EVERYBODY’S GOT A FAVORITE BUG

In Bob Parks’s first (and only, as far as I know) brush with the law, he was presumed a corpse. He was about 11 years old. He’d been lying facedown, very still, for so long in a vacant lot next to Greenwood Cemetery that a neighbor called the cops. When Parks was growing up, his neighborhood was mostly barren hills and chaparral. Turns out he was falling in love — with insects. He was observing a wasp, a hunting wasp called Ammophila. Parks was so absorbed in his observations that he didn’t move for a long time.

(continued on page 26)
LETTERS

We welcome letters pertaining to the contents of the Reader. You may phone them in by calling 619-233-3000, ext. 460; address them to Letters to the Editor, Box 85803, San Diego CA 92186-3803; fax them to 619-231-0489; or e-mail them to letters@sandiegoreader.com via the Internet. Please include your name, address, and telephone number. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

Tsk, Tsk, Anne
So, if some friends of Anne Albright’s came over in their big pickup truck, would she allow Angela, Lucy, Johnny, and Ben to all pile into the front seat with a driver who would make the truck bounce and cause the riders to “lurch sideways”? Would she let someone hold “baby Ben” in her arms and let Lucy sit on Angela’s lap, all of them “unencumbered by car seats or seatbelts,” so they keep “slipping forward and nearly falling off the seat”? Would she think twice about some idiot, saying, running a red light right in front of them, forcing the driver of the pickup truck to slam on his brakes, and sending little Angela, Lucy, Johnny, and Ben hurtling, respectively, of course, through the front windshield? Is it reading “The Trouble with Cars” (“Kid Stuff,” April 4), I guess we know the answer is yes, she would. What a great mom!

Name Withheld

No Goldberg Regrets

I’ve been playing guitar and bass for over 30 years. About 10 years ago I took a look around, decided we needed some music, or at least some lyrics, of romance.

So during my usual gigs of acoustic, I transcribed it with some Sinatra and Nat Cole, doing ‘em in a cappella. A bit later, got a hold of some Dan Hill, and figured out about a dozen tunes, got some like-minded guys and girls together, and had a great time performing. By ’95 I had completely moved into the realm of jazz — from the ‘30s, ‘40s, ‘50s, ‘60s — brought a stand-up bass, practiced with any of many local jazz pianists, got gigs, etc.

One such person was the leader of the local big band for whom I had done some vocal work. After we had finished for the day, I asked him if he could recommend some books or exercises to help me improve my fingering, intonation, and just plain “chops.”

And what did he suggest? Yes... “Study the bass line of the Goldberg Variations.” No regrets there.

M. Kaye

Brizzolara Shines
This is in regards to John Brizzolara, who writes your “T.G.I.F.”

column. I must say, he turns a phrase, for example: “that of a wounded and constipated rhino in an orgy of mindless rage” (March 21). You know, that’s a beautiful piece. But the one that’s caustic and cynical and jaded is the Brizzolara and Noble bedtime-hour column (April 4). Boy, that thing, that’s a smoker. This guy, keep him in line, but don’t get any closer than you already are.

Leederman Downtown

LETTER COLUMNS

Let Van Dams Heal
This article regarding whether the van Dams were fit parents or not is simply disgusting (“Are the Van Dams Fit Parents?” “City Lights,” March 28). Of all the media coverage I’ve seen on this topic, this article was by far the most irresponsible. What the van Dams do behind closed doors is their own business. The fact remains that UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES IS IT ALL RIGHT FOR A PERSON TO ENTER SOMEONE’S HOME, KIDNAP THEIR CHILD, AND KILL HER. The van Dams are suffering the ultimate loss, a void that will never be filled. It’s easy for those 16 people to ridicule from a distance, but ridicule won’t bring Danielle back, and more importantly, it won’t help the van Dams heal.

All that this media coverage of the van Dam’s “lifestyle” accomplishments is drawing blame away from the person who ultimately is at fault. The van Dams need support right now, support which may come in the form of switching off the cameras and setting down the pens.

Kelly Wong
North Park

News & Features

Everybody’s Got a Favorite Bug
Bob Parks gets close to insects. By Thomas Lux

City Lights
Local discounts Catholic priests and sex crimes; and City Lights shorts (April 4). Boy, that thing, that’s a smoker. This guy, keep him in line, but don’t get any closer than you already are.

Leederman Downtown

Van Dam Insult
“Are the van Dams Fit Parents?” (“City Lights,” March 28). The van Dams seem very loving and involved parents. For you to criticize them and put them on trial for their “lifestyle choices” during this tragic time is downright evil. — A freakin’ madman sneaked into their home in the middle of the night and stole their baby!! How anybody can think that was somehow their fault just because they smoked a little pot now and then!!

Brenda and Damon, I hope you see this and know that most of us believe you are very good parents and in no way was this terrible tragedy your fault. Please don’t let anyone convince you otherwise. This could have happened to any of us. My prayers will be with you always.

They might not be perfect parents, but who is? Their kids seem nice and well-adjusted, which tells me they’re doing okay. Unfortunately this nightmare could have happened to any of us, no matter how many times we check on our kids at night.

M. Kaye

Brizzolara Shines
This is in regards to John Brizzolara, who writes your “T.G.I.F.”

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North County Reader

April 11, 2002

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NEWS & FEATURES

Cover

City Lights
Locals discuss Catholic priests and sex crimes; and City Lights shorts (April 4). Boy, that thing, that’s a smoker. This guy, keep him in line, but don’t get any closer than you already are.

Leederman Downtown

Straight From the Hip
San Diegoe sports headlines over the mountains, paper airplanes, and more (April 4).

The Sporting Box
Patrick Dougherty gets set for the Tiger Woods Show (April 11).

Sheep and Goats
Are Opincar is nonplussed in University City (April 11).

Ask Aunt Trudy
A high-flying father-in-law must prepare for a crash landing (April 4).

Corpus of Joe Bailey
At long last, Joe returns to Mission Hills (April 11).

Off the Cuff
Good Friday without computer games (April 11).

Picture Story
The weasel-in-pancakes dance (April 11).

T.G.I.F.
John Brizzolara considers the weasel-in-pancakes dance (April 11).

Best Buys
A tea buzz that won’t rot your teeth.

Kid Stuff
Good Friday without computer games.

CALENDAR

Events Highlight and Guide
Thirsty San Diego threatens the Imperial Valley (April 11).

Roam-O-Rama
Well-honed spatial skills required. By Trailmaster Schad (April 11).

Reading
Alan Shapiro: Song & Dance (April 11).

Poetry
Alan Shapiro’s “The Accident” and its allusions (April 11).

Classical Music Review and Guide
With a mixture of strengths and weaknesses, San Diego Opera’s Tosca nevertheless pleases the audience. Review by Jonathan Saville (April 11).

Art Review and Museum & Gallery Guide

Theater Review and Guide
Jeff Smith reviews Memoir and Harlem, Harlem (April 11).

Pop Music
Blurt
Do you dress well enough for a night on the town (April 11).

Savvy jazz buffs dote over Ahmad Jamal (April 11).

Restaurant Reviews and Guide
Chula Vista sends Naomi Wise back to Argentina (April 11).

Fragile Tongue becomes larky at Pauline’s old place (April 11).

Burgundy’s winemakers turn into scotflaws (April 11).

Movie Guide
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## Cassette Decks

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<td>Eclipse</td>
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## CD Players

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## Special Purchase

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## Mobile Security System

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Gospel according to George

San Diego city councilman George Stevens says he knows the reason for his loss to Vince Hall in March’s Democratic state-assembly primary: Satan did it.

“I don’t recall ever going through a campaign where the devil was more involved than ever before — the mud-slinging, the hit pieces, the lies that were told,” Stevens told the San Diego Voice and Viewpoint. Stevens, who is a preacher and officiates at weddings and funerals when he’s not otherwise occupied at city hall, attracted attention after he accepted a $3000 campaign contribution from Cheetah’s, a strip club on Kearny Mesa famous for its dirty dancing. Asked if he intended to continue his political career after leaving office later this year, Stevens replied, “If I see a burning bush, yes, I will run for office again.” Meantime, a call by Stevens for a boycott of the Padres to punish owner John Moores for supporting University of California regent Ward Connerly’s Racial Privacy initiative was widely covered by TV news but completely shut out by the Union-Tribune...San Diego attorney Thomas Warwick, who is defending U-T publisher David Copley in Copley’s latest drunk-driving case, has given $2500 to the re-election bid of District Attorney Paul Pfingst...San Diego city councilman Jim Madaffer is the only one among his eight colleagues to report receiving a free Lindbergh Field parking pass from the Port District. He valued it at $96...Jerry Allen and Associates has been awarded a $75,000 contract to develop a “public art plan” for the City of San Diego. Among other chores, “identify potential sites of public art development.” Meanwhile, the firm of Kelling, Northcross, which is advising the San Diego City Council on possible ways to raise taxes, has been given an extra $35,000 to continue its study. The original contract was for $40,000.

Slave whales

SeaWorld may be getting another adoptee from the Vancouver Aquarium, reports the Vancouver Sun, and animal-rights activists there aren’t happy about it. Last April, Biota, the aquarium’s last remaining killer whale, was sent south to SeaWorld but died six months later. Now the Canadians are thinking of handing over Imaq, a male Beluga whale that has fathered a calf expected in July. Beluga males are known to sometimes make trouble after their mates give birth. “At this point, we’re just being careful,” says aquarium vice president of operations Clint Wright. “We want to have the option of moving Imaq if it becomes necessary.” That doesn’t sit well with Nikki Rotmeyer of the Coalition for No Whales in Captivity, who claims the Vancouver facility is a “puppy mill” for America’s marine parks. “I believe that what the aquarium is doing is perpetuating the slave trade of these captive cetaceans again.”

All politics

The story of why ex-Padres co-owner Larry Lucchino left the organization can finally be told. At least part of it. “My partner and I, John Moores, had six glorious, good, comfortable years. We would finish each other’s sentences,” Lucchino, the new Red Sox co-owner, told the Boston Globe. “For the last year we had differences of opinion on things — ballpark issues, Major League Baseball issues, personnel issues. It wasn’t comfortable. We agreed at the end of the season I would step down. So, basically, it was six great years and one bad year.” Did current Padres CEO Bob Vizas have anything to do with the falling out? “I’d prefer to keep that private. We were friends and acquaintances at law school,” San Diego attorney Mike Schafer, who recently lost his bid for the GOP nomination to be California secretary of state, has again turned his sights on Nevada. The former San Diego city councilman who has run at least 17 times before for a variety of offices, according to a count by the Las Vegas Review-Journal, has decided to run for Clark County public administrator...More bad news for the Predator, the unmanned aerial vehicle made by La Jolla’s General Atomics. Defense Week reports that out of 65 Predators made, each costing $4.5 million, 22 have been lost, either by malfunction, hostile action, human error, or weather. The military is keeping a tight lid on the precise problems the drone has experienced...Coronado Democratic assemblyman Howard Wayne has been named Assembly Parliamentarian by lawyer Herb Wesson Jr.

