The small Venice library on the corner of California and Electric was built in 1930, which makes it fifty-seven years old. The Venice library is really very important to the community. For instance, the Venice Historical Society meets there regularly. On November 16 Robert Cameron, an expert on the Pacific Electric "Red Cars" addressed the Society in a meeting at the library. Obviously, in the struggle to preserve the traditions and character of Venice, the Historical Society plays a key role.

Off and on for many years the library has also been a meeting place for Venice writers. On the first Monday of each month there is a coffee hour for local writers. Sometimes there are two meetings a month of the Venice Writers' Workshop to allow all those who wish to be involved to attend, exchange information, and be inspired. I attended the meeting held on the first Monday in November, convened by Lucille.

I had heard from a former student of mine, a supervisor at the Central Public Library downtown, that funds have been set aside for ten years for the construction of a new Venice Public Library, but according to Lucille, a librarian for whom many of these writers and many people in the community at large feel affection, construction has been postponed for so long because a location cannot be agreed upon. She said that at present, the site proposed was on the median of Venice Boulevard at Ocean. At present, this site is supported by most members of the library, and I said that it seemed like a wonderful place, also spacious. Lucille said that at first she objected to the fact that there would be danger to people crossing the street for library use, but then she added that she thought some arrangement could be made for pedestrians. Also, she pointed out, nearly all the Westside libraries are located on very busy streets. The Culver City Library is on Overland, and the Mar Vista library is on a street busier than the proposed site for the Venice Branch.

The site is being opposed, however, by council members who apparently wish to mark that area for parking. As a Venice resident and a member of the Venice Town Council, I am well aware of the parking crisis. But as a library user, one who loves the Venice user-friendly library, I support the staff opinion on this issue. I would say that a library so near Ocean would be a more important land use than sloppy parking for beachgoers. I don't think most members of the community realize how important the library is to the community. Again, the problem is not a question of funds, rather it is a question of site, and Lucille said the new councilwoman, Ruth Galanter, had requested an additional two weeks to find a better site, so probably no decision will be made until December.

There is a group, the Friends of Venice Library, which has a better fix on this matter. For a long time they lobbied for lighting and drapes for what is called the Community Room, actually a very small and modest room located in the current library on California. The funds, minimal, eventually were granted from the City budget. The painting, however, was paid for by the Friends.

At present the library is located on the edge of the Oakwood section of Venice, and some Oakwood parents of young schoolchildren naturally prefer the present site to the proposed new site. However the Venice Branch Library must serve all the diverse neighborhoods of Venice. The old building is hopelessly undersized and inadequate given the broad public it benefits. Sections of children's books in Spanish overflow into the Community Room. When Venice residents visit the modern and ample Culver City Library, they have some idea of what our new library could be.

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. We welcome and take responsibility for publishing contributions exactly as the contributors submit them, although the opinions expressed by the contributors are not necessarily endorsed by the Collective staff. The Beachhead encourages anyone to submit news stories, articles, letters, photos, poetry, graphics or other material of interest to the Venice community. We ask that writing be limited to 1200-1500 words. The volunteer staff reserves the right to make all decisions collectively on material published. There is no editor of the Beachhead. The Collective is an open group and welcomes interested Venice people's participation. Printing is financed by ad donations. To submit material, include your name & phone no. Anonymous material will not be published, but your name will be withheld on request. If return of material is desired, a stamped, self-addressed envelope is required. No payment is made for material used.

Dear Editor,

My mood is so ascerbic that I hope that talking tongue-in-cheek won't burn a hole in my cheek!!

In the article published in the L.A. Times about the period of homelessness of Jacki King, prior a news anchor on Channel 11, she stated that the longer her homelessness continued, the worse it looked on her resume, making her feel like there was a scarlet "H" on it. Of course, if the "Aid to Potentially Self Employed" categorical aid I proposed back in 1969 to be legislated were now on line such nonemployment-period problem wouldn't be a basis for APSE denial.

Thus I see, amusing me highly, a blurb--"Jury seeks volunteers"--not mentioning The Homeless as a minority group. I quote, "the hope is to find more Latinos, Blacks and Asians, groups that have been underrepresented in past years..." But worse underrepresented have been the homeless.

