

HOTEL BUILT ON LIES - SEE PAGE 57

SAN DIEGO WEEKLY

# Reader



San Diego City Council at the State of City Address, 1998. (From left) Byron White, Harry Mathis, Christine Ebersole, George Stevens, Barbara Nordin, Valerie Stallings, Judy McCarty, John Vargo.

## District Fix Failure?

### TEN YEARS AGO,

### A SMALL BAND OF OUTSIDERS DECLARED

### WAR ON CITY HALL.

Frustrated with what they said was the city council's inattention to their desire for more park space and city services, and dissatisfied by proliferating potholes, subdivisions, and high-rise waterfront hotels, they launched a petition drive to force a change in the way the city elected its councilmembers. At the time, hundreds of thousands of dollars — much of the money from real estate development interests and national hotel chains that wanted to expand on public land here — was pouring into the campaign war chests of councilmembers, and little serious

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FEB 1998

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# LETTERS

We welcome letters pertaining to the contents of the Reader. You may phone them in by calling 619-231-3000, ext. 400; address them to Letters to the Editor, Box 80803, San Diego CA 92186-5803; fax them to 619-231-0400; or e-mail them to letters@sdreader.com via the Internet. Please include your name, address, and telephone number. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

## Unsubstantiated Boastful Ramblings

This is in response to your cover story for the February 19 issue featuring the band Skid Row. I am familiar with the band Skid Row and was amazed at the scene when Nemois existed. Unfortunately, that piece of literature was largely factually incorrect. Nemois was not the local son of the Del Norte brothers would have you believe. In comparison to the other hard rock band on the scene at that time, Power, Nemois' short-lived glory days of outdrawing Power were more due to Power's inactivity locally than anything else. To say anyone in Skid Row has a music degree is very improbable, and to say Dino De La Cruz, the drummer, went to Juilliard is insulting to anyone who actually worked their ass off to get in that prestigious school. As far as the other band members go, Carl Rothman is the most talented, but much is true. The other stuff about Nemois is regarding the Del Norte brothers' egos. Unfortunately, their boastful ramblings, however unsubstantiated, made for very busy reading. Without a doubt, that story holds the Reader record for most B.S.

Edward Johnson

## Be Careful

I'm wondering about your "Room-O-Rama" in the February 19 edition. This is just a question — it may be naive. I don't go in for faking that much. He is recommending something called Sandstone Canyon, and I suppose the connecting gulches and gulches, as something a baker might want to visit. Shouldn't there be a caution in there warning people that these very narrow canyons — look at the photo there — can be death traps in the event of a heavy, unexpected rain? We've got el nino coming down every few days with a vengeance. It was not too long ago — it seems so — a few months ago — a bunch of German tourists that did not know any better were drowned in some arroyos or wadis or whatever you call them out in the Arizona desert. I think when you recommend places like that for hikes you really ought to add a caution: "Be careful, could be dangerous in a sudden rainstorm."

Name withheld

## Green Objection

Much as the Reader likes to disparage Charger owner Alex Spanos, declaring that he popped \$10 grand for "Yellow Greek" New York Governor George Pataki's "City Lights," February 19, the governor's grandmother from Hungary might object to being called a Greek.

Ronald Lemery-Garcia

## Shoot A Few Of Media Operatives

Mr. Skatzen's story of Pataki is absolutely true, notwithstanding the ignorant comments of Neil Heyman of the SDPSL history department "City Lights," February 19. American troops were sent to escort favors from starving and brutalized Italian women and girls. It was not just the Mexicans who were preyed upon by the helploos. But that's war.

As for your statement about conquering the Italian peninsula, Italy surrendered in summer of '43. After that, it was a matter of blissing out the en-

trenched Germans. Mussolini's invitation to his German friends to enter Italy was among the more stupid legacies left by the Duce to Italy. The Italians never wanted war with the USA. The king, Marshal Badoglio (the chief of staff), most of the Fascist Grand Council, Mussolini's own son-in-law Count Ciano all opposed joining Germany, as did the preponderant majority of the Catholics of Italy. But Mussolini, who had heart and opportunists, had his way. Strangely enough, Germany is honored in her American media today, but Italians and Italian-Americans are ridiculed and stereotyped by the New York-Jobwood crowd. Because the blacks, Latinos, Asians, etc., have been declared politically unmovable, the only group that still has to take it on the chin is the Italians. Probably, if we shoot a few of the media operatives, the stereotyping may end. I'd be glad to do it, given the chance. These vermin should be exterminated.

Name withheld

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Name withheld

lery Schud replies: Because the desert lies in the "rain shadow" of the mountains, it is shielded from the strongest effects of the Pacific storms, which occur in winter. Even once in a great while a late summer thunderstorm, triggered by moist, unstable air coming in from the south or east and piling up against the desert mountains, releases torrents of rain that cause out deep ravines such as Sandstone Canyon.

This is not to say that a significant amount of water cannot flow out of Sandstone Canyon in the winter. However, the el nino-related rains are the primary of warning of their approach. Also, the Sandstone drainage itself is small — unlike

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# Reader

SD WEEKLY

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**Cash vacuum** Hundreds of small arts groups may soon have to give up their traditional monetary handouts from San Diego city hall under a plan secretly making the records of upper-level city management. The arts subsidies, including everything from neighborhood festivals to street theater to ethnic arts programs, would be cut to free up enough cash to make the payments on at least \$215 million of convention center bonds, the fate of which is due to be decided by city voters in June. If those "non-essential" cuts aren't enough, officials are telling sources that funds for neighborhood library operations could also be affected. "Of course, they're going to deny that there will be any subsidy cuts until after the convention center election," says one well-placed source. The late Larry Lawrence's reputation may be in tatters, but that of his beloved Hotel del Coronado is hardly dented from its encounter with Pres. Bill Clinton.

In fact, the Del's new owners, a pension-fund manager from L.A., is helping the hotel's connection to the "Big Top" in Monica Lewinsky reportedly called him on its "new and improved" Web site, at [www.hoteldel.com](http://www.hoteldel.com), due to launch next month. The Del "has hosted stars and heads of state including 14 U.S. presidents, from Benjamin Harrison in 1891 to Bill Clinton more than a century later," boasts a news release. Actually, Clinton spent most of his time at Lawrence's beachside mansion, Crown Marine, down the street from the hotel. The mansion is still up for sale, offered by Lawrence's widow Sheila, who has recently tangled with columnist Arianna Huffington over the degree of her personal relations with the Pres.

**Printing money** A nationally famous but locally low-profile resident of Rancho Santa Fe is making big news in San Diego's *Fortune* magazine. Elizabeth Goth, homeowner extraordinaire, also happens to be here in the Hill Street Journal. Goth and her husband, William C. Goth III, have declared war on company management. "My vision for Dow Jones does not include a stagnant stock price with investments that provide little or no value to the shareholders," she recently told a *Fortune* reporter over breakfast at a San Diego restaurant. "Described by the magazine as an 'elegant 34-year-old,' Goth is one of the country's richest residents and also one of the country's biggest breadwinners and donors of so-called saddlebush farms, which she exhibited during closing ceremonies of the Napa Valley Wine Olympics. She was also close friends with the elderly Elton John. Goth's husband, William C. Goth III, who died in a fire this month at his Scripps Ranch saddlebush farm, where many of Goth's horses are kept. Goth, now divorced, married her horse-trainer husband at Rancho Village Presbyterian Church in 1969.

**Pot of Golding** Preliminary figures show that Mayor Susan Golding raised a total of \$919,751 in her third U.S. Senate bid and had \$175,000 cash on hand at the end of last year. Visa card magnate, **Darrell Issa**, who's paying for most of his campaign out of his own pocket, reported raising six million dollars, most of it from himself. And Democratic **Barbara Bauer** reported raising \$4,590,000. CBS newscast **Lesley Stahl** and Clinton Black **James Carville** are heading here for separate speeches to a Big Ten TV convention at Townes Center on March 30. A neo-Nazi from Pacific Beach is reportedly being held in a Swedish prison after being convicted of sexually abusing his teenage sons. **Eric Doherty** was among four Americans arrested at a pro-Nazi rock concert after allegedly giving the Nazi sign first class.

**Monetary infusion** Invaluable multimillionaire **Joe Jack** is trying to sell his Valley Center house, complete with elevator, saltwater aquarium, and replica of a western town, the \$2.75 million, Jenkins and his wife **Richard** are, along with the owner of San Diego's **John Dinkel**, making hundreds of millions of dollars when, back in the late-1970s, they unloaded Jined, a maker of intercom "injection pumps" on pharmaceutical giant Warner-Lambert, which later sold the firm to huge law firms, Jenkins and his wife reportedly want to move to Colorado.

Contributor: Matt Pottler  
The Reader offers \$25 for news tips published in this column. Call our voice mail at 619-235-3000, ext. 440, or fax your tip to 619-235-3096.



Jeff Olsen

## Brains on a Platter

By Phyllis Orrick

**S**eptember 12 of 1993, when I collapsed at the bowling alley, the Vista Entertainment Center, that was the starting

point," Jeff Olsen says. What started on that day was a new life for Olsen, who was 29 years old when he crashed onto the boards after completing a game.

He'd been a regular at the Vista lanes since his family moved there from Orem, Utah, in 1973. Jeff was clue to notice. For most of his life, he looked and acted profoundly retarded. His gut was unsteady; he employed a Rast Man-esque refrain of "you knows" to express a thought. Although he had grown to be 6'3" tall and weighed some 250 pounds, he was exhausted after walking a block. He slept 12 to 14 hours a night. Besides, he had a glassy stare, and he was withdrawn.

At 14 months, his doctors at the Camp Pendleton Navy hospital, where Jeff had been born, diagnosed him as epileptic and brain damaged. Over the years, they prescribed a battery of powerful drugs to keep the resultant seizures in check.

By the time he was 29, Jeff had never held a job though he had learned arithmetic and reading and writing in special education classes. The state of California ranked him as having a "most severe" disability. When he was 21, his doctors declared his disability was permanent.

still carried the diagnosis of epilepsy and brain damage, dating back to the Camp Pendleton doctor who saw him in 1964 when Jeff was an infant. Jeff was born on the east in 1963, the fourth of four children, all boys. Aside from a brief but severe viral infection and fever at five months, Jeff was a happy and healthy baby, just like his three brothers.

But around the time of his first birthday, he started experiencing mild seizures. His parents took him to the Camp Pendleton doctors. And that's baby's brain was literally scared, that his seizures would escalate, leaving Olsen mentally retarded and unable to care for himself.

Jeff's parents were told to get on with their lives as best they could. Also, in accord with standard treatments then, the baby was put on Phenobarbital, a potentially addictive tranquilizer to control the seizures. By the time he was four, Jeff was showing signs of hyperactivity, a not-uncommon reaction for children following the protocol for treatment of hyperactivity (still

largely applicable today). Jeff was given a stimulant, Dexamine, in a short while, it was replaced by Sedation. The records aren't clear why the switch was made. That drug would never be used today; it is too powerful to administer to a child.

San Diego neuro-psychologist Barbara Schenk said that the drug was much more popular in the '60s and '70s. "I've come to know the Olsens their

monastery itself is a lackluster, two-story stucco structure built sometime in the 1970s. The upstairs area where Winai and six monks live and took more like a college dorm than an international criminal's hideout. Dusty boxes of books and Buddhist trichotomies fill the main room. The carpet could use shampooing. Two dogs, Tiger and Lion, trot in and out at will, dashing the carpet with muddy paw prints. From the windows and sliding glass doors behind the small area where Winai sits when he receives guests, you can see the Pala mountains and, in the foreground, among the fruit trees, a few of the blue-tarquin tents — the Klot — in which Winai and his monks sleep. This rustic touch is intentional. Winai is a "forest" monk.

Monks are revered in Thailand, which is 95 percent Buddhist and a country where the division between church and state authority is not always clear. The monks are revered in Thailand, which is 95 percent Buddhist and a country where the division between church and state authority is not always clear. The monks are revered in Thailand, which is 95 percent Buddhist and a country where the division between church and state authority is not always clear.

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## Escondido's Forested Monk

By Abe Opincar

**H**e's been accused of pretty much everything that could destroy a religious leader: financial misdealing, heresy, lying,

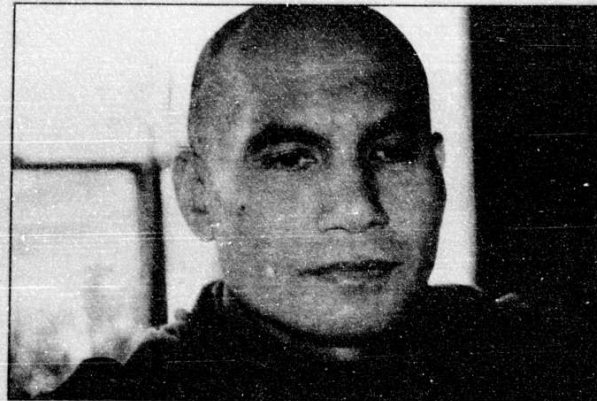
misinformation, sexual sin. Angry mobs have burnt chili and salt in a ritual effort to curse his name. Lucid "documentaries" featuring "dramas, enactments" of his alleged visits to Australian brothels have been broadcast again and again to millions. Headlines have called him "a vile beast," "permanently stubborn," and "son of a bitch." The U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service and the Thai government have called him a "rogue monk" and "one of the most wanted men in Thailand."

Given everything that's been said about 46-year-old Ven. Winai Amano, in person he's something of a disappointment. Sitting cross-legged on the floor, dabbling at a dog's muddy paw with a kleenex, Winai doesn't seem like a cunning, smooth-talking sex machine. He seems sweet and cheerful and docile — he seems like, well, what you'd expect a Buddhist monk to be.

If he's misreading his followers' devotion, he's not lacking them. In the Escondido monastery where he's lived for the past three years, the monastery's setting is beautiful, however. Off a two-lane road a mile or so east of I-15, the monastery's 13 acres overlook the Pala mountains and are lush with bergamot, oenothera, and kumquat trees heavy with fruit and shiny with rain. The

monastery itself is a lackluster, two-story stucco structure built sometime in the 1970s. The upstairs area where Winai and six monks live and took more like a college dorm than an international criminal's hideout. Dusty boxes of books and Buddhist trichotomies fill the main room. The carpet could use shampooing. Two dogs, Tiger and Lion, trot in and out at will, dashing the carpet with muddy paw prints. From the windows and sliding glass doors behind the small area where Winai sits when he receives guests, you can see the Pala mountains and, in the foreground, among the fruit trees, a few of the blue-tarquin tents — the Klot — in which Winai and his monks sleep.

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Winai Amano

since, he camped in cemeteries and at one point lived for six months with the corpses of ten men and women in a cave, where he contemplated their decay. His biography says of this sojourn, "These rotten corpses became bloated, and blood and bodily fluids exuded. The smell of the rotten flesh pervaded the cave. In expanse and search for the internal organs for contemplation, he cut open the rotten bodies, removed some organs, and preserved them in liquid. Living side by side with these corpses and practicing the recommended contemplations enabled Winai to make good progress in the way of [Dharma]."

To the American ear, Winai's remarks on 60 Minutes and ones he later made to his followers, sound inconsequential. Moreover, they sound like precisely the sort of thing you'd expect a Buddhist monk to say. Winai encouraged the military government to cooperate with pro-democracy demonstrators. Winai said the main problem in Thailand was "greed and hatred." Winai criticized government corruption, government involvement in prostitution, and he said Buddhist monks shouldn't be involved in liquor, gambling, and prostitution. He encouraged government officials to be honest. He suggested that all Thais practice nonviolence.

Instead of ignoring him, the Thai government took a very active interest in what Winai had to say. In 1994-1995, Winai was inundated with all sorts of accusations, most having to do with his allegedly having broken his vow of celibacy and with a criminal charge of having "defamed unnamed government officials and the Supreme Patriarch of Thailand." The Thai media, which are operated by the government and the military, had a field day. The ensuing national hysteria was so violent and prolonged that it could only have occurred in a country where, as the U.S. State Department reports, politicians routinely take bribes, police routinely take bribes, and radio stations are required by law to broadcast government-produced newscasts four times daily.

Despite the fact that no one could produce any evidence that Winai had fooled around or defamed unnamed government officials and the Supreme Patriarch of Thailand, media and government persecution were so relentless that Winai fled to the United States in July 1995. But his troubles didn't end here. Under pressure from the Thai government, the INS has repeatedly sought to deport Winai to Thailand, even after United States immigration judge Ron Hartman granted Winai political asylum in June 1997. The INS has since appealed Hartman's decision. Two weeks ago, the INS and Peter Schrey, Winai's L.A.-based attorney, filed briefs on the matter with the Department of Justice Executive Office for Immigration Review. A decision could take weeks, months, or even years.

Winai doesn't seem much worried about the outcome. On Sunday morning, he was surrounded by his followers — mostly middle-aged Thai men and women from San Diego, Orange, and

an end to military control. The military didn't agree. In May 1992, soldiers killed at least 50 pro-democracy demonstrators. If you ask Winai now why he decided to speak out against the killings, he says he doesn't remember. He says he doesn't think it was an exceptional or brave thing to do. "I've spent my life teaching Buddhism, teaching the truth. I don't think it was unusual for a Buddhist to say that killing people was wrong."

But it was unusual for a Thai Buddhist to say that killing was wrong during an interview taped by a 60 Minutes TV crew, especially when the Thai military was responsible for the killing in question.

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illegal drugs," Jeff says. His father, Bob, adds, "His face would twist up like he was going into a stroke. His head would go to one side."

Jeff has educated himself about the pill that once ruled his life. He can tick off dosages to the last milligram and recite the side effects he suffered. He realizes now that for ten years he was technically near death from taking too much Dilantin. Jeff also suffered through the '60s version of special education, where teachers yelled in students' ears and held strong: "I'm sorry, but you're not smart enough to do anything."

Most of his symptoms have abated now that the medication has been reduced.

"They stole his life," Bob Olsen says now. "They took away his childhood, they took away his teens, they took away his young adulthood. By the time he gets off all this, he'll be going into middle age. They say get a life — what life? He still has to learn and get out; he should have been married now and had children and a promising career. That's why we've been trying to find help for Jeff. Nobody wants to do anything, nobody wants to get involved."

Bob Olsen, 66, retired from the postal service, jokes that he'll "have to live until I'm 106 to make sure Jeff gets a fair shake. I don't drink alcohol or smoke or take illegal drugs. I have to stay in shape." His three other sons have their own lives and

careers. Legally, the Olsens have been rebuffed in efforts to sue the government for restitution. Most recently, on February 3 of this year, Southern District federal Judge Irma E. Gonzalez granted the government's motion for summary judgment against the Olsens, in effect throwing out their claim against the government. The judge ruled it was invalid because it had been filed after the two-year statute of limitations for tort claims against the government.

Dr. Schrock, who practices at Sharp Memorial Hospital, counsels patients who are coping with the aftermath of brain injuries. She warned that someone who has been through an experience like Jeff's is likely to face significant emotional adjustments. "Although this is wonderful news," Schrock says, "months down the road it may be a little

hard to deal with. You can't change overnight that little Polaroid snapshot of yourself that is who you are. It's an identity crisis. He'll need to adjust that snapshot to be current."

"That's not easy even if it's a positive one. You've been one person for 34 years, and you wake up and they say, 'Oops, we made a mistake, you're someone else.'"

## Forested monk

*continued from page 3*  
L.A. Counties — fill the monastery's "chanting room." Winai lectures them at length about "peace of mind."

"Worry about the past or the future," he says, "are a kind of desire, an attachment to the material world." In the Buddhist scheme of things, the material world is illusory, and so it would be useless to worry about an illusion. Perhaps Winai has a point. Peter Schrey says that recently something happened that may make it possible for Winai to remain in America. An INS office in Laguna Niguel, after reviewing Winai's application, is poised to grant him a "religious worker" visa. If it goes through, the visa would save the image-conscious Thai government the embarrassment of having one of

its citizens granted political asylum in the United States, and it would save the INS the embarrassment of seeing its questionable appeal denied by the Immigration Review Board.

"Everyone," Schrey says, "would like to go back to Thailand."

In the meantime, Winai pads around the monastery's grounds, stopping to pull and crush a leaf from a bergamot tree and sniff its citrusy perfume. He meditates. He teaches yoga. He lectures on nonattachment.

Up on the monastery's second floor the late afternoon light grows dim. Winai finishes cleaning the dog's dirty paws. Cold wind rattles the windows and Winai pulls his mustard-green robe over his shoulders. He shivers.

"It is cold here," he says. "I am surprised."

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## STRAIGHT FROM THE HIP

BY MATTHEW ALICE



Matthew: A fine pal of mine spending time here from New Zealand gets a newsletter from his yacht club in N.Z., postmarked in England, forwarded to Seattle, then here to San Diego. Aside from getting his mail 90 days late, who gets the money for postage?

—Cigar, Shelter Island

Whatever political differences we may have, possibly speaking the world is one big happy family. Thank the Switzerland-based Universal Postal Union for our ability to get a postcard from Patagonia to Pasadena with no border skirmishes or harbor blockades. The UPU is more than 100 years old and is now part of the United Nations. The 180-member group makes sure each country's postal system fits into a reasonably efficient international network, sets international rates, and makes the rules for dividing up the money. It's hard to tell from your description exactly how the newsletter gets from New Zealand to the U.S. if it only bears a U.K. postmark. So let's assume your peripatetic pal has simply left a trail of forwarding addresses behind him—N.Z. to the U.K. to Seattle to San Diego.

The yacht club drops your pal's mail in the box in Auckland, bound for London. The N.Z. to U.K. postage is paid to the New Zealand postal service. In England the aging mail is restamped (proceeds going to the U.K. coffers) and heads for the States. It bounces around here for a while until one day the really old, really mangled newsletter is delivered in San Diego. According to the rules set up by the UPU about 30 years ago, there's a big annual accounting of who owes what to whom for handling international mail. Your friend's newsletter is one small item in a grand annual tally of mail postage used to settle the bills. In this case, between New Zealand and the U.K. and between the U.K. and the U.S. The postal union has given this reckoning the ominous name of "terminal dues."

Each year every UPU member adds up how many pounds of international letter mail, parcels, and special deliveries were sent to and received from each of the other UPU member countries. They all compare notes and reimburse one another for any imbalances. For example, let's say New Zealand sent 10 million pounds of mail to the U.K. last year, while the U.K. sent New Zealand 50 million pounds. At year's end, England would be required to pay N.Z. for handling that extra 40 million pounds of mail. The UPU sets the rate and enforces it according to the type of mail handled (letters, parcels, special delivery).

At the moment, the UPU says, only 20 percent of international communications is by some form of physical mail. By 2005 growth of electronic messaging will far outstrip growth of letters and packages, and the figure may be down to 15 percent. One big issue for the UPU at the moment is protecting their piece of the communications pie and keeping themselves employed. Of course, as the Universal Postal Union, they'll eventually be handling our Christmas cards to Mary and Plato.

Sir Matt: We were playing some word processing dragons round the office the other day when we made the following observation: Most high-tech electronic gizmos—stereos, CD players, camcorders, etc.—are tinted a Darth Vader-ish black. Yet the humble personal computer seems to be universally produced in a unique sort of "whorl throat" color. Our own personal theories are twofold: First, light tan is the "traditional" computer color and none of the manufacturers can bear to change it. Second, off-white is the cheapest color for pretty-punching makers to produce. Third, "deathly black" conveys a machine image that is too scary for friendly Mr. Power Mac. Even stranger is the fact that while desktop computers are Navajo white, laptops are black or gray. So, oh sage of all things extant, what is the rationale behind computer colorism?

—Sir Guillaume, Knight of the Keyboard

Let's take a spoonful of Theory One, a dash of Theory Three, mix 'em with a whole load of competition and marketing paranoia, bake it for 30 years or so, and we have your answer. According to a snailish survey of computer makers and marketers, they'd be glad to peddle PCs in black or plaid or neon orange or as a hand-carved rosewood case, if that's what we want. But the truth is, we want "the" color. Non-white computers are definitely unreliable as business systems, and even for home use, any kooky colors are eyed skeptically. People have tried to hawk things like a camouflage keyboard or fur-covered mouse, but anything out of the "outlandish white" norm is a dud. (One problem with odd-colored accessories is finding a matching odd-colored mouse, processor, and printer.) A San Jose manufacturer sells color-coordinated systems in charcoal gray and a deep emerald green, both with multicolored keyboards, and they're toying with the idea of a purple PC. But even they admit the color systems are targeted for the low-end home PC market. Their business system comes only in high-credibility "almond." Portable laptops are black so they won't show dirt, scrapes, drops. They're also not so different from a black attaché case. An all-black desktop system may just be too ominous or too visually intrusive to be popular. But be honest now. Would you trust any data that came out of a pink PC? Wouldn't you feel like Computer Barbie, with Mattel stamped across your forehead?

Hey, Matt: What's the meaning behind your name "Straight from the Hip"?

—El Nino, Chula Vista

Well, we'd considered calling it "Straight to the Dense" but eventually changed our minds.

Got a question you need answered? Get it straight from the hip. Write to Matthew Alice, c/o the Reader, P.O. Box 85803, San Diego, CA 92186-5803, or fax your questions to 619-231-8489, or e-mail to mattal@aol.com via the Internet.

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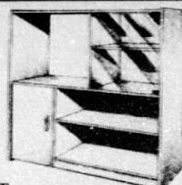
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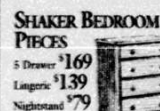
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By Patrick Daugherty

## CLASS ACT

### SPORTING BOX

"So what's the deal? Do players come out here and say hello to you guys?"

Mike Ford, a 46-year-old electrician from Chula Vista, replies, "A lot of them do, yeah."