Contribution: Matt Potter

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.
priests are more likely to engage in illicit sex than Protestant ministers because Protestant ministers can get married. Whenever you make something taboo, it becomes more desirable, and you create a fetish. I think that by making sex unattainable, it's become fetishized. I know premarital sex is a mortal sin for Catholics — another one of the many reasons I'm not Catholic! Priests are obviously not qualified to counsel married couples about sex.

Matthew Byrd, 25, lives in Pacific Beach. Byrd describes himself as "pro-Catholic" and claims to have friends who are Catholic too. "I'm not at all uncomfortable talking with them about the recent scandals. I want to get their opinion on it. I've heard that priests would actually pull down their pants and spank their bare ass in class when they taught — the nuns would do this also — sometimes with their underwear on. These are friends who went to Catholic school in San Diego, actually. I've always looked at priests as kind, gentle souls who want to help, maybe someone you can trust or bring your problems to. Maybe someone who is perfect, morally. Now, it's a little questionable, but ultimately, most Catholic priests are probably nice people who can be trusted. Not just Catholic people, but everyone in general is going to have some strange people in their line of work. It's a very high-attention job. I think. You're commanding the attention of the Church. And you're supposed to lead a certain life, and I don't think you should resort to violating people sexually and making advances at them. It should absolutely be illegal for adult men to have sex with teenage boys. The bishops should report them, even if it's just owning child pornography. Heck, yes. I haven't seen the statistics, but I don't think they are more likely to get into sexual trouble than a Protestant minister. There's not a religious reason why people do that but more personal reasons. Maybe it's their own upbringing. A new thought seizes Byrd. "Maybe it is religious. Perhaps they were brought up Catholic, and other Catholic priests have molested them so they become molesters as well. I was not aware that premarital sex was a mortal sin for Catholics. I think that's good, but if you believe in hell, that's good. Maybe you'll do more positive things with your life rather than becoming sexually active at a young age. Why not save it for marriage? Priests counseling about sex may be out of their league, but I think it's a good idea. They know that one side of it. But you might also want to talk to a psychologist or a counselor or someone else who knows more about that."

Miguel, 39, lives in Pacific Beach. "I'm anti-Catholic, and I have no Catholic friends that I know of. I've heard homosexual stories about priests and nuns. Whenever I've looked at a Catholic priest, the first thing that comes to mind is that they pray to idols — dead people. Nothing has changed since then. It should definitely be illegal for these guys to have sex with boys, and they should be prosecuted. I know for a fact that the bishops quieted it down and transferred them to other congregations — maybe from the East Coast to here and vice versa. But they always take them away and hide them somewhere else. Child pornography is the same thing. It's illegal all the way around. I don't think that being a Catholic priest makes them more likely to do illicit sex than a Protestant minister. What I think affects them is that they are isolated in monasteries and nunneries; it brings on the fact that the homosexual thing will be more pervasive. I didn't know premarital sex was a mortal sin for Catholics. It's fornication but..."
Priests and sex
continued from page 5

Tiffany Hawkins, 30, lives in Bird Rock. Hawkins is passionate about Catholic priests and abuse is more relative to frats, and I think this is one of the clearest signs of the end times.

it happens. Priests have no business counseling married couples about sex. You have to experience it before you can counsel it. I think this is one of the clearest signs of the end times.

Tiffany Hawkins, 30, lives in Bird Rock. Hawkins is passionate about Catholic priests and abuse is more relative to frats, and I think this is one of the clearest signs of the end times.
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Priests and sex
continued from page 8

Steve Elkins, 57, is a Pacific Beach resident who also seems to feel indifferent about Catholicism. “The only priests that I’ve really known were Franciscan friars. I have friends who are Catholic. It’s not at all uncomfortable to talk about this with them. We rise to adversities, and discussion brings everything out in the open. It’s necessary. They haven’t told me too much about priests and nuns — at least nothing local. Just the discipline stories, but that happens at rabbinical school and Hebrew school too. Whenever I’ve looked at a Catholic priest, I’ve always thought, ‘What a waste of manhood!’ Look at all that productive sperm going to waste! The Eastern Orthodox allow marriage, and I think that’s more of what should be happening. If the Pope wants to just push this away and not confront the priests and keep it all overshadowed... Gay should also mean ‘joyous, happy,’ but now it’s a social taboo to say ‘gay’ about anything. I don’t think sex between men and boys is right. Instead of covering this up, the bishops should report it. But if they have child pornography, isn’t that right of privacy? How many heterosexual lay people have pornographic videotapes and things? What’s wrong with that? I mean, don’t I think it’s just a Catholic priest problem. I think the idea that premarital sex is a mortal sin is pretty archaic. Isn’t it kind of hard for a priest to counsel about sex? How can you counsel someone when you have no knowledge?”

Beverly, 65, lives in Clairemont. Self-described as indifferent to Catholicism, Beverly says she has friends who are Catholic. “It’s no problem talking about this with them, because it just doesn’t matter if you’re Catholic or not. There’s always been stories about the priests fooling around and the nuns getting pregnant and things like that. The sexual abuse by priests is the worst thing I’ve ever heard about. A priest is just a person of the cloth, and I still see them that way. But it should absolutely be illegal for adult men to have sex with teenage boys. I think the bishops ought to be doing more than what they’re doing now — just slapping them on the hand. They should excommunicate them, report them to the proper authorities, and let the law take its course. If a priest has child pornography, they should be strung up by their thumbs. But it’s hard to say whether a Catholic priest is more likely to have these problems than a Protestant minister. It all depends on how a person is predisposed. If they have those types of pedophile feelings to begin with, it doesn’t matter what religion or race or anything that they are. I know they consider premarital sex as a mortal sin, but that shouldn’t just be the Catholic Church, that should be anywhere. Unless a priest has done a lot of studying, I don’t see where a priest is any more qualified to do counseling about sex than someone else who is married.”

Another La Jolla resident, Terry Gulden, 62, has no
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Priests and sex
continued from page 12

feelings one way or another about the Catholic Church. “I have friends who are Catholic. I don’t recall talking specifically to anyone about this stuff in the last week or so. I’ve heard various stories about priests and nuns that are not surprising — about abuse and priests who don’t act like priests all the time. Generally, I’ve had positive feelings about Catholic priests. I don’t think I’ve seen a priest since it’s been in the papers. I suppose I’m more suspicious of the institution but not of the individuals. But should it be illegal for adult men to have sex with teenage boys? I thought it was! The bishops should report these priests and...” (he laughs) “...string them up. If priests are doing this kind of thing, I don’t think they should be priests. Priests probably aren’t any more likely to have these problems than a Protestant minister. I know Catholics think premartial sex is a mortal sin, but ‘mortal sin’ is Catholic dogma, and I’m not a Catholic. It’s up to the religion. It strikes me as a strange concept that priests can counsel married couples on sex. People have told me that it works, but I don’t understand how it could.”

Ken Vaughn, 76, is visiting his brother in San Diego from Tehachapi. He is not a Catholic and is indifferent about the Church until it comes to the topic of priests abusing youth — a topic that puts a bit of venom in his voice. “I have friends who are Catholic, and we try not to talk about it because I don’t like it at all. I think it stinks! My friends have told me that priests are nice people and do a good job, but now it comes out they’re not doing such a good job after all — especially with the kids they’re supposed to be taking care of. I think it embarrasses them, what’s going on. I’ve always thought priests were very nice people. They had to be doing what they were supposed to be doing, but I don’t think that so much anymore. I don’t think they’re all bad, but I think there are more than they’re about priests or nuns — nothing specific. This kind of stuff has been in the news before. It’s exploding now, but it’s not any surprise to me. They obviously need to address it. If I saw a priest, I wouldn’t think anything one way or the other. I wouldn’t assume that they were one of these perpetrators, although obviously a lot of them are. It turns out, it’s a problem. A lot of these people hide behind the cloth. Of course, it should be illegal for adults to make these things to teenage boys. The bishops should communicate and defrock them. They should be done, and they should be turned over to the proper authorities. I don’t know if this is just limited to Catholics or any other religion. I know they think sex out of marriage is always a mortal sin, but sex is not a sin to me. If priests are not supposed to be having sex, it’s not really applicable, is it? I guess it’s their job to counsel people in all areas, but if they are supposed to abstain from sex, what are they doing counseling about it?”

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Hey, Matt:
How did fish get up into the mountains? Was there an earthquake and the mountains rose up and the fishes went with them in little pools of water? Or was it a water spout that sucked 'em up and dropped 'em off?

— Carlos, the net

You've obviously given this a lot of thought, Carlos. If you're a regular visitor to Alicealand, I'm not sure how you managed to think so clearly, but you're kind of on the right track. Actually, fish mostly get to mountain lakes by swimming there. Lakes don't usually sit in isolation. There are rivers or waterways in and out, and the fish can just swim to their new home from their old one. But waterways have moved fish and fish eggs from one place to another. Earthquakes do shift bodies of water. Ketefar Lake in Tennessee was created from a bend in the Mississippi River during a very big earthquake centered in nearby Missouri. And dry lakes can fill again with water, releasing fish and eggs that might have survived in muddy patches.

Dear Wise One:
Can you tell me the history of the paper airplane? I know the first airplanes and gliders were glorified box kites. I also am aware that sheet paper has been around for centuries. When did someone fold up a sheet and toss it at a teacher? Did it look like the Wright Flyer or the sleek delta fighter jet we all made in second grade?