In light of this fact, added to the fact of this being a paying job, I'm applying! And if I don't end up among the 23 to be chosen to serve, then what? Vigilantism against the homeless being on the rise, I'll have to perhaps have a Federal marshal accompany me to my job of Grand Jury duty. After I've sued in Federal District Court to a) get such a job if I'm not selected, and b) note that the post of jury commissioner should by law traditions be an independent County position, meaning my pending employer should not be the State office of Superior Court Juror Services? (All over California the prior posts of Jury Commissioners were unlawfully usurped in the post-Proposition 13-related cutbacks period!)

Sincerely, Jon Hildale

28 Nov. 1987

Dear Sirs,

I hope that your address still exists and you can help me.

Please could you run the following ad for me in your Beachhead paper. I really would appreciate your help:

AD
 I am looking for a Black guy, native of Venice, whose first name is Webster. Unfortunately I don't know his last name. I met him on Venice Beach in 1979 and we skated together a lot of times at the disco skating place, close to the ocean of Venice Beach. He usually skated there almost every day and weekends.

His age in 1979 was 27 so far as I remember, so he should be 35 now.

In case anyone knows this guy please send me his address.

Or if you, Webster, should read this ad, please get in touch with me!

My address: Simone v. Ulmenstein, 89 Flandernstr., 7300 Esslingen, West Germany.

Thank you for your help!

Sincerely, Simone v. Ulmenstein

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The first Beachhead meeting in January for the February issue will be held Sunday, January 17, 11 a.m. upstairs at the Fox International.*

Been quite a year, 1987: earthquakes on the ground and in the stock exchange, and more and more houseless people, thanks to Ronnie Raygun's policy of welfare for the rich and laissez faire for the rest of us. Seems Pierre Denerone, OFW restaurateur, loves Justiceville Ted Hayes. Pierre said Hayes is a "gentleman," etc., etc. But it's the local houseless people that are the criminal element. Pierre said this on the 6:00 o'clock news, Wednesday, December 23. That's an interesting statement, since Captain Proctor of the Pacific Division LAPD, has said at public meetings that crime has gone down ten per cent. This was before Justiceville carpetbagged in Venice to exploit the situation for Ted's own ends. Capt. Proctor was not including illegal conversions of low-income units to commercial spaces or the illegal expansion of patios into restaurant space at the expense of parking, as crimes. That's Building & Safety's domain.

Seems I assumed in my article of the December issue that everyone knew what NIMBY stands for. It's an acronym for Not In My Back Yard. One of the few good terms invented by bureaucrats.

What about that Gary Hart, hey? Know what Hart said to Donna Rice? "I told you to lick my erection, not wreck my election." How does Gary talk to his wife after sex? By phone. Now that the Democrats have the Seven Dwarfs back again, what's the seventh one called? Horny. Well, won't these be interesting trivial memorabilia twenty years from now?

Twenty years ago in the salad days of the War on Poverty, many units were put under HUD contracts. This meant affordable housing to many low-income people, including the working poor. Under Housing & Urban Development grants, people who qualified would pay a certain percentage of the rent and HUD would pay the rest. The contracts are running out, and soon these people will be receiving rent raises of one hundred to two hundred percent or more. Do you want to guess how many more houseless people this will create? In the next three years, 770,000 units whose HUD contracts will expire in three years. State Senator Roberti is proposing a renewal of and addition to these grants. He wants to put a measure about this on the June ballot. My New Year's resolution is to find out more about this by calling Sen. Roberti at: 876-5200.

The Beachhead is entering its second decade of publication. The Free Venice Beachhead will be twenty years old in December 1988. Despite the many changes in collectives, the Head is still telling it like it is, from the point of view in the anarchate of Venice. Hope all you

former Headers, con Free Venice Beachhead community folks, etc., past and present, will start to think about putting out a super-spectacular 20th anniversary issue. You know where to call us; it's right there on the front page. Imagine: Twenty years of poetry and muckraking. May all our issues be bright. There's a play on words there. An advance toast for another twenty years of personal community journalism. Interesting how the issues we wrote about in the 60's are still with us today: poverty and secret wars. It wouldn't be as bad now if you'd only listened to us then.