Ford and I are standing outside the San Diego Padres parking lot gate. This is spring training in Peoria, Arizona, and Ford is an autograph collector. His stash includes 5,500 signed baseball cards, "probably 150 autographed baseballs, and 40 signed broken bats." He is waiting at the fence with 23 other colleagues.

Somebody spent some money in Peoria. The stadium is brand new and shared by the Padres and Seattle Mariners, but both teams have their own practice fields, gyms, clubhouse, and administrative offices.

I ask Mike how long he'd been collecting autographs. "Six years. I usually come over here every spring for ten days. I try and make one day at each club." (Ten major league ball clubs hold spring training in Arizona.)

"Who are you hoping to find today?"

"I'm waiting for Tony Gwynn to come out."

Fifty cars squat in the parking lot, but I don't see anyone walking around. "Are players pretty good about giving autographs, or have they become paranoid, thinking that fans are in it for the money?"

Ford smiles. "Gwynn talked about it last year. He said if fans sell his autograph there's not much he can do about it. He's pretty philosophical. Some players won't let the fact that people collect their autographs to offend."

I look down at Ford's feet and regard a half-dozen boxes of baseball cards. "I see you've got your little kit here."

"Yeah, these are my cards. Last year I was over for just five days and was able to get 500 autographs. The year before I was over for nine days and got 671."

I shake my head. "That's amazing."

Ford's benevolent controlled enthusiasm breaks free. "Today I've got 43 and this is a slow day for San Diego."

"See where that sign is?" Ford points to a "No Parking" sign one hundred yards distant.

"Yeah."

"Right there is a walkway that goes down and around and in between the practice fields. A lot of times players will go from one practice field to another, and in crossing sometimes they'll sign something, sometimes not. It depends what their schedule is. If a coach needs him on another field, of course, he doesn't have time to sign. I didn't start

getting autographs until 10:30 today. I really wasn't working too hard. I was watching Gwynn take batting practice."

"How was he?"

Ford grins again. "Like watching Beethoven write up a concerto. The guy's just sweet. It's a pleasure watching him swing."

At this precise moment Tony Gwynn appears, sauntering to the fence showing a big grin. He's wearing white shorts, blue T-shirt, and dark sunglasses. Instantly, 25 of us crowd close to him. No other player has come to the fence today. Gwynn remarks, "I see a lot of people just drove on by you guys."

A voice calls out, "They must be bigger stars than you are."

"No, it's not that, they just have places they got to go. They got a life they got to live too." Gwynn takes a fan's pen and begins signing baseball cards. The ballplayer looks over the crowd, nods to a man wearing a Seattle baseball cap. "He's got a Mariner but on so he can wait a little while."

The crowd laughs. Gwynn laughs too. "Our job isn't to sit out here and sign your cards."

A modest-faced man replies, "We have no life." Everyone laughs again.

"Yesterday I had to go, so I didn't stop by. You guys were dropping F-bombs on me." Gwynn signs a bat and accepts a left-tipped pen from an outstretched hand. The supplicant has a handful of baseball cards. Gwynn asks, "Are all these yours?"

"Remember last year in San Francisco?"

"You want to take advantage, that's what I'm talking about. See, you ask us to be fair, but then you guys aren't fair."

The man in the spotlight replies, "Remember last year in San Francisco?"

"Yeah, I do remember that, you were hanging out by the hotel." The crowd roars.

Gwynn looks to his left and asks a fan, "Who do you have that Yankee cap on? Talk to me now." Gwynn studies the crowd. "You've been wearing that Yankee cap around me all day, talking to players in the batting cage, and so soon as he comes up here, he takes it off. Thunderous laughter. "You know why?"

Because of Mr. Mariner there, I say something about the Mariner cap and boom, this man takes his Yankee hat off." Everyone howls. Gwynn smiles. "Don't even try that. I've been doing this too long."

Gwynn has been at it for 15 minutes. A young man hands him a framed charcoal drawing. The drawing depicts Tony Gwynn at bat. The drawing is not very good. Gwynn wants to leave, the fan wants to give him the picture. Gwynn signs, takes the drawing, walks back into the clubhouse, returns with a bat and hands it to the overjoyed artist.

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**KARL MARX**  
(1818-1883)  
German social theorist, father of communism, author of *Das Kapital* (1867). Believed "the emancipation from misery

When Thomas Jefferson, in the Declaration of Independence, wrote, "We hold these Truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal," he was stating that those men

Today, there is almost unanimous agreement about the justice of allocating political rights equally, but how should a nation's wealth be distributed? Karl Marx felt there should be no difference between political and economic justice: both would require equality. Financial inequality was not merely reprehensible in Marx's eyes; it was destined to destroy

The distinction between economic quality and justice was first articulated by Adam Smith. Smith's stroke of genius was to suggest that it did not matter how rich the rich were in a country or what the gap was between rich and poor — what really mattered was the wealth of the nation generally.

Smith's argument that peasants in Europe were rather badly well off compared with kings and queens, but he added that — thanks to modern capitalism — these very peasants were frequently far better off than "many an African King, the absolute master of the lives and liberties of a thousand naked savages." The justice of capitalists was linked to its ability to raise the living standards of its poorest masses.

A further consequence of this difference was

A subtle objection to this illustration is that



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# I CURSE POLLY WITH MY IDIOSYNCRASIES



*So it's a late summer Sunday morning*, six weeks after friends and family tossed rice at Phil and Polly, and hotter than Hades. Polly wears a see-through shortie nightie from her trousseau. She stands barefoot in her kitchen, ready to prepare Phil's first breakfast in bed. When she asked what he wanted, he said, "What about fried eggs, sunny-side up, and bacon and French toast and syrup?" She's left him in bed, Sunday paper and a new book, *Catch-22*, strewn around him, coffee on the bedside table, a Kent burning in the Waterford ashtray, of which Polly's mother's best friend gave them six.

Polly is the narrator of the novel I'm writing. She is like me and not like me. I gave her the long red hair I always wanted and asparagus-green eyes. I gave her my freckles. Twenty-year-old Polly, still in college, marries 26-year-old Phil and goes to live in a little valley town in the mountains, which isn't far from what I did. I don't know much about Phil yet. I don't know in what he got his graduate degree or how he's making a living. He doesn't even have a face.

The time is the early 1960s. The Beatles have not come to America. Jack Kennedy hasn't been shot.

Polly's got on hand: butter, eggs, thick-sliced rasher bacon, four slices of stale Wonder bread, Aunt Jemima's syrup. The night before she arranged a tray. On the tray she unrolled a pink linen place mat, embroidered at each corner with white-faced purple pansies. She rolled her Gorham Windsor Rose knife, fork, and spoon in the matching pink napkin. She set a bud vase dead in the middle and stuck in a red rose she cut from the bush at the side of the house.

Polly had listed the order in which she must prepare this breakfast. First bacon, then French toast, and last, eggs. With a fork, she beats up four eggs, two tablespoons sugar, two tablespoons cream, and a teaspoon of cinnamon in a square pan and plops in the bread to soak. That's number one. Then she takes out the bacon and strips away six slices and lays them out across her biggest iron skillet. That's when she breaks out in a sweat.

I curse Polly with my idiosyncrasies. This particular mind-taint I give Polly is one that leads me, when I cut a chicken into wings and legs and backs and breast halves for frying, to see that chicken scratch its way across the hen yard. I hear its fretting *cock-back* sounds. I see feathers ruffle, beady malevolent eyes focus on perfect grains of yellow corn, on glittering beetles. I see the hen's green poop plop from her egg hole. I see her eggs in the nest, dotted with engravings of this same green poop. I smell the hot, closed henhouse in summer. I look inside. The white hens sit on their nests. They cluck. They brood. I think about *The Little Red Hen*. The same goes for pork chops, rib roast, lamb shanks, pressed duck, roast goose. I envision pigs, steers, lambs, ducks, geese — whole again, alive. I expect any minute the slaughterer will arrive in his truck. He strides across the field, shotgun on his shoulder. He whistles.

Polly takes this further. Even fish worry Polly. When she probes the red snapper filets that she will wrap around bread crumbs, grated cheese, carrots, and parsley, she imagines the fish in schools. They swim far beneath the surface, where water is coldest and no light shines. She sees boats at sea. Tanned men toss out vast nets. The fish look up, as if they performed a synchronized water ballet: each fish head turns at the same moment. The fish then plunge down farther, deeper, and head for home, wherever, Polly says to herself, "a fish home might be."

So that when Polly begins Phil's first breakfast in bed, her hands tremble as she rolls away from the pond of shored bacon, one after another strip. She hates the way the fat sticks to her hands. She never eats pork chops, pork roast, ham, without seeing, in bequipped awe, the three little pigs. She never does not think about their fear of the roasting wolf, of their building their various houses, first of straw and then brick, that will keep the wolf at bay.

I want to show the reader that my Polly isn't exactly steady on one foot. She's got problems. I want the reader to suspect that what the galling Polly did with her lockless room in chapters one and two left Polly a frightened little gal anxious to build a safe nest. That nest is marriage to Phil, the pretty house Phil's parents help them buy, and Polly's role as housewife and, eventually, mother. Polly fears the wolf.

But on this hot Sunday morning, when the thermometer reads 84 degrees at 8:15, Polly places bacon strips in one of her two black-iron skillets. She switches on the gas flame, full bore. She turns back to the counter and pours a half-cup of Aunt Jemima's syrup in a saucepan, together with two tablespoons of butter. She sets the pan on a low flame, so that the butter will melt and syrup warm. The next thing she knows, smoke rises from the bacon skillet. She grabs her long-handled flipper over the strips, already sizzled, and turns down the flame. She sighs.

Polly wants more than anything in the world to make Phil happy. He's her job. Phil is. He's her journey. Even though I don't yet know what he looks like, Polly can look at him for hours, he's so handsome.

What gives Polly the most trouble is what cooks need most: patience. Polly wants to hurry

everything. She turns the gas high. She jitters from one bare foot to the other while she stands before the skillet where she's put butter to melt for the French toast. She knows she must let the cold, solid butter's cell walls slowly give way. But she wants to hurry.

**I see feathers ruffle, beady malevolent eyes focus on perfect grains of yellow corn, on glittering beetles.**

Now the bread has soaked up egg and cream. Polly inserts the spatula beneath the first slice. The bread falls apart in gooey scraps. Polly decides to set these scraps in the bubbling butter and reassemble them later, on the plate. "No one will know," she says aloud. She is already disappointed. She has

that feeling you get when you tell a new friend the first lie. She thinks she'll yell with frustration, it all takes so long. To control herself, she begins to recite, while she waits for Phil's French toast to brown. "The Lord is my Shepherd." Her bare feet itch while she stands, spot-

honey jar, slow attenuated drops of sweetness. "The Lord," she begins again, "is my Shepherd. I shall not want."

Polly never fried an egg until this morning. She's eaten many a sunny-side-up egg. She knows that the yellow yolk should rise like half a bright sun, above the egg's white. She's terrified she can't get the egg out of the shell in one piece. Frying an egg, if you've done it, seems simple. It isn't. First you've got to figure out how to break the egg. The best way for beginners is how I have Polly do it. Grasp the egg between thumb and second and third finger of your right hand (if you're right-handed). Firmly but carefully tap the equator of the egg on the side of a small bowl. Your goal is to crack the eggshell, but not shatter it, and to get the egg, white and yolk, out from the shell into the bowl with yolk intact. So once you crack open the egg, you hold it over your bowl and slowly open

the shell's two halves and let white and yolk slide gently into the bowl. For rookies, which Polly is, cracking eggs into a bowl rather than into the skillet where they'll fry gives you a chance to pick out any shell fragments that drop into the egg. Polly manages it, first time, and once she's got Phil's bacon fried and stretched out on paper towel to drain, she tips the egg from the bowl into the hot fat.

The bacon fat's too hot. The cold raw egg hits the fat's surface, the fat splatters and pops. Hot fat flies onto Polly's naked arm and burns. Pin-size red blisters rise. Polly squeals a scream.

Mornings when I'm writing Polly's life, and she gets into one pickle after another, I feel my heart's going to break for her. I know what's going to happen to her up ahead, and it's not good. I want her here, early in the novel, to be happier than she is. I want her to enjoy her

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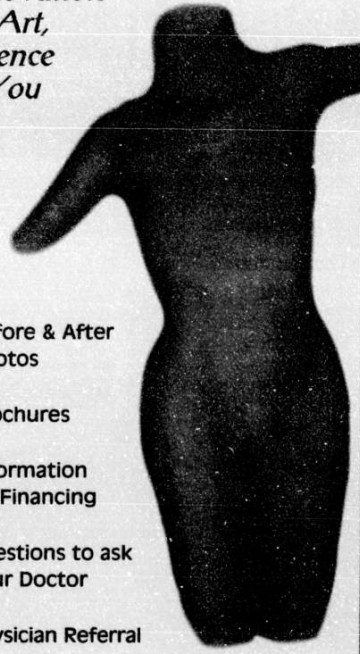
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have given my opinion to pregnancy a second thought.

But, finally, on this particular Sunday morning, an hour after she arrived in the kitchen, Polly has the eggs, both yolks broken when she converts them from skillet to plate, the puzzle pieces of blackened French toast tucked back together, and the respectably crisped and only slightly burned bacon assembled on the white stoneware plate. Polly grips the tray's edges. She tiptoes out of the kitchen, its counters littered with dirty pots and pans. I see egg yolk already hardening on the white GI stove. Flies circle the pan that held the syrup. Polly tells herself, "Be careful," as she walks through the dining and living rooms and up the stairs. "All I need now," she thinks, "is to drop his tray."

"Moon River" is playing, the orchestral no-words version. Polly wishes she knew the words if she did, she'd sing it. She feels, all at once, so happy to be alone with Phil in this big house where anything can happen. She hopes he likes his breakfast. She hopes he leans over and sniffs the red rose.

Phil looks up from the funny papers. I see him now. No wonder Polly loves to look at him. He's got that square, all-American blue-eyed trustworthy face and above the face, khaki-colored hair, the forelock of which falls over a wide forehead. He's got almost jay ears, but not quite. His mother once thought of having them pinned and his father raised hell, so she didn't. He's got what people call an "irrespressible grin" and he's grinning it now.

"Baby," he says, as Polly sets down the tray. His voice is as deep as Elvis's can get in "Love Me Tender." "Baby," Phil says again and reaches up and strokes Polly's white throat. He is naked — "back naked," he says — under the sheets. He pulls the tray onto his lap. Polly plops down on the bed's end, one bare foot under her. Phil picks up a slice of bacon and feeds it into his mouth. Polly shows her bare arm where the bacon grease splashed. She whispers, "I love you with these little red blisters." Her green eyes narrow. She watches her husband eat. Except for "Moon River" and the sounds of Phil's chewing, the room is quiet. Phil watches him chew and swallow French toast and egg and syrup and bacon, every bite. ■

— Judith Moore

Judith Moore has been a recipient of two NEA Fellowships for literature, most recently in 1996. She is coauthor with Sue Grafton, published by New Books and Graphics and reissued by New Press, and author of The Left Coast of Paradise, Solar Press, which included pieces written initially for the San Diego Reader. Her essay collection, Never Eat Your Heart Out, also including pieces first printed in the Reader, was published last year by Farrar, Straus & Giroux.

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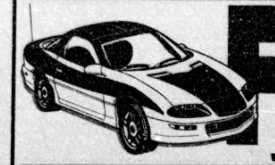
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# Middle

The last chord of one of Liszt's Transcendental Etudes resonates and falls silent. I am brought back from 19th-century Paris, where the great Hungarian pianist is performing a salon recital for the Parisian elite. I return to Carmel Valley Library's meeting room, where 35-year-old Yugoslav pianist Kemal Gekic bows to applause and shouts of "Bravo!" from the audience of 60. To my left, one row back, Jacques Leiser nods and smiles approvingly. He is Gekic's manager.

An artist's manager is to a musician what a sports agent is to a professional athlete. He coordinates every aspect of the musician's performance except the music itself. "We are the middlemen," Leiser explains, sitting in the living room of his tenth-floor Hillcrest condo.

"Artists are often not in reality; they visualize their world as extensions of their own worlds, and their own worlds often revolve around themselves."

From their early days, they've been brought up and nurtured and catered to by their families or their wives or boyfriends.

Leiser reclines in a chair in a corner of the room. Above him and to his right hangs an oil painting of the Russian pianist, Sviatoslav Richter, a friend and associate of Leiser's who died last August. "In the profession, he's known as the last giant and one of the greatest pianists ever," Leiser says in an accent, an omelette of his native French seasoned with Italian, German, Spanish, and a little Russian. Raised in Paris, Leiser and his family fled France in 1941 when he was 11 and settled in New York City. After studying musicology and piano at Syracuse

and Princeton Universities, he went back to Europe to work for the London record company Electrical and Musical Industries (EMI). His first assignment in 1953 was in Milan working with the opera stars of the day.

"I lived near the world's most famous opera house, La Scala, for three years," he remembers. "That's where I met Maria Callas. In the daytime, we courted her during recording sessions at the Teatro Alla Scala, and in the evening I got free passes to the performances. So guess where I spent my time? I was at La Scala every evening practically. I was fortunate to be in the right place at the right time because that was the golden age of opera. All of the major singers were there in the '50s."

Being in the right place at the right time became Leiser's hallmark while he was with EMI. Combining this timing with a knack for recognizing talents before they became famous, he was often signing musicians before his competitors. A good example is Sviatoslav Richter. Leiser smiles at the memory.

"I contacted [an EMI representative in Helsinki] a few days before the concert and asked if he had any idea where Richter might be staying, because I wanted to see him before the concert. He said he didn't know, maybe one of the luxury hotels. We rang them up, and no Richter to be found. I thought maybe he was staying at the Soviet Embassy. I asked the representative, who was also the local piano dealer, if they had a good piano there, and he said they didn't. I said, 'He's got to be practicing somewhere.' He said, 'Maybe at the Helsinki Music Conservatory.' He took me there, and there were all these practice rooms. You could hear the playing, but you couldn't see who was practicing. So I just opened every door, and if it was a student I would say, 'Oh, I'm very sorry.' I finally opened a door, and there was Richter. I was sort of taken aback and I said, 'Oh, I'm very sorry,' and he says, 'Oh, please come in,' and he didn't know me. I immediately introduced myself and said, 'I represent His Master's Voice' — that's the most famous label on EMI, the dog and the gramophone, who recorded Rachmaninoff and Chaillyan — Chaillyan was the most famous Russian bass of his time, he was like the Pavarotti of that time — 'and we'd like to record you.' He said, 'With pleasure. Are you coming to my concert?' And I said,

"Wild horses couldn't keep me away." At the concert, sure enough, I spotted people from Philips Records in the auditorium. But I was the first one there, and I beat them to it."

After Leiser's triumphant signing of Richter in Helsinki, he brought the pianist to London to record Schumann. A photograph Leiser snapped of the blond-haired Richter, his strong Russian face bowed over the keys, became the album's cover photo. It was Richter's first recording in the West and the beginning of a long association between him and Leiser.

During this time, Leiser acquired his first managing experience, though it was unofficial. "Richter had asked on numerous occasions that I accompany him on tour," he explains, "so I was often with him on these tours in Germany, Italy, Austria, and so forth. Since he was very reluctant to speak to people and to answer the phone, I was in

charge. So a lot of people assumed that I was his manager. I wasn't at all. I was working for EMI Records. I remember one day, the director from Deutsche Grammophon asked if I were Richter's manager and I said, 'No no no, I'm not his manager.' He looked at me and said, 'You're not his manager? Well, why not?' I said, 'Me, a manager? No, that's not for me. I can't see myself as a manager. It's too commercial and it's too stressful. I like music. Managing is too much high-pressure business. That's why I'm working in the record division, because I'm dedicated to music.'"

What Leiser didn't know was that managing would soon become his life's work. In 1964, EMI had a company reorganization and wanted Leiser to move from Paris to their headquarters in Hayes, Middlesex, near Heathrow Airport outside of London. He didn't want to move and subsequently quit. He was out of work when Philips Records asked him to sign one of the piano titans of the time to a recording contract.

"The other major pianist of our time, who also died a year ago, was an Italian named Arturo Benedetti Michelangeli. I had contacted him about making some records, and he was always very reluctant to record. But I got him interested, and then he asked me a question. 'Tell me, if I made this record, do you think they would sell?' There was a keen interest and demand for his recordings, so I answered, 'Oh yes, of course, but I think they would sell even more if you toured in other countries besides Italy.' When I got to him, he had confined

himself to Italy; he hadn't played London, Paris, or New York in over ten years. He looked at me and asked, 'Do you think you could get me concerts?' I said, 'Of course. Give me two months.' So I organized a concert for him in Paris, which was a great success. That's how I

got to New York City, which had become the world center for classical music. Leiser worked in New York from 1971 to 1991 until, as he puts it, "after 20 years of hard labor, I was pardoned for good behavior" and came to San Diego.

"The real reason — it's quite

"Well, I went to San Francisco by way of San Diego because I happen to have friends here that I've known for 20 years. I arrived at Lindbergh Field, it was in October of '91, and when I got out of the plane, it was in the afternoon and the sun was shining and the sky was blue, the palm trees were swaying in the breeze, and all of a sudden I thought to myself, 'What are you doing in New York when you could have this?' The thought lingered on and it just wouldn't leave me, and at dinner with my friends I mentioned this to them. One of them is in real estate and he said, 'I have to look at some condos tomorrow. Why don't you come along.' So we went to see some condos and I didn't have any thought of buying. But the second one they showed me was in this building on the sixth floor facing the park, and when I stepped in there and saw the park and the trees, I was taken aback. This was on a Saturday morning, and Saturday afternoon I had put down a deposit. On Monday I left for San Francisco to meet Dr. Walker and he asked, 'How was your weekend in San Diego?' I said, 'Great. I bought a condo and I'm moving in December.' That's how it happened."

While he continues the work he did in New York via phone and fax, Leiser has embraced the slower pace of life here. He walks in Balboa Park, plays tennis four or five times a week, lunches in Coronado and La

started to be a manager. This was one of the pianists I admired most in the world, and when I was telling my friends that I was managing Michelangeli, I remember saying, 'Can you imagine? Not only do I have the privilege of hearing him at his concerts, but I got paid for it.' That's how I got paid for the business."

For the next three years, Leiser worked from his home base in Paris representing Michelangeli and a growing list of other musicians, including pianists Julius Katchen and Maurizio Pollini. He also founded the Tours Music Festival in Tours, France, in collaboration with Richter. In 1971, he moved his operation to New

York City, which had become the world center for classical music. Leiser worked in New York from 1971 to 1991 until, as he puts it, "after 20 years of hard labor, I was pardoned for good behavior" and came to San Diego.

"Artists are a special breed. They're spoiled."

## Souvenirs

During his early years as an artist's manager, Jacques Leiser found photography, a hobby he picked up in his youth, a pastime compatible with his busy schedule. "I combined my interest in photography with musicians," he recalls. "When I was with the artists I always had my camera, and I took pictures while we were at a cafe or on the train or in the recording studio. I amassed these pictures but I never had time to devote to them. I was much too busy as a manager, so I just put them away. Now I have boxes and boxes of them. But I've never considered myself to be a professional photographer. I've never had an exhibit before. It never dawned on me that it could be possible."

Not only was it possible that Leiser's photography be exhibited, but it would happen at the Louvre in Paris, no less. From February 15 to March 16, a dozen or so of Leiser's photographs — all of Sviatoslav Richter, including one with Pablo Picasso on the artist's 80th birthday — are being shown in conjunction with the biennial "Classiques en Images" film festival at the Louvre. This year's festival is titled "The Great Pianists of the Twentieth Century."

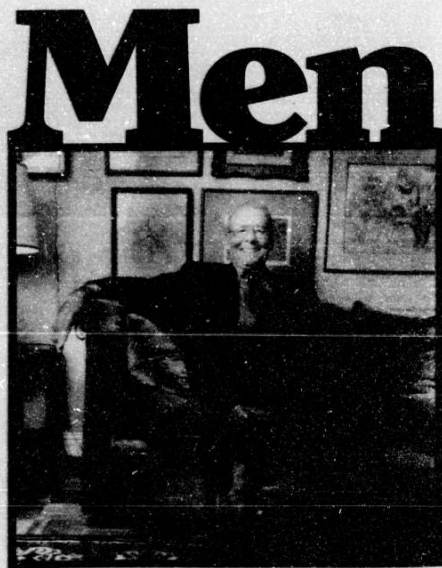
"I was astounded," Leiser exclaims. "I was in disbelief that I would have my pictures at the Louvre. I said if I had dreamed this, it would have been unbelievable. This all came about because I happen to know Pierre Laban, he explains, 'the artistic consultant of the Louvre film festival, and he knew that I had these pictures. He had seen some of them, and he decided to use them. They are also used in the official catalog. I have ten photos in it including a full-page shot of Richter and shots of [pianists] Edwin Fischer, Alfred Cortot, and Anne Fischer. And

I wrote an article on Richter in French for that catalog. It's called 'Sviatoslav Richter, Souvenirs.'"

In another surprise, the man who proofread the articles in the film festival's catalog is the producer of a French radio program called *Les Imaginaires*. He thought Leiser might make an interesting guest on his program. "When he saw my article," Leiser says, "he decided to have me do a show. I don't think they've had any artist's managers before, only artists. He called me out of the blue, and I was a bit reluctant at first because I've never done that kind of thing, and it was in French. But I said I would do it."

While in Paris for his exhibit — and to represent the United States on the film festival jury — Leiser will spend two and a half hours on air talking about "Richter, Michelangeli, Maria Callas, David Oistrakh, and other musicians working with EMI in Milan during the golden age of the Paris years with EMI, and how I happened to become an artist's manager. Then there's the development of my American management organization and the story of my move from New York to San Diego. Also, my current clients, pianists Kemal Gekic and Juanza Zayas will play live on the program. [The producer] had never heard of them, but I told him that this goes hand-in-hand with what I've been doing all my life, discovering unknown artists. I also prepared a lot of recordings to go with this list of topics; for instance, Richter's first recordings in the West, which I arranged, and the first recording of Callas I ever heard, which dates back to 1954. I won't have to speak for two and a half hours, thank God."