— John Neumann, Houston, Texas

The first flying paper was indeed a Chinese kite, about 2000 years ago. It was the French in the 1870s who made the first paper toys based on the idea of flight: paper and feather ornithopters, fanciful helicopters, balloons, and, eventually, airships. They were printed on sheets of heavy paper intended to be cut out and assembled. French toy makers also offered one of the first models of the Wrights' plane in 1908. But if we're talking about the popular homemade toy, the teacher tormentor — the classic seven-fold dart paper airplane — there's no clear history. First references go back to about 1918, when they were well known to kids by 1915 or so. And by 1930, Jack Northrop was using them to experiment with designs for flying wings. If some early ancestor made and flew a dart, it would probably have been a Muslim, not a descendant of the Asian style of paper folding. Chinese and Japanese forms were primarily artistic or symbolic. Arabic forms were used to explore principles of mathematics and geometry. So I guess it's historically correct if you're fond of folding paper airplanes at your math teacher's head.

Hey, Matt:
Recently several news stories have mentioned that Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother, is the second queen consort to lie in state. Who was the first? I say it was Jane Seymour, the consort who gave Henry VIII a son, then promptly croaked from puerperal fever. My mother says it was Queen Adelaide, consort of William IV. Mom says a city and a wine were named for Adelaide, she must have been popular. She further suggests that Jane Seymour was too early for embalming fluid. I say the 1550s were stinky times anyway, so people didn't notice dead-body color. Who's right?

— Jenna, homesteck in Miami

Way too much fancy thinking going on in your house. Nobody's right. Not even the quote is complete. (Must be that damned humidity, Jenna.) The Queen Mum was the second consort to lie in state in Westminster Hall. Westminster may be 1000 years old, but the Brits have been laying out dead national icons there for only the last century. Prime Minister William Gladstone (1899); King George V (1936); King George VI (1952); Queen Mary, wife of George V, our consort number one (1935); Winston Churchill (1965); then Elizabeth Angela Marguerite Bowes-Lyon, Queen Elizabeth, wife of George VI and consort number two (2002).

Adelaide, who did not lie in state, also had a hotel, a pub, and a rose named after her. She was sweet and generous and much loved, perhaps out of pity for having to marry William, who was a drunkard, wearing kout nicknamed Pineapple Head. Tell Mom that Jane Seymour was embalmed. Then she was laid out privately in her chamber in Hampton Court for two weeks. Her funeral procession to St. George's Chapel was lavish, and Henry was actually sad to see her go and mourned her passing. But mostly because she'd had the good sense to die while giving birth to a baby boy.

New Bee News
Charlie Edmonds of downtown San Diego sends this follow-up to last week's discussion of the OB bees. "Last fall a swarm of bees entered an apartment on Cortez Hill. The professional bee-removal expert said they had attracted to that particular apartment because the occupants had used lemon-scented pledge furniture polish. They were seeking a lemon grove. The bees that zoomed in the apartment window weren't swarming or looking for a new home like the OB bees, they were foraging for nectar. Bees find it mainly through smell. Any sweet scent — perfume, aftershave, soap, shampoo, scented candles, chewing gum, fruit, soda cans — will attract foraging bees or wasps or hornets. In the unpromising concrete jungle of downtown, I'm sure lemon pledge smells like a banquet.

Got a question you need answered? Get it straight from the hip. Write to Matthew Alice, c/o the Reader, P.O. Box 85083, San Diego, CA 92186-5803, or fax your questions to 619-231-0489, or e-mail to heymatt@ix.netcom.com via the Internet. A searchable archive of past columns is available at SanDiegoReader.com.
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That’s It. Have A Nice Day.

Okay, the Masters begins Thursday. In order to get set for the Tiger Woods Show, and, particularly, the Tiger Woods betting line, I have a few last-minute pointers from Felicia Brown, San Diego State University women’s golf team coach. I trust everyone was taking notes last week when Brown discussed golf and revealed how anyone, no matter how brainless or mean-spirited, can make $1,000 a week while sleeping.

I talked with Brown at the Lake San Marcos Country Club, home to the Aztec Invitational, a collegiate golf tournament hosted by the SDSU women’s golf team. Brown, 35, attended San Marcos High School, graduated from the University of Arizona, played on the Futures Tour, was an LPGA teaching professional (on this very course), and, as career capper, hired on as SDSU women’s golf coach last August.

One thinks, “Six more years till tenure.” No, not really, in truth. That alleged thought was merely a — how you say? — zee jokie de la ha-ha. What I thought was what I asked, “How do you become a professional golfer?” Brown has the decency not to laugh.

“All you have to do to turn professional in the United States is sign your amateur status away and hand somebody a check. Golf is the last bastion of capitalism. They don’t care who you are or what you’ve done. It’s what you do this week, what you do today. Have a nice day. You post a number, good, bad, indifferent; there’s the number, the number, whether people like you or not.”

Gads, sounds like a meritorocracy or one-world domination by one-worlders, take your pick. “You played professionally in the ’90s, just before the big money came in.”

“Yeah, but I never made the big tour.” Brown slowly retrieves a four-iron from her bag, lifts it high over her shoulders, and then smashes the club head into the patio table top. We laugh like children.

Ahem. The foregoing is not literally true, although I should point out it could have been true... indeed, probably has been true in any number of alternate universes, but, if we must stick to superficial facts, I’ll own that on this occasion the activity described above did not happen because Brown, as I recall, fashioned a pleasant smile and said, “I almost made the big tour. I’ve only played in one tour event and that was two years ago. I got to play in the LPGA Championship at the Pont Country Club, Wilmington, Delaware.”

“Big fun.” You’ve got to admire that résumé, play one LPGA tournament... for the championship.

“I was queen for a week.”

For readers who have not attended a PGA or LPGA event, players are treated like... well, like the way we’d all like to be treated, by everybody, everywhere, all the time. “They treat you like a movie star.”

“Oh, yeah, they do. My caddy and I were put up in a private residence. I went to fill my gas tank. Pumped the gas and walked over to pay for it. I still had my visor on with my tournament ID clipped to it. The guy said, ‘Oh, you play in the tournament?’ I said, ‘Yeah.’ He said, ‘Gas is free.’

Go to a restaurant and they buy you dinner. The city of Wilmington is a small town and they’re excited to have the LPGA there. The DuPont is one of the four majors and they roll out the red carpet.”

“How did you do?” Brown smiles. “I shot 76 and 80, didn’t make the cut. But, the 76 is not bad. I’m proud of that.”

Two golfers walk past our table. One woman is talking on a cell phone, the other woman is talking to the woman who is talking on the cell phone. “What separates the player who is very good from the player who is going to become a pro?”

The Vegas Line

Boxing

Mike Tyson Vs. Lennox Lewis

June 8, 2002

Memphis, Tennessee

Proposition

Odds

Mike Tyson by decision

6 to 1

Mike Tyson by K.O.

2 to 1

Lennox Lewis by decision

9 to 5

Lennox Lewis by K.O.

7 to 5

12-round draw

33 to 1

World Featherweight Championship

Erik Morales Vs. Marco Antonio Barrera

June 22, 2002

Las Vegas, Nevada

Proposition

Odds

Erik Morales by decision

5 to 2

Erik Morales by K.O.

4 to 1

Marco Antonio Barrera by decision

9 to 5

Marco Antonio Barrera by K.O.

2 to 1

12-round draw

12 to 1

“Being able to travel, being very independent. When you’re on the pro tour, you’re home for, maybe, two months a year. The other thing is being able to play under any condition, anytime, whether you feel good, don’t feel well, whether you just had an argument with your husband, whatever it is. And having confidence. My pro used to say to me, ‘If you’re wishing and hoping and praying, you’re done.’ You gotta go, ‘Here it is; there it goes; boom.’ And just do it.”

Here it is, there it goes. “Is that something people can learn? Those qualities seem more personality than sport.”

“Part of it is how you’ve been brought up and part of it can be learned. If you make a million dollars in front of somebody, they’ll learn it.”

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Long chanting liturgy

Liturgy — clouds of incense hung before the ikonostasis. Tables filled with lighted candles stood before the icons.

The English language liturgy that St. Anthony's uses was developed by the Antiochian Church in the 1920s and '30s. The melodies, minor key, sober, sound neither Middle Eastern nor like Gregorian chant. As in other Orthodox parishes, you stand a lot. Father Braun moved back and forth from the sanctuary to the nave, swinging his censer. A large choir on the left side of the room responded a cappella to his chant.

Deacon Tom Braun gave the sermon, "Steps to Surviving the Journey." In the Orthodox Church, last Sunday marked the midpoint of Lent. Explaining that Lent was a "personal journey into the mystery of Christ's death and resurrection," Deacon Braun told parishioners how to best use the rest of Lent to "move deeper into this mystery.

"Of the most powerful things you can do is avoid distractions, like radio, television, the newspaper. Trust me, if you avoid these things, after Lent you're not going to discover that the world was destroyed. Young people should turn off their radios. Children should turn off the television. Families should use this time to turn to each other. In the morning, at dinner time, and before bedtime, the family should pray together, 'Lord, please help me show you my sins and help me not to judge others.' By removing distractions, by turning to each other, by praying together, God can finally speak to us. We can hear God speaking to us."

After the Holy Eucharist, St. Anthony's observed the Veneration of the Cross. In front of the sanctuary two men placed a table on which sat a small cross decorated with lighted candles and surrounded by red and white carnations. Parishioners lined up to either prostrate themselves before the cross, or kneel before it and touch their foreheads three times to the floor.

Deacon Tom Braun had told me that only 50 percent of St. Anthony's parishioners were Syrian born and raised in the Antiochian Church. I said I was nonplussed to see former Protosteres prostrate themselves before a cross.

Deacon Braun said he understood my reaction. "Raised as an evangelical Protestant, I believed that people who knelt or prostrated themselves were idol worshipers. But the fact is, it's not idol worship. It's respect. I don't mean to sound sappy, but evangelical Protestantism is more about feeling than doing. There's no preparation for Easter. There's no Lent. How can you show up at church on the most important day of the year without having done any preparation? That's one of the great differences between Orthodoxy and Protestantism. In Orthodoxy, you actually experience your faith. You do the acts. During Lent we prepare ourselves through fasting, confession, prayer. We don't believe in the doctrine of eternal security. We don't believe in once-saved-always-saved. We believe that you make choices every day of your life that effect your salvation."

— Abe Opinac
What Does Your Spine Look Like?

Do you have any idea what your spine looks like? Do you know how straight it is? Do you know how well the vertebrae are aligned in regard to each other, or how much pressure is being put on your nervous system?

Do you have any idea what stage of degeneration it is in and what effect that has on your health? Are you aware of the effects that your job, your stress level, the bed you sleep in, or past accidents have had on your spine?

I'm sure most of you are aware of how many miles are on your car or how long it has been since you have been to the dentist. However, many of you have never seen an x-ray of your spine. Many of those who have seen an x-ray of their spine haven't seen one in a number of years. So I ask you again, what does your spine look like?