Seems the Mayor's office O.K'd the Oakwood Rec. Center for emergency shelter for the homeless when the temps. dropped below 40. Homeless activists have tried to get the long unused Venice Pavilion at Windward opened for emergency shelter.

This was refused because it was a recreational area. Insiders report that this is because a deal was cut with the Mayors office and the Venice Action Committee not to shelter the homeless in a tourist area. That's why the XMAS pageant practice was disrupted. by CAROL FONDILLER

Bye Bye Baza

The Reverend Bob Alexander, known to his friends as Baza, went on through to the other side in mid-December. Baza was a poet, supporter and archivist of artists and poets of the late 40's and 50's, that period known as the "Beat" era. He and his wife Anita were also active in Venice politics. More than once, they made their archives which cultural historians regard as invaluable, available to The Beachhead and the community. They gave freely of time and money to the Venice Town Council, the Peace and Freedom Party, various peace organizations, and the Beachhead. His friends and admirers regarded him as an invaluable friend and counselor. Bob married and eulogized many Venetians as minister of the Temple of Man. He is survived by his wife Anita, Direct of the Temple of Man, and a daughter (by a previous marriage), Marika, and two grandchildren. Bob and Anita settled in Venice in 1968. He died peacefully, as his friend Frank Rios said, "in the soft grey morning," after a lengthy fight against cancer. Baza was a triple Scorpio. He was 64. A memorial party will be held at the Temple of Man to send off the Baza. *****

Merry Krishmas 3

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YIMBY!*

*Yes, in my back yard!

By Phil Chamberlin

Numerous pro-homeless house dwellers in Venice control back yard space which could be made available to some individual whose tent is now pitched in the

path of the Big Sweep, due in early January. Should VNN (Venice Neighbor-to-Neighbor) take it on to rally hosts and match them to guests? Is it legal? Will I be robbed, raped, annoyed? What will the neighbors think? What's in it for me?

Is it legal? (The following is a composite from statements given me by various clerks in planning, code, safety and zoning to whom both the City Attorney's office and LAPD Pacific Division referred me. None could quote chapter and verse from applicable codes, so this is entirely tentative 'til the ruling ordinances are located.) Under L.A. zoning it is nowhere legal to buy a lot and then establish residence in a temporary structure: trailer, shanty, tent. However, if an otherwise legal house is already there, it is legal to have a tent, and for temporary guests to stay there. Transgressions would arise from proscribed activities: hazardous wiring, dangerous fires, unsanitary toilet provisions, overcrowding, disturbance of the peace and eyesore.

Human rights: "Freedom of Residence" (Universal Declaration of Human Rights). On the other hand, there must be a right to sleep, since there exists a declared right to "...life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness." And sleep implies space to lie down on. So if not yet permitted on public lands, the right to sleep must be fulfilled on private land, that is, in our own back yards.

But what about my own fears of harboring a burglar, lunatic, drug dealer, or disorderly disturber of the peace in my nice quiet neighborhood? Answer: host and guest should jointly set down the rules to guide their game, a contract. Items to consider might include possible use of house for emptying of chemical toilet, periodic bath, kicking back with book, etc. Barter for labor could involve security, yard work, car polishing, child care, animal care during trips away, tarrot, massage, padleball partner.

What if it becomes too much and guest refuses to leave? Answer: VNN should respect the need of the yard-lord to terminate the contract and help relocate the guest.

Hosting a tent will not be for everyone who just happens to have a suitable yard, so I am by no means trying to talk everyone into it. The potential host group is the general progressive community in Venice. Which of us, therefore, will comb thru our phone books and ask around if anybody is interested?.



Newfield News/cpf

Venice... NOT Beverly Hills!

NATTERING NABOB

Jeffrey Miles lives just off of Rose Avenue. It's not clear how long he's made his home there, why he chose that location, or where he thought he was when he chose it.