— Eric Grimm



Jacques Leiser

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Jolla, works on writing his memoirs, and thinks of himself as a San Diegoan. As for the familiar complaint that San Diego has no culture, Leiser will have none of it.

"I don't understand why people are always criticizing San Diego," he says. "It's not New York. You can't have your cake and eat it too. If we were New York, you wouldn't have paradise. I am not the least bit troubled by the lack of culture here. This is not a cultural vacuum at all. For a city of this size, it's doing quite well. We have concerts. We have the La Jolla Chamber Music Society, we have wonderful artists like Yo Yo Ma coming here. We have the Escondido Center for the Arts, which is an outstanding place with a beautiful hall and wonderful acoustics. We have theater. We had the Romanov jewels at the Museum of Art. There were only three or four of those exhibits in the whole country. We have wonderful museums, and we have a wonderful opera season here. Of course, it was a tragedy about the symphony, but it will probably be reestablished sooner or later. Those things happen in cities throughout the country; it's not just here. There are a number of cities — for example, New Orleans, Denver, and Oakland — that have had to close down their symphonies. These are hard times for everyone."

Leiser offers several reasons for the decline of classical music: dwindling government subsidies, a lack of music education in schools, astronomical concert fees that make the best artists inaccessible to all but the biggest markets. But underlying all of these, he sees a deeper reason.

"People today aren't really nurtured to music," he laments. "They don't hear it on the radio, and their families don't encourage it. It's something foreign to young people. If they had been brought up to like classical music, it would be different. That has to be done from an early age. My family had music in our home in Paris, and ever since the age of five, I remember loving it. I had my own phonograph, and we had a piano in our home, and I was brought up with the sound of classical music. That's what's lacking today. I don't want to oversimplify it because it's a very complex problem. But that's one of the ingredients."

"You've got to start people when they're young. When I say young, I mean in the formative years, when they are seven years old or so. I remember growing up in New York during the war years; there was a film that knocked me out, *A Song to Remember*, which was the story of Chopin. I went to see that film several times — I was very young at the time — because it really impressed me. I was drawn to that. I was exposed. It certainly influenced me a great deal."

—Eric Grimm



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**KEITH:** This is the L.A. Freeway. Which lunatic are you talking about?

**ZACK:** That idiot in the black BMW with the tinted windows. It's freaking me out. I wish he'd pick a lane for crying out loud!

**KEITH:** Look, don't go road raging on me, man. I'll bet you a pack of Luckies that it's a big shot producer screaming at some poor schmuck on the car phone. Let's try and lose'em....

**ZACK:** How? We're bumper to bumper, here.

**KEITH:** Wait a sec...the dude's pulling up alongside us... the window's coming down...HEY! LOOK OUT!!

TO BE CONTINUED...

AN AMERICAN ORIGINAL SINCE 1871

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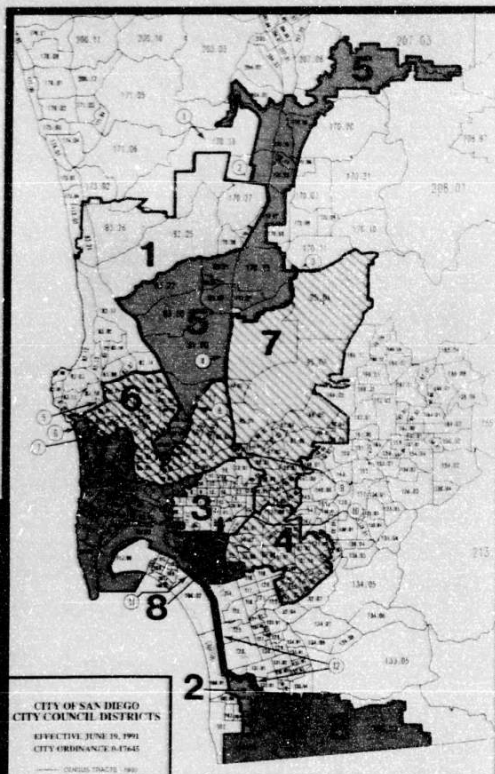
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# District Fix Failure?

opposition was emerging to take on the incumbents. Reformers argued that the city was being taken over by the special interests, and they thought they had a solution.

Steve Erie, a professor of political science at UCSD, was an eyewitness to the beginning. "I was a participant observer," Erie recalls. "I came in at the invitation of Barb Bamberger, who at that point was the coordinator of the Sierra Club, and the organizing meeting was at the Sierra Club headquarters in Balboa Park. Of course, this was being pushed by the Sierra Club and John Hartley [in December 1987], and it was a way to control the power of developers' money in local elections. They saw that you can run much cheaper campaigns, labor intensive, a lot of citizen volunteers, if you had district elections. Remember, a big issue in the late 1980s, before the economy went in the toilet, was too much growth and too much influence by developers in local city politics."

In October 1988, at a rally in a tiny North Park playground said to be symbolic of the lack of city services and facilities in blue-collar neighborhoods, petition organizer



Steve Erie



John Hartley

San Diego City Council districts map

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**SURGEON GENERAL'S WARNING: Smoking By Pregnant Women May Result in Fetal Injury, Premature Birth, And Low Birth Weight.**

**KEITH:** What the hell!  
Some trash just went flying  
into our backseat!  
No, hang on, it's a note...  
No, hang on, it's a note...

**ZACK:** It's not some kind of threat, is it?

**KEITH:** That's weird. It's lipstick, like someone kissed the paper....

**ZACK:** Huh?

**KEITH:** Hey, on the other side it says, "Have extra tickets for concert at the Wiltern...tonight. Join us???" Signed Steph, Carmen and Lisa.

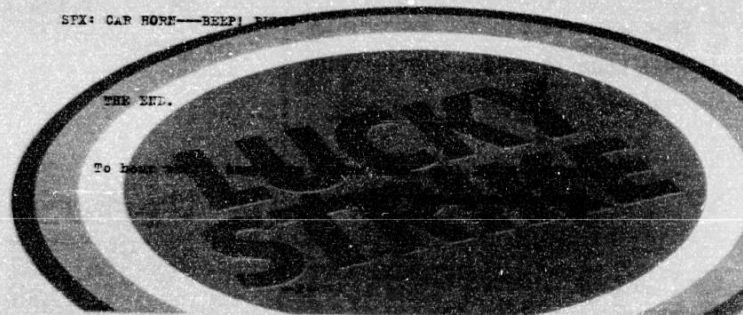
**ZACK:** You're kidding me...!

**KEITH:** Like I always say about this town, buddy, it's being in the right place at the right time.

**SFX:** CAR HORN—BEEP!

THE END.

To hear



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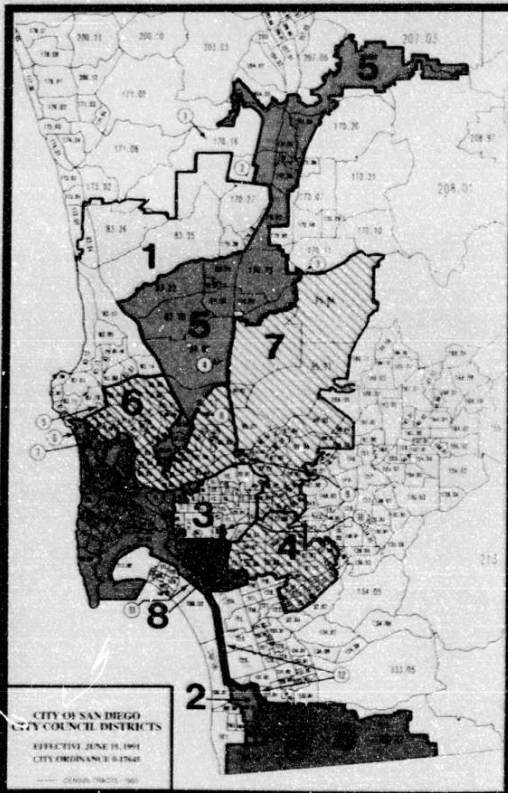


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STX: CAR HORN---BEEP!



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Bob Fisher and Bill Chavira

Jim Blusener told reporters that under the old system, "the power of the individual vote is watered down, diluted." As volunteers fanned out across the city to gather signatures, the battle was joined by Channel 10 news reporter Herb Lawhorn, then president of the San Diego Urban League, an advocate for black and minority causes. "It's not just a black or Hispanic issue," Lawhorn told the *Union-Tribune*. "People all over the city aren't receiving the kind of representation they deserve. District election has to do with the enfranchisement of all people."

As the signature count mounted, the Chicano Federation filed a lawsuit in federal court, arguing that the then-current way of electing the city council by a district-only primary — which first narrowed the field of candidates to two, who then faced a citywide runoff — discriminated against minorities. The reformers demanded that each city councilmember be elected solely by the voters of the district they were to represent.

"The nub of the question is whether power in San Diego will remain concentrated or be more widely shared," declared



Mayor Maureen O'Connor

Herb Friedman, in a column written for the *Union-Tribune*, outlining the classic arguments for what came to be known as district elections. "Citywide campaigns in a metropolis of more than one million persons are costly. With San Diego's legal contribution limits, candidates, to win, must have substantial insider support — which historically comes from the development industry — or be personally wealthy."

"Foes of Proposition E say its passage would bring parochialism to the council and destroy a 'citywide' view-point by members. They say

this without blushing, despite a council constantly leading over district concerns."

In a letter to the editor, grassroots activist Hans Lovshoff added, "Few voters know their own council person, let alone those in other districts. As a result, they tend to rely on advertising pieces, radio and TV ads, and last-minute hit pieces. It has been shown, time and again, that because of this person winning a large majority in their districts have been defeated in the citywide contest by well-financed opponents. As you well know, these opponents are not grass roots



Jim Jacobson

candidates, but members of the power structure."

Glen Keene, another letter writer, declared, "San Diego city government has become a government of the rich, by the rich, and for the rich. The cause of this perversion of the American ideal is San Diego's system of citywide elections for city council. The cure is the district election initiative. Candidates of average means, most of us, can't afford to buy an election and are excluded from what is supposed to be a democratic system."

Other supporters were even more visceral. "By signing the ballot argument against district elections, Mayor O'Connor has shown her true colors as a member of the ruling establishment who control our city," wrote Jim Jacobson. "The pretended guise of populism wears thin. Maureen! The city's poorest holders squawk that we would be victims of machine politics with district elections. I can't imagine a more corrupt system than that the present one, where a candidate's only chance of being elected is with hundreds of thousands in developer and big-shot money needed to run television campaigns citywide. In San Diego, money talks and

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unopposed. This year, although some opposition is emerging to the reelection efforts of Byron Weir and Juan Vargas, the only big name to make noises about challenging an incumbent, in this case Valerie Stallings, has been ex-coordinator and Chargers contract foe Bruce Henderson. So far, George Stevens, the fourth member of the council facing reelection, remains unopposed. With the final filing date looming on March 5, the lack of opposition has non-phased many in light of the low regard the city council has come to be viewed with, but Eric says he is not surprised.

He remembers that district-election battles were counting on their reform to encourage more candidates. "We thought it would trigger an increase in participation and turnout, at least that was the kind of argument being made by the proponents. There was a slight uptick right afterwards, but since then I think we've

just gotten into a holding pattern or continued the long-term decline of the 1990s.

"San Diego has always had what I call a depressed civic culture," explains Eric. "We frequently act like a Santa Barbara South, with a Father Knows Best [attitude], [treating of] elite decision-makers downtown. It's still a small town in many ways, with the decision-makers making the decisions and the citizens just sitting back passively. It's a spectator sport at best."

There remain some strong supporters of district elections. Barbara Bamberger, a Sierra Club activist at the time she played a key role in the district-elections campaign and now an environmental staffer with the City of Chula Vista, says the system has proven itself well. And she says that the lack of candidates filing for council elections can't be blamed on the reform measure.

"I think, to be honest with you, that it's more of a problem with the perception of public officials that the public has—that it's not the greatest job in the world. I don't necessarily know if it would be that much different if we had citywide elections. I don't know what

don't see that as being the case."

The fact that the stadium issue smoldered for months before exploding into a people's referendum and two lawsuits showed that there are mechanisms other than district elections for addressing citywide concerns, even when individuals

only," Bamberger observes. "The detractor people who were arguing against were saying it would become parochial, and I think to some degree, probably, that there is an element of parochialism when you decentralize."

"But when you look at the major issues of the last two years—the stadium, the convention center, and other issues—these are very citywide issues, and people are still concerned about city issues."

As for the controversial, hush-hush way the city council initially handled the stadium expansion and Chargers' ticket guarantee, Bamberger adds, "I don't know if that's necessarily related to whether it was citywide elections or district elections. You'd think that the district, in that scenario, would be more accountable. [But] I think that issue is so way beyond the electric system, and that the whole way the project was presented to the public was an

educational issue of how are we presenting information, and are we providing this information to the public, and that's why the public said, 'Wait a second, what's really going on here?'"

"I think, environmentally, definitely, there has been much greater attention paid to what the public thought about the development projects in their neighborhoods than there may otherwise have been," Bamberger says. She also argues that pork-barrel politics may not be all bad. "I think that is part of the territory. I don't disagree that that happens because I think that's true. But in an offense, that's what representative government is to some degree. That is literally what representative government is."

Both Eric and Bamberger are quick to give John Hartley, a Democrat and North Park business broker, much of the credit for coming up with the idea for the district elections

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Hartley argues that money politics has proliferated in the years since his council days. He and other observers note that despite district elections, the city council has been hit with seven major money-laundering scandals, in which developers and city leases have been caught using employees as fronts to give money to city council campaigns. In each case, the violators have paid a fine, and the city council recipients have

claimed they didn't know the true source of the money. The series of scandals has become so notable that a federal judge in Sacramento recently cited them as an example of why contribution limits don't work to limit corruption. (The City of San Diego officially imposes a \$250 per person limit on donations to city council campaigns. In each case, the violators have paid a fine, and the city council recipients have

legal, as long as the employees aren't reimbursed.) "The Democrats on the council are almost indistinguishable from the Republicans," says Hartley. "We're not getting people who really have some sort of a philosophical base other than a personal career; it's like careerism. They get on, they go along, they get taken care of, they don't get attacked, they go with the flow, rather than people there who are fighting for something. I mean, they don't take votes that are unpopular votes, they don't buck the establishment."

Like the others, Hartley bemoans the lack of grassroots candidates, whom district elections were supposed to encourage. "What we haven't seen is candidates getting out and canvassing, going door-to-door, so a year early, their sentiments that people don't want to walk, they don't want to go door-

door, but that's the only way to win elections, I think, with those leather, unless you have a lot of money. "I'm a little cynical here about even getting people elected to the council, so I'm looking at this referendum that Henderson brought forth as an option. Maybe we should have a citizens' group that does referendums. If you just can't trust your elected people, no matter who they are, then maybe

what you should have is some kind of citizens' group that can just put a brake on them, all the time. That's kind of where my thoughts are going." Of district elections, he now concludes, "It's good and bad. It wasn't that whole new dawn. It did a lot of what we wanted it to. The district can now hold a person accountable. Whether they're doing it is another story." ■

— Matt Potter

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"My job is to control the image," says Colleen Gibbs, who works in the public relations department at Sea World of California. "If National Public Radio calls and says it's Marine Mammal Freedom Week and someone is going to be picketing outside the park, my job is to provide a counter." Not herself, she says, but an expert biologist who's done work with Sea World. Sea World of Florida doesn't have to deal with environmental activists the way Sea World of California does, she says — California is a more environmentally active place. Gibbs says she also deals with film crews — the Discovery Channel, National Geographic, public television, and so on.

Today Gibbs is controlling the image with me. It's taken many calls and a lot of persuasion for me to get into Sea World to interview the dolphin trainers. When this started months ago Gibbs asked if I would be talking with the other side, the animal-rights people — it was something they always asked when journalists came to Sea World — and I said no. (And because I said no, I never did.) I figured I had a fairly good grasp of the issues anyway, since I'd been writing about marine life for more than a decade. I told her I'd once been a dolphin trainer, and it may have been this which, after a refund, got me into the park to speak with the trainers and to participate in the Dolphin Interaction Program.

By the time I'd arrived this morning and stood waiting in the security office, where workers filed by flashing ID cards to the sounds of "Okay, Okay, Okay, Okay." I had already interviewed the head dolphin trainer, Bill Hoffman. It was a telephone interview, by speaker phone from Gibbs's office — all interviews, I was told, were to be conducted with Gibbs present, and all telephone interviews were to be conducted by speaker phone.

I was the lucky one, getting backstage to see the dolphins, getting to talk to the trainers about their work. Later on, after this was all over, Gibbs would write to me that Sea World of California "never devoted the amount of time we made available to you to any print or broadcast reporter covering the dolphin-training element of our park." She may have told me this because when I left the park after a second visit a few days later, we weren't speaking, and she may have told me this because it was her job, after all, to control the image.

Dolphin training and dolphin performance are about control too — though there's more to it, and in a way dolphin training could serve as a model for the best kind of parental training. But I've always found controlling the image a hard thing to do, a bigger, right up there with controlling your fate or your destiny, or hardest of all, controlling other people.

At the doors of an aquarium Gibbs and I join a group of people, some of whom have paid \$125 to interact with dolphins. Inside a theater we have a view of six Comm-

on's dolphins, which have come from Chile. Our guide, whose name is Justin, tells us about the disruptive camouflage patterns on their bodies, that they're too fatigued and have too short an attention span to be in a dolphin show. He talks about education, a dolphin's ability to orient by sound, says that they hear through their jawbones, and passes around a tuning fork so that we can touch it to our jawbones. He also tells about the training principle called the "three-second pause," the neutral response to undesirable behavior that is the cornerstone of dolphin training here. He demonstrates this by standing still for a moment and removing all expression from his face. The three-second pause, he says, is also called "Least Reinforcing Stimulus."

When we file out of the theater and move over to the back pool of the dolphin stadium, Justin shows us the hand signal for "passing a dolphin," a pointing motion across the body, and he tells us to be affirmative in our signals because "dolphins can read your level of energy." He tells us more about "Least Reinforcing Stimulus" and adds that "positive reinforcement builds a positive relationship."

Then the head trainer Bill Hoffman joins us. Hoffman is in his 30s, tanned, slim, and fit, with an air of confidence and happiness. He also talks about Least Reinforcing Stimulus and tells us that it is a response that is "slightly above neutral, and never negative." There is always eye contact, he says. Least Reinforcing Stimulus tells the animals "that failure is a part of learning, that it's okay to fail." The dolphins are never punished, and they are never deprived of food for not performing correctly.

Hoffman tells us that to keep the dolphins interested and stimulated there are variations in the reinforcements and rewards. They give fish in varying numbers. They regularly introduce new toys into the pool. Very important is "tactile stimulation," which includes rubbing and touching, but also such things as pouring warm water or ice cubes into the dolphins' mouths, "which they seem to like." Sometimes they don't reward proper behavior at all, he says, to keep unpredictability in the dolphins' lives, which seems to improve response. The name for this principle is "Variable Reinforcement with Reinforcement Variety."

When Hoffman tells us it's time to get into our wet suits I think — Did I miss something? In my conversations with Colleen Gibbs, when she said I would be participating in the Dolphin Interaction Program, that it would be "hands-on." Did she also tell me I'd be getting into a wet suit and getting into the water? When I mention this, her response is, well, neutral. She doesn't say anything.

But that's okay, I don't mind. This is great, actually. I get to go into the water with dolphins, something I haven't done for 20 years, something I used to do all the time.

When I was 21 and in between colleges, living on Cape Cod in Massachusetts, I answered an ad in the newspaper for a "fish curator" at a small aquarium. It was a marine-and-pop operation, and I was third in command, responsible for feeding the animals and catching fish for the tanks and for putting on dolphin and seal shows two or three times a day. The seals, picked up off the beaches, lived in a little pond, came up a ladder, took a fish from me, and slid down a slide to applause. The dolphins lived in a homemade concrete pool with brackish water pumped in from the salt marsh and filtered through sandboxes. It was given most of the

# THE Eye OF THE Dolphin

time but the dolphins were happy, as dolphins always seem to be. Stormy, Salty, and Spray had come from Marineland of Florida already knowing the show. My job was to learn the script and lead them through it — playing basketball, jumping through hoops, spitting out a fire. The climax of the show was when Spray, the biggest and dominant dolphin at 1200 pounds, 30-plus years old, would jump ten feet into the air and pluck a cigarette (a piece of rolled paper) out of my mouth. Spray was good at it, rising into the air, plucking the cigarette cleanly from between my lips as I stood on the platform with jaw thrust out and hands behind my back. But each year Spray took a two-week "vacation" and boycotted the show. Because these were grimmer times, Spray was not fed when she didn't perform. Nevertheless, she still got her meals, damming the other dolphins aside when I fed them, after they had jumped through hoops and spit out fires, etc. One time when I had enough of Spray's body-damming, I threw a piece of fish at her, intending to hit her in the head but actually hitting her in the eye. Spray threw herself backwards, raced down to the far end of the pool, and swam around in circles, blowing up bursts of air.

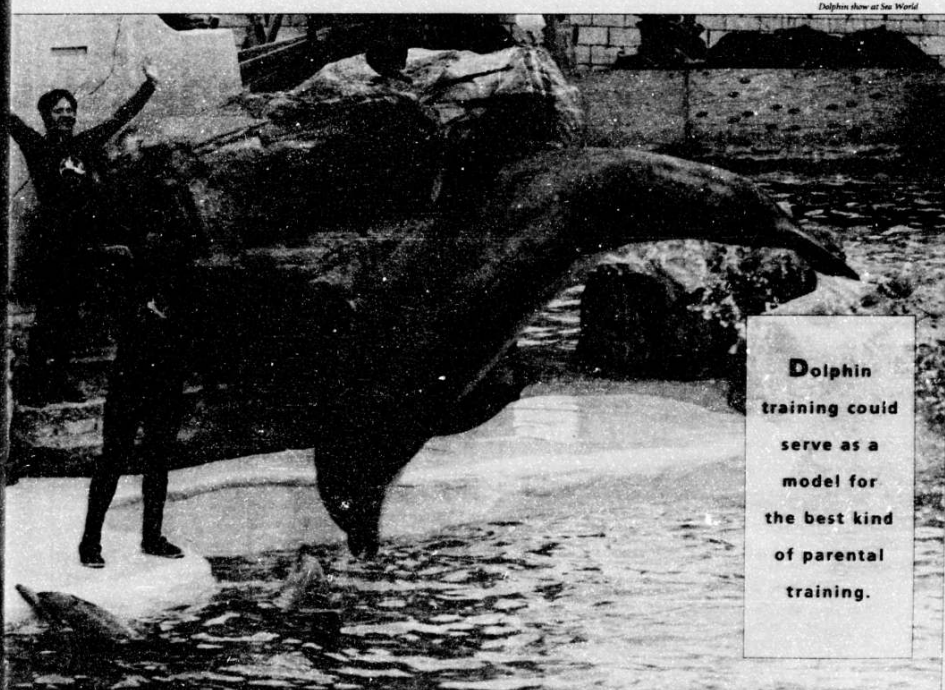
A few tricks later I tried the cigarette trick, explaining to the crowd, who had been watching what had happened, that Spray was on vacation and probably wouldn't participate. But when I

blew the whistle and put the paper in my mouth and my arms behind my back, I saw her rippling form coming along underneath the water. I didn't move, even though I was afraid — there was something wonderful about dolphins I thought, just like everybody else. Spray exploded from the water, rose into the air, snatched me in the jaw for the first time ever, and then somehow tapped away the cigarette too.

My favorite time as a fish curator was when I got to release a loggerhead sea turtle. I drove it south to Nantucket Sound in the back of a pickup truck, lumbered with it across the beach, my hands on the front part of the shell, the back part of the shell on my thighs, and then watched it flip and flap through the waves into the ocean. I left the job after a year, bored with the routines, tired of seeing the dolphins in the fetal pool. But I truly had gotten an experience with dolphins. In the men's locker room I'm joined by two others. A father, an airline pilot, has brought his daughter here as a gift because she loves dolphins. A husband from Baltimore on a belated honeymoon has come here with his wife, who has loved dolphins all her life and sees this as the fulfillment of a dream. They're in bathing suits, I'm in my underwear, and we get into our wet suits, helping each other zip up. We put on rubber booties, and out we go into the fresh air, skin-tight and rubberized.

I'm choking at the collar, and I'm feeling naked for two reasons. One is the wet suit, which is small for me. My underwear is showing through, I fear, and I feel like my stomach, advancing into middle age ahead of me, is sticking out. I'm pulling at my rubber collar and keeping my gut in, trying not to look at anybody, including the middle-aged women — the mothers, I assume, of the young women who make up most of this group. The other reason I'm feeling naked is because I no longer have my pen or my notebook, which is how I take notes.

Bill Hoffman speaks to us again and explains the daily life at the pool, as I remember it. He says there are husbandry sessions in which, amazingly, the animals present their tail flukes to have blood samples drawn (they are also able to urinate on command — one wonders what the signal is for that). There are learning sessions, when the training is done. There is playtime, and feeding time, and there are "relationship sessions," when the trainer merely spends time with the dolphins. The relationship sessions are important — it's a kind of buzzword here — and significant time is devoted to them. There's a bit more to Bill Hoffman's talk, I'm simultaneously feeling conspicuous in my wet suit, while trying to remember what Hoffman is saying, and thinking that while this is fun it's also a public relations effort. I think that this is what journalists often encounter — the job of writing a neutral story in the face of the agenda to control it.



Dolphin training could serve as a model for the best kind of parental training.