Most of you are aware that the general condition of your spine has a direct relationship to your nervous system. Bad alignment or advanced stages of degeneration may result in pressure on your nervous system, which will affect your health.

Many times, potential problems can be detected early and treated successfully, much like finding a cavity in your tooth early. It is easier to treat than waiting until you need a crown.

After 20 years of practice I can tell you without a doubt that the earlier you find a problem, and the sooner you start care, the easier it is to treat. So I invite you to come in and see what your spine looks like and what effect it is having on your health. Please use the coupon on the bottom of this ad. We look forward to helping you.

Dr. Harvey is the Founder/Director of New Life Chiropractic Clinic in Solana Beach, one of the largest clinics in San Diego County. He has been in practice for 19 years.

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Dear Aunt Trudy,

I have an ideal father-in-law. He is generous, funny, and wise. He's sweet as can be to our kids. This admirable guy seems to have only one flaw. He's terrible with money. He spends all his money and lives way beyond his means. All his life he's worked hard and mostly he's made an excellent living. He went broke a few times when he was younger but always managed to bounce back. Now he's a grandpa, in his 70s, and should be able to retire and relax. Except he can't because he has no savings or retirement plan. He also has no idea how to live modestly. He never has. He drives a Lexus and has substantial debt on each of his nine (!!!) credit cards. All this news came to light last week when my wife had lunch with her dad. He broke down and wept about his financial state. She was totally surprised, having assumed from the way he was living that he was in okay shape. He has his own company, they got sued, and he lost. Now he has to pay a big judgment and is in serious debt too. His energy is dwindling and so is his company's viability and earnings. We aren't rich enough to bail him out, or I'd do it in a heartbeat. I told my wife we must help him work out a rescue plan before things get worse. I can get the best guy from the accounting department in my firm to counsel us for free on ways to alleviate Pop's debt and plan for his future. Pops will probably have to sell his Lexus, move to a cheap apartment, and live frugally. My wife doesn't like this plan. She says it would kill her dad to economize, break his heart. He's lived this way forever, and anyway, she doesn't want us to be in the position of giving him advice when he hasn't asked for it. His pride will be hurt. I say the guy is sinking fast and we have to step in or he'll go down for the third time. I don't want to make my lovely wife mad and force the issue, but I'm afraid of what will happen to Pops if we don't.

FRETFUL, DEL MAR, SON-IN-LAW

Dear Fretful,

What a variety of sorrow money problems can cause. Even ancient Greek and Roman proverbists bemoan money's power to ruin lives. You get a standing ovation for your willingness to leap into the breach and come to your father-in-law's aid. Boy, does he need it. Try to muster every ounce of your tact, resourcefulness, and smarts. You're going to use them to strike a balance between your laudable urge to take immediate action here and the necessity to move slowly and carefully with sensitivity for Pops's and your wife's feelings. This mess wasn't made in a day. It's not going to be cleaned up swiftly and easily either, I fear. So be patient. Keep talking to your wife in an open, loving, creative way about what can be done. You two need to figure out a way to be a team on this issue, to come up with possible game plans that might be acceptable to all three of you. It's awfully difficult to come to the rescue of someone who doesn't want help. Could your wife start by simply asking her dad, "How can we help? We're worried sick about you." If Pops is initially resistant, then you get as much good financial advice from experts on his behalf as you can — about all the possibilities, including bankruptcy, and bide your time. If it comes to that, I think you'll know when and how to step in. In the meantime, keep in close touch with Pops and continue telling him know on a regular basis that you really want to be of service and that you and your wife believe you're all in this together because you love him.

READER RESPONSE DEPARTMENT:

Dear Aunt Trudy,

I read the letter from "Pretending at UCSD," who was pretending to study marine biology at college to satisfy her father's wishes. The letter was so pure and honest it nearly broke my heart. We go a long way to please and placate our parents. It delays, sometimes forever, the change of relationship from guiding parent and learning child to two adults who may be very different. The letter reminded me of a Raymond Carver short story. It was very well written. Its simple sentences conveyed lots of telling details. "Pretending" is an excellent writer. I think looking around for other fields is a good idea for this young person. Perhaps he/she should give writing a try.

FT. LITTLE ITALY

Write to Aunt Trudy c/o the San Diego Reader, P.O. Box 85803, San Diego CA 92186-85803; call her at 619-235-3000 ext. 413; fax her at 619-881-2401; or e-mail to trudy@sdrreader.com
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EVERYBODY'S GOT A FAVORITE BUG

About 45 years later, I asked Bob Parks to name his favorite wasp. Ammophila: after all these years. Perhaps it was her (the wasp Parks was observing was a female) shape that first drew his attention. One naturalist has written: "...her abdomen looks like a pear on the end of a length of string. Nevertheless, she is graceful and svelte. Her favorite color is black, with the upper half of her abdomen an orange-red, giving quite a chic effect." Early in its life, Ammophila lounges around flowers, nips a little nectar, warms in the sun. A sybaritic life: a butterfly's life.

But when motherhood calls, she turns her attention to business: "She loosens the sting in its sheath — that as yet unbleeded sword, so slender and delicate, so feminine in its daintiness — and goes a-hunting." But first she builds a nest, a tunnel leading to a chamber in the ground. Her name means "sand lover." She removes the excavated material with her mouth and puts it in two neat piles a few inches from the entrance. She is a tireless and fastidious worker, and she finishes by closing the entrance with a pebble or small clod of dirt, many of which she will first examine and then reject before she finds the perfect fit. Then she plugs her nest's entrance with it. Then she does something only you or I and a few other creatures can do (though I don't do it very well): she uses a tool. She selects a comparatively large stone, again inspecting and rejecting many before finding the perfect one, picks it up in her mandibles, hauls it to the nest, and "uses it to hammer down the loose soil that has been placed over it." She hides the nest so well that she must carefully memorize where it is. Then she's off a-hunting, for caterpillar, the young of night-flying moths the preferred entrée. She means to take the caterpillar alive but completely immobilized. Now, this is a problem with caterpillars because the nerves in each segment are self-controlled. Each segment is like a little engine: knock out one and the other 12 can keep the car running more or less the same. Ammophila has to slip her stiletto, tipped with poison, into each segment. Sometimes, she leaves a segment or two uninjected — maybe because she needs to cook up more venom.

There's one more important task before she hauls her prey home. Though it's helpless against the wasp, it can use its jaws to inconvenience her, by grabbing onto things, slowing her down. This can't be so. She stands astride the caterpillar's head and bites the base of its skull. She bites very carefully, applying slight pressure to the caterpillar's brain. She raises her head to study the effect: "The brain is a delicate organ and her patient must not die." The Ammophila Sleeper Hold — brings down the big boys every time.

Next she dashes home to open the nursery door and then back to her prey.

It was at this point in his observations that a neighbor or passerby saw young Bob Parks and thought he might be dead.

He was watching Ammophila drag her booty home. This is how she does it: she flips the caterpillar on its back, bites it by the throat, and drags it beneath her, not unlike a cheetah dragging an antelope. When she gets it home, she pulls it headfirst into the nest and promptly lays her egg on its side. She won't lay another egg in this nursery, though she might drag in a few more paralyzed caterpillars. Depends on how hungry her baby is, how big the caterpillar. But she doesn't check again for a while. She takes a few days off and goes back to her old ways, a beach babe, bagging some rays and sipping some pina coladas. Then, refreshed, it's back to baby-making and giving the needle to caterpillars.

Shall we return to the chamber? The caterpillar's jaws are now working — the head-squeezing causes only temporary narcosis — and there's a slight throbbing under its skin. In a few days, a tiny white legless grub emerges from the wasp egg and, like every newborn thing, is ravenous, but, unlike every newborn thing, it gnaws into its cradle, which is the flesh of the caterpillar. It becomes even clearer how precise the
mother wasp's sting must be: improperly or not fully paralyzed, the caterpillar back or squirm (most creatures, being eaten alive, would!) and knock the baby to its doom or crush it against the walls of the nest. Just as the surgeon's knife slips sometimes, so does the mother wasp's, and some opened nests show live caterpillars and dead larvae. Most of the time it works: fresh, juicy, 24-hour room service, breakfast, lunch, dinner. Luckily, as the poet Theodore Roethke said, 'Great Nature has another thing to do / To you and me...’ Or does it?

Bob Parks' love of small creatures led him, eventually, to macrophotography, the photographing of very small things. He's almost completely self-taught — as a photographer, as an entomologist, lepidopterist, herpetologist, etc. — and like many autodidacts is driven, proud but self-effacing, devoid of self-interest but wanting attention for his work, short on money, crafty, and self-contained. Like all autodidacts he has read prodigiously. When I asked him what he does for a living, he said, "I convey things, sometimes people." He drives a truck or van or bus. When I first met him, he was delivering flowers. More recently, he's been working as a custodian at the San Diego Natural History Museum, not the kind of work he usually likes, but it keeps him close to creatures he loves and he's devoted to the museum, has both taught and taken occasional classes there. He owns little and spends most of his disposable income on film and better photographic equipment, most recently a new lens, which has features that will greatly improve the things he can do. Bob Parks is 57 years old and about six feet tall, lean, and brown of arm and face, from the sun — he spends as much time as possible in the field, photographing. His pictures have appeared in several publications and at the San Diego Natural History Museum as well as the San Diego Art Institute. One of his photographs was recently a finalist in a national competition and was exhibited at the Smithsonian. I never saw him wearing anything — in the field, at home, out for dinner — but a denim work shirt, jeans, boots. Outside, in the sun, he wore a hat. On a scorching summer day, we went to the field. I like saying that:

"hilltopping," the phenomenon that hilltops, mountains, etc., are great places to find butterflies and all sorts of other insects. He described it as a kind of dating bar.

There was one other person with us: Bill Johnson, also a photographer and, briefly, a student of Parks'. As I said, Johnson's also a photographer, but his subjects are often inanimate, i.e., dead. He's the manager of the Chula Vista PD Crime Lab and a forensic photographer. As his art, and for his soul, he takes splendid nature pictures and was just learning macrophotography. I have a shot of us taken at Palomar. I must say, we are quite a trio. Parks, Iaconico, in blue; me with binoculars around my neck and a tape recorder in my shirt pocket; and Johnson, a magisterial man, in a photographer's safari suit, film cans lined up in his vest. It turns out, they knew what they were doing. It turns out, most of what I thought I taped didn't get taped because I plugged the microphone into the earphone jack.