Miles, a founder of an "organization" called the Venice/Santa Monica Neighborhood Association, talks like he thinks the money he pays to live in that location has bought him membership in a privileged class of some sort. He talks with great pride and hubris of the right of local property owners to protect themselves from the scourge of the City's homeless. And he's formed a group dedicated to making it as difficult as possible for the private and public sectors to do anything constructive to address Venice's ongoing homeless problem.

It is attitudes like Miles' which turn multi-faceted problems into multi-faceted tragedies. Shortly after Miles stood up at a recent Venice Action Committee meeting and declared forthrightly that social programs and job programs don't work so local government might as well give up trying to help the homeless in Venice and just send them someplace else, (anyplace else) threats and incidents of violence involving homeless persons and agencies trying to provide services began to increase in numbers. One man was shot on Speedway. Bomb and arson threats were phoned in to private service agencies. Those same agencies were threatened about the reliability of their fundraising sources if they continued their work on behalf of the homeless. And a frustrated homeless woman drove her van into the front of an Ocean Front restaurant whose owner has complained loudly and longly about the effect the beachfront bivouac has had on his business since last summer.

Do we owe all of this to Jeffrey Miles or to his silly, and quietly venal, expoundings at the VAC? Clearly not. But in a recent letter to the Outlook, Miles stated confidently, "I am certain that most permanent residents believe the same things that we do..."

What belief was he referring to? That because the homeless were not willing to pay to live in Venice, they don't deserve to be here like him. Unfortunately, while he may not be right in saying that most permanent residents share that belief, some obviously do. They may also share his belief that there's no point in trying to help the homeless either, at least as long as they're anywhere near his precious little piece of God's green earth.

Miles', and others', crusade to keep homeless services from operating in Venice is fueled by colossal, and embarrassing, ignorance. But ignorance doesn't embarrass those who wallow in it unknowingly. And the great crusade to protect private property and the privileges of those who possess it can be like a blinding light shining in the eyes of the true believers.

Miles, of course, is a true

believer only so far as it comes to protecting his property rights. The property rights of a social service agency that owns a building in which it would like to locate a program apparently don't count.

But let's not get bogged down with details. Since Jeffrey doesn't think helping the poor does any good anyway, why should he have a sense of fair play for those fools who are trying to do just that? Better to just advocate shipping the poor off to some other neighborhood where the privileged class isn't yet strong enough to resist, or where the property owners are mostly absentees. Yeah, let's just "punish" someone else for not being as rich or vigilant as we are.

The problem with this approach is that, unless you're the guy at the top of Fortune magazine's list of zillionaires, there's invariably someone richer and infinitely more vigilant ready to crush you like a worm when it suits his purposes. If owning property, or paying more for the opportunity to be somewhere, carries with it certain privileges, then owning more property or paying a higher price carries with it more privileges. That's the intractable law of Madison Avenue, not to mention Pennsylvania Avenue.

Jeffrey Miles doesn't seem to understand he hasn't paid enough to be thinking his kind of thoughts yet. If he was paying enough to live in Beverly Hills, or Bel Air, or Palos Verdes, maybe he could get away with it. But this is Venice, and he hasn't paid

enough to have the right to talk in terms of shutting certain groups of people out of the community. It doesn't come with this territory.

His contention, also stated in his letter to the Outlook, that "Venice has plenty of low-income services, including housing, but it is already full," is at the root of his more specific display of ignorance in these matters. One wouldn't have to look far to discover that Venice has a total of less than 60 shelter beds specifically for the homeless. That's less than a number of other parts of Los Angeles, all of them, except downtown, populated by fewer homeless.

So Miles' belief that providing token additional facilities will turn the community into even more of a "dumping ground" seems directly at odds with the possibility that those facilities might indeed get some of the current local street population off the street. It also ignores the fact that additional facilities would also provide the authorities with legal means to better monitor and regulate the homeless population. One would think Miles would want this, but his ability to reason things out doesn't quite go that far.

We're left with his thinly veiled "call to arms" to all of those who feel that they somehow have the right to declare that no one should be allowed to help the poor in this neighborhood. He threatens legal action. He

(Continued on P. 6)

Don't forget to worship at the Super Bowl church of your choice--NFC or AFC.

'City Hall' continued from Page 1.

can we expect her to represent us, in the midst of competing pressures, if we are not there to represent ourselves?