A photographer announces that all those who want photos are to wear wristbands. There's a photographer from public relations there for me.

We break into smaller groups, and I'm joined by two women, Jennifer and Sarah, who are 20 and have just finished a year of nursing school. For them, this is the reward for a long and stressful year at school. This year, for the first time, they had been interacting with real patients in a hospital. Jennifer loved it, she says, though it had been very, very hard. Sarah found that she couldn't stop thinking about the patients, and so has decided to transfer out of nursing and study business.

Erin Bailey, a dolphin trainer, an exuberant, athletic woman with an incredible smile, joins us to do the "dry session," at the edge of the pool. We learn how to pass and accept a dolphin, how to point and make hand targets. Sarah goes first, giving a signal to make the dolphin rise up on its tail, after which she shows a handful of ice cubes into its mouth. Jennifer makes the dolphin spit water and splash, and then gives it a piece of fish. I hold the dolphin by its fluke and, in a crouch, lead it along



Falling after riding two dolphins

the edge of the pool. Bailey drags me a pitcher of warm water, which I pour into the animal's mouth before leading it back to the group.

The four of us then sit side by side and have a touching session, turning the dolphin onto our backs and rubbing its side and belly. When Jennifer asks about a series of numbers burned into the dolphin's side, Bailey

says that a long time ago they thought they needed brands to recognize a dolphin, that they didn't know the personalities of the animals could serve to identify them. We rub the dolphin one way, with its head on my lap, and it's turned around so that I get the tail end. After rubbing, we stand up and wave good-bye and clap like trainers in a show, while the dolphin

waves back to us. Jennifer and Sarah are clearly very happy. We go to another part of the pool and join Bill Hoffman for our "wet training." Hoffman talks about physiology, examining a dolphin called Misty, showing us the flukes, the blowhole, the nose, the eyes, and the small teeth in the lower jaw. After more rubbing and petting, we end with "dolphin hugs."

each of us getting down on a knee and holding Misty around the middle.

There is a lot of photo-taking. This reminds me of a time when I was in Egypt and went to a nightclub near the Pyramids called Sahara City to watch belly dancing. After the dancers finished their routines, they went table to table, posing, followed by a photographer. I got a copy of one of them, leaning in to touch my cheek with hers.

After the wet session we follow Tom Jernigan, another trainer, into the shed where the food is kept and prepared. A cooler is there, and a blackboard with the feeding amounts, in pounds per day. One pilot whale gets 110 pounds of fish a day, another gets 97 pounds, and the dolphins, between 15 and 25 pounds, if memory serves me right. There are lots of vitamins per animal. And schedules for performance, learning, play, and husbandry.

Then Jernigan takes us out to the stadium pool and we stand outside. A dolphin rises up to greet us, and Jernigan says she's pregnant, 3 months into a 12-month gestation. She's the star athlete, he says, able to jump 19 feet into the air, and is of yet unaffected by the pregnancy.

A pilot whale comes up to greet us too. Deep black with a bulbous head, about 20 feet long (these are the animals famous for beaching themselves in groups), the whale bobs up and vomits a little food for us, that permanent silly grin on its face. Jernigan tells us about the depth of the pool, which is 36 feet, and says that anyone interviewing to be a Sea World trainer must swim to the bottom.

It's a drizzly, gloomy day, and by the time we finish, standing there in our wet suits, Jennifer and Sarah are clenching themselves and shivering. I'm cold too, and still sucking in my gut. We're ready to head back to the locker rooms, where there are hot showers. The headband, the father, both talk about how great it was. The father says it seems odd to him that it's mostly young women doing this. It's hard to speculate on the reason. Colleen Gibbs has told of a mother who enrolled her daughter in this program after her daughter, in love with dolphins, had gotten a tattoo of a dolphin. Could it have something to do with love, that dolphins seem to love us so much, or the positive feeling about relationships that dolphins present? Their sensuousness, per-

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	50-59	\$405	\$176	\$168	\$169	\$181
under 18	0-17	\$268	\$126	\$118	\$119	\$129
	30-39	\$271	\$127	\$120	\$121	\$130
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happ! Now, if you could ride the dolphin, if you could strap a man on and send him into the air screaming, there might be more of an even draw here.

The group from the Dolphin Interaction Program flies off to some other place, while Colleen Gibbs and I go into the stadium to watch the first dolphin show of the day. It's an athletic presentation, with the dolphins diving high, spinning and flipping. Gibbs tells me that the show isn't based on tricks anymore, which makes it too much like a circus act. But the trainers do ride the dolphins in the way that circus performers ride horses, and there even is a trick on the audience — like the old circus trick when the clown throws a bucket of water that turns out to be paper — when Tom Bailey, a "plaster," falls into the water and gets pushed around, upright, on the nose of a pilot whale. The audience gets let in on the trick, Gibbs says, because people used to complain. There's the standard splash session at the end of the show, with the dolphins and whales caressing onto their sides and soaking the audience.

After the show, Bill Hoffman speaks to us at the back of the pool. Hoffman studied psychology at Bowling Green University and began training sea lions at Sea World of Ohio in 1984. He wanted to train animals and had an interest in education and so has been able to follow a "parallel path," combining the two professionally. While working at Sea World of California, Hoffman used their educational assistance program to get a master's degree in human behavior at Northern University.

"We try to present the animals in a natural light, without glitz," he says of the dolphin shows. "We try to show that they are intelligent animals with high energy and powerful. It's all an extension of their natural abilities. They play with each other, which conveys the social aspect. Relationship is the foundation by which we train. We build trust, which takes time. You have to spend time looking at them. There's a lot of eye contact, rubbing them down, feeding them. Relationship allows them to do what we do in the shows. We trust them, and they trust us, through interaction and positive experience."

They spend an hour a day, he says, five or ten minutes at a time, building the attention span of the animals. "As far as relationship goes, sitting with them, you cannot do that too long," Hoffman has also trained killer whales, otters, and birds. He has trained eagles — for fish eagle and the Australian wedge-tail. "They're naturally stand-offish, wary." And walrus, which he says are overlooked in terms of intelligence. Though not so social as dolphins, probably because they're independent bottom feeders, they're very smart, with a longer attention span than a sea lion. I've developed a relationship with a wal-

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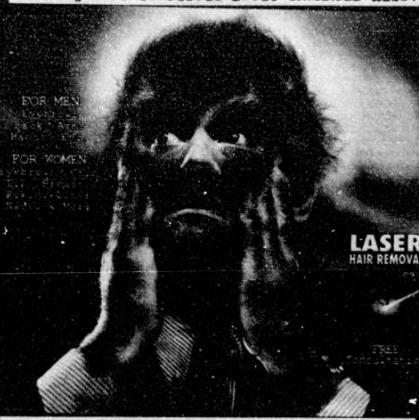
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run is also a matter of spending time, making eye contact, and robbing them — walrus love to have their whiskers rubbed. And of course sea lions are fun to work with because of their natural sense of humor. Up on land, interacting with humans, they become comedians — "We take the sea lions in the park, walk on the pathways, use golf carts with a flatbed to take them to night parties. They look so comfortable and familiar on the

golf track, like a dog in the back of a pickup truck. They have a funny side to them, they get the last laugh." When Hoffman began working at Sea World, the concept of relationship was already in place — it's a variation that has increased. There are more rewards, more kinds of motivations, we're ch in resonance with human relationships. "With children it's the same thing. As they mature, the relationships

mature, and the important thing is change." As in a friendship, he says — you spend time with friends, and hopefully they like it; you do different things, and the relationship stays interesting. With humans it might be golf or hiking or dancing. With dolphins, "You use ice cubes. You jump into the water with them. They seem to respond to enthusiasm and relationship." And of course the animals have things to teach. One of the

ironies of zoos and animal parks is that they increase awareness of the free animals in nature. "After being on the land stage for a couple of years," Hoffman says, "I saw that humans cause a kind of cancer, that we do have an impact." Hoffman oversees a staff of 11 trainers. Every day he interacts with the eight dolphins, aged 4 to 22, and the two pilot whales, aged 17 and 37, and he does at least one show a day. In

the morning there's a discussion about what they'll be doing in the Dolphin Interaction Program, about what toys may be used that day, and about what rewards to use in the shows. The program, he says, is for people to get an education about dolphins. "It's a saturation effort. There's touching, looking in the eyes, feeding. It's a dream of people to do this." The program has rewards for the dolphins too — it provides ways for them

to meet people and provides unpredictability to their day. And Hoffman enjoys what he is doing — he too is living his dream, interacting with animals. "I get paid to do this," he says. "I pinch myself sometimes and think, What more could you want? I don't have to work with computers or machines. There's no daily input and output." As for animal activists and dolphin captivity issues: "They don't understand what we do.

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Toward the end of our talk Julie Scardina, the curator of the animal training department, stops by the table. Scardina has recently been on the Jay Leno show with an other named Norton. Our little table with an umbrella by the pool reminds her of the restaurant by the killer whale pool, and Scardina jokes that they've talked about putting a restaurant over here, maybe having something called "dining with dolphins." Scardina says some wrong note in this, Colleen Gibbs says, "Julie, I'll talk with you later," which helps a puzzled look to Scardina's face. I say I'm out of questions but that I might like to talk with Bill Hoffman again, and Gibbs says to go through her office and ask the questions on speaker phone.

Gibbs walks me back to her office, gives me publicity releases and booklets from the education department and a show schedule, and I'm free to wander through the park. I make a loop, passing by the killer whale pool, stopping to see J.J. the gray whale, but then there I am, back at the dolphin pool. There's a gate at the entrance, and I don't feel right about crossing it, so I stand there. But soon Bill Hoffman comes onto the stage with three other trainers: Erin Bailey, Tom Jernigan, and Suzanne Morgan. Because of the weather the two o'clock show has been canceled. The trainers are doing a learning session. When Hoffman sees me he calls out, "You can come in," and so I take a seat in the stands. I'm glad to be there, to see something happening spontaneously, and it feels good that Hoffman trusts me, but I'm thinking I've probably transgressed a public relations policy.

First they work with Tom Jernigan on leading Bubbles, one of the pilot whales. He tries without success at first to get her to come with him along the edge of the pool. He calls out: "I put a hand target on the water and she was supposed to come to it! She ignored it!" Suzanne Morgan calls to him: "You're out of context! Meaning, he's not standing in the right place. Lead her along!" Morgan, I've been told, was a dolphin in another life; she is the most enthusiastic among the most enthusiastic group.

When Jernigan does succeed in keeping the whale with him while walking along the pool, the three trainers applaud and congratulate him. Bubbles, who may have been playing with Jernigan a bit, spins water in his face.

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# Calendar

## Lies the Del Told Us

Coronado's Love Affair with the Hotel del Coronado

A group, Thomas Edison may seem historically remote. However, L. Frank Baum, who wrote *The Wizard of Oz*. But the roles of the Hotel del Coronado — and a debate about whether the Prince of Wales met Wallis Simpson there — have become a sore subject in Coronado, one that has four guides requesting anonymity before they'll comment on the "mis-picking."

Thomas Edison appears in two stories that circulated for nearly 40 years: first, that he installed the hotel's electricity in 1887, and second, that he lit the inaugural Christmas tree in 1904.

Not so, found San Diego historian Benjamin Sacks, who holds a Ph.D. in history from Stanford. In a 1993 issue of *Southern California Quarterly*, Sacks traced what he calls the Edison legend to a 1946 magazine article in which, "Edison came to marvel at the first and largest installation of the new incandescent lamp."

In 1954, a local bank president published *The Coronado Story*, in which he said that the use of incandescent lamps on such a large scale brought "no less a percentage than Thomas A. Edison, their inventor, to the hotel to advise on the installation of the generators."

When the Hotel del Coronado installed its own museum of memorabilia in 1964, the hotel's managing director told the *San Diego Union* that "Edison himself had installed the generators." Three articles in the 1970s — including the *Historic American Buildings Survey Report* that enrolled the hotel as a national landmark — repeated the story, as did the hotel's official history, published in 1984.

To dispute the claim, Benjamin Sacks uses newspaper and magazine archives, Edison's biography, and the hotel register, none of which mention a visit to San Diego in 1887 or 1888. The hotel manager (and majority owner) Eliza Babcock didn't note Edison's presence or assistance, despite the prestige Edison's fame would have given the hotel.

Besides the omission, Sacks found proof of who did install the hotel's power plant: the Mather Electric Company of Chicago, which in 1888 was credited with the feat in both a scientific journal and in the *San Diego Union*. Edison later sued firms —

including the Mather Company — that infringed on his patent for incandescent lamps, and it's unlikely, Sacks argues, that Edison would assist a company that was violating his patent. Then Sacks neatly exonerates the story that Edison lit the hotel's first outdoor Christmas tree in 1904. Once again, the legend strung up a good 60 years after the fact, and once again, Sacks found no evidence in the newspapers of 1904 that the world-famous inventor was in town, a strange omission considering that when Edison arrived in San Diego for the exposition of 1915, he was greeted by 12,000 school children holding 4000 bouquets. He was photographed on the hotel grounds, and a *Union* reporter said that Edison was "keenly enjoying his first visit to San Diego."

Sacks has also found evidence disproving the story that the Prince of Wales met Wallis Simpson — for whom he would one day abdicate his throne — at the hotel in 1920. Sacks published the evidence in *The Journal of San Diego History* in the fall of 1987, but the Frank Baum controversy, which centers around whether the hotel inspired the Emerald City in the *Wizard of Oz*, has yet to be settled.

Regarding Oz, Edison, and the prince, one exasperated tour guide declined to talk about the tale of her tour, saying, "Everybody just has his own interpretation."

City activist Carol Cahill, on the other hand, has researched each of the tall tales, which she calls "Larry's Legends" after Larry Lawrence, who owned the hotel from 1963 to 1996 and whose body was exhumed from Arlington National Cemetery last December after it was proved that he lied about his military service. Cahill keeps a file of documents about each Coronado controversy, including proof that the first volume of *The Wizard of Oz* was published in 1900 — at least four years, she says, before Baum reached Coronado.

A second tour guide says that the International Wizard of Oz Society "told us that some of the descriptions of the Emerald City were based on his love affair with the hotel and the island." As for Edison, she says, no proof has been found that he lit the switch, so she never claims that he did, nor does she claim that Wallis Simpson met the prince there.

The new owners of the Hotel del Coronado seem to be taking an equally cautious approach. Ron Silva, executive vice president of Lowe Enterprises, says the 1984 history book that contained false claims about Edison is no longer sold at the hotel, and inaccuracies will be or already have been removed from the downtown museum called the Hall of History. Official hotel tours and

brochures will also be revised, he says. "But you're not going to stop the tour-bus drivers from telling the stories as they want to tell them."

Beginning this weekend, the Coronado Historical Museum will celebrate the 110th birthday of the hotel with an exhibit of furniture, dinner invitations, menus, photographs, silver, china, and other memorabilia related to the hotel. Those interested in royalty can view the hotel register of 1890, in which the king of Hawaii signed in with his wife, and a photograph of Wallis Simpson dressed for a Chinese costume ball. Those who love Edison, however, are out of luck.

"Edison will not be mentioned once in the exhibit," says Gindi Malinick, executive director of the Coronado Historical Association.

— Laura McNeal

**"Isn't It Romantic: Coronado's Lifelong Love Affair with the Hotel del Coronado"**

Photos, artifacts, memorabilia

Beginning Sunday, March 1, Coronado Historical Museum 1126 Loma Avenue

Museum hours: Wednesday to Saturday, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Sunday noon to 4:00 p.m. Admission: Free

We celebrate our grand procession of visitors—fourteen Presidents of the United States, foreign leaders, celebrities and international travelers. They all came to experience a atmosphere of culture which has been all but lost in the m of time. Enjoy strolling corridors once roamed by Charlie Chaplin, Charles Lindbergh, Cary Grant, Thomas Edison, and the Prince of Wales, who is said to have met Wallis Simpson here for the first time in 1920.

Plaque in the Hotel del Coronado historical gallery, 1998

San Diego Reader February 26, 1998





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## Calendar LOCAL EVENTS

Photo-trail transfer station. Call 234-1101 for more information. Free.

**"Resonance Ideas as Seen in the Garden"** will be explored when University of Oklahoma English professor James J. Yach delivers a Decent Explorations Lecture at 10 a.m. on Friday, February 27, at the San Diego Museum of Art in Balboa Park. Admission is \$10; 40% off.

**Get Your Questions Answered** when a panel of local experts who have done considerable research in the areas of England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales convene *Le la British Isles Genealogical Research Association* from 9 a.m. to noon on Saturday, February 28, at the Lane Beer Community Center (3900 Vermont Street, Hillcrest). For additional information, call 461-4362. Free.

**"Fighting Work of Fighting Men"** is the topic when author Hugh Crompter speaks at the annual *Los Banos* commemorative dinner of the 118th Airborne Division Association on Saturday, February 28. The event commemorates the liberation of

2147 American and Allied civilian internees from the Los Banos prison camp near Manila by the 118th Airborne and Filipino guerrillas on February 23, 1945. Crompter, a war correspondent, was with the 118th at the end of the Philippines campaign. The dinner begins at 6 p.m. at the Rancher Shop, 5255 Kearny Villa Road, Kearny Mesa. Call 762-3718 for reservations.

**Get What's This Stuff Do?** Dive into the mysteries under the hood of your automobile when the Automotive Service Council hosts workshops at locations around the county. Attendees will learn to check fluid levels, change tires, read the owner's manual, and more. The next workshop is on Saturday, February 28, at Robert's German, Swedish, and Japanese (4600 Mission Bay Drive, Pacific Beach). The fee is \$5 in advance, or \$6 at the door. Call 275-1132 to register.

**Wet Thumbs**, selecting and maintaining underwater animals, plants, filter systems, and accessories will all be discussed during the "Basic Saltwater Aquarium" workshop planned by senior aquarist Fernando Houspoer at Birch Aquarium-Museum from 9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. on Saturday, February 28. The fee for the class is \$25 per person; advance registration is required. For reservations, call 534-7236. The aquarium is located at 2300 Es-

planado Way (off North Torrey Pines Road, south of La Jolla Shores Drive) in La Jolla.

**"The Art of Meditation"** for beginners will be discussed from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturday, February 28, at the Vajrapani Buddhist Center (4455 Vandewater Avenue #7, Greenville). For information, call 265-7653. Admission is a \$10 donation.

**Want a Piece of the Next Big Thing?** Learn how to make money investing in independent films when industry insiders Ross Clay, Jim Orellana, and Bruce Cook participate in a seminar for the Learning Series from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday, February 28. The fee is \$49; call 944-7700 for information, directions, and registration.

**When Was the First Movie Version of 20,000 Leagues Under the Sea?** The first film adaptation of Jules Verne's classic was released as a silent film in 1916. Tom Burgess, author of *Take Me Under the Sea: The Dream History of the Deep*, will present a lecture and sign his book at 2 p.m. on Sunday, March 1, at the Birch Aquarium-Museum. He'll replace the work of Verne, as well as work by the Williamson Brothers, pioneer underwater filmmakers, and submarine aerospace painter Zahr Prechtard.

The event is included in regular museum admission. The aquarium is located at 2300 Esplanado Way (off North Torrey Pines Road, south of La Jolla Shores Drive) in La Jolla. For more information and the required reservations, call 534-7236.

**"The Growing Divide: Exploring Our Economic Inequality"** is the subject when computer programmer Sandra Brown and social worker Eleanor Semmonds speak for the Humanities Fellowship on Sunday, March 1, at the Thomas Paine Cafeteria. The program begins at 11 a.m., followed by open discussion until approximately 12:30 p.m. For more information, call 291-1955 or 276-2000. Free. The coffeehouse is at 4247 Park Boulevard, in San Diego.

**Examine Maimon** butterfly during the opera preview addressing the music, drama, and history of the upcoming San Diego Opera production planned by Nicolas Kevles at the Athenaeum Music and Arts Library on Monday, March 1, at 7 and 7:30 p.m. Admission is \$7. Find the Athenaeum at 1008 W. 10th Street, in La Jolla. 434-5672.

**What Did You Think?** You'll be on your way to knowing the answer to the frustrating question after "Candide" Edwards leads a class and field trip for the San Diego National History Museum in Balboa Park. Classes run from 7 to 9 p.m. on Tuesday and Thursday, March 2 and 5, with a field trip from 7 to 10 a.m. on Saturday, March 7. The fee is \$27. To register, call 232-8203.

**Cable Service**, learn which types of cables best suit your live and studio needs when Gensler Center hosts a "Monster Cable Clinic and Seminar" at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, March 4. Representatives from Monster Cable will conduct the clinic. Admission is free. Gensler Center, 733 Center Drive, San Marcos 736-8096.

**Read and Write!** Author and editor Sofia Shapiro is offering a "Read and Write!" workshop at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, March 4, at Ramada Books and Cafe (1555 Camino del Mar, suite 302, Del Mar). The event combines reading and critiquing of participant work, analysis and discussion of style and genre, and tips on getting published. Free. For information, call 796-2855.

**"Internalized Oppression"** is the focus of the ongoing "Dialogue Racism" series hosted by the Balboa Center — providing an opportunity for "healing racism" — on Wednesday, March 4, at 5:45 p.m. at the Malco 5 Library (3148 Market Street, just San Diego). Free. Call 865-1562 or 201-3999 for information.

**Readers' Book Illustration** Pam Ryan Munster will present a demonstration when the San Diego Art Guild meets next Thursday, March 5, at 1:30 p.m. in the Seder Room at (3801) Botanical Gardens (3200 Quail Gardens Drive, Encinitas). Admission is free; call 760-942-3636 for more information.

**Children's Book Illustration** Pam Ryan Munster will present a demonstration when the San Diego Art Guild meets next Thursday, March 5, at 1:30 p.m. in the Seder Room at (3801) Botanical Gardens (3200 Quail Gardens Drive, Encinitas). Admission is free; call 760-942-3636 for more information.

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**Learn About Israel** Lashak when director Mollieanne Taparinas, who has explored the area since 1981, speaks at Adventure 16 at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, March 4 (141 South California, San Diego, 755-7662). Lashak is a high desert region, on the "other side of the Hallelujah" Highway. Helicopters now arrange cultural tours to the area. He'll repeat the talk at 7 p.m. next Thursday, March 5, at the La Jolla Inn at 4620 Alvarado Canyon Road, in Mission Valley. 263-2374. Free.

**Look Up to the Sky!** Film Center resident astronomer Thomas Munster will lead a tour of the current evening sky during "The Sky Tonight" program next door at the Roshni H. Plot Space Theater and Science Center at 7 and 8 p.m. on Wednesday, March 4, after the show, view the wonders of the real sky through telescopes as you go to Film Center next door and the San Diego Astronomy Association. For more information, call 238-1231. Admission is \$3 general.

**Colombia Was Created** by the Taino 500 years ago, but those little-known people were dominated over the next 50 years through war and disease. Archaeologist John W. Foster will discuss the efforts of his international team to retrieve artifacts at the "Museum of the World" (back half of the film) in the Dominican Republic at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, March 4, at the San Diego Natural History Museum in Balboa Park. The team unearthed well-preserved wooden tools, decorated pottery vessels, war clubs, and gorilla made by the Taino by slipping through a hole in a limestone cave floor, rappelling 50 feet down to an inflated raft. Then diving to a depth of 125 feet through a yellowed layer of sulfuric water to the black depths holding the Taino artifacts (carton dated at between 400 to 1300 years old). Tickets to "Diving into the Taino Past: Underwater Archaeology in the Dominican Republic" are \$8 general. To make the required reservations, call 232-8203.

**"Weathering Heights"** turned 150 years old last year and is still one of the most widely read books in the English language. Kate Kenyon will lead a reading group/seminar on Emily Brontë's a seminal novel at the Book Works starting at 7 p.m. on Thursday, March 5 (meeting again on March 19). The fee is \$26, and reservations are required. The shop is located in Flower Hill Mall, at 2670 Via de Valle, in Del Mar. 755-7575.

**Read Light on Your Personality** Professor when Shalika Karmakar discusses "The Enneagram," defined as a tool to understand character types, at 6:30 p.m. next Thursday, March 5, at the University of Humanities Studies (1801 Stevens Avenue, suite 215, San Marcos). Free. Call 229-8733 to register.

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New exhibitors are offered 10% off the regular rate and admission.

## Calendar LOCAL EVENTS

**Canon-Fixing Drills** demonstrations of crafts and skills from the 1800s, history lectures, entertainment, volunteer in period attire, and authentic food for sale will all be part of San Pasqual History Days, taking place from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Sunday, March 1 (and on the first Sunday of each month), at San Pasqual Battlefield State Historic Park. The museum is located at 1808 San Pasqual Valley Road, Escondido. Call 760-438-0070 for additional details.

**Are You Sewing?** Detail all books with yellow dots will be half-price at the Santee Library's bookstores from Tuesday, March 3 through Thursday, March 31. Find the library at 9225 Carlson Hill Boulevard. For more information, call 448-1863. Free.

**Catholics New Service** when you had been to third annual strawberry festival on Wednesday, March 4, between 2 and 3 p.m. during the festival's market on Kneeland Street between Caribid Village Drive and Grand Avenue in downtown Caribid. Representatives of the U.S. Cooperative Extension will be on hand to answer strawberry gardening tips, strawberry cake will be served (free), and lots of other strawberry treats will be offered for sale. For more information, call 760-720-8161.

**A Traditional Spring Feast** is being held at San Diego's American Indian Health Center next Thursday, March 5, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. with buffalo soup, venison chili, wild rice (acorn mush), traditional dancing, Indian arts and crafts, and more. Admission is \$5 general, \$3 for seniors and children 12 and under. Find the center at 3812 Kuy Street, in North Park. For more information, call 281-9090.

## FOR KIDS

**"Be Kids for Kids"** the fifth annual fundraiser of the multi-cultural festival continues through February 28 at locations around Caribid. The Karan Pappas Company presents fabulous items around the world at 3:30 p.m. today, Thursday, February 28, at the Centro de Informacion al Fines Elementary School, 1333 Harding Street.