As soon as we got to Palomar, we walked to a small pond with a large reed bed at one end. Parks knew we'd find butterflies there and we sure did. What would be a slight blur to me, less than one of those motes we occasionally see in our peripheral vision, he would spot and identify — giving both the popular and the scientific name and other details about it. He'd sometimes say, after he'd given a name, that he wasn't sure if he'd pronounced it absolutely right. If I referred to him as an entomologist or a lepidopterist, as I did above, he would always correct me, remind me that he didn't have the academic credentials to claim those professions. Ziiiinn — an iridescent dragonfly, and seeing its flight path, the green glint of a damselfly. I ask Parks the difference. Bingo. Dragonflies, also known as damselflies, and I mean to damselflies, have the reputation of being dangerous. They are to smaller insects. Dragonflies rest with wings outstretched. The more delicate damselflies rests with wings held to its sides. They both lay their eggs in water,
which is why there were so many of them near this pond.

We took one of the trails into the forest. I noticed a sign: Plague Warning. Since I’m a bit of a lay expert (if I am to be reincarnated, let it be as a professor of medieval history!), on the Black Plague, I took this to be a good omen. Still, I made a mental note to be sure not to feed any squirrels or other rodents, a thing I sometimes find myself doing unconsciously.

There was also a sign about rattlesnakes. This did concern me. It’s not exactly an uncommon feeling: lots of people are not nuts about snakes. I read about them. I watch that crazy Australian guy on the Nature Channel picking up the world’s deadliest and most aggressive snakes and talking sweet to them. I read somewhere that we should confront our fears. Or did he heard it in a psychologist’s office? Or did some pop psychologist say it? That’s how to get over this fear: I’ll just touch a snake. Fat fucking chance! Parks told me a story of lying down for a long time once in the desert, taking photographs of a lizard, and finally, he looks to his left, and just a few feet away, “within easy striking distance,” is a rattler, which was probably there all along. If that happened to me I wouldn’t need to spend years at the Maharishi University learning how to levitate: that would lift me right off the ground. I did just about step on a copperhead when I was a kid while climbing a half-assed mountain. My houseboys still claim it as the highest vertical leap they’ve ever seen. So snakes I was hoping we wouldn’t see.

We followed the trail, Parks leading the way, identifying flora as well as butterflies and other insects. We came to a flat, grassy, weedy place at the bottom of a hill. It teemed with butterflies. It’s practically impossible to photograph butterflies on the wing. When they’re feeding at a flower, immobiling fluids, one can usually approach. Ditto mating pairs. Courting pairs, however, are too frenetic. Basking or perching butterflies are approachable, but ovipositing females (a female about the business of laying eggs) are too skittish. Parks waded into the brambles carefully, slowly, one step at a time, eyeing different butterflies, planning a route, actually, to be in position to get a good shot. It’s all about timing, and angles. There’s a lot of frustration, perfect opportunities are few and may last only seconds. Parks said what one needs most is patience and knowledge, which he has gained from reading “all there is to read,” because we need to know “what the hell we’re looking at.”

Parks has a butterfly Zen thing going, though. The butterflies were more...comfortable around him. I’d heard this about him, that he was a Dr. Doolittle of insects. As usual, modestly and a little impatiently, he explained it as just experience, a sense of what will spook them and what won’t. At times, butterflies would surround him, or even land on his hand or wrist. Most never came that close to, and certainly never landed on, Bill Johnson or me. Sometimes I could follow close enough behind Parks to lean over or around his shoulder while he set up or took shots. Johnson took a beautiful picture of Parks, the lens of Parks’ camera only a few inches from a bright yellow butterfly called a California dogface perched on a neon pink thistle. I’m behind him, looking very intently too, but, if I remember right, I was staring at a stick thinking: that looks like a snake!

Later, we took a walk in a large mountain meadow. It was too dry and hot out here for butterflies. Perkins told me about a fly he likes: the robber fly. A fierce predator, it catches its prey—other flies, butterflies, etc.; it’s not picky—in the air, it injects it with a paralyzing fluid. It then falls to the ground, and quickly the robber fly sucks it dry. If nature had made them the size of cocker spaniels, Parks said, there would be no humans on earth, just our huskies. I like to think about stuff like that.

My interest in insects is relatively new. I’d done some bug reading in the past, but in recent years I’ve read more and more. The most expensive book I own—E.O. Wilson and Bert Hobbie’s definitive text on ants—cost me close to a C-note. Worth every penny. Put a gun to my head and demand to know my second favorite insect, I have to say the ant. (I hold my favorite until the latter parts of this to increase suspense.) That would put me with a lot of people. Much work has been done on ants. Ditto
bees — one of the most beautiful books I’ve read recently was written a little over a hundred years ago: The Life of the Bee, by Maurice Maeterlinck. More about bees later too.

I asked Parks what his favorite ant was. He didn’t like questions like this. It was as if I asked a father which of his children he loved best. His girlfriend, now wife, Dee Norton, whom I met on other occasions, would often help me to get answers to certain questions. She’s an intrepid mountain-climbing outdoorswoman (she was leaving for Kilimanjaro soon), who also works at the Natural History Museum. Forced to choose, Parks said the bearded harvester ant of the genus Pogonomyrmex. The Pogonomyrmex branch of the ant family contains the most industrious and ingenious and some of the most vicious ants (in human terms) on the planet. Pogonomyrmex molestus, not surprisingly a Texas ant, not only harvests but also sows.

Lots of creatures harvest — in the sense of gathering food. But this ant reaps what it sows. They love the seed of a plant of the Aristida genus: “ant rice.” Some ant people believe they deliberately sow it — it’s always close to the burrow; they clear debris and weed the area. Other ant people believe they just sort of drop the seeds there and forget them. Because no one has yet figured out how to read an ant’s mind, men have spent entire careers debating these issues. A few of them get pretty exercised over it: “Wheeler [an entomologist] pooh-poohs the idea that the ants sow the seeds deliberately. Indeed, he gets somewhat wrought up about it, which is unusual with this level-headed and unbiased writer. One can sense his excitement when he says that even Texas schoolboys regard the notion as a joke.” I love it when academics get in this kind of catfight. And then’s fighting words: telling someone that schoolboys laugh at their ideas. We’ll never know, although I have heard that two scientists — one at MIT and one at Georgia Tech — are working on devices to read the minds of ants. Their quarrel over whose method is better (and therefore more deserving of funding) has brought me much amusement and is reminiscent of Edison and Tesla’s famous squawk over AC or DC current.

Another pogo is Pogonomyrmex barbatus, large, fierce, and powerful. This is the species ancient Mexicans used to torture people by, staking them over their nests. The pain of their bite has been ommorphonically described as “fiery and numbing.” That’s what a bee sting feels like too. The pain, lasting hours, travels from the ant’s bite along the limbs and sets the groin. These big harvesters are tough, and some of the little ones are tough too: Scolopopsis geminata, the “fire ant” of tropical America, for example. This tiny red thing gets its name from its sting, not its color. As the 19th-century naturalist H.W. Bates wrote of them in the Amazon: “The houses are overrun with them; they dispute every fragment of food with the inhabitants, and destroy clothing for the sake of the starch. All eata- bles are obliged to be suspended in baskets from the rafters, and the cords well soaked with copoabu bal- san, which is the only means known of preventing them "from climbing. They seem to attack persons out of sheer malice." As many people know, fire ants are in the United States and a seri- ous problem in Southeastern states. Their range now covers about 300 million acres; they cause billions of dollars of damage and kill a half dozen to a dozen people every year, mostly chil- dren and older people from allergic reactions. (To put this in perspective: toothpicks kill one to two people per year in America.) The U.S. Department of Agriculture is trying something to control the fire ant problem: decapitator flies. The preda- tor-prey relationship, in these early stages anyway, is working well, "like a lock and key," says an entomol- ogist for the department. This fly is so sharp it attacks...
only South American fire ants — ignoring the native species and even South American fire ants of the wrong size. A fly "hovers like a helicopter" over the fire ant, dive-bombing a torpedo-shaped egg into the ant's body, then buzzing off to do it again another few hundred times to other ants. The fly's egg hatches in the ant, and the larva travels up the ant's neck into its skull, where it eats the brain. While it's doing this, it releases an enzyme that weakens the ant's joints, and its head falls off. The fire ants, who are neat freaks, carry off the skulls for deposit in an "out-of-the-way" "bone heap." Here the larva finishes its meal in leisure, after first sending an air tube though the ant's skull. The larvae eat the brain and are protected by the braincase. Nice work if you can get it. Back at the wasp's nest, many paragraphs ago, Bob Parks was hooked. He said the cops laughed when they approached him and found out he was watching bugs. Parks told me he'd sometimes dig up a paralyzed caterpillar to see what the wasp's egg looked like. (These are about the smallest things he photographs — insect eggs.) He started reading everything he could get his hands on and while still only 12 or 13 found his way to Dr. Charles Harbison, now deceased, but then curator of entomology at the San Diego Natural History Museum. Harbison was generous and encouraging, directed his reading, teaching him all he could. There was turmoil in Parks's family during these years — his parents divorced — and he saw less of his father, a Navy man, who was at both Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, and aboard the USS Missouri during the formal Japanese surrender, Tokyo Bay, September 2, 1945. Parks has three brothers and a sister.

He'd recently purchased a new 200-millimeter macro lens and was eager to use it. It would give him double the working distance he had with his old lens, a 105-millimeter macro lens — very helpful when trying to photograph quick, nervous creatures like butterflies and hummingbirds. The reasons to prefer a little more distance, without sacrificing detail, when photographing rattlesnakes in the wild, were previously illuminated. He's always upgrading his tools, selling a lens and buying the next model up, and repeat again.

I asked him why macrophotography and not microphotography. He said most microphotography takes place in the lab — it needs magnifying lenses, controlled conditions. He wants to be in the field, and he wants to capture the detail, the great beauty and engineering in these creatures. Detail and color. The colors in his photographs are lush and intensely alive. The verdant, early-spring-in-a-river-valley green of an emerald tree boa; the blazing maraschino red feathers of an epipedium orchid surrounding the butterfly yellow bird-shape at the center of its bloom; an ant caressing an Arrowhead blue caterpillar, who has one feeler against the lavender bud of a lupine; the upturned slender pale green leg of a poppy's stamen — ending in a fluffy yellow slipper heavily powdered with a golden pollen. The light these give off is the light in the distance of El Dorado. Parks gets a little excited (so do I) when he talks about color. Then again, I've never heard anyone talk about the color in the scales of a python. He said each scale looks like an enamel bead — micro-pinheads of light turning up the fire of the color from inside. He dreams a lot in bougainvillea red. He wants things that are not normally seen to be seen. He quoted Georgia O'Keeffe: "People never really see flowers; that's why I paint them big." He later tied his impulse to take pictures with a desire to communicate with fellow human beings. He said he likes the medium of photography because "I can not only show what's in our back yards but also show what we're destroying." He laughed and said, "I admit to being a tree hugger, and I hate what we're doing to our land and habitats."