This means a more active participation in local government than most of us are used to. Naturally, since under former Councilwoman Russell, no amount of participation did any good. Many of us are not ready for the new situation. The past has conditioned us to protest or apathy. We came to expect the worst.

That's poor preparation for the present situation in which we have a Councilperson who, in my estimation, is willing to listen to us and consider our suggestions, if they seem workable. Those of us who are used to the politics of protest and confrontation need to learn new skills of communication and cooperation.

The cooperation we need to learn is not just with people of like minds, but also with people of unlike minds with whom we share a particular problem. And most difficult, cooperation with that part of government which seems receptive: Ruth and her staff. We can't expect to get everything we want; this is the real world, after all. We can expect that in many instances we and the Councilwoman's office can help each other to find solutions.

That feels like a real challenge, with the possibility of real results.



'Walden' continued from Page 1.

someone is yelling. I smile, as I wonder why it's OK with society for the well-to-do to booze out of their minds in order to escape their "lives of quiet desperation," but for a poor person to do it on Red Mountain wine is such a no, no. Because it's done in public? done too freely? because it's on cheap wine that doesn't add substantially to the economy? I don't know; just another something to think about. Maybe the panhandlers should ask for \$10.00 for a vintage Pinot Noir.

"You can't use private property because it belongs to 'someone,' and you can't use public property because it belongs to 'everyone'."

Back on the Pond...maybe if the homeless built little cabins on the beach rather than those colorful tents, lean-tos, and tepees they would be more acceptable. Oh, you don't think they should build anything on the beach. What? It's public property. It belongs to everyone. I see. You can't use private property because it belongs to 'someone' and you can't use public property because it belongs to 'everyone.' My economic geometry isn't too good, but I don't see that those arguments leave much else to build on. That's why I am of the mind that the homeless should build their shelters on any and all public spaces so as not to become invisible. Then maybe the public will take on the problem of building shelter for our citizens in this great society of the free.

Along these lines I belong to that group of people, in this case, Venice residents, who believe that the problem of "homelessness" does not stem from those living without shelter, but is due to our government's unwillingness to provide employment and affordable housing for all its citizens. I know that a lot of Americans disagree, so I want to share some important statistics taken from the Bureau of Census' Annual Housing Survey as compiled by James D. Wright and Julie A. Lam at the University of Massachusetts.

housing costs: the average price of a single family dwelling sold for \$23,000 in 1970; \$62,200 in 1980; and \$70,300 in 1983.

poverty level for a family of 3 in 1978 = \$5,784; the Survey used 40% for rent: \$193. mo. in 1978; \$242. mo. in 1981; \$256. mo. in 1982; and \$265. mo. in 1983.

total number of units renting for \$80: 5.5 million in 1970; 1.1 million in 1980; and 650,000 in 1983.

percentage of population living below the poverty level: 12.6% in 1970; 13% in 1980; and 15.2% in 1983.

low-income rental units decline (12 city survey): from 1,607,000 in 1970 to 1,128,000 in 1980 (30%).

poor population increased: from 2,522,000 in 1970 to 3,425,000 in 1980 (36%).

loss of SROs (single-room occupancy): with the redevelopment of our downtown areas the SROs has been reduced and in some cases wiped out.

The telling story is told in the listings under "homelessness" in the Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature: no listing in 1980; 3 in 1981; 15 in 1982; 21 in 1983; and 32 in 1984.

On the charts the declining line of affordable housing units crossed the rising line of poor people in the early 1980s; a cross our entire nation should bear.

In the US today, 1987, regardless of the causes of poverty and who the poor are, the homelessness problem is real and will not go away by itself. As the statistics indicate, the problem is not caused by those without shelter. The problem has been created by our government's refusal to deal with problems of unemployment and the declining stock of affordable housing.

There's a great danger to human life invading our contemporary mind-set, that is, accepting statistical data as if the percentages were just numbers; 12.6%, 13%, 15.2%, 36%... Percentages represent human beings, too often fewer than the actual number that are without shelter, without food, without medical care, without jobs. We must change this mind-set. It's inhuman. We must also change our mind-set that sees the 'Government' as an abstraction. Government is people; mostly like ourselves. In fact, in a democracy, the voters are the government. Therefore, the homelessness problem is our problem.