On Friday, February 27, head to Harding Community Center, 1208 Harding Street, when Tula Natus performs West African dance and drumming at 8 and 10:15 a.m. and regional dance of Mexico are presented by Texaco Folklorico at 9:45 a.m.

Also on Friday, at 4 p.m., the Tula Natus Ode to Palm Springs dancers will entertain at the Caribid City Council Chambers, 1300 Caribid Village Drive. The festival concludes with the Academy of Highland Dancers present traditional Scottish dances accompanied by bagpipes at 2 p.m. on Saturday at the La Costa branch library, 10000 La Costa Road #100A. Admission is free to all events. For information and reservations, call 760-438-2980.

**"Goldrush Cowboy"** will be presented by Lynn Trimble at 10 and 11:30 a.m. on Thursday and Friday, February 28 and 29, and at 10 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday, February 28 and March 1, in the Silver-Hatched Puppet Theater. Coast artists Pecos and Tanya from Tinseltown will present bilingual puppet versions of Pecos and Tanya at 10 and 11:30 a.m. on Wednesday and Thursday, March 1.

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**Jitterbug & Swing** (10 weeks, Thu 6:30-8:30)  
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and 5 (with shows continuing through March 8). The theater is located near the Aerospace Center in Balboa Park. For more information, call 485-5043. Regular admission is \$2 for adults, \$1.50 for children, free for those under two.

**"Little Women"** is the next production by the San Diego Junior Theatre, premiering on Friday, February 27, and continuing through Sunday, March 15. The show will be performed and technically crewed by Junior Theatre students aged 8 to 18 — in the Casa del Prado Theatre in Balboa Park.

Performances are at 7 p.m. on Fridays and at 2 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays. Tickets range from \$5 to \$9. For information and reservations, dial 239-8355.

**Spring** will be in the air during the story and craft time at Borders Books and Music on Saturday, February 28, at 11 a.m. Hear stories and stay for a flowers craft. Find borders at 11180 Rancho Carmel Drive #104, in Carmel Mountain. Free. For reservations, dial 638-1814.

**"Beauty and the Beast, Part I"** is on the program when the San Diego Actors Theatre presents a "Children's Classics" at 1 Aulberg Del Mar Garden Amphitheater at 11 a.m. on Saturday, February 28. Also planned: *Mad Tea Party*, *Pinocchio*, and *Peter Pan*. For more information, call 268-4494. The cost is \$4 per person. Find 1 Aulberg at 1540 Camino Del Mar in Del Mar.

**Because They Matter**, Cindy Truitt — the manager of the Fund for Animal Welfare Center in Ramona and author of *Because They Matter* — will discuss some of the many animals she has cared for from 3 to 4:30 p.m. on Saturday, February 28, at the San Diego Natural History Museum in Balboa Park. The fee, for those four and older, is \$15 per non-member family. Call 232-3821 x203 for the suggested reservations.

**Theater Arts Workshops** for children four to nine years old are conducted by the San Diego Actors Theatre on the fourth Saturday of every month, including February 28, at 1 Aulberg Del Mar Garden Amphitheater (1540 Camino Del Mar, Del Mar). Workshops run from 12:30 to 2 p.m., and reservations are required. The fee is \$10. Dial 268-4494 for information and registration.

**Fun for All**, property artist Mandy Danner of the Spinning Wheel Puppetry will lead a puppet-making workshop and perform for the "Free for All First Sunday" in the Museum of Contemporary Art, Downtown from 2 to 5 p.m. on March 1. Admission is free. Find the museum at 1001 Kettner Boulevard downtown. 234-3901.

**Filly Escondido Children** will join the Museum Children's Theatre in its production of *The Pied Piper* on Sunday, March 1, at 3:30 p.m., at the California Center for the Arts Escondido. The performance of this full-scale musical is the culmination of a week-long residency by the organization. Tickets are \$9.50. Find the center at 340 North Escondido Boulevard in Valley Parkway Escondido. Call 800-988-4253 for information and reservations.

**Follow the Trail to Quail Botanical Garden** on Tuesday, March 3, at 10:30 a.m., for a general tour of the garden oriented to kids (aged three to six). Meet at the visitor center located directly north of the parking lot. Quail Botanical Garden is located at 230 Quail Gardens Drive, Encinitas. The tour is free. For more information, call 760-438-3036.

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## Calendar LOCAL EVENTS

**"Stories from Around the World"** will be told by "Hafslund" at 4 p.m. next Thursday, March 5, at the San Carlos Library (7365 Jackson Drive, San Carlos). For information, call 527-3416. Free.

**Carlsbad Children's Museum**, the museum is designed as an educational environment through art, science, and social activities targeted for children 2 through 12. Look for a medieval castle, magic mirror, ministry, and children's marketplace. Find the museum at 300 Carlsbad Village Drive, suite 103, in Carlsbad. 750-6717.

**Children's Museum of San Diego**, "Stories from Home" is a group of three related exhibitions expressing the power of people, faces, cultures, and imagination in shaping the lives of children. Look for "Memories of Childhood," "We're not the same," or the "Brady Bunch." 361 Casa De La Reina, San Diego. 524-1000.

Continuing exhibitions include "The Book Shop," "Imagery Theater," and "Cora's Rainbow." Find the museum at 200 West Island Avenue, downtown. Dial 231-8762 for additional details.

## MUSEUMS

(Art museums are listed in the Reader's Guide to Art.)

**Bancroft Ranch House Museum** houses indigenous Indian artifacts and memorabilia of early settlers in the area and is run by the Spring Valley Historical Society. The house, built in 1963, was registered as a National Historic Landmark in 1982 and is a spot where Rancho Leona camped more than 1700 years ago before the spring that later gave the area its name. The museum is located at 9050 Memory Lane, Spring Valley. Call 469-1495 for more information.

**Californian Surf Museum**, the museum features surfing artifacts and memorabilia — such as surfboards and clothing — of local legends Phil Edwards, John "J.L." Richards, and Peter Johnson, and that was cool megastar Duke Kahanamoku. The museum is now located at 223 Ninth Street, San Diego. 590-7214.

**Chula Vista Nature Center**, an interpretive living museum devoted to the endangered Southern California coastal wetlands, is located in the

## NIGHT TRAIN



**Author:** Martin Amis, born 1949, Oxford, England, middle child of the late Sir Kingsley and Hilary Amis, godson of poet Philip Larkin. Martin was five when Sir Kingsley's *Lucky Jim* became a transatlantic bestseller. His parents divorced when Martin was 12. Martin was educated at Oxford and later became literary editor of the *New Statesman*. The 5'6" Martin quelled shyness to become a masterful skirt-chaser who loved and left them. Long before Tina Brown ascended to editorship of first *Vanity Fair* and then *The New Yorker*, she was Martin's girlfriend, as were a series of prettier, fledgling English novelists. In 1984 Amis put womanizing behind him and married wealthy young American widow Antonia Phillips, described as one of the great beauties of her generation. The couple settled in London and had two sons.

At 24 Amis won the Somerset Maugham Award for his first novel, *The Rachel Papers*. He has published seven novels since, plus three books of essays: one of which, *The Moonlight*, collects pieces written during visits to the United States and one of short stories. Each has been well received, although England's classic laureate, the Booker Prize, continues to bypass Amis. Booked or not, "every male writer under 45," said English novelist Will Self, "would secretly like to be Martin Amis."

The English press follows Amis (and other English writers) as closely as our press sniffs after TV lowlives. Londoners who will never read one word of Amis, father or son, have scanned several hundred thousand words about the Amises. They know that Martin's brother endures stunning depression, that his sister is a drunk, that Sir Kingsley in his last years couldn't be left alone a minute without spiraling into vertiginous panic. They know about Amis's long real-world friendship with novelist Julian Barnes, know that the two men battled at tennis, snooker, and chess. They know that Barnes's wife Patricia Kavanagh for many years was Martin's agent, that Martin dumped her for an American agent nicknamed "The Jackal," and that Barnes then cut the friendship with a chilly letter.

In 1993 when Amis left Antonia Phillips for the younger American heiress Isabel Fonseca, London headlines offered: "MARTIN AMIS WRITES OFF HIS MARRIAGE" and "BRAINY, DARK, AND STUNNING: THE WOMAN MARTIN AMIS HAS FALLEN FOR." Tabloids sent photographers to stalk out girlfriend and wife, the latter characterized as "angry, devastated, and utterly betrayed."

When Amis flew to Manhattan for periodical surgery, London newspapers interviewed dentists: "THE PEARLY KING OF LITERATURE: WHAT DID MARTIN AMIS HAVE DONE TO HIS TEETH?" One columnist wrote, "Amis has swapped his Ford Popular gnashers for a gleaming Cadillac grille" and mused a word for Martin's dental upgrade: "dentification."

But can this fellow with new teeth, new mistress, new baby by new mistress, an abandoned wife, and drunken sister write? Yes. "The nearest thing to a Nabokov," one critic said about Amis, "that the punk generation has to show."

Rumor has it that Amis plans soon to move permanently to America. His reason, he explained in an interview in a London newspaper, "is a feeling that America is where the excitement is, that it is road-testing the future."

**Night Train**, Harmony Books, 1998, 166 pages, \$20. **Type:** unnamed fiction. **Place:** unnamed by American city. **Time:** present.

I read *Night Train* in an evening. I stretched out on the couch, this small book clutched in my hands, and read in the rap, fascinated way of people who stop to gaze at freeway accidents, bloody aftermaths. Amis's female narrator is a chain-smoking career cop who calls herself Mike Hoolihorn. This 5'10", 180-pound recovered boozier with bad skin and hapless lovers and ugly memories is asked

## READING

by an old friend to investigate the apparent suicide of his beautiful and brilliant physicist daughter, Jennifer. Amis manages to take this simple request and turn it into a query on the meaning of life.

I admitted to Mr. Amis, when we talked, that after I finished *Night Train*, I wondered if the late Philip Larkin, who was fond of detective stories, would not have liked his godson's recent book.

"Well, he did like thrillers," Amis said. "And so did my dad. Yes, it probably would have appealed to both of them far more than my other books." Larkin, Mr. Amis went on to say, "has been much in my mind because I've been reading my father's correspondence, which is going to be published eventually. And the letters to Larkin are the backbone of it. They really did love each other, those guys. I'm very impressed by the depth of the affection. There's an awful lot of jazz stuff [both men were jazz buffs] that will probably be cut, that is all written in a kind of shorthand. There's a lot of literary stuff too, and of course unfavorable remarks about nearly every contemporary writer."

I asked Mr. Amis if he'd imagined readers as reading *Night Train*, as I did, in one sitting.

"I sort of suspected it. I'm not sure whether it's a novella or a short novel. Perhaps the definition of a novella is that you can read it in one sitting. But *Night Train* did feel like a more accessible book and more of an entertainment. Quite a few people have said that they stayed up late and exhausted themselves finishing it. Which is nice to hear. It's not the sort of thing you think about while you're writing it, but as you're finishing it, you think, 'Mmm, this is a page-turner.'"

I was conscious of there being more attention to plot and pace than usual. I was surprised how demanding plot is. Because you usually associate plot with thrillers instead of with the more middle-brow kind of road. But my respect for the Ken Folletts and the Herman Wouk went up when I realized that plot does stretch you. Everything does have to fit. And there's a certain muscularity you need for keeping a plot coherent."

It also, in a way, must be like the difference between writing a sonnet and writing free verse. I said:

"Yes, there are formal restraints. But each limitation brings a liberty with it and it was a very pleasant book to write, oddly enough. I enjoyed it and had few slumps. And if it came rather naturally."

I wondered if Mr. Amis had worked on sections of *Night Train* when he was on his last American book tour.

"No," he said, "you can't really get anything done on a book tour. I might have soaked up some stuff but not consciously. Mostly I was either being interviewed or snoring my head off."

Amis's narrator, Mike Hoolihorn, is just about the world's most world-weary woman. She's seen every kind of bloody, stinking murder-mystery death. I asked Amis how he came to attach himself to this jaded female voice.

"I read a lot of noirish thrillers. Not a great many. I read a lot of nonfiction about procedures and picked up tons of phrase there. And then tried to let those rhythms seep into the rest of the prose. All professions have a jargon, and none is more seductive than the bloody, tough-guy, noirish, American police voice. The homicide detectives are also, I think, the most massively fictionalized of all professions, with the possible exception of the criminal himself. It's a self-consciously sick-sounding world. And, of course, a callous world too."

*Night Train*'s funny kind of novel. Because it's an up-and-down crime novel. But it has to be admitted that it's also an existential novel, too, and without them being very present in my mind. I was thinking slightly of Camus and Gertrude and Gide, and so it's that French tradition of the *acte gratuit*, the gratuitous act. A couple of people have been quite upset by my book. But I did feel like playing devil's advocate in the book in that the kind of expansion of consciousness involved in really thinking about your place in the universe is, in fact, a sort of liberating thing, not a depressing thing. In as much as Jennifer's suicide has to do with a kind of Pascalian despair about the enormous hostility of the world around us."

I said that I didn't find it all that existentially uncomfortable to not be the center of the universe.

"No," said Mr. Amis, "it's kind of a relief, really, isn't it."

— Judith Moore

## THIS FAST-PACED, BRUTAL THRILLER

There's always a killer with a name like Tony, a tie-dyed shirt, and a certain sad history of deprivation: just so much evil on the plot going

down the edge of a formula nickel-and-dimed by years of repetition. There's always an ocean near Hawaii or California

where the detective ponders the copy of a palm he once gave in commemoration to his friend, the victim (they shared a tin but in Vietnam).

over whose body the salt water swarms. Something as strange and uncanny as Taiwanese packing tissue has been wrapped around the legs and blue arms.

giving the detective, for his deduction, a sign that the script changed tempo, the middle of a scene, and only he has to render this line

to the bored, puzzled gal on whom the camera can't focus because she stepped over for a look from another channel. She stares right past him as she says, "Joss."

This show, it's the pin."

And the faces start Mending on the molten screen: screen below which the deflated imagination sits.

— Vijay Seshadri



From *Wild Kingdom*, Graywolf Press. "This Fast-Paced, Brutal Thriller" copyright 1996 by Vijay Seshadri. Reprinted from *Wild Kingdom*, with the permission of Graywolf Press, Saint Paul, Minnesota.

Vijay Seshadri was born in India and came to America at age five. He grew up in Columbus, Ohio. His work has appeared in the *Therapeutic Review*, *The New Yorker*, *Sewanee*, *Antaeus*, *ACORN*, and *The Paris Review*. He currently lives in Brooklyn.

middle of Sweetwater Marsh: North National Wildlife Refuge. The facility is home to fish and invertebrates that inhabit the mudflats and marshes of San Diego Bay. Visitors can use a

binoculars to view animals in their natural habitat. Use a Westcott binocular viewer to view microscopic organisms found in the "Sweetwater Sludges." And interact with computerized videos exploring how tides affect the bay in the "Moons, Tides, and the San Diego Bay" exhibit. At other exhibits, visitors can peek through and rays, see burrowing oods and migratory birds, and enjoy the sunbathing gardens.

Visitors must shuttle bus at the Northern 1 Street Transfer Station or the center's parking lot at the foot of E Street and Bay Boulevard, in Chula Vista. For more details, call 422-2481.

**Coronado Museum of America**, the museum includes an educational exhibit covering the history of glass processing and the contributions of pioneers and business-makers in the compact industry. Some of the over 100 historic data-processing machines date back to the 1930s.

Interested in restoring and programming historic computer equipment? The museum hosts workshops for volunteers on Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. In 6356 Mission Gorge Road, suite 10, in Mission Valley. Call for registration and space availability.

Visit the museum on the grounds

of Columbia College, 7380 Parkview Drive, in La Mesa. 665-8226.

**Coronado Beach Historical Museum**, in conjunction with the 110th birthday of the Hotel del Coronado, the museum is offering "The History of Coronado's Lifelong Love Affair with the Hotel del Coronado" starting on Saturday, February 28. The exhibit includes photographs, artifacts, and memorabilia. See this show through September.

The museum, housed in a restored 1904 house, traces the history of Coronado, mostly through photographs. The exhibit shows the construction and early days of the Hotel del Coronado. Tent City, the first school and restaurant, and the ferryboats. One room is devoted to the story of early aviation at North Island. Find the museum at 1126 Loma Avenue, in Coronado. Call 435-7242 for further information.

**Gateway Museum of Historic San Diego**, glimpse San Diego's colorful past at the museum, where displays highlight West Park's San Diego days, the Peg Leg Gold Legend, the first may and photographs of Old Town and "New Town," early military history, the naval disaster in 1945 at Point Loma, and more. Find the museum at 413 Market Street (between Fourth and Fifth Avenues), in the Gateway Quarter. 257-1492.

**Heritage of American Museums**, the museum features art and artifacts,

from South and North America, concentrating on the artistry and decorative artistry of crafts workers from ancient cultures. There are wings dedicated to natural history, archaeology, education, anthropology, and fine art.

Find the museum on the Coronado College campus, 2927 Jamacha Road, Rancho San Diego. 670-5194.

**Junipero Serra Museum**, the museum interprets the Native American, Spanish, and Mexican periods of San Diego's history and contains Spanish Colonial furnishings, art, and artifacts. It's located at the site of the west coast's first European settlement, founded at 2727 Presidio Drive, Presidio Park. 297-3386.

**Ramon Funes Historical Society and Guy S. Woodward House** is a complex of historical buildings, including the Verlaque House (the only Western adobe house of French provincial design still in existence), wagon, antique exhibits, and artifacts. There is a cowboy boot house, a ranch blacksmith shop and tack room. The Casey Funes Memorial Exhibit is dedicated to Funes, a local resident who was a world-champion rodeo rider. Women's clothing and accessories from 1700 to 1800 are also on display. The Rancho Morongo Rose Garden is on the grounds. Rare documents, historical exhibits, books, photographs, and a research library are also part of the complex.

Find it at 445 Main Street, in Ramona. For more information, call 760-789-7644.

**San Diego Aerospace Museum**, the museum offers exhibits of over 65 aircraft — including a replica of the Spirit of St. Louis, a Fokker Scurge (a Fokker Eindecker E.III), a World War I Spad VII, and a Lockheed Blackbird spy plane — 1400 scale models, 10,000 aviation-related items, and memorabilia from the Montgolfier hot-air balloon era to the Space Age, along with an International Aerospace Hall of Fame.

New at the museum is a 340' motion simulator, in which visitors at a time may choose between realistic simulated scenarios in P-51 Mustang, "Survival 2006," or "Jet Interceptor." Each scenario costs \$5 per person and is not included in regular museum admission.

The museum is located in the Ford Building in Balboa Park. For additional information, call 234-8201.

**San Diego Hall of Champions Sports Museum**, baseball historian and model builder Bill Swank has created a model of Lane Field, the Padres' original home in San Diego, which is now on display. The original stadium was constructed in just seven weeks under a federal grant from the Works Progress Administration, when William Lane owned it. Hollywood Stars Pacific Coast League team to San Diego in 1936. The model will become part of the museum's permanent baseball exhibit.

The museum has permanent exhibits and artifacts from a wide variety of sports. The museum is located at 1449 El Prado, Balboa Park. 234-2844.

**San Diego Model Railroad Museum**, billed as "the world's largest permanent operating model railroad and toy train exhibit," the museum includes four scale-model railroads of the Southwest, an interactive toy train, and a refurbished Toy Train Gallery with a new Lionel O gauge exhibit. There is a multimedia presentation on railroads, an operating railroad workshop, and an interpretive display on railroads and model railroading. The museum is downtown in the Casa de Balboa.

## Artists On The Cutting Edge VI CROSS FERTILIZATIONS

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Thursday, March 26

- CRISTINA GARCIA
- JAMES RAGAN
- KEVIN BELL

Thursday, April 2

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- TESS GALLAGHER
- MIKE WOFFORD

Thursday, April 9

- ROSARIO FERRE
- JAY WRIGHT
- AL YOUNG
- GEORGE LEWIS
- STEVEN SCHICK
- ANTHONY DAVIS

Thursday, April 16

- ANNE LAMOTT
- LI-YOUNG LEE
- JOHN HICKS

Thursday, April 23

- RALPH ANGER
- LINDA HOGAN
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- REGINA CARTER

## ticket information

All performances at Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego, 729 Prospect Street, La Jolla. For more information, call the museum at 654-5414.

Tickets may be purchased in advance at the MCA Bookstore, Downtown, the MCA Bookstore, La Jolla, and at TicketCity outlets (205, 705). Tickets will be on sale the day of the performance. Advance purchase is recommended. Individual tickets: MCA Members: \$20.00; General: \$12.00.

The Museum Café will be open for light snacks from 6:30-7:30 p.m.

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## Calendar CLASSICAL MUSIC

### CLASSICAL LISTINGS

Contributions to the *Reader's Guide to Classical Music* must be received by 5 p.m. Friday the week prior to publication for consideration. Do not phone. Send a complete description of the event, including the date, time, site, the precise address where it is to be held, including neighborhood, or contact phone number (including area code), and a phone number for public information to *Reader's Guide to Classical Music*, P.O. Box 91081, San Diego, CA 92169-0801. Or fax information to 619-481-2461.

**Instruments for Children and Piano by Pianos and Cantatas**, a Ballade by Bach, and the Rumanian Whirling Dance by James Schaefer meet at the hotel where the Lafayette Halligan Quartet performs at 7:30 p.m. tonight, Tuesday, February 26, in the UCSD's University Art Gallery. Admission is free, but call 594-0671 or 594-2107 to make the required reservation.

The gallery is located in Mendocino Center on the UCSD campus and is open Tuesday through Saturdays, from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. On-campus parking permits are required; they can be purchased at the information pavilion at the Gilman and Northwest Drive entrances to the campus.

**Bethlehem's Piano Trio "Globe"** No. 1 is in the program when Viennese's Bethlehem Trio presents concert for the Spring Series held by Mount St. Mary's University, 26, 27, 28, and March 4, also on the program are Mozart's Piano Trio in E Major No. 4 and Beethoven's Piano Trio in A Major. Enter the concert at the Teatro del Estado, 100, Boulevard Adolfo Lopez Mateos in Mexico; 101-107 on 16th St. (4th Street) tickets are \$9.50-\$15.

The group moves to the New Orleans Convention Center (NACC) in New Orleans, Louisiana, for the 1998-1999 season. The concert will be held on Saturday, February 28, at 8 p.m. The concert will be repeated on Wednesday, March 4, at 8 p.m. in the NACC.

One of the Great Quartets of the World? To see the New York Times' "The Best of the Best" Quartet, and you'll have the opportunity to see the world's best quartet at 8 p.m. on Friday, February 27, in the UCSD's University Art Gallery. Quartet members Peter Katinis (violin), Gary Hargrove (viola), Gary Hargrove (cello), and Leslie Allen (bass) will present Mozart's String Quartet in C Minor, Beethoven's String Quartet No. 15, and the String Quartet in A Major. Enter the concert at the Teatro del Estado, 100, Boulevard Adolfo Lopez Mateos in Mexico; 101-107 on 16th St. (4th Street) tickets are \$9.50-\$15.

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**Selections:** Charles Ives, Chopin, and modern American composers will be heard when pianist Peter Cech presents a recital at 8 p.m. on Friday, February 27, in room 102 of the University Art Gallery. Tickets are \$10 general. Call 594-0671 for information and advance tickets; tickets are also available through Ticketmaster (212-771-7715).

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Valley Forge, in San Marcos. Dial 760-750-4366 for more details. From the Veterans Recreation Center on Friday, February 27, when the San Diego Recorder Society meets from 7 to 10 p.m. for instruction and playing. Find the center at 11200 Claremont Mesa Boulevard (about two miles east of I-15), in San Marcos. For more information, call 661-3981 or 297-3095. The first visit is free.

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The UCSD campus, cost \$1 in the evening, and must be purchased at the Gilman Drive and Northwest Drive information pavilion at the north and south entrances to the campus.

**Organ Concert**, acting organist James Schaefer presents a concert at the Veterans Recreation Center on Friday, February 27, when the San Diego Recorder Society meets from 7 to 10 p.m. for instruction and playing. Find the center at 11200 Claremont Mesa Boulevard (about two miles east of I-15), in San Marcos. For more information, call 661-3981 or 297-3095. The first visit is free.

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chairs for concerts March 1-4. The program includes Violin I Concerto for Two Trumpets in C Major, the Capriccio Solo by Peter Weirick, Heller's Break Green Suite, a variety of dance music from the Renaissance and Middle Ages, along with selections by Prokofiev, Beethoven, Gershwin, and Copland.

The program will be presented at 7 p.m. on Sunday, in the vicinity of the Imperial Bank Tower (1701 S Street, downtown), at 8 p.m. on Monday in Sherwood Auditorium at the Museum of Contemporary Art, La Jolla (1700 Prospect Street, La Jolla), on Tuesday at 8 p.m. at the Fairbanks Ranch Country Club in Rancho Santa Fe, and finally at 8 p.m. at the California Center for the Arts, Escondido (140 North Escondido Boulevard, Escondido).

Tickets range from \$8 to \$48, depending upon the venue and seats available. Call 760-753-4402 or 760-948-7528 for information and tickets for any of these performances.

**A Musical Concert** at noon on Monday, March 2, at the Admissions Music and Arts Library (1000 West La Jolla, La Jolla, 454-5872). **Each Week Continues**, works by Isaac and Beethoven will be in the program when pianist Peter Cech presents a solo recital for the main concert at 8:00 p.m. on Wednesday, March 4, in South Coast Hall. Cech is known as an interpreter of 20th-century music. Free. Dial 594-0671 for further information.