I inquired about other misadventures in the field. He didn't like talking about himself much, but he said, in the desert once, a few guys came up to him on horseback and accused him of trespassing and looking for gold. He told them what he was really doing, and then they were sure he was looking for gold. Once, he ran into someone on a trail in the jungles of Costa Rica. The man asked if he were taking pictures of birds. It was a particularly good place for birders. Parks said no, he was looking for termites. Lesser known, perhaps less glamorous: the jungle is a good place for a termiter.
too. Speaking of mites, Parks told me there’s a kind that lives in certain flowers from which hummingbirds like to quaff. When the mite wants to move to a new flower, it waits for the hummingbird to arrive, and when it hovers with its tongue inserted in the flower, the mite takes a running leap onto the bird’s beak, scars into its nostril, and holes up there until the bird goes to the next blossom, and then it hustles down its beak again and leaps. Timing is crucial. I don’t think there is photographic evidence of a mite failing to make the leap, nor do I think the audio equipment has been invented yet that would hear its tiny scream as it plummeted a distance equal to three Empire State Buildings! Perhaps they carry backup parachutes as Eevil Knievel did when he tried but failed to leap a canyon? Parks had a lot of stories about survival tactics of flora and fauna — the incredible adaptability and specialization creatures have devised in order to survive and perpetrate each species. One of my favorite examples is a snake whose tail looks just like its head. It’s a particularly long snake. While a mouse is gauging whether its distance from the snake’s head is within the safety range, the real head is sneaking around the mouse to snatch it from the rear. I have yet to explore the metaphorical or psychological reasons I am engaged by that particular predatory strategy.

Everybody’s got a favorite bee, right? Parks’s is Chalicothoa platy, the world’s largest (body length up to 39 millimeters, wingspan up to 63 millimeters) and most mysterious. Until recently, only a few specimens were known. This bee boasts the world’s largest bee head: 13 millimeters wide, and it has jaws to rival a stag beetle’s. (A stag is a large beetle collected by schoolchildren in Japan. It can be purchased at post offices there. I thought it might be a nice thing to contemplate while waiting in line at an American PO, but when I presented the idea to the Postmaster General an FBI agent was sent to interview me.) The female Chalicothoa platy wears a velvety black pile, with white hairs on the lower half of her head and the first abdominal segment. I can see Bob Parks getting excited about photographing one. They seem to still exist on only a few of the remote Moluccas, on the eastern end of the Malay Archipelago. This would be a dream place for Parks to go to take pictures. He’s just settling for just about anywhere close to the equator. They are insect life teems. Another great place would be the island of New Guinea. So much has not yet been seen or photographed. Chalicothoa is a bull of a bee and a home builder who contracts out a portion of the early work. It nests in association with colonies of wood-eating termites, a species of Microtermitidae. The termites build nests of cartoon-like material, made of cellulose and saliva. It is light and durable, usually attached to the branch or trunk of a forest tree. The female Ch. platy burrows into the termite carton. The termites dig a horizontal entrance tunnel and a vertical main tunnel. The bees dig their large cells off of the main tunnel. The nest is big enough for two female bees to pass another (one thinks of old movies when two ose people try to squeeze by one another in a train’s aisle, and two or more males may share a nest. It is thought that they gain from the termites’ building skills protection for their provisions and for their young from the considerable humidity of these islands.

What they do for the termites and whether their apartments are rent controlled is unknown.

Lately, Parks has been interested in butterflies. The world’s smallest butterfly, a pygmy blue, about the size of a man’s thumbnail, can be found around San Diego. It likes salt marshes and feeds primarily on a small introduced plant from Australia. Parks has never gotten the picture he’s wanted of a pygmy blue, despite hundreds of tries. Never got one that quite filled the frame the way I wanted. Their wings are almost metallic, hard to get the right angle for the right light to bring out the color properly. Some of the other butterflies common to the San Diego area (I’m just picking the ones with the best names) are fiery skipper (good name for a racehorse), the West Coast lady, purplegul copper, gorgon copper, hegewisch hairstreak, unsilvered caleite (new, but could be a better onomatopoeic word for a species of butterfly), Bernardino dotted-blue.

What’s the difference between a butterfly and a
moth, you ask? Butterflies fly by day, are brightly colored, have (with exceptions) cubed antennae. Moths: mostly by night, dull colors. Really, butterflies are fancy moths. Some creatures have to show off more! Butterflies have a head, thorax, and abdomen. Adult butterflies have two pairs of wings: forewings and hindwings. With the wings they do more than fly. They're used in courtship, regulating body temperature, and avoiding predators, particularly as camouflage and deception. One tropical moth's foraying tip looks exactly like the head of a snake. When we were on Palomar, Parks showed me the hindwings of two or three butterflies with big chomps taken out of them. Most attacks come from the rear. If they get nipped in a hindwing or even get it torn off, the butterfly still has a chance of getting away. Mortally wounded pregnant butterflies are said to speed up the birth process so they can accomplish their primary task before it's time to go.

Most of us are familiar enough with the life cycle of butterflies (even before there were nature shows on TV, there were nature shows about butterflies), so I can just run through it here. It has four stages: the egg, which hatches into a caterpillar (larva) and wraps itself in a cocoon (chrysalis) from which emerges the adult butterfly. One of Parks's hopes is to someday get the perfect photo of a butterfly's wing just as it emerges from the chrysalis, that split second when the wet wing is spiking the fine threads. This unfolding is one of the miracles of life. Most butterflies live only a few weeks. Some of the California blues live only a few days. A few species live six or seven months, a couple almost a year. The adult butterfly spends its time looking for mates, mating, laying eggs, feeding, and resting. Sounds familiar. Maybe the only difference between humans and butterflies is that humans do all of the above and have to hold jobs too! There are two primary mate-finding strategies, personal ads not being an option because of a low rate of literacy among butterflies: patrolling and perching, both more or less self-explanatory and ditto familiar. I mentioned earlier "hilltopping." The males of perching species tend to favor hilltops for meeting females. Butterflies have a "courtship probe" (a straw for a nose) and can't chew solids. They drink sugar-rich fluids — nectar, sap, rots, fruit, bird droppings. Just-emerged butterflies, usually males of the patrolling species, gather in groups on wet sand to imbibe water rich in salts, probably for temperature regulation.

But do I sense a bit of restlessness on the part of the reader? A certain sense of anticipation? When is he going to tell us about his favorite bug? Well, it's the beetle. I know it's yours too. Hello, my name is Tom and I can't stop reading about beetles! It's easier when we can admit it: it's the unglamorous beetle I admire the most! Not the bee and its honey, not the ant and its industriousness (and its feature movies), not the butterfly and its brilliant colors. It's the beetle for me, and, I am not ashamed to say loud, in print, it is the (there are many, many species) dung beetle I admire most. Dar-winn said he thought God's favorite creature was the beetle because He made so many of them. There are 350,000 known types of beetles, and some people believe as many as another 150,000 unknown types. I realize not everyone is nuts about beetles. Joseph Conrad was

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not. He described them in one novel as "horrid little monsters, looking malevolent in death and immobility"—he was looking at an entomologist's collection. As a child, growing up on a farm, I was paid, I think, a penny apiece for Japanese beetles I picked off the corn stalks. I often roasted them to death on the lid of the barrel where we burned our trash. They were a serious pest (though I marveled at the beautiful green of their heads and the rich copper bleeding into their carapaces), and their name (they were introduced from Japan in 1917) probably had something to do with my cruelty to them—WWII was the dominant historical reality of the 1950s. Then there was the click beetle. Catch one and flip it on its back. In about a minute, with a loud click, it would flip into the air. Most of the time, it landed on its feet. If it didn't, it rested a moment and clicked—it would try again. They should teach turtles this trick!

Of my dear dung beetles, let me start with one that is not a dung beetle but a fake dung beetle. There's a tropical Central American beetle called Leistostethus versicolor. Like a regular beetle, it gets to a pile of dung post haste, but not to haul away dung for a meal. No.  It crawls on the dung pat as if it's doing dung-beetle business, but what it's really there for is the flies that come to feast on the dung. It just sits there until a fly walks into its jaws. You want to eat flies, you go where the flies go.

Lest the reader cringe at the word "feast" when applied to excrement, dung is loaded—because most mammals digest only a fraction of what they eat—with proteins, nutrients, bacteria, etc. Dung comes cheap. Animals do not defend their dung, nor does dung, like some plants and most small animals, defend itself.

Dung beetles seem to prefer the droppings of large mammals, but the beetles have lived on earth for over 350 million years—since before the existence of large mammals. Some scientists believe the beetles lived on dinosaur droppings, but no beetle fossil has yet been found in petrified dinosaur poop. Several people are looking, you can put that in the bank, as I write this.

Want to know one of humanity's greatest benefactors? Uncle Dung Beetle. They remove dung from sight, from smell, and from beneath our feet, and what they don't immediately eat they bury, thus putting in the soil fertilizing nitrogen that otherwise would just be absorbed into the atmosphere. Beetles churn up and aerate the ground, providing as much help this way as earthworms. Their larvae eat parasitic worms and maggots found in dung, thus cutting back on the spread of disease. Some dung beetles are parasitoids. A few species live in the rump fur of a kangaroo, wait for the animal to evacuate its bowels, and at that point leap from the fur to the dung, attach themselves to it in midair, and ride it down to the ground—thereby becoming first claimants. A kind of long-necked (only kidding—about the long neck!) beetle lives exclusively on giraffe dung. One entomologist has said that if these beetles didn't exist, the whole world would look like a cattle feedlot after months of rain and then turned crusty with heat. The whole world covered with a two-day-old cow flop, crusted on the outside, loose inside. One elephant pie, weighing about four pounds, might be covered with 60,000 beetles within minutes of hitting the ground and be gone in a matter of hours or less. They work fast. Competition is great, and insectivores, beetle-eaters, know dung piles are a good place to find meals. Some beetles survive this by disguise: one looks like a twig.