What can we do? I belong to a newly formed group: Venice -- Neighbor to Neighbor. We are a group of renters, homeowners, and homeless people trying to find solutions to the problem of homelessness in Venice. Solutions that don't include sending the homeless to some other community. I hope similar groups will form all across this land, that is our land. It's a human problem and requires human solutions.

SO AMERICA, where are we headed?

It is a good time to reflect on Charles Dickens' words from the last century:

"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had everything before us, we had nothing before us."

Where we're headed is up to us.

'Not Beverly Hills'

continued from p. 5

wants to shut down a charitable agency with a long tradition in the community (longer, probably, than his own tradition of local residence). He says the

beleaguered permanent residents can only take so much.

One can only hope there are still enough permanent residents of Venice who know better than to take the likes of Jeffrey Miles' drivel for much longer. There are ways to get the homeless off the streets and beaches of Venice, but Miles clearly doesn't have a clue as to what they are. He and his cohorts can't be allowed to be the loudest voices in the community on this subject or the Venice we thought we knew and loved will disappear forever.



DANNY'S DINER
3306 LINCOLN BLVD
(BETWEEN ROSE & MARINE)
SANTA MONICA CA, 90405
450-7882
MON-SAT 9:00am - 7:00pm

Breakfast served until 11:30am
Banana Pancakes \$1.95 - Omelete of the Day \$2.95

** SUPER \$1.00 SPECIALS **

- \$1.00 Burger (Lettuce, onion, pickles, mayo and ketchup)
- \$1.00 Hot Dog (Mustard and relish)
- \$1.00 Burrito (Beef and beans)
- \$1.00 Tuna Sandwich on a bun
- \$1.00 Cheese omelette sandwich on a bun
- \$1.00 Ham & Cheese (Mustard, mayo and lettuce)

Extras: Cheese-bacon-chili-guacamole-tomato- (Add 50¢ each)

** SANDWICHES **

- Tuna Grande \$2.95
- Ham & Cheese \$2.95
- Hot Pastrami \$2.89
- BLT \$2.25
- Vegetarian Sandwich \$2.75
- Grilled Cheese \$1.50

- Fries Medium Large
- .75 1.50
- Chili Fries
- 1.25 2.50

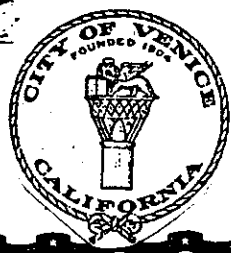
** Beverages **

- .70
- Coke
- Root Beer
- Orange Juice
- Coffee
- Tea
- Hot Chocolate
- Diet Coke
- Sprite
- Lemonade
- Brewed decaf
- Iced Tea
- Milk

** Save Room **

- Ice Cream .45 .80
- Root Beer Float .95
- Milk Shake 1.50
- W/Banana 1.75

ASK ABOUT OUR DAILY SPECIALS TOO!!!



Venice Town Council

HOLIDAY ELECTION MEETING

Thursday, January 14
Beyond Baroque Center
681 N. Venice Blvd.

AGENDA

CITY's Interim control ordinance for VENICE

PLANNING DOCUMENTS XXX-POSED!!!!

2. COMMITTEE REPORTS

- Planning & Devlp. (305-7149)
- Homeless (392-8037.)
- Board of Directors (392-2872)
- Boardwalk Takk Force (396-1585)

Gay and Lesbian Community Services Center:
Seeks clinical psychologist for 1/2 time
administrative position. Resumes to Person-
nel, GLCSC, 1212 N. Highland Ave. LA 90038
Seeks Mental Health Clinicians with Mas-
ters degree. Resume to the same.

New Year's Eve Peace Party
Church in Ocean Park:
at the church from 8:pm
Call 399-1000 for reservations

January, 1988
Free Venice Beachhead

Alcoholism Center for Women:
Growing Pains: Five week workshop series
designed for women who were sexually mol-
ested as children. It will be offered Wed-
nesday nights, from 7pm to 9pm, beginning
January 6, 1988, through February 3.