**Chamber Music** is on tap when the Haydn Quartet performs at 8:00 p.m. on Monday, March 2, at the Escondido Library (140 North Escondido Boulevard, Escondido). Tickets are \$10 general. Call 760-753-4402 for information.

**Period Instrumental** Hengstlich is exhibiting her work through Saturday, March 14, at Gallery 21, the show begins with a reception on Sunday, March 1, from noon to 4 p.m. Find the gallery in the Spanish Village Art Center at Balboa Park. For more information, call 214-9610. Gallery hours are 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. daily.

**Functional and Sculptural** Pieces created by artist across the country are on view in "Chronicles: Vancouver '88," opening in the Hyde Gallery at Convention Center with a reception on Tuesday, March 3, from 1 to 5 p.m. The art of works of contemporary ceramic were shown by Leah Kary of 108, Haverly Works of Art, New York. See the show through Friday, March 6.

**Convention Center** is located at 1400 Convention Center Drive, El Centro. Gallery hours are 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday and Wednesday to 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday and Thursday and 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Friday. For more information, call 664-7299.

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## Calendar ART

### ART LISTINGS

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**"Three Points of View"** are on exhibit at Gallery 411 through Monday, May 4. The show starts with a reception for participating artists Ronald Dismuke, Nyla Benquist, and Thomas Erwin from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. next Thursday, March 5. It's a party that also promotes a celebration of Michael's 50th birthday. Find the gallery at 451 North Pale Avenue, in Escondido. Hours are Monday through Friday 11 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. For information, call 760-734-8337.

**Two One Artists** from San Diego have been chosen by Tami March to appear in the "Creative Artists of San Diego" show opening at Gallery Alexander through Saturday, March 28. The show is located at 2000 Grand Avenue, La Jolla, 454-5872.

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**Strange and Interesting Places** may be seen in the inaugural exhibit at the Escondido Municipal Gallery, opening with a reception from 5 to 7:30 p.m. next Thursday, March 5. This "art tour" encourages artists to "see out of their normal media for experimentation in new media." See the show through Saturday, April 18. Gallery hours are 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday. For information, call 760-460-4161.

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been exhibited; see the show through April.

When he was in, John Dancy Noble traded a portrait for a china white in the form of a baby inside a cage, and this was born his lifelong passion for toys and dolls. Later he held the newly created past of Carver of Dolls and Toys at the Museum of the City of New York, the works being considered for acquisition are available for public preview in "Contemporary Galleries 310." The final selection will be made in early March, when one or more of the works will be added to the collection. See the possibilities through Saturday, June 13.

Find the museum at 750 Prospect Street, in La Jolla, 454-5872.

**Museum of Photographic Arts**, the digital, traditional, and spiritual of African culture and identity around the world are on display in "The Spirit of Africa," capturing the daily life and rituals of people of African descent in over 15 countries, organized in categories entitled "Most Ancient Places," "Middle Passage," "The Living World," "Spirituality," "Rites," and "Expressions." The show continues through Tuesday, April 14.

The museum is located in the Casa de Balboa in Balboa Park, 238-7519.

**Escondido Museum of Art**, the evolution of James Hengstlich's creative energy, which manifests itself in so many media — including drawings, models and photographs of public and private architectural projects, various iron, glass, sculpture, paintings, jewelry and pottery — is traced in a retrospective of Hengstlich's work continuing through Tuesday, April 14. The museum is located at 104 Park View, in Escondido, 760-721-2787.

**San Diego Museum of Art**, paintings, sculpture, and objects of art by artist, design, and decorative arts from 1800 to the 1950s — is the first show of his work in the United States since 1972. His art is used to reflect the lighted spirit of French Impressionism and the theme of modernism with religion. See the show through Sunday, April 26. The museum is permanent at 1700 La Jolla Village Drive, San Diego, 434-2500.

**Museum of Contemporary Art, La Jolla**, the search for an individual style and voice by artist, artist John Allen, is documented in a current exhibit, shown — said to be one of the most influential artists working in Los Angeles in the late 1950s and 1960s — traveled in Europe for six months in 1954, exploring the abstract expressionist style prevalent at the time and experimenting with new materials. His painting style was considerably, yet he broke into the mainstream of the art world, including some 50 paintings and drawings from the artist's key periods. See "John Allen" through

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Wednesday, March 11.

The museum's support group, known as Contemporary Collectors, has acquired more than 30 works for the permanent collection since its founding in 1985. In 1998, the works being considered for acquisition are available for public preview in "Contemporary Galleries 310." The final selection will be made in early March, when one or more of the works will be added to the collection. See the possibilities through Saturday, June 13.

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lection includes Italian Renaissance paintings, Spanish old masters paintings, American art, 19th-century European paintings and sculpture, the Weisman Gallery of Contemporary California Art, and the Interactive Multimedia Art Gallery (IMAGE). Find the museum in Balboa Park 232-7931.

**Tinkler Museum of Art**, fine art, 19th-century American paintings, and Russian icons. Find the museum in Balboa Park and by calling 238-5548.

The museum's permanent collection includes European masters, 19th-century American paintings, and Russian icons. Find the museum in Balboa Park and by calling 238-5548.

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said to be the first ever comprehensive display of works from the Golden Age of Mexican painting to be shown in America, with pieces gathered from U.S. museums, the Netherlands, and Switzerland. See the exhibit through Sunday, April 12.

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Calendar  
THEATER

## Hollowness at the Heart

He's so caught up creating scenes and dialogue, he doesn't know his own family.

**A** B. Gurney Jr.'s play *The Cocktail Hour* takes place around 1975. John, a playwright in his early 40s, comes to his parents' upstate New York home with a manuscript in a black cover. It's a play called *The Cocktail Hour*, written about his family. When the temporary help ruins the roast beef, thus extending cocktails deep into the evening, John and his parents haggle about what the play might say.

REVIEW  
JEFF SMITH

*The Cocktail Hour* premiered at the Old Globe Theatre in 1988. Ten years later, Gurney returns to the Globe with *Labor Day*. John's back too. Now in his mid-40s, he's got a farm in Northwestern Connecticut that's a cross between "Andrew Wyeth and Norman Rockwell," with a pool and tennis court. And John's studio, an erstwhile chickenhouse, is an ideal workplace.

John's paid the bills by being, his faithful director Dennis says, a "Wade Boggs" kind of playwright. Like Boggs—that paltry imitation of Tony Gwynn—John's play never belies one deep, never qualifies for MVP honors. Instead they hit single and doubles. They always "get on base" and come through in the end. Dennis likens John's success ratio to Boggs's lifetime batting average of .325—which, though impressive for a baseball player, isn't much in the chin-dusting, spikes first world of big-league playwrighting.

In *The Cocktail Hour*, John's father asks, "You have that lovely wife, those fine, strapping children;

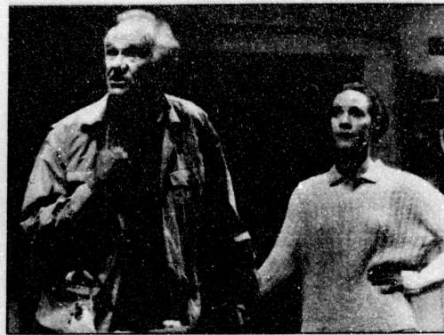
do you ever write about them?" In *Labor Day*, John's got a new play in a black cover called *Labor Day*. It's about his children. During the holiday, as his extended family scrapes knees and squabbles in the background, John considers revisions. He begins the play in a groundbreaking mood,

wanting to show "the hollowness at the heart of conventional family life." Then he became ill, faced death, and saw the world afresh.

The play's ending, written after he left the hospital, is schmaltzy and, Dennis insists, "too personal." The Seattle Rep wants to stage it with a new ending. Robert Redford's interested, as are the Shuberts. John and Dennis labor to get it right.

The Old Globe Theatre, which has staged at least ten of them, gives Gurney's plays the best possible chance to succeed. For *Labor Day*, as the green hills of Connecticut roll like waves in the background, scenic designer Ralph Funkelstein fills the whitesided interior of the chickenhouse with a lifetime of theater memorabilia. This juxtaposition of the rural and ultra-urban reveals volumes about the characters before they appear onstage.

The cast feels hand-picked, and they do precisely as required. Joyce Van Patten's perfect as John's harried wife, Ellen—the still center of converging cyclones—even though the script can't figure her out. She encourages John to write about the "bad patches" of their lives, then says don't write the play, threatening divorce after 35



Josef Sommer, Vianne Cox on *Labor Day*

*Labor Day*, by A.B. Gurney Jr.

**Old Globe Theatre**, 3400 Edison Centre for the Performing Arts  
Directed by Jack O'Brien; cast: Josef Sommer, Brooke Ishman, Joyce Van Patten, Vianne Cox, James Colby; scenic design, Ralph Funkelstein; costumes, Michael Krane; lighting, Kenneth Porter; sound, Jeff Lohman  
Playing through March 15; Tuesday through Saturday at 8:00 p.m.; Sunday at 7:00 p.m.; Matinee Saturday and Sunday at 2:00 p.m. For information call 619-239-2255.

years of marriage, then says do the play.

James Colby plays John's son, Ralph, as if intelligence skips a generation. He's a type: the adult

hook. His sister Ginny's a type too: she's a control addict, whom Vianne Cox must play as one-note hyper. Cox does set up one of the play's best lines

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Ginny asks her father why people still call her "Little Hitler," John replies, "Because you've got leadership qualities." Two other children, who don't appear onstage, are also stock types (John refers to one daughter as "a saint"). John's family should complain, not that they're in his play, but that he's made them so one-dimensional. And John! Josef Sommer does what the script calls for, making John affable Telford. Like his illness, John's character is also in creation. He's so caught up in creating scenes and dialogue, he doesn't know his family. But Sommer, and Gurney, need to ground John in more reality, since he's the least developed character of all.

Jack O'Brien, who staged *The Cocktail Hour*, directs Gurney's world premieres as if he's known them all his life. You can't quibble with the Old Globe's remarkable production values. But the style calls for unflattering comparisons.

Gurney and O'Brien give *Labor Day* Chekhovian emphases. Little happens in the foreground, while explosive, life-changing events occur offstage. But, except for surface comparisons, *Labor Day* is the opposite of Chekhovian. Chekhov never intrudes into his plays. He trusts his audience's ability to discern themes and motifs. He just lays quirky, pathetic, pain-pierced life at your feet. Gurney, by contrast, explains everything. This is Chekhov as if mediated by a mopey theater critic desperate for everyone to understand every single word.

Gurney even tells us how to watch his play. Dennis, the director, distinguishes between an "action"—what characters do to get what they want—and an "activity." Action movies are "activity" movies, since there's a lot of physical activity in them. *Labor Day* is obviously an "action" play, and Dennis says we should follow the actions of the characters. Though it steers us away from false expectations, inviting us to follow "actions" is an awfully mechanical way to watch a drama unfold. Actors perform actions. Audiences respond.

Like John's play, *Labor Day* needs rethinking. It longs to make important points about the family, life in these splintering times, and the lure of commercial theater to playwrights in need of cash or credentials. What emerges instead is a play filled with self-conscious references to theater. Everyone's aware they're doing a scene. If we saw the story solely through John's perspective, this might make sense. But we don't. *The Cocktail Hour* has some theatrical references. But *Labor Day*, in many ways its sequel, has so many meta-dramatic metaphors that they clog the story and drain humanity from its participants.

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# Calendar THEATER

## THEATER LISTINGS

Theater listings and commentary are by Jeff Smith. Information is accurate according to material given us, but it is always wise to phone the theater for any last-minute changes and to inquire about ticket availability. Many theaters offer discounts to students, senior citizens, and the military. Ask at the box office.

**Brigadoon**  
Starlight Musical Theatre opens its winter season with Lerner and Loewe's fantasy about two American tourists who stumble upon a mist-shrouded Scottish town that reawakens only one day every 100 years.

**SPARKLES THEATRE, THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 26, THROUGH MARCH 8, WEDNESDAY THROUGH SUNDAY AT 8:00 P.M. MATINEE SATURDAY AT 2:00 P.M. FOR INFORMATION CALL 833-544-7827.**

**Children of the Wind**  
Coral One Productions presents Jerry Devine's drama about three weeks in the life of Daniel Brophy, an actor struggling to cope with the demands on his life. Wayne Allen Freese directed.

**THEATRE PRODUCTIONS, THROUGH MARCH 8, FRIDAY AND SATURDAY AT 8:00 P.M. MATINEE SUNDAY AT 2:00 P.M.**

**Cultural Hyphen**  
Andy Lowe's drama began as an essay for an Advanced Placement En-



Cultural Hyphen

glish class. "It was based on the phrase 'Asian-American,'" he writes. "We seem to have a definition for Asian or Chinese or African, and I always believed there was a definition for American. However, I don't really know what the 'A' means." Peter Ju, a fourth-generation Chinese-American, grew up in the San Diego suburbs and has two brothers. Pressures from outside and inside force him to confront "what it means to be separated from the world by a hyphen."

Lowe's play has scenes that feel alive, and others that are derivative, based on plays with the same theme. The Asian American Repertory Theatre's staging, however, of ten flows like a dance. K. Lee Brophy and Gingerly Lowe's co-direction is terrific, especially when

the play incorporates the legendary struggle of the Monkey King to wrestle with an impostor and find his true identity. Wearing masks and radiant colored costumes (by Pamela Sullivan), the cast turns the bare Sweetest Theatre stage into a mythical realm. Dwight E. Lowe's bold martial arts choreography takes it from there. The acting (which doesn't always play to the full power) is solid, overall. In particular, John Truong (Peter) and Al Abur (Marcus) are actors to watch. It's rare to see why the A.R.T.T. recently extended this production—and why they might need another extension soon.

**Worth a try.**  
SWEETEST THEATRE, THROUGH MARCH 8, FRIDAY AND SATURDAY AT 8:00 P.M. SUNDAY AT 2:00 P.M.

**The Late Great Ladies of Blues & Jazz**  
Friday, February 27, 8 pm  
Joined by the All-Star Jazz Band, this actress-singer's one-woman show brings to life the music and poignant personal drama of six colorfully costumed legends: Ma Rainey, Mahalia Jackson, Billie Holiday, Bessie Smith, Dinah Washington and Ethel Waters.

**Four Armed Super-Virtuoso**  
Assad Brothers, Duo-Guitar  
Saturday, February 28, 8 pm  
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light harmonies of "50s 'gay groups' aren't your particular bins (I needed a quick fix of Otis and Hendrix after hearing them), you've got to admit the Plink folk-lore them with verve. They dare to be square. They cross in line of having a life but put life into the greatest hits of *True Blue Parade* (which consumed the most popular songs of the '50s until Elvis drove it off the airwaves). Stuart Ross, who conceived, directed, and choreographed the original New York version, directed the Old Town production with the aim of evoking everything to evoke. The four performers—Leo Duganoff, Steve Gundersen, Rick Meach, and Bobby Smith—sing as well as any collection of Plink (minor gripe: the opening night was crisp but made no distinction between where the rehearsal spots left off and the "spontaneous" sections began, everything left rehearsed by the numbers). Terry O'Donnell plays an indelible piano and permits himself the occasional piece of always funny business. The act, which is either the Theatre in Old Town or a purgatory where the Plink got stuck, is an odd duck for such a pretty show, though Lane Remann's verse lighting is when to break the brightness. **Worth a try.**  
THEATRE IN OLD TOWN, OPENED 8 P.M. TUESDAY THROUGH FRIDAY AT 8:00 P.M. SATURDAY AT 2:00 P.M. AND 8:00 P.M. SUNDAY AT 2:00 P.M. AND 8:00 P.M.

**The Fantasticks**  
Scripps Ranch Community Theatre offers the popular musical, by Tom Jones and Harvey Schmidt, about youth and experience. Dave Redford directed.

**LESLIE BENDROUGH THEATRE, UNITED STATES INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY, THROUGH MARCH 14, FRIDAY AND SATURDAY AT 8:00 P.M. MATINEE SUNDAY AT 2:00 P.M.**

**Greened the marvellous technique**  
Don Chabot's gripping drama, in its first performance with the San Diego Black Ensemble Theatre, stars with a showman's flamboyance four African American males come to Nebraska for a wedding. They

meet in room 412 of a hotel. They talk, get acquainted, and, as the formula dictates, revelations occur. You'd think the play's a comedy, ending with a wedding. But just when it looks like everyone won't give, it sprouts in several directions. Chabot examines chemical imbalances, man hallucinations, ritual, warrior culture. He shows forms of racism both blatant and subtle, and how each lives. He also sets four well-crafted characters on a crossroads where a whole spectrum of possibilities intersect. **Greened** tells a tough tale well. It's one of the best scripts the SEBT's ever worked with, and the production is among their finest. Whether they're hanging around or in deadly earnest, Walter Murray, Rhye Greene, and D. Reynolds do strong work as Gaines, the groom, and his friends. And Scott Johnson is out standing as J.W. Johnson has a taste on his left arm. This letters spell out "race." But if you look more closely, there's a little a little of the occasional piece of always funny business. The act, which is either the Theatre in Old Town or a purgatory where the Plink got stuck, is an odd duck for such a pretty show, though Lane Remann's verse lighting is when to break the brightness. **Worth a try.**  
THEATRE IN OLD TOWN, OPENED 8 P.M. TUESDAY THROUGH FRIDAY AT 8:00 P.M. SATURDAY AT 2:00 P.M. AND 8:00 P.M. SUNDAY AT 2:00 P.M. AND 8:00 P.M.

**Joe and Maria's Telling**  
1984 Theatre Productions presents an interactive wedding ceremony in which everything that can go wrong, will. The Grooms and Carrolls families, both dysfunctional, celebrate the nuptials of Joe and Maria.

**CLAYTON HOTEL, 600 K STREET, DOWNTOWN, OPENED 8 P.M. SATURDAY AT 8:00 P.M. FOR INFORMATION CALL 344-9444.**

**Laber Day**  
Reviewed this music. OLD TOWN THEATRE, JAMES EDSON, GLENDE FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS, THROUGH MARCH 15, TUESDAY THROUGH SATURDAY AT 8:00 P.M. SUNDAY AT 2:00 P.M. AND 8:00 P.M. MATINEE SATURDAY AND SUNDAY AT 2:00 P.M.

**The Ladies of the Camellias**  
NELL'S department of drama presents the reworking of *Blondie* (Hue and Sarah Bernhardt) A Russian

archivist takes both hostage. **Sparks fly.**  
DON POWELL THEATRE, SAN DIEGO STATE UNIVERSITY, FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 27, THROUGH MARCH 8, THURSDAY THROUGH SATURDAY AT 8:00 P.M. MATINEE SUNDAY AT 2:00 P.M.

**Murder at the Cafe Noir**  
Black Archer has a problem. The hard-boiled private detective came to the Caribbean island of Montserrat (it's on the Grenadine chain) to find the runaway daughter of a wealthy mainland—only to find himself ensnared in intrigue, murder, and a very entertaining evening of dinner theater at the "Cafe Noir," where anything and everything is for sale. "Somebody used the enigmatic (albeit insatiable) Countess Guinevere. Was it the enigma, a sexy mix now calling herself Sheila Wonderly (Yvonne Fisher)? Or the nefarious Anthony Castro (John Garcia), the scion of whose recent fatal opera was having to be held? Or Maria Larzer (Jennifer Lewis), wooden priestess? Or Madame Tournau (Diane Thibault), owner of the cafe and one-time lover of Guinevere (that who was)? Or 'Thurbs' (Brian Kewell), an unemployed local? Or even the snide Simon Gutterman (Rick Stevens), erstwhile lawyer? All had motives aplenty. And Rick Archer—he says call him "just plain Rick"—wants to know. So he elicits the aid of the audience in this interactive murder mystery, written by David Lindsay. Along with audience participation and a funny script awash with wit and bawdiness, the show offers a fast-paced read (Horowitz chokes in the center, though vege-

terians dishes are optional, served by the cast in character, all of whom make valuable contribu-



The Old Couple

tion. Michael Ari Wallhart's direction creates an atmosphere in which anything can happen. Especially laughs. **Worth a try.**  
MYSTERY CAFE, OPENED 8 P.M. FRIDAY AND SATURDAY AT 8:00 P.M.

**No, No, Nanette**  
The Wolf Resort Theatre stages the popular musical—music by Vincent Youmans, lyrics by Irving Caesar and Otto Harbach—about how Jimmy Smith, bible salesman, helps the careers of three women in different cities. **WEEKEND THEATRE, THROUGH MARCH 28, TUESDAY AND THURSDAY THROUGH SATURDAY AT 8:00 P.M. MATINEE SATURDAY THROUGH SATURDAY AT 8:00 P.M. SUNDAY AT 2:00 P.M.**

how to make them different from each other. That said, it's worth the price of admission to see the first act's knockout curtain-closer about the Titanic ("Dance on the Edge") and Tibberty's choreography. As the ship goes down, the cast do a Rocky/Beverly routine, with small, with swim fins and life preservers, and generating a laugh a second.

**Worth a try.**  
OVERSIGHT THEATRE, THROUGH MARCH 3, THURSDAY THROUGH SATURDAY AT 8:00 P.M. SUNDAY AT 2:00 P.M.

**Our Town**  
The South Coast Repertory Theatre offers Thornton Wilder's ageless drama about ordinary life in an ordinary town. Mark Rucker directed.

**Ready for the River**  
The First Theatre presents Neal Bell's "funny, scintillating, and touching saga of a mother and her daughter on the run from a gruesome murder." Christina Courtenay directed.

**SCOTT THEATRE, THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 26, THROUGH MARCH 28, THURSDAY THROUGH SATURDAY AT 8:00 P.M. SUNDAY AT 2:00 P.M.**

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Calendar  
MUSIC SCENE

## The Beatles Broke Me

The Wurlitzer blushes back at him through pastel color changes worthy of a frightened squid.

Walk into Ernie's '50s Diner, National City. Check out the Elvis Presley Limited-Edition Wurlitzer jukebox. Do not pass. Slip in your dollar bill (the slot for quarters is on the blink). Press 0816. Wait. Listen. That's the Reflections singing. "Just like... Romeo and Juliet." Their greatest hit. 1963.

Also, Ernie Stratton's greatest moment. They were just kids. Four of them. Thirteen. 14 years old. Came right off the street into my studio with this song. It was simple. I recorded them. Four-track. I played the demos to DJs. They liked it. They played it. It was a hit.

It all seemed so easy. It happened like magic — and then it never happened again. Even 35 years later, Ernie can't get that time out of his system. He's put it all into Ernie's '50s Diner, a part of Plaza Bowl, a historic bowling alley in National City. Old LPs fill the holes in the sloping metal griders that hold up the roof. Donut-holed 45s pepper the walls. Giant James Dean posters, old Chevy Corvetté pic, '50s ads paper the space between records — Jean Harlow pitching for "Cream of the Crop," Lucky Strike cigarettes, George Herman (Babe) Ruth for Big League Chew Gum. There's even a plug for "America's Favorite Nickel's Worth" — The New Wurlitzer...Music For Everyone!

A kid leans over the new retro model Wurlitzer. He's Latino, with Elvis-style slick-back hair. The Wurlitzer blushes back at him through pastel color changes worthy of a frightened squid. He presses buttons. It gurgles: air bubbles around its hooped sides and coughs up a CD. He chooses "The Great Pretender" and "Romeo and Juliet." When "Romeo" comes on, I can't help thinking: Little does this kid realize that the man behind the counter, his host Ernie, was actually in the control room in Detroit when kids his age sang into a big old mike and laid down this track, over a third of a century ago.

Fact is, Ernie Stratton could have been the Berry Gordy of Motown, if the song gods had been kinder and the big labels a little less ruthless. "I was acquainted with Berry Gordy," says

Ernie, who's 69 now, born and raised in Detroit. He still grows a doxy look in his dark eyes whenever he talks music, but not where he talks of Gordy. "He was tough. Especially with his artists. So many of them told me they never got their money from him. Greedy. Even Mary Wells. She had so many hits, yet she ended up flat broke."

Ernie came of age in Detroit when the Motown sound was just starting to explode. "My mom had this restaurant in the Gratiot Central Market. Stratton's. Corned beef and beer. That was the thing. Beer 25 cents. Corned beef sandwich 85 cents. I used to help her every Saturday. Musically, things were starting to hop. Like, at the sausage counter opposite Mom's place, there was this pretty colored girl handing out sausage samples every Saturday. Diana. Her family was on welfare. She was from the Breakers projects right outside, where Joe Louis the boxer grew up. I got to know her. But not that well. She was shy, reserved, only 15, nice. Well, one day she disappeared. It turned out she had teamed up with two school friends and they were singing. They called themselves the Supremes. I never dreamed then that I'd be getting into the record business too. My parents were Greek immigrants. They wanted me to finish college. Like my brother. He became a doctor. I was a little wild, I guess."

It all happened just as Ernie was setting into promoting cigarette brands for Brown and Williamson (he still smokes). His first wife's kid brother came to him and said he wanted to start a band. "Mike Hegy was his name — he was 13! But he was an accomplished bass player. He wanted to form a group. He got his kid sister Linda Rae to be the singer. She was 11. They wrote their own tunes. Called themselves the Royal Playboys. So I started promoting them. I started taking them round the record hops."

The record hops were dances where radio DJs emceed live bands. "The kids'd interbug and twist and line-dance to them," says Ernie. "I gave DJs exposure. It gave bands exposure. It gave you an 'in' with the DJs when you wanted to get them to play your records on air. We saw lots of Mary



Ernie Stratton

Wells, lots of Diana Ross and the other Supremes on these record hops."

Pretty soon Ernie was hooked. This was '59, when Detroit was busting out. Rhythm. Strides. The violent seeds of civil rights... Motown music. The Royal Playboys got a couple of smaller hits. They did well in Detroit and Pittsburgh, and Ernie Stratton, impresario, learned the ropes promoting them. Two years later he decided to build himself a studio, "Ernstat Studio," so he could start his own record labels, Meadowbrook Records and Dode Records (pronounced "Dodge," after his first wife's nickname). During his 30s, Ernie's life suddenly became music. Finding musicians to back singers and traveling to Tin Pan Alley in New York to look for songs in the famous Brill building where all the songwriters and music publishers gathered.