In Australia, the indigenous beetles couldn't keep up with all the cattle and sheep feces, and a few dozen varieties of dung beetles from other parts of the world were introduced in the 1960s, which greatly reduced the dung, which greatly reduced the flies that feed and breed in it, which greatly reduced incidents of "the Australian salute," the brush of a hand across the face to chase away flies. Dung beetles are the blue-collar workers of the insect world; without them our planet falls apart, or at the very least, we live life in shit up to our clavicles.

Let me quote a paragraph on dung beetles by the superb science writer Natalie Angier that sounds almost rhapodic, almost Whitmanesque: "Each day, dung beetles living in the cattle ranches of Texas, the plains of Africa, the deserts of India, the meadows of the Himalayas, the dense undergrowth of the Amazon—any place where dirt and dung come together—assiduously clear away millions of tons of droppings, the great bulk of it from messy mammals like cows, horses, elephants, monkeys, and humans."

I had one more question for Bob Parks. I wanted to know how those holes got in sweaters from moths when you never saw a moth in your closet or drawer. Well, the moth doesn't stick around—it lays the egg, the egg turns to larva and eats the sweater, then it leaves. But, it might not be moths after all. Might be a very common beetle called a carpet beetle. Moths often take the rap for their dirty work. Parks told me one more thing about the carpet beetle. It's a danger to entomologists: it likes to eat insect collections!

—Thomas Lux

Thomas Lux's most recent book of poems is The Street of Clocks (Houghton Mifflin). He teaches at Sarah Lawrence College and in the fall will begin an appointment as Bourne Professor of Poetry at Georgia Institute of Technology.
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The last chapters of *Corpus of Joe Bailey* bring the circle back to Mission Hills, back to Connie, and back to Polly, where Joe belongs. It's taken this long for him to realize what and who was really holding him back and how, sometimes, staying put and digging deep is what moves you forward.

On Monday he moved out of his father's house and into two rooms on Juniper Street, close to his office. He immersed himself in his job, working from 7:30 in the morning until the last truck was checked in at night and the last preparation made for the next day. He never got back to his rooms until after dark, and then only to bathe and change his clothes before going out to dinner and a movie. When he had seen all the movies, he began driving around again, following the old route, the route of Con and the San Diego years compressed into an hour or two of driving that, because he still did not go through Mission Hills, start there, was apathetic, vain, meaningless, like trying to fill in a jigsaw puzzle with key pieces left in the box. Then to a bar to drink—not getting drunk, the drinking as useless and time-marking as the journey had been—until it was late enough to go to bed and sleep.

He had no telephone in his rooms, and when he was not working heard from no one and saw no one. When Hickey called him at the office he said he was trying to work out a better deal with Walter Peake—a lie that would require continuing a series of lies. When his father phoned to ask him to dinner he said he was working very hard but would come as soon as he had the time.

But he did not go, and finally one evening his father came by and caught him at home. "Mr. Davis is going to be in town tomorrow," he said. "He phoned from Los Angeles. He —" "Who?" "Your father-in-law," his father said. Joe had not asked him to sit down, and he stood just inside the door, holding his grey hat in his hands. "He asked me to tell you he'd be at the El Cortez tomorrow. He wants to see you tomorrow morning."

"What does he think he wants of me?"

"He asked about you and Polly. I couldn't tell him anything. I didn't " "I can't tell him anything either."

"You're taking this bank business pretty hard, it seems to me," his father said sharply. "Listen, son, when you go to see him, won't you try to understand his side of it? He's worried about Polly just the way I'm worried about you."

"Don't worry about me. Probably I'll be all right after a while."

"How's that little bar down on the corner, son? Do you want to go down and have a drink and talk things over?"

Joe shook his head. "No, thanks. I've quit drinking. I've been drinking too much. Dad, I'm sorry I'm so rude. Don't you want to sit down?"

"I guess not this trip," his father said.

The next morning, Friday, after he had gotten Mrs. Dunbar and Al Quade briefed on the day's business, Joe phoned Mr. Johnson to tell him he was taking some of his accumulated time-off. He drove downtown past the apartment house where Con had lived during the war. A hearse, followed by four
black limousines, was just pulling away from the morgue next door, and he had to fall in line behind them, moving very slowly as an unwilling part of the funeral cortège down to the corner of Sixth Avenue, making the turn south as they did. He turned out from behind them onto Dute Street. He could see the El Cortez towering on the brink of the hill above downtown San Diego, and he found he was still driving slowly as before, because too soon he was going to have to go through this with George Davis.

George Davis had a suite on the 12th floor. He wore a yellow sport shirt and a silk tie with a flamboyant design of swirling blues and browns that looked like a child's finger painting. He seemed very friendly and loud and ill at ease as he pumped Joe's hand. He told Joe he was looking fine and asked about his father and stepmother, saying his father had sounded like a fine guy over the phone, and how about a little drink? "I've got a bottle of Teacher's. It's good stuff."

"No thanks," Joe said. "It's a little early for me." He didn't know how he had expected George Davis to act, but this wasn't it. George Davis was making himself a drink, muttering that Teacher's was a fine scotch and was Joe sure he wouldn't have one.

Joe sat on a brocade love seat and watched him. "I meant to ask you about Pauline," he said. "Is she..."

"She's been going to a psychiatrist. I don't know whether it's going to be much good or not. She's read up on that stuff, and when he tries to find out what's wrong, I guess she tries to keep him from it. He worried his lower lip between his teeth, then said, "It hasn't been so good up there recently. Things kind of stacking up."

"I'm sorry to hear that," "Geejay and Julie are separating," George Davis said.

Joe watched him sitting with his thick legs apart, frowning down into his glass. "Divorce?"

George nodded. "Julie wants the kids. It's a damn mess. It's all hit Pauline pretty hard. At a bad time."

"I'm sorry."

"I don't know."

George glanced at him, looking almost embarrassed now. "Maybe Polly's written you about this," he said loudly, "She had a job over on Treasure Island — did she tell you?"

Joe nodded.

"Well, I asked her to give it up and come stay out at the house. I thought it would be good for her mother. And for her too. She did, she's there now, but we had a kind of ruckus about it. I didn't know the damn job was that important to her." He took a quick gulp of his drink, then set it down and lit a cigarette and waved smoke away from his face with an irritated gesture. "I got pretty good and sore about some of the things she said, he burst out. "I said she was nothing but a — a call girl. She said all she did was wait around to run upstairs whenever we — you or me, she said — called for her service. That's a hell of a thing to say to your father."

"What else did she say?"

Joe said thickly.

George's face was flushed, dark and angry. "I talked it out with her, he said at last. "I always try to understand my kids." His eyes met Joe's defiantly. "Well, she said she was married to you. She said I was important to her, we were her family, but she was married to you. She said I was important to her, he said, nodding, "but that I had to understand her — well, her responsibility to you. So I thought I'd better get down here and see —"

The heavy reluctant voice broke off, and Joe turned to gaze off out the window at the nearby concrete shape of the San Diego Club. It had been the Athletic Club once, where his Uncle Dick had lived. Below it, at the foot of the hill, was downtown San Diego, the buildings white and gray and casting shadows westward. And there were gray Navy ships in the bay and ferries passing in the channel. Everything looked very tiny and far off as he stared out the window, trying to picture Polly telling her father that she was married to him, Joe, that he, Joe, was the most important, that her responsibility was to him. "Polly says you're working for some concrete outfit down here," George said in a different voice. "Good job?"

"It's all right."

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"She was telling me something about a rock crusher you'd written about. We were interested in it. Sounded like you were onto something pretty good. Anything work out there?"

"No, nothing worked out there."

"That's too bad," George said, but he sounded relieved.

"Bert Grover keeps asking about you. He was sorry you left. I suppose you know you would have stepped into that job someday."

Joe turned back. George Davis was watching him keenly, one eyebrow raised, one of the locks of his hair curling down over his forehead. "What do you think about coming back to the plant? We could pay you more money. I talked to Bert about that. He said..."

"Don't do this. You can't like doing this..."

George Davis flushed again and drained his glass. "How much is this outfit paying you down here?" he said.

"Don't!" Joe got to his feet. He stood there clutching his fists; Polly, who had been blundered and distant at the time and space, was pulled close into this by his resentment. He saw what she had meant by her responsibility and then George Davis coming down here to bring him back. "Tell me something," Joe said. "When I was at Cal, did you ever think of fixing me up with the kind of deal you gave Marshall Trask?"

George Davis stared at him uncomprehendingly.

"No, you didn't," Joe said and wiped his hand hard across his mouth. "I wasn't any good. But I did eventually get that scholarship from you. And not by being any good, by marrying it."

"Now, you did a damn good job, Joe. I mean that. Much better than I expect..."

"Seel," he cried. "Well, I walked out on my scholarship, you don't want me back on it. I'm not worth your money. And Polly doesn't know when she's well out of it, sending you down here to —"

"She didn't..."

"The hell she didn't! Because she pities me. Because she feels responsible for me like she would for an idiot child or — a sick cat. Well, you'll just have to go back and break the good news."

He braced his hand against his chest to stop the trembling. "I can't compete with you," he said. "I was going to buy this famous gravel pit and crusher — a friend and I in partnership. Two of us without cajolery, and without enough money or experience or guts. Whatever it takes we didn't have. So it's no good now, and there's nothing for you to buy and take back to Polly. Nothing. Her husband's gone under. There's nothing here, and you're going to have to tell Polly because I don't even have the guts for that."

"Now, hold on a minute, kid —"

"And tell her this," he broke in. "Tell her if she ever gets married again to listen to Barty. Get 400 miles away. Move, tell her to get —"

He stepped as George Davis rose, the muscles standing out like clenched fingers in the loose flesh of his jaw. He wondered if George Davis was going to hit him. He almost prayed that George Davis would hit him so he could hit back and thus end it with Polly, violent and clean and unalterable.

"Whatever I did, I never ran out on her," George Davis said, and Joe could only turn aside and nod. He could hear George Davis's uneven breathing. "Whatever I did wrong with my kids, I was never a quitter!"

Joe started past him blindly, but he stopped when George Davis said, "You're no damn good. You're just like the rest of my family."

Joe swung around. "Did you ever stop to think that what's wrong with your family might be you?"

"Why you son-of-a-..." George Davis's hand rose, the wrist flexed back. The fingers flicked hard across Joe's lips.