Healing and Health through Yoga and Medi-
tation: afternoon workshop designed to
enhance a lifestyle of well being. Sunday
January 24, 1988 from 2:00pm to 5:00pm.

Incest Survivor Support Meeting: for old
and new participants, Wednesday, January
20, 1988 from 7pm to 8:30pm.

The Mother/Daughter Dilemma: Finding Our
Way Out: one day workshop, Sunday, Janu-
ary 17, 1988 from 9am to 5pm.

Choices: advanced 8 week workshop series
designed for incest survivors or women
sexually molested as children. Tuesdays
from 7pm to 9pm starting January 5 to
February 23, 1988.

For the above workshops contact:

Clarissa Chandler 1147 S. Alvarado St.
(213) 381-7805 Los Angeles 90006.

Poetry at Midnight Special

Poetry Reading: Beth Miller, Austin
Straus: Midnight Special Bookstore, 1350
Santa Monica Mall, Sunday, February 14,
4pm.

Community Events

The Beachhead welcomes notices of public meetings and other information for publication on the Community Events page. To have your event publicized, please mail your press release to: P.O. Box 544, Venice, CA 90288 by the third Sunday of the month. Late submissions will be called in at 525-8092 no later than the following Wednesday.

Poetry on Melrose

Three readings will be held in January, 1988. The readings will be held on consecutive Sundays at Gasoline Alley, 7219 Melrose Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90046. Programs include: Marina LaPalma and Manazar Gamboa (January 10), open reading (nine poets) (January 17, and Bob Crosson and Phoebe MacAdams (January 24). Donation. For more information call 937-5177.

CalArts Exhibition

The Newport Harbor Art Museum will present a large-scale exhibition of works by graduates of CalArts in a show entitled CalArts:Skeptical Belief(s). From January 24 through March 20, 58 alumni of the School of Art will be represented by works of painting, photography sculpture, film, and video. For video and film times or more information, please call 714-759-1122.

Sierra Club

The next General Meeting of the Airport-Marina Group of the Sierra Club will be held Monday, January 11 at 7:45pm in the Community Room at Burton Chase Park, Marina del Rey. Patty Klein will present a slide program on her trip to Sikkim. For further information please call 614-4028.

LA. SCHOOL OFFICIALS TO WAKE UP & SMELL THE COFFEE IN 88??!

Racism, Frigidism, Anti-Unionism to yet become passé!!

Mark Twain once pointed out that in order to locate the most reactionary individuals in society, one need look no further than those leaders of your local school board. The miseducators of our precious young gold. Ha Ha.

Maybe that is why I would like to plunk a stick of dynamite into 450 N. Grand St. headquarters of the Los Angeles Unified School District?

Or more specific...what is it about the nature of this city's school bureaucrats that they feel desperate to fire one black employee accused of "kissing and hugging" his employee girlfriend in public?

It might all be comprehensible if one just projected the entire adult school board staff in image as all overgrown and aged blowups of the K-through-12 gradeschool kiddies they supposedly educate. Mostly still pouting and defiant whenever they are unable to get their own way. Only I truly believe that given the chance, the children would react more intelligently.

For recently in fact, the decision to "get" (read "permanently terminate") one school busdriver John C. Scates is another story of childlike vendetta and infantile fixation dating back to 1981.

Dynamiting could surely begin moving the glands of some of these educational skeletons...as well as possibly heat up this continuing iceberg saga: Just how are some individuals simply "too GOOD" for this L.A. school district? And what must a person do to deserve the oodles of attention never desired...but put forth by this same senile school board "papa"chcracy?

To begin with in Scates' case, in 1981, he and Chiral Pitts (another busdriver) were transferred and demoted in hours for the unmentionable aforementioned crime of supposedly "kissing and hugging" each other. So far, so good. At least they weren't accused of humping the busses.

At the time, there probably was a little coincidence to the fact that John had been chosen to represent other drivers in union negotiations. And to make a long story short, the arbitrator (Geraldine Leshin)

who eventually ruled on John and Chiral's responding grievances against the district, found insufficient evidence to draw the "sex" conclusions that had been levied against them.