"One day I met Nat King Cole in Capitol

Records. He had time to kill, so he said, 'Let's go to lunch.' We went down to Scymour's coffee shop... I had goosebumps."

But as Motown became the rage, times were getting tougher for the likes of Ernie. The big companies didn't like small labels. They hogged airplay time. "It was rough. It was, like, five to six thousand singles were being released every week, and, literally, only five or six records would actually get airtime. The odds of breaking in were worse than rolling dice!"

Ernie's eyes wander, dreaming, and at the same time keeping a weather eye on his coffee shop. Or maybe he just needs a smoke. We're sitting at one of the booths. Forty-fives hang nearby on little nails Ernie hammered into the wall. People keep bringing these to him. He has to find a spot. He doesn't want to let his customers down. For a while, Ernie was having success. In the

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**Legends of Rock and Roll**  
Tuesday, March 10  
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Or, visit our website at [www.sycuancaas.com](http://www.sycuancaas.com) for additional concert information.  
No smoking in concert venue. Must be 18 years of age. Dates subject to change or cancellation.

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there. And on that record she sang "Hush Hush, Sweet Charlotte." It was a huge smash. From then on he was producing top-drawer acts.

"One night Bob invited me to dinner at Elvis's house, with Elvis there. It was a Saturday night. That morning they'd sent Bob a movie script from Elvis. He'd glanced at it. Same as always. Boy loses girl, boy has a few fights, soul-searching, gets girl. That morning he dashed out six or seven songs — six or seven songs, in a morning! — to put in the movie, flew down to Elvis's place, to play them to him, and then called me. But I

He proffers the records to me. "You're welcome to borrow them."

But I shake my head. "I don't dare."

Instead, I thrust one dollar and go to the Elvis Presley Limited-Edition Warfield and hit 0816, one more time. "Just like... Romeo and Juliet..." ■

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

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# Calendar MUSIC SCENE

"I did three guitars for Rocket from the Crypt yesterday. They came in their usual panic," laughs Fred Marotta, owner of the Repair Zone in Clairemont (found inside the Guitar Trader). "All the local bands

common job is something called a setup, where the guitar is restringing and made stage-ready. "It's like a tune-up for a car; that's what we equate it with," says Marotta. The cost for his services ranges from

gig tonight, so could you do this right now?" "I did restring level's guitar once," he recalls. "She was standing right where you are. She was only 19, and it was back when she had just hit San Diego and was really poor, living out of her van.

she's on the cover of Rolling Stone. I knew I should have charged her six." —E.Z.

"He's basically going to throw all his furniture in the trash, and drive up there. He doesn't really have a lot rising him here," says Billy Shadow, the bass player for the recently broken-up band the Cables. Shadow is referring to Cables' frontman and guitarist Mike Flinn. At the end of this month, Flinn will be moving to San Francisco in search of two new members for the band. He'll keep the Cables name.



FRED MAROTTA, GUITAR TECHNICIAN

She was very sweet, had only five bucks, so I said, 'Yeah, okay. Let me put your strings on for you.' Two years later



THE CABLES

drummer," says Flinn, talking about sticking with Shadow. "Now, he's staying in San Diego for his girlfriend's sake, because she doesn't want to go."

"It's not impossible to make it here in San Diego," says Shadow. "We're 100 miles away from L.A., the biggest city of industry in California for music."

A sparsely attended 35-minute set at Java Joe's in Ocean Beach on February 11 was the band's last show in San Diego. Ironically, the Cables, and their debut CD *Five O'Clock Shadow*, have been very well received at local radio station 92.5.

"They were one of my favorite San Diego bands and one of our most frequent

guests on 92.5," says on-air personality Jason Riggs. "They always kind of reminded me of the Replacements, and I love the Replacements, and I love Mike Flinn inside." "This is all I want to do, I don't care if I'm recording and putting out records by myself as a fucking old, alcoholic, man. I don't care."

—R.B.

**Harbor Nights in Point Loma has been visited by Elvis** (a.k.a. Raymond Michael). Ads for his show, "Forever Elvis," claim that he was "woted #1 Elvis by Dick Clark."

Tonight, Pink Floyd is on the bill. It's their third time at

# blurt THE INSIDE TRACK

are great, we love them, but they always seem to wait until the last minute."

Marotta calls himself a guitar technician. For the better part of 20 years he has been doing everything from simple restringings to custom building of all kinds of fretted instruments — guitars, basses, ukuleles, banjos — "if it's got frets and strings on it, we work on it."

Marotta and his part-time assistant, Mark Neil (a member of the band the Unknowns), perform all kinds of repairs and modifications for local musicians, but the most

\$5 for a minor adjustment to over \$1000 for a custom-built guitar. He builds between 6 and 12 each year. Though he's not a professional musician, Marotta plays guitar, ukulele, and banjo. "But my real love is working on them. I started off like a lot of other people in the early '70s, wanting to play professionally, but I gave it up to work on guitars."

He says most local bands are clients, frequently storming in to see him at the last minute. "They'll say, 'Hey, how are you?' Then they say, 'We don't have a much money, but we have a

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**JOE SATRIANI**

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**TONIGHT, THURSDAY**

**Steve Gibberty and Cindy Hays**  
San Diego's United Methodist Church,  
Friday, February 27, 7:30 p.m., 1710  
Regal Drive, Encinitas. 760-436-4030.

**Hays (874):** 4th and B, Friday, Feb.  
27, 8 p.m., 345 B Street, downtown.  
619-231-4141 or 619-231-2497.

February 27, 9 a.m., 710 Sunset Avenue  
Pacific Beach 619-495-7544

**SUNDAY**  
**The Red Hot Chili Peppers** (54)  
Spring Street Forum, San Diego, March 1  
p.m., 3801 Spring Street, Banker's Hill  
619-295-4381.

019-221-6457

**WEDNESDAY**

Black Whisky (453), the

**The Spring Course Institute and  
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Thursday, March 5, 8:30 p.m., 1435  
Central Avenue, Seaside Beach  
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and **Markus Brown** and the **Yachtmen** 1940's Swing Series, Tuesday, March 10, 5:45 p.m., 5302 N. Harbor Blvd., San Diego, CA 92106. 619-542-4462.

**The South Seas** 1940's Swing Series, Tuesday, March 10, 7 p.m., 5302 N. Harbor Blvd., San Diego, CA 92106. 619-542-4462.

**The Hula Hoop Band** 432's, "Come For Me", Wednesday, March 11, 8 p.m., 3105 Ocean Front Walk, Mission Beach, 619-486-1780 or 619-230-8497.

**IndieRock, Purple Heart, and Brownie Biscuits** 1990's, "Cabin Fever", March 11, 8:30 p.m., 2501 Camino del Rio South, San Diego, CA 92108. 619-233-4355 or 619-230-8497.

**The Big One** 1940's and 1950's, "The Big One", Thursday, March 12, 8 p.m., 5302 N. Harbor Blvd., San Diego, CA 92106. 619-542-4462.

**Supernova** 1990's, "Supernova", Thursday, March 12, 8:30 p.m., 2501 Camino del Rio South, San Diego, CA 92108. 619-233-4355 or 619-230-8497.

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WEST: Jose Carmona, Cumbria

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SAT: The Mike Reilly Band SUN: Tessa Cantelino, MON: Steve TULL: The Deaconess WED: Dave Grosse

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**Calendar**

**MUSIC SCENE**

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*It's not just your underground dance club to be included, but it's 21+ only, no 18+ or 19+ or 20+ or 21+ or 22+ or 23+ or 24+ or 25+ or 26+ or 27+ or 28+ or 29+ or 30+ or 31+ or 32+ or 33+ or 34+ or 35+ or 36+ or 37+ or 38+ or 39+ or 40+ or 41+ or 42+ or 43+ or 44+ or 45+ or 46+ or 47+ or 48+ or 49+ or 50+ or 51+ or 52+ or 53+ or 54+ or 55+ or 56+ or 57+ or 58+ or 59+ or 60+ or 61+ or 62+ or 63+ or 64+ or 65+ or 66+ or 67+ or 68+ or 69+ or 70+ or 71+ or 72+ or 73+ or 74+ or 75+ or 76+ or 77+ or 78+ or 79+ or 80+ or 81+ or 82+ or 83+ or 84+ or 85+ or 86+ or 87+ or 88+ or 89+ or 90+ or 91+ or 92+ or 93+ or 94+ or 95+ or 96+ or 97+ or 98+ or 99+ or 100+ or 101+ or 102+ or 103+ or 104+ or 105+ or 106+ or 107+ or 108+ or 109+ or 110+ or 111+ or 112+ or 113+ or 114+ or 115+ or 116+ or 117+ or 118+ or 119+ or 120+ or 121+ or 122+ or 123+ or 124+ or 125+ or 126+ or 127+ or 128+ or 129+ or 130+ or 131+ or 132+ or 133+ or 134+ or 135+ or 136+ or 137+ or 138+ or 139+ or 140+ or 141+ or 142+ or 143+ or 144+ or 145+ or 146+ or 147+ or 148+ or 149+ or 150+ or 151+ or 152+ or 153+ or 154+ or 155+ or 156+ or 157+ or 158+ or 159+ or 160+ or 161+ or 162+ or 163+ or 164+ or 165+ or 166+ or 167+ or 168+ or 169+ or 170+ or 171+ or 172+ or 173+ or 174+ or 175+ or 176+ or 177+ or 178+ or 179+ or 180+ or 181+ or 182+ or 183+ or 184+ or 185+ or 186+ or 187+ or 188+ or 189+ or 190+ or 191+ or 192+ or 193+ or 194+ or 195+ or 196+ or 197+ or 198+ or 199+ or 200+ or 201+ or 202+ or 203+ or 204+ or 205+ or 206+ or 207+ or 208+ or 209+ or 210+ or 211+ or 212+ or 213+ or 214+ or 215+ or 216+ or 217+ or 218+ or 219+ or 220+ or 221+ or 222+ or 223+ or 224+ or 225+ or 226+ or 227+ or 228+ or 229+ or 230+ or 231+ or 232+ or 233+ or 234+ or 235+ or 236+ or 237+ or 238+ or 239+ or 240+ or 241+ or 242+ or 243+ or 244+ or 245+ or 246+ or 247+ or 248+ or 249+ or 250+ or 251+ or 252+ or 253+ or 254+ or 255+ or 256+ or 257+ or 258+ or 259+ or 260+ or 261+ or 262+ or 263+ or 264+ or 265+ or 266+ or 267+ or 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1016+ or 1017+ or 1018+ or 1019+ or 1020+ or 1021+ or 1022+ or 1023+ or 1024+ or 1025+ or 1026+ or 1027+ or 1028+ or 1029+ or 1030+ or 1031+ or 1032+ or 1033+ or 1034+ or 1035+ or 1036+ or 1037+ or 1038+ or 1039+ or 1040+ or 1041+ or 1042+ or 1043+ or 1044+ or 1045+ or 1046+ or 1047+ or 1048+ or 1049+ or 1050+ or 1051+ or 1052+ or 1053+ or 1054+ or 1055+ or 1056+ or 1057+ or 1058+ or 1059+ or 1060+ or 1061+ or 1062+ or 1063+ or 1064+ or 1065+ or 1066+ or 1067+ or 1068+ or 1069+ or 1070+ or 1071+ or 1072+ or 1073+ or 1074+ or 1075+ or 1076+ or 1077+ or 1078+ or 1079+ or 1080+ or 1081+ or 1082+ or 1083+ or 1084+ or 1085+ or 1086+ or 1087+ or 1088+ or 1089+ or 1090+ or 1091+ or 1092+ or 1093+ or 1094+ or 1095+ or 1096+ or 1097+ or 1098+ or 1099+ or 1100+ or 1101+ or 1102+ or 1103+ or 1104+ or 1105+ or 1106+ or 1107+ or 1108+ or 1109+ or 1110+ or 1111+ or 1112+ or 1113+ or 1114+ or 1115+ or 1116+ or 1117+ or 1118+ or 1119+ or 1120+ or 1121+ or 1122+ or 1123+ or 1124+ or 1125+ or 1126+ or 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**Calendar  
MUSIC SCENE**

**The Lodge at Torrey Pines**, 11480 N. Torrey Pines Road, La Jolla, 619-453-4420. Friday, 4 pm, Tim Maguire and friends, jazz.

**Milligan's Bar and Grill**, 5780 La Jolla Village Drive, La Jolla, 619-459-7311. All performance are jazz unless otherwise noted. Thursday and

Wednesday, Jay Urbesne, Friday and Saturday, 8 pm to 11 pm, the Bobby Gordon Quartet, Sunday and Tuesday, Ken Koper.

**Moonbeams**, 835 Canyon Avenue, Pacific Beach, 619-451-6350. Thursday, *Julius Blue Painted Friday*, *Latin Soul Saturday*, *Big Mop Band*.

**Old Venice Cafe**, 2910 Camino Street, Point Loma, 619-222-5888. Thursday, 7:30 pm, Marc Angelis, jazz. Friday and Saturday, 9 pm, the Fab Lutes, pop.

**Schwan's Bar and Grill**, 919 Hornshead Street, Pacific Beach, 619-272-7280. Saturday and Sunday, live entertainment, call club for information.

**Tiki House**, 1155 Canyon Avenue, Pacific Beach, 619-273-9734. Thursday, Jimmy Lewis, acoustic. Friday, *Tenacious*, blues. Saturday, the Redwolves, blues rock.

**Panhandle Cafe**, 3145 Rosemead Street, Point Loma, 619-224-2891. Saturday, 8 pm, Michelle Williams, acoustic.

**Robusto**, 5660 La Jolla Village Drive, La Jolla, 619-459-1972. All performance are jazz and blues and begin at 8:30 pm, except Sunday, 6:30 pm. Thursday, *Julius Blue Painted Friday*, *Latin Soul Saturday*, *Big Mop Band*.

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**Belly Up**

Thurs., Feb. 26, 8:30 pm  
Jamaica's collection of 80s music  
**THE SKATILITES**  
and guest **SKRANK**

Fri., Feb. 27, 9:15 pm  
and guest **THE PRICE OF DOPE**  
**THE SKATILITES**, 5:30-8 pm

Sat., Feb. 28, 9:15 pm  
**THE GREYBOY**  
ALLSTARS  
and guest **LAMONT**

Sun., Mar. 1, 1 pm  
**MISSISSIPPI MUDSHARKS**  
and guest **THE BILL WYSON BAND**

Mon., Mar. 2, 9 pm  
Guest DJ  
**JOEY BARRINGER**

Tues., Mar. 3, 8 pm  
DANCE OUT THE NIGHT  
**THE NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH**  
and guest **THE NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH**

Wed., Mar. 4, 8:30 pm  
For 20 years, Jamaica's best live band  
**INNER CIRCLE**  
and guest **THE OVERSTAND BAND**

Thurs., Mar. 5, 9:15 pm  
From the mountains of Colorado  
**THE 4 UNTOUCHABLES**  
and guest **COLOMBIAN**

Fri., Mar. 6, 9:15 pm  
with guest **MIAMI COPIA**  
**spacehog**  
and guest **MIAMI COPIA**

Sat., Mar. 7, 7:30 pm  
**LADYSMITH BLACK MAMBO**

UPCOMING:  
Super Diamond, Mar. 7 • Steel Pulse, Mar. 16  
Gold Street Blues and guest **Golden State**, Mar. 18  
Buddha's, Mar. 19 • The Pulse Orchestra, Mar. 21  
Government Mule, Mar. 27  
Der Williams and Don Scumbay, April 14 • The Walters, April 17

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**DJ RATTY DJ ATARI**  
**DJ MARK & QUARK**

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The funky disco sounds of  
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guests **MAHALO BOOGIE**

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**BUCKFAST SUPERHERO • BENEY DEFENDS THUMAN**

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**GENE LOVES JEZEBEL**

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92.5 presents  
**APPLES IN STEREO**  
**JONATHAN BROOKE**  
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Happy Birthday, Hartini!  
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**Cherry's**, 1894 Main Street, downtown, 619-234-6837. Friday and Saturday, *Lower and Lower*, Chicago rock and roll.  
**Cree's Restaurant and Jazz Bar**, 802 Fifth Avenue, downtown, 619-233-4355. Thursday, the *Blues Brothers*, Irish folk, Saturday and Wednesday, *Steve Brown*, acoustic, Sunday, *Steve Brown*, rock.  
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## Remedial Criticism

*Little wonder that nasty Letters-to-the-Editor so often take the form of job applications.*

The average moviegoer wants an average movie. It only stands to reason. An above average movie by definition will be over his head. But such is the cosmology of the isolated ego, such is the vantage of human vanity, that the average moviegoer nevertheless wants the critics to affirm that his taste is exceptional and that whatever he is missing would go untouched by wild dogs.

To assure that what they themselves saw in a movie is all there is to see in it is a common and easy mistake for moviegoers to make. The mistake is commonly and easily compounded with the assumption that anyone who professes to have seen more in it must somehow be blinder than all those who saw less.

Only a fool could feel that the moviegoer who afterwards has the fewest complaints must be the one who had the finest time at the movie. One logical extension of that — though only the moviegoer with the most complaints might be tempted to go so far — would be that the moviegoer who had the finest time at it is the

one who chose to stay home and not go. Another logical extension of it would be that no moviegoer had a finer time than had the seat underneath him.

### REVIEW DUNCAN SHEPHERD

A widening gulf between the full-time professional movie critic and the leisure-time occasional moviegoer is a natural and not terribly alarming growth. The name of the gulf is Experience.

The major myth perpetuated by the liberal seasoning of movie ads with critical blurbs is that one man's opinion is as good as another's. While ostensibly valuing the views of the "experts" — and whether it's Gene Shalit or Andrew Sarris or Larry King makes no difference — the blurb-cullers reduce the expertise to an anyone-can-do-it selection of an adjective ("powerful"), a noun ("powerhouse"), or, in the case of Siskel and Ebert, a hand gesture. Little wonder, then, that nasty Letters-to-the-Editor so often take the form of job applications.

It is unreasonable to expect that people who watch movies every day of the week and who think about them

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Calendar  
MOVIES



E.T., the Extra-Terrestrial

twenty-four hours a day should think the same things about them as do people who think about them seldom or never, even when watching them.

In all good conscience, the critic must consider the possibility that he has been warped by his experience and that his views will be a puzzlement to the uninitiated, the unsold, the unwounded. In better conscience, he must realize that he is honor-bound to go

ahead anyway and deliver his views. Just one of the guy's views are available from any guy.

The point at which the critic begins increasingly to diverge from the general opinion is the precise point at which the necessity of his opinion begins to increase in strict ratio. This relationship, the marriage of divergence and necessity, will hold any day until his opinion spirals outside the

gravitational field of sanity.

The critic who has to make a conscious effort to be different would for certain be a sorry spectacle, but not sorer than the reader who presumes that any degree of difference must be the result of a conscious effort.

Any reader who asks, demands, desires that a critic accurately reflect (or predict) the reader's personal re-

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104 San Diego Reader February 26, 1998

STARTS TOMORROW

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# Calendar MOVIES

has no farther to go, and the movie has already well over the two-hour mark, he will not be hurried through his final church service. The preacher, in common with the actor, does not want to have to get off the stage. Miranda Richardson, Farrah Fawcett, John Beasley, Todd Allen: 1997

\*\*\* CAMEL MOUNTAIN, COVE, DE MARI HIGHLANDS, GROSSMONT TROLEY, HILLCREST CINEMAS, PLAZA CINEMA, SWEETWATER 9: LA ESCORRIDO 8.

**As Good As It Gets** — Beautifully misnamed, but well above average in execution, bordering on bizarre, romantic triangle composed of an obsessive-compulsive homophobic misogynistic racist antisemitic (misanthropic, in short, besides dog hating) best-selling romance novelist, and a next-door homosexual painter with a push-faced little pouch and a black arse duffer, and a single-mom waitress with a sick little boy. The respective work of the writer and painter is only sketchily characterized, and the delightful dog doggie for too long a stretch in the flapping second half, and the little boy never comes into focus as an individual, a major oversight in light of developments. And while the movie must be credited for manufacturing more unusual and more problematical complications than the standard romantic comedy, it betrays itself in the neatness with which these are ul-

timately (often subliminally) cleared up. (Ging Kinnear, as the painter, comes off better than normal mainly because the circumstances are better. And Helen Hunt, no revelation to regular or occasional viewers of her *Mad About You* sitcom, is a slick, smooth, if shallow comedienne. The real revelation, strange to say, is Jack Nicholson, so commanding a presence for so long a time that we are apt to take him for granted. If his performance here is as surface-y as Hunt's, his range of expression from full-body stance to the tiniest fluctuation of those famous eyebrows, is seemingly boundless, and the most amazing thing about him at this stage of his career is how hard he is still willing to work. With Cuba Gooding Jr., and Shirley Knight, directed by James Brooks: 1997

\*\*\* CAMEL MOUNTAIN, CINEMA STAR GALAXY, CINEMA STAR 13, CINEMA STAR 13, CINEMA 8, PLAZA CINEMA, GROSSMONT TROLEY, HILLCREST CINEMAS, PLAZA CINEMA, SWEETWATER 9: LA ESCORRIDO 8.

**Blues Brothers 2000** — A low point of anything better to do movie. It at least serves as a reminder that John Landis made a good one once. Eighteen years earlier, his lack of inspiration here extends to the clod-hopping parade of face shots, the puns, phrasing and plagiarizing of the original, the employment of the Russian mafia as snow badmen, and the long time getting going. John Belushi is of course long departed, reason enough, surely, to have never



Blues, Hollywood, Burn

even thought about getting going. And with the Blues Brothers thus reduced to the singular (Tim Allen) hearse-footed than before, a "sort of like" a stepbrother will have to be scared up (Joe Morton). "Have you noticed, Mr. Blues, that I am an African-American?" just to justify the title. The sort of stepbrother — the bastard offspring of the Blues Brothers' mentor, the late Cab Calloway, but so present a Commander in the Illinois State Police — doesn't enter the fold until almost the end. In the meantime, a ten-year-old orphan and a string-club bartender (John Goodman, more or less filling Belushi's pants) are recruited to don the uniforms of dark suits and dark glasses. The musical number at Ed's Love Exchange, with phone-sex operators in physically unfit chorine girls, and the solo vocals handled by Wilson Pickett, Eddie Floyd, and a young blue-eyed soulster called Jonny Lang, had some possibilities, mostly unfulfilled (washed-out color, insufficiently differentiated dancers). The climactic Battle of the Bands works up some definite sonic excitement, but one wonders about the standards of admission to an R&B dream team that welcomes the likes of Lou Rawls, Eric Clapton, Navee Winwood, and Travis Tritt: 1998

\*\*\* CAMEL MOUNTAIN, COVE, DE MARI HIGHLANDS, GROSSMONT TROLEY, HILLCREST CINEMAS, PLAZA CINEMA, SWEETWATER 9: LA ESCORRIDO 8.

**Boogie Nights** — A movie that needed, that could not, to be made a hefty slice of heretofore unexamined cultural history, carved out of the San Fernando Valley, cradle of the porn film industry. The precise stopper of the timeline — sufficiently lengthy to qualify as "epic," especially at a two- and a half-hour running time — could hardly have been more strategically selected. It spans from the salad days of the late Seventies, after these glorified stag films had gained a foothold in public places in the light of day, to the early Eighties, when the arrival of video drove them back underground and into the privacy of the home. At its best, the movie encroaches on the territory Tim Burton raked out in *Ed Wood*, a cheerful spectacle of people doing the best they can, however abysmal their level of ability. But writer-director Paul Thomas Anderson, who appears to regard himself as doing well by being nonjudgmental, cannot match his own affection for his people and cannot make his own concession to. To be sure, we would not want Anderson to give us exactly the same thing we get from Burton. We want something new, something else. We get something less. We are expected, evidently, to congratulate Anderson on his nonjudgmental alien toward people he views as — people he, after all, created as —

uniformly simple-minded, glibless, un-aware, unreflecting, inarticulate, unenlightened, a-quintessentially childish, defenseless, how very big of him, how very superior. Neatly it is always a more interesting, a more difficult, a more arduous, position to maintain in the face of more interesting people. Anderson's version of it is at bottom a self-imposed handicap that gets in the way equally of the potential parody and the potential piety. The movie is dull, edged all around. A certain intensity of imagination — an inclination to pull out guns and start blasting — is a handicap, too. But an even bigger handicap than these is the hybridized visual style that compels us to think of other filmmakers when we ought to be thinking about Anderson: primarily of Scorsese, secondarily of Schrader, of the baroque operatic floridness of the one, and the paranoiac glacial intricacy of the other. They do not go together, these two, except as figureheads of scholastic cinema. And they do not both go — Scorsese, at any rate, does not go — with an attitude of neutrality. Mark Wahlberg, Burt Reynolds, Julianne Moore, John C. Reilly, Don Cheadle, William H. Macy: 1997

\*\*\* CAMEL MOUNTAIN, COVE, DE MARI HIGHLANDS, GROSSMONT TROLEY, HILLCREST CINEMAS, PLAZA CINEMA, SWEETWATER 9: LA ESCORRIDO 8.

**The Borrowers** — Back-chunk chunk of whimsy, from the children's books of Mary Norton, about a species of wee folk known as Borrowers, one family of whom infest the house of the Lenders in a most hard-time-warped fantasyland. The Ellipticals and Brobbingsgrays consist well enough in the same space and time as are required to interact, the scale is okay, the timing is off. Easier, no doubt, on the page, with or without marvelous illustrations. The Band, neglecting only to capitalize the movie, give out some pertinent words of advice through the big mouth of Polonius: "Neither a borrower nor a lender be." With Jim Broadbent, John Goodman, Mark Williams, and Hugh Laurie direct: 3 by Peter Hewitt: 1998

\*\*\* CAMEL MOUNTAIN, COVE, DE MARI HIGHLANDS, GROSSMONT TROLEY, HILLCREST CINEMAS, PLAZA CINEMA, SWEETWATER 9: LA ESCORRIDO 8.