In fact, according to Leshin, out of the six students willing (or able) to write letters for district "investigators" (in this instance Bernice Harris), not one described the alleged February 4th, 1981

"display of affection". One adult aide constituted the remainder of the district's "evidence". And this woman (Akko Kato) testified that she saw "Ms. Pitts putting her arm around Mr. Scates' neck while she (Pitts) was behind him, (standing in a bus stop-well). Further, she observed Ms. Pitts put her arm around Mr. Scates waist while they were standing side by side!!!

However, no exact or specific time was recalled for this revelation as described in the arbitrator's report, and this sole thread of district prosecution was thereby put aside. The two "lovebirds" were found innocent of any particular frolic. Yet by the spring of that year (in '81), Scates had been accused, transferred and punished with the loss of driving (income) hours.

He was declared innocent on paper but offered no recompense for the injustice of district official incompetence. (Chiral Pitts was not long to leaving the employment of the district herself under further duress).

By 1984, much change and inter-union turmoil had shifted the scene for John. Although John maintained his position as steward and negotiator within his local union, (L#99-Service Employees International Union-AFL-CIO), John had successfully witnessed the removal of the previous Secretary-Treasurer Howard Friedman as titular head. A black, and ex-busdriving employee of the district was elected to replace him by the name of Bill Price. District officials were concerned that younger employee militants not rise through the ranks of the union.

They attempted another attack against John, this time suspending him 5 days allegedly for refusing to use his red "crossover" lights while conducting a student (street) crossing. Again, the hearing officer in charge of determining innocence or guilt concluded against the district.

Hearing officer Bicknell Showers, noted in his decision that "the district has failed to establish any of the alleged causes for discipline"...it was discovered upon closer investigation that either students that had crossed were not indeed students from Mr. Scates' bus or that certain students so crossing had not been designated to do so in the first place. Nonetheless, the district's personnel commission (for all intents and purposes an adjunct flunkay arm of the district's staff and board) overturned the hearing officer's decision and suspended John anyway.

In so doing, they directly contradicted their own hearing officer's findings without benefit of further testimony. Following the suspension, John continued working and

attempted pursuing remedies to his legal disputes through the courts and/or the Public Employment Relations Board with little success.

By 1986, (Transportation administration officials (especially Barbara Davis) went off the deep end to drown Scates. They drew up approximately 10 charges against him in essence ranging from embezzlement, to a form of criminal battery to kidnapping. Capping off the ludicrous concoctions...district officials decided to switch gears from a proposed suspension to instant termination by the spring of '87. This did not occur though until they (the bureaucrats themselves) attempted to physically imprison John in one of their office buildings downtown on San Pedro St., (the 'Business Division' B.D.).

Again by the fall of '87, John had won this newest round of aggression by demonstrating once again to a different hearing officer that not only were the allegations against him false and manufactured, but that district officials had overstepped their bounds in procedure by suspending him in the first instance.

The officer (Briscoe) ruled reinstatement and backpay and the district's personnel commission (remember the original flunkettes?) immediately went haywire a third time.

Again sidestepping the work of the hearing judge they themselves had assigned, commission members voted to seek more "legal" opinions through their counsel's office (read the back door to the superintendent's-schoolboard staff suites) in order to seek a "new opinion". Meanwhile, the illegitimately sacked John Scates has been denied re-employment in the interim...despite the paper decision proposing reinstatement and backpay. Really nothing new for a bunch of less-than-adolescent babies 'governing' OUR babies!

What is so odd about all of this is that John Scates is one of the gentlest individuals a working man or woman might meet. Although it is true that when John smiles he reveals several gold-capped teeth which sneak to a mischevious grin when pressed to describe what the hell is really going on.

For John might be the last person around to inform you what he already knows, ie. that is if you work hard enough, be nice enough, go the extra mile to help out someone, and above and beyond that keep full informed of your rights and responsibilities, chances are wicked your ass will get fired too. We don't want no smart boys here in L.A. Just a bunch of assholes. Right on, right on you mother fuckers at LA Unified, right on!!
Write Off - Victor Wightman

pagina 7

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