**Burn, Hollywood, Burn** — First announced under the title of *Alan Smithee* Film, it then turned into an actual Alan Smithee film. Alan Smithee being the official Hollywood pseudonym of any director who, for any variety of reasons, has withdrawn his name from a project. Arthur Hiller (who appears in the outtakes at the end) was the original director here, though his withdrawal looks as if it could have been part of the plan from the start. The end result, in any case, is well worth disclaiming. The initial mystery was the printing of a "real" Alan Smithee film, *Idiot*, a veteran film editor who was entrusted to direct a metaphorical action picture called *True*, co-starring Robert Redford, Whoopi Goldberg, and Jackar Chan, and who then stole the negatively in order to save face. Many of the supposed "in" jokes are equally far out of bounds, the mockumentary format, with plenty of talking to the camera, is lacy and disorienting, and the entire tedious mess stretches hardly to an hour and a quarter. The real creative force behind the project, of course, is scriptwriter Joe (Shoguer) Eschbacher, a fair sample of whose wit is to have the fictional Alan Smithee say of his own movie: "It's worse than *Shoguer*." So,

"hilarious."

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San Diego Reader February 26, 1998 111



Sent to *Woods Hole* February 26, 1938. **111**

## Sauce That Looked Like Rust

My friend said under his breath, "It's pathetic."

What I admired most about the old Michelangelo restaurant on Rosecrans Street was the family atmosphere. Although the main dining room was tiny and crowded with tables, you would almost always see a large family with babies, grandparents, and assorted relatives digging into plates of pasta, chicken, shrimp, Pizzas Blow-out of the kitchen almost magically to compete with the food on the table. When Michelangelo closed in June 1996, the loss was felt by many.

### REVIEW ELEANOR WIDMER

Ask any Italian restaurateur in Gaslamp if children are welcome and the response will be "Yes." But the upscale image of downtown dining rooms seems to preclude parents with children. As soon as Michelangelo reopened at its new location, I rushed to see whether it would attract families. It does.

It took more than eight months to renovate—from the ground up—what used to be the Bombay Bicycle Club. Stefano Patrucco, the chef/partner, oversaw the construction and the design, which includes seven skylights, a full bar, large upholstered chairs, copper paneling, and a wood-burning pizza oven. Franco Galofaro (previously at Grant Grill) is the pit master who works the front of the house.

Why is Michelangelo different from the downtown emporiums? The recipes for its food come from every region of Italy. Downtown restaurant specialties in food from Capri, Piedmont, Tuscany, or Rome. At Michelangelo, Sicilian may be married to Northern Italian; many of the recipes come from Stefano's Roman grandmother (a professional cook).

We started with a Sicilian salad of sliced oranges, arugula, Moroccan-style sun-dried black olives, sprinkled with virgin olive oil (\$5.00). We also had curb fries with radicchio served with a warm dressing of corn and walnuts (\$5.50). The two salads made an unusual combination, half fruit, half greens, one with cold dressing, the other with warm.

We then sampled the daily rissole (a dish baked in a mold), which that night consisted of

fresh, made-on-the-premises egg noodles and spinach noodles layered with eggplant, ricotta, Bolognese sauce, plus a creamy béchamel sauce. The dish was exotic and rich. When we selected the giant ravioli (fagottini) we didn't realize that it, too, contained eggplant. We

praised the dish with its tasty meat sauce (both \$11.75). I regret that we didn't sample the pizza, cooked in an oven that burns white oak and olive wood. Most of the families around us selected pizza and salad or pollo alla diavola, a half chicken roasted in the wood-burning oven and seasoned with hot pepper, black pepper, rosemary, and garlic, for those who love spicy Italian (\$10.95).

Don't laugh when I mention that I ordered the nightly soup (lentil) just before dessert. I love the soups at Michelangelo and took most of this one home (\$3.50). We finished our meal with a cannoli, a recipe from Stefano's mother-in-law. The cannoli, stuffed with ricotta cheese and candied fruit, must be consumed right on the spot—you can't save it for later because the pastry shells grow soggy.

At lunch a baked half chicken is \$8.00, and spinach, zucchini, or artichoke fritatas are available (upon request in the evening). If you like home-style Italian, try Michelangelo. Here was my experience at Pizzeria Via Italia in Claremont. A few minutes before 6:00 p.m., the place was filled to capacity and to noisy you could hardly hear yourself speak. Waiters dashed between tables as if in a relay race, and one employee skirted around with a cell phone to his ear.

I was with a chef who had just returned from a two-week stint out of Italy and France, and he was relaxed about having to stand inside the door waiting for a table. Our waiter, who spoke to us in Italian, suggested we try the risotto with blueberries. I know someone who eats potato pancakes with ketchup and another who puts mustard on corn on the cob. But rice with blueberries? Acacia!

Our polenta arrived cooked like frittata, runny instead of firm, with cheese thrown on top that



**The Restaurant:** Ristorante Michelangelo  
**The Location:** 2806 Shelter Island Drive, Point Loma; 619-224-9478  
**Type of Food:** Regional Italian  
**Price Range:** Dinner entrees, \$8.50 to \$19.00  
**Hours:** Open daily. Lunch, Monday through Friday, 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.; Dinner, Sunday, 4:00 to 10:00 p.m.; Monday through Thursday, 5:00 to 10:00 p.m.; Friday and Saturday, 5:00 to 11:00 p.m.

**The Restaurant:** Pizzeria Via Italia  
**The Location:** 4705 Claremont Drive, Claremont Town Square, Claremont; 619-274-9732  
**Type of Food:** Italian  
**Price Range:** \$4.00 to \$14.95  
**Hours:** Open daily, 11:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.

was not thoroughly melted. Our waiter asked, "You like?" I said, "No, this polenta isn't cooked enough." He whisked it away and when he returned, the corn meal was warmer and the cheese melted, but the dish hadn't been prepared properly from the start.

The risotto with mushrooms was salty, perhaps from the Italian cheese and the pancetta, which tasted as if it had come into contact with bacon grease. Our waiter asked, "You like?" "No," we said in unison, "too salty." That dish disappeared in a hurry.

Some alla vodka showed no evidence of cream; but bacon appetite. My friend said under his

breath, "It's pathetic." The halibut was fresh (thank you, thank you), but the roasted potatoes accompanying the fish were dry. The meal with our wine cost \$59.00.

What redeemed the evening was the Cold Stone Creamery next door. I had the double Dutch chocolate, with hot fudge sauce; my friend, sweet cream with macadamia nuts. We sat on a bench outside and discussed Via Italia. Diners flock there in great numbers. Possibly we ordered the wrong dishes, though a meat dish at a table next to ours had a sauce that looked like rust. The restaurant has a reputation for being "different." We didn't dispute that claim.

## Do What the Romans Did

I'm too weak to start a war. She knows it.

I can't believe I'm doing this. Me! One of the few, the proud, the principled, who refuse to set foot inside a mall (apart from Horton Plaza. That's different. They've got Future Tronics in there).

Yet here I am, with Carla, sitting in a mall restaurant among thousands of other mall-shoppers resting up after trollying the aisles, gazing at diamonds in jewelers' grilles, gazing at diamonds in carpet shops, "free" phones at the Aircouch booth. (Yeah, right. The Trojan Horse was free, too.)

My excuse? Carla and I had done the unthinkable. Rented a car. A car! Sixty bucks, with all that insurance. But it was worth it, because I was going to take her to a Sunday brunch at one of my all-time favorite places, the Dufur Cafe. Up there in them live-oak woods, 30 miles along 94. Some of the license plates from the Oldies' Model Ts are still hanging from the walls up there.

Except, wouldn't you know it? This morning I woke up with this bug in my rummy. Ache in my head. I had to get up. As soon as I got up, I wanted to throw up.

But with 60 bucks of car sitting outside? No way I was going to waste that car. "How come you're so quiet?" says Carla as I turn onto Chula Vista's Broadway to head east. "You look like you're heading for Tombstone."

As I fess up, I'm sure I catch a gleam in her eye. We just happen to be outside the Chula Vista Shopping Center. "Why don't you stop here, find a men's room. Do what the Romans did." she says.

No time to argue. I turn in, park, go looking for someplace where I can talk to the Great White Telephone, as my Aussie friend Dale would say.

When I come back, Carla's waving from the upstairs area at the center of the mall, where the carousel goes round and round. And round. Hohey. I have to stop looking at it. "This way," she calls

over the organ music. "Better than Dufur!" I find the escalator, fight a bunch of strolchy teens with skateboards to find Carla seated in the middle of an ark of restaurants with outside seating. That could be good. Except look who's sitting there! Mall rats. Moments changing diapers. Little old ladies staring into space. That whirling thing.

This lady says they have the best Philly steak sandwich, and she's from Philadelphia," says Carla, pointing to the woman at the next table. She's sitting outside Sugar & Spice Delicatessen. Looks like a sandwich place. The lady nods her head up and down as she bites into a foot-long sandwich.

"But Dufur..."

### TIN FORK ED BEDFORD

"Bedford!" It's Carla, Nurse from Hell. "I'm not going into the boonies with you looking like you've seen a ghost. Besides, you need to replace what you've just..." — she sees the lady at the next table listening in — "...recycled."

I'm too weak to start a war. She knows it. "I'll have what she's having," she says, without waiting, looking at her neighbor.

I go inside to place the order. The place is red-stained varnish wood and black-and-white tile. The wall menu has stuffed croissants, meats in long loaves, salads, cheesecakes, and a coffee list to rival Starbucks.

Don't get seduced. I keep mumbling. It's a mall. The husband-and-wife team take orders. The wife assembles the sandwiches and grills them. Carla wants the \$3.40 six-inch Philly. (The foot-long are \$5.50.) I notice a big square bread after enclosing chicken, cheese, and other good-looking stuff. "Chicken panini," says the wife, Alina. "\$3.65." I order it. And a medium iced tea (\$1.10) for each of us.

"We have homemade candied chowder," says Alina. "People from across the border — they like things fresh — say they come here just for that."

\$2.50 a bowl, \$1.95 a cup."

"It's all fresh," says Hasan, her husband. "And healthy. Everything's grilled. Nothing fried. Beef is 97 percent fat-free. Our chicken Caesar salad is tossed with each order. We never have tired salads."

"Great," I say. "Still a mall," I mumble. Trouble is, this chicken panini tastes scrumptious. It's a six-by-four-inch slab of focaccia with golden pin-cushion top, stuffed with chicken, tomatoes, onions, melted cheddar and provolone, and jalapenos to give it kick. But the thing I like best is the mesquite flavor in the chicken.

Two bites in I can actually feel my appetite coming back.

"What I love," says Carla, chomping at her Philly, "is the bread. Fresh. Crispy. Don't have to fight it. He said the beef's 97 percent fat-free! Aren't you glad we ate here and not McDonald's?"

I look across to the McDonald's concession, just as the carousel rings its bell. Organ grinds. Kids wave. They start turning. Slowly at first, then whirling, whirling whirling...

**The Place:** Sugar & Spice Delicatessen  
**The Location:** 555 Broadway, Chula Vista, Suite 2004; 619-476-0276  
**Type of Food:** American, Greek  
**Prices:** Philly beef in six-inch French roll, quarter-pound of beef and melted jack cheese w/sausage, green peppers, tomatoes, mushrooms, \$3.40. "San Diego," six-inch croissant w/sausage, avocado, Swiss cheese, lettuce, tomatoes, mayonnaise, \$3.99. "All American," large-size baked potato w/quarter-pound of ham and cheese, butter, sour cream, chives, \$4.00. Chicken Caesar salad, w/mesquite-grilled chicken, two kinds of Parmesan cheese, side of focaccia toast, \$3.99. Bailey's Irish Cream cheesecake, \$2.35  
**Hours:** 10:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m., Monday to Thursday; 10:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., Friday and Saturday; 11:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m., Sunday  
**Bus/Trolley Routes:** 932, 702, Blue Line Trolley  
**Nearest Bus Stop:** H and Broadway  
**Nearest Trolley Stop:** Chula Vista H Street

## Nothing Here Is Gooped Up with Sour Cream

Pasta, which means hot or spicy, served in a spaghetti sauce made with fresh tomatoes, onions, and garlic. The sauce is thick and hearty. The pasta is served with a side of sour cream and a side of cheese. The pasta is served with a side of sour cream and a side of cheese.

### REVIEW ELEANOR WIDMER

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## CAVATAPPI

Chef Bill Colella combines the flavors of the Pacific Rim and the Southwest with traditional Italian cuisine to create a sensational new menu. Innovative entrees, fresh fish, pastas, wood-fired gourmet pizzas and desserts are all prepared and served in a relaxed atmosphere within view to our show kitchen. For reservations call: 276-4010

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Picture a setting designed to tantalize the senses. A breathtaking gallery atmosphere replete with objets d'art. Gleaming copper and polished wood accents abound. The earthy sounds of live jazz take you places you've only dreamed of. Exotic aromas of exquisitely prepared Mediterranean and California cuisine linger in the air tempting your palate. A quaint Paris bistro? The romance of an elegant New York supper club? You'll find it all at the captivating new Torreyana Grille in La Jolla. Where you'll enjoy a world class experience, with a uniquely California attitude.

Featuring this week for your listening & dancing pleasure  
**Thursday: The Big Little Band**  
**Friday: Kenny Goldberg - Latin Jazz**  
8 pm until 1 am

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10950 North Torrey Pines Road, La Jolla 619/450-4571  
Complimentary Valet/Driver Set Parking



**Calendar**  
**RESTAURANTS**

**RESTAURANT LISTINGS**

The Reader's Guide to Restaurants is compiled by Eleanor Widner and represents a selective listing of recommended San Diego County and Tierras dining establishments. Individual restaurants will appear once or twice a month. Price estimates are based on the latest information available for a mid-range entrée. **Lunch** below \$10, **dinner** \$10 to \$15, **expensive** more than \$16. Please call restaurants in advance for operating hours, reservations, and other specific information.

**NORTH COASTAL**

**BULLY'S NORTH** 1404 Camino del Mar, Del Mar, 619-735-1600. Especially during summer, this branch is the most colorful and is jammed with the opening crowd, which makes the place exciting. Food is the same as at other bully's, but the high intensity carries it. Service is courteous, and breakfast and lunch are served until 4:00 p.m. Early bird special, Monday through Friday, from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. Breakfast includes steak and eggs, wonderful omelets (one with crab), and Saturday and Sunday breakfast specials. Steak, prime rib, lamb chops, fish, and fresh fish are featured. Open daily from 10:00 a.m.; dinner served to midnight. Moderate.

**CALIFORNIA PIZZA KITCHEN** 437 South Highway 101, Suite 601, Solana Beach, 619-790-0909. Here's a good family restaurant where you can take your children and grandchildren for a late pizza pizza. There are 28 pizzas. The chicken veggie with spinach for house is great in an vegetarian sandwich. Same menu, lunch and dinner. Open daily, 11:30 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.

except, Sunday close at 9:00 p.m. Low. Branches also in La Jolla Village Square, 3363 Tobol Drive, 414-457-4222; and Carmel Mountain Plaza, 11602 Carmel Mountain Road, 619-475-4424.

**EL CALADO** 101 South Highway 101, Suite 12, Encinitas, 760-434-2793. If you're searching for a romantic, low-cost, lower 50 Mexican restaurant, then this should be right up your alley (the same menu also). Recommended are grilled cod, grilled shrimp, chicken breast in several preparations, and meltaways of beef or chicken sauce with potatoes and vegetables. Full vegetarian menu with 35 items. Everything Central Mexican-style ingredients, delicate and beautiful. Outdoor patio is for brown Open daily. Same menu lunch and dinner. Low.

**THE ENCINITAS CAFE** 531 South Highway 101, Encinitas, 760-432-0915. This American cafe serves breakfast from opening to closing, 5:30 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. The Encinitas special offers omelets, pancakes and two eggs, plus your choice of sausage, ham, or bacon, sausage, or ham, for \$5.50. Egg dishes are served with biscuits and gravy. Sandwiches and salads for lunch. American entrees for dinner. Fast, efficient service. Open daily, breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Low.

**THE FISH MARKET** 640 Via de la Valle, Del Mar, 619-735-2277. From the moment it opens until closing, there's a constant buzz. The reason: food of fresh seafood on the run service, and a choice of 15 to 30 fresh fish items, accompanied by a knowledgeable, friendly, and attentive staff. Dinner Tuesday through Sunday. Moderate to expensive.

**LA ESPERANZA NORTH** 601 N. Highway 101, Encinitas, 760-434-2793. If you're looking for a romantic, low-cost, lower 50 Mexican restaurant, then this should be right up your alley (the same menu also). Recommended are grilled cod, grilled shrimp, chicken breast in several preparations, and meltaways of beef or chicken sauce with potatoes and vegetables. Full vegetarian menu with 35 items. Everything Central Mexican-style ingredients, delicate and beautiful. Outdoor patio is for brown Open daily. Same menu lunch and dinner. Low.

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**ANTHONY'S RANCHO BERNARDO**

11401 Avenue Plaza, Rancho Bernardo, 92037. One of the best features of the handsome branch of Anthony's is that it accepts reservations. This is a new way of waiting around until your name is called. The dining room also tends to be less frantic than the downtown branches. Sauté fish and chips, methodically finished fish. Fast service. Hours: 10 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. Open daily, lunch and dinner. Low to moderate.

**ANTHONY'S RANCHO BERNARDO**

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**St. Patrick's Day 3-17-98**

**Irish Fare**  
Corned Beef and Cabbage  
Corned Beef Sandwich on Rye  
Irish Stew

**Irish Fun**  
Ira Cnib & His One-Man Band 11 am-3 pm  
Piano Bar & Irish Music  
Upstairs & Downstairs Open to Close

Reservations recommended (complimentary valet parking)  
Piano bar nightly • Closed Monday • <http://www.sdn.com/milligans>  
**5786 La Jolla Blvd. • At 4th Rd. • 459-7311**

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**\$11.95**

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**110** San Diego Reader February 26, 1998



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Order one lunch or dinner at our regular menu at regular price, receive second lunch or dinner at lower cost here, with this ad. Valid 10 days from date of publication. **WOOD-BURNING OVEN GOURMET PIZZA**

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Dinner includes entrée, dinner salad, focaccia bread & Italian salad. Catering Specialists!

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Dinner \$5.99

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Japanese Cuisine • 2100 La Jolla Village Drive • 619-454-2500

**for one**

**Calendar RESTAURANTS**

**THE ORIGINAL PANCAKE HOUSE**  
3900 Conway Street, Laguna Hills, 619-270-5000. The impressive menu boasts 80 items, of which 21 are appetizers. There's also a room with floor seating. Best here are french toast, shrimp, fish cakes, stuffed chicken wings, and any item from the list of house specialties. Outstanding presentation and excellent presentation. On weekends arrive early to avoid waiting for tables. Open daily. Lunch: Tuesday through Friday. Dinner: nightly. Low to moderate.

**KOLBI'S RESTAURANT** 601 E. Mission Bay Drive, Pacific Beach, 619-273-8171. Persian food is low in calories and fat and many of the dishes are charcuterie. The two best, served with enormous amounts of basmati rice, are the filet mignon and the chicken (but not the lamb). To accompany any charcuterie dish, you should order just one or two items from the list of appetizers. Open daily. Lunch: Tuesday through Friday. Dinner: nightly. Low to moderate.

**SAVOY RESTAURANT** 4001 Camino del Rio South, San Diego, 619-594-1111. The menu is a mix of Italian and French. The food is excellent. The service is excellent. The atmosphere is excellent. Open daily. Lunch: Tuesday through Friday. Dinner: nightly. Low to moderate.

**TRAI OUCHI RESTAURANT** 4110 Genesee Avenue, 619-273-8171. The menu is a mix of Italian and French. The food is excellent. The service is excellent. The atmosphere is excellent. Open daily. Lunch: Tuesday through Friday. Dinner: nightly. Low to moderate.

**THE BEACHES**

**THE BELGIAN LION** 2265 Balboa Street, Ocean Beach, 619-232-2366. Without a doubt the best Belgian food in San Diego is served in this charming provincial-style dining room. The cuisine is a mix of French and Belgian. The food is excellent. The service is excellent. The atmosphere is excellent. Open daily. Lunch: Tuesday through Friday. Dinner: nightly. Low to moderate.

**CHINA HOUSE** 1777 Hamilton Street, between Garnet and Grand streets, Pacific Beach, 619-482-6660. At least 118 items appear on the menu, which offers Mandarin and Szechuan specialties and includes sweet and pungent shrimp, Mandarin pork ribs, duck in orange sauce, shrimp in garlic sauce. Simple, fresh, and delicious. The food is excellent. The service is excellent. The atmosphere is excellent. Open daily. Lunch: Tuesday through Friday. Dinner: nightly. Low to moderate.

**CAFE PACIFICA** 1831 Bacon Street, Ocean Beach, 619-224-9490 or 619-224-9470. Here's a good place for a quick lunch or dinner. The food is excellent. The service is excellent. The atmosphere is excellent. Open daily. Lunch: Tuesday through Friday. Dinner: nightly. Low to moderate.

**EL ENRIQUE** 2414 La Jolla Village Drive, San Diego, 619-291-6666. Super menu standards serve parrot fish. The food is excellent. The service is excellent. The atmosphere is excellent. Open daily. Lunch: Tuesday through Friday. Dinner: nightly. Low to moderate.

**PREGO RESTAURANT** 1370 Frazee Road, Imperial Center, Mission Valley, 619-294-4100. The Italian menu offers about 50 dishes, some Italian-California-style, others are regional cooking. The dining room is a gem with open kitchen, lots of buzz and excitement. Interesting dishes here are the fish and the chicken. Open daily. Lunch: Tuesday through Friday. Dinner: nightly. Low to moderate.

**EAST COUNTY & STATE COLLEGE**

**ANTHONY'S LA MESA** 9530 Murray Drive, La Mesa, 619-463-0384. The menu is a mix of Italian and French. The food is excellent. The service is excellent. The atmosphere is excellent. Open daily. Lunch: Tuesday through Friday. Dinner: nightly. Low to moderate.

**ANTHONY'S RESTAURANT** 101 E. Mission Bay Drive, Pacific Beach, 619-273-8171. The menu is a mix of Italian and French. The food is excellent. The service is excellent. The atmosphere is excellent. Open daily. Lunch: Tuesday through Friday. Dinner: nightly. Low to moderate.

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Offers a World of Food and Fun.

**Mexican "South of the Border" Buffet**  
Wednesday, March 4th  
Albion Soup, Chicken & Beef Enchiladas, Chile Relishings stuffed with Monterey Cheese, Beef & Chicken Fajitas, and Shrimp Ranchero.  
Lunch: 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m., \$3.99 • Dinner: 4:00 p.m. - 11:00 p.m., \$4.99

**"Baja" at Barona • \$6.99**  
Wednesday, March 11th • 4:00 p.m. - 11:00 p.m. Only  
Barona Casino's signature buffet filled with Puerto Nuevo-style Jambo Tiger Shrimp and Slipper Lobster Tails. Includes Salad, Salsas and Desert Bars, Spanish Rice, Refried Beans, Corn and Flour Tortillas, Gourmet Butter and Lobster Bisque.  
Regular Dinner Buffet also Available - \$4.99

**Italian "Pasta Lovers" Buffet**  
Wednesday, March 18th  
Pesto Del Mar, Baked Rigatoni with Ricotta Cheese, Italian Sausage & Meatballs, Eggplant Parmigiana, Venetian Shrimp and Assorted Gourmet Pizzas.  
Lunch: 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m., \$3.99 • Dinner: 4:00 p.m. - 11:00 p.m., \$4.99

International buffet items are in addition to Barona's regular buffet. Price includes access to regular and international buffet items, salad and desert bars, and beverages. Prices subject to change. Must be 18 or older to be present in casino after 8:00 p.m. Management reserves the right to cancel or modify this promotion at any time.

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**ADOLESCENT GIRLS, WOMEN** who support self-esteem, abuse, and other relationship issues begin today at 7:30 p.m. in the auditorium, Hazy Lane Community Center, 1100 S. 10th St., San Diego. Call (619) 594-1489.

**ADOLESCENT SHORT-TERM** therapy group for girls and women who have experienced sexual abuse, incest, and other trauma. Call (619) 594-1489.

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**Daddy, Will You Tell Me A Story?**

THESE ONCE WAS A LITTLE BOY WHO HAD NO TELEVISION.

IS THIS A HORROR STORY, DADDY?

NO, GONNA DE. GONNA DE WASN'T A HORROR STORY, DADDY.

I DO! BUT ONLY BECAUSE THEY'RE ABOUT SCARY STORIES.

OH, ALRIGHT. DADDY.

OKAY, F.L.L. - I'LL REWRITE IT. INSTEAD OF THESE ONCE WAS A LITTLE BOY WHO WATCHED TOO MUCH TELEVISION -

SO ONE DAY HE WENT INTO HIS TELEVISION WHERE HE COULD "WATCH" A LITTLE TV AND A SPECIAL EFFECT 15 MINUTE -

THE END!

GOOD NIGHT, LITTLE DADDY.

D. B. S.

Board Certified in C.A. M.A. & by the IRTI Board of Licensors  
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SO ONE DAY, HE WENT INSIDE IN TOLE VISIONS WHERE HE FOUGHT "RAPPERS" & ALIENS & HAD A SPECIAL EFFECTS NIGHTMARE. "THE END."

GOOD NIGHT, TELL GOD

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