He put his hand to his mouth; George Davis's face wavered and trembled behind a watery red film. He swung at his face. His fist struck, solid and blunt. George Davis staggered back and sat down on the carpet with a groan, and covered his eye with his hand. He sat there swaying and shaking his head; his loud tie was flung back over his shoulder. Then his hand groped out and up, as though to keep Joe from hitting him again, or to stop him from leaving.

Joe opened the door and stumbled out. As he moved down the hall he was shaking with despair at the wall infinitely high and thick that separated him forever now from Polly, and that was still rising all about him as he hurried down the hallway of the 12th floor of the El Cortez Hotel, as he had hurried away from the bank, and as he had walked off the field toward the sidewalks where the coach and George Davis were standing. Beyond whom, up in the stands somewhere, was Con. All he could do now was go and find her.

It

In the elevator of the Hunter-Hamilton Building in Los Angeles he started at the fat neck of the Negro operator. He felt the trembling of the metal wall against which he leaned as he watched the operator slide the brass handle in a semicircle. The elevator came to rest, the door slid aside. His heels clicked slowly on the checker-board of black and white.
tiles in the hallway. He read the inscriptions on the doors as he passed: "John Fiegelnmann and Edward R. Fiegelnmann, Chiroprists"; "Harry's Hollywood Hairsalon"; "O.O. Modo, Nutritional Consultant." At the end of the hall above a fluted chrome arch were the words in chrome script: "Crane Publications."

Inside, in a chrome tube chair beside a chrome ashtray, a young man in a beige sport coat was working the lever of his cigarette lighter. On the opposite wall magazine covers were arranged in a kaleidoscope of eye-catching colors — bright photographs of movie stars, girls in bathing suits and dishonourable, cowboys, policemen, comic characters — *Screen Careers, Flit Clic: The Hollywood Picture Magazine, Cinemaverie Real Romances, Screen Comics, Black Ranger Comics, Spicy Investigations, CineMagat, Hollywood Modes.* Slanting across the far end of the room to another chrome archway was a black wall bisected by a waist-high band of windows and a narrow counter, below which the paint was worn and peeling in ugly scallops. Behind the windows a red-haired girl and an older woman wearing dark glasses sat typing.

The woman looked up. "Yes?"
"I'd like to see Mrs. Stockton," Joe said.
"Who shall I say is...?"
"Tell her it's Mr. Bailey from San Diego."

The woman nodded and left the narrow cage behind her counter. The red-haired girl cranked another sheet into her typewriter. The young man came up beside Joe. "Say, Red, when the hell's Mr. Meir coming in?"

"He's in and out all the time," the girl said. "Should be in pretty soon." She began to type, a rapid tinny rattle.

The young man went back to sit down.

When he heard the sound of high heels Joe turned slowly toward the inner chrome arch. The heels were in a hurry, but it seemed to take a long time. She came out running.

"Darling!" she cried. Her face was a pale triangle beneath her black hair that was cut short now, and she looked thin in a rust-colored suit with a high collar. She ran toward him, her red lips parted, her eyes wide; and as the girl in the autumn-colored suit ran to him and as he put up his arms to her, he felt all the emotions he had ever felt for her in a huge choking wrench of his heart.

She put her hand out for his and pressed his hand against her side. "It's you, isn't it?" she said. Her eyes flickered to the woman behind the counter, to the young man. "Come back to my office, darling," she whispered, turning as she said it and still gripping his hand, pulling him with her under the chrome arch and into another hallway with worn linoleum on the floor and lined with tiny crowded offices like a fiberboard honeycomb. They passed a youth with long, carefully arranged blond hair who said, "Hi, Connie," a drinking fountain where a glass jug of water hung upside down in a green metal rack.

Joe stopped her. "Con, let's get out of this place."
"Yes," she said. Her eyes were heavily shadowed at the corners. "You wait here. I'll just be a minute." She gave his hand a squeeze and ran on down the hall. He watched her legs flashing and the small bounce of her hips in the skirt's tight sheath. When she was out of sight he leaned against the wall beside the water cooler. It was noisier here; the hurrying of the typewriter was louder, and he could hear people talking. At the end of the hallway where Con had

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disappeared was a huge room with many steel I-beam pillars and desks and costless men at the desks. A phone was ringing.

Con appeared again. She was wearing a hat, a phalanx feather nodding over her forehead, a green purse and a manila folder. She smiled at him as she turned in one of the offices. "Hi, Connie," someone said.

"I'm off," Con said. "Check over this layout for me, darling. The pictures stink. There are only two I think we can use at all. But see what you think."

"Can't get it to today."

"Monday's soon enough. Where's Jack? That photographer stinks. I want Jack to see the pictures."

"Tell him tonight, doll baby."

Con came out in the hall and cried, "Wally! Wally!"

The blond boy hurried down from the big room and Con pressed a stack of photographs into his hands. "Put these on Jack's desk, will you, darling?"

"Sure, Connie. Taking off?"

"Yes," Con said. "There's a note there. When he comes back, be sure he sees it."

"Right!" The boy looked archly at Joe.

Con came on down the hall. In the bright light she passed the window her face looked very hard and efficient. She caught his hand and pressed it against her side again and said, "Let's scram before anybody gets me tied up with anything."

There were two more people in the anteroom, a fat man and a blonde with long hair and barouqin glasses who was striding up and down. The young man still sat dejectedly beside the ashtray.

"Quick, quick, quick," Con said, as they hurried down the hall toward the elevator.

In the elevator, behind the operator's thick back, she raised her face to him, and he kissed the smooth lips as the floor fell away beneath them. Her lips had a taste he could not connect with Con Robinson, and he could smell perfume and powder and a faint odor of cigarettes. She pressed against him tautly; under his hand the muscles of her back felt rigid. Then she pulled away and with her face averted said, "How long has it been, darling?"

"Six years."

"What made you come?"

"I wanted to see you, I guess."

"Mr. Bailey from San Diego," Con said. "When she told me that I thought I'd —"

"She stopped as the elevator came to rest with a suddenness that pushed him crashing down upon himself. The doors rumbled open. Con's fingernails dug into the back of his hand. "Let's go get hornocho, darling."

It was dark and very quiet in the bar. They sat almost alone on tall stools and drank double schnapps. Joe watching and listening to Con, who talked incessantly, half turned toward him with her forwardhood, her hand held palm up at her shoulder. It was a gesture he did not remember. She had been in Los Angeles since her divorce, she said. She had a wonderful job. She had a darling boss. The magazine was doing marvelously. She had put a lot of money — Peter's money, she said, with a quick sideways glance at Joe — into it, and she had a wonderful job. She and her boss, whose name was Jack Meir, and a photographer had gone to San Francisco last week. They were doing an issue on San Francisco summer fashions. They had had a marvelous time. She loved Los Angeles except for the smog. She hadn't been down to San Diego but she had been meaning to go. She had hated Washington during the war. She had thought she couldn't stand it till she got back to California.

She told him about her job. She called movie people by their first names, which he recognized immediately as not springing from acquaintance but as a kind of convention; she talked of directors and designers and mentioned names of which he knew he was supposed to have heard; she seemed pitifully eager to impress him, or for his admiration, or, he finally began to see, merely for his approbation. As she talked, with the pale hand held palm up as though for alms, he observed the thin lines of her neck, which, here, seemed the only detail of her appearance to have aged, for out of the harsh light of the office and the street her face was very beautiful. It seemed softer, and easier, as she talked on in the excited, slightly
husky voice, telling him about Hollywood and the magazine set and the fashion racket, how marvelous everything was, and how happy she was.

"What did you say your wife's name was?" she asked. He stared down at his right hand, watching it slowly fold into a laxe fist, feeling its ache and the little sharp pain of the torn flap of skin on the knuckle. "Polly," he said. "Pauline."

"Tell me about her."

He described Polly briefly. He felt very drunk, and he knew he was near to being sick. Con had ordered another scoop and the man was sipping it. He recalled slightly as the feather on her hat brushed his forehead, and meeting her eyes, uninterested smile, he felt a kind of apathetic horror, at her, and at himself, and then again the jolt of realization that this was Con Robinson, sitting here beside him and asking him about his wife.

"Are you in love with her, darling?"

"Yes," he said. "Yes—and he felt the depression and the nausea thrust down on him to meet the small relentless ache in his right hand. He stretched out the hand and pushed the drink away. When he asked Con about Frank Stockton, she made a face. "That little schmo. I don't know how I stood him as long as I did. I can't remember anything about him I liked."

"Why did you marry him?"

"Darling, that's something I never've been able to figure out." Her voice was fuzzy. "I think I must have married him because he looked a little like you.

She smiled at him and raised the hand again. "He had that big nose and chin," she said. "He didn't really look like you, though. He was an ugly little schmuck. He drank just quarts of coffee and smoked thousands of cigarettes whenever the draft board called him up for a physical. He was a friend of my father's. What a nasty, dull, cocky little man he is. We fought all the time."

"That's too bad."

"No," she said. "That's what kept it from being too horribly dull. I got to drinking a lot and it was a mess. But it was all his fault. When he hit me I left him."

"He hit you?" Frank

Stockton, unreal and vague before, appeared suddenly in his mind's eye with a heavy ugly red face, like George Davis's face. His fist clenched painfully, the bruised flesh on the knuckles showing dark; looking down at it, he felt a surge of hysterical laughter catch in his throat. "With a club," he whispered. "I should have hit him with a club."

"What, darling?"

He shook his head and closed his eyes. "Why did he hit you?" he asked.

Some argument we were having. He had a nasty little mind, and he'd gone to

Cornell and could say things in a nasty eastern way. We fought all the time. After I left him he came whining to me that we could start over again. We'd both go to a psychoanalyst and start all over again. Understanding each other. He cried. The divorce was vile. I kept getting letters and telegrams from my mother, and my father wouldn't even talk to me. They all hate me," Con patted his knee. "I've had two hideously happy marriages, darling," she said. "But maybe the third time is a charm.

He stared. "Are you thinking about getting married?" He stopped himself from saying "again."

"Just thinking about it a little. Third time's a charm, isn't that right?" She smiled at him brightly. "I'd like you to meet him. Some time, Joe, you mustn't breathe a word to anybody."

"I won't." He pushed at
his glass distastefully again.
"Where shall we eat?" Con demanded. "At the Beachcomber's?"
"Anywhere."
"How about the Mocambo? Let's eat at the Mocambo and we can dance. Darling, you're awfully quiet. Don't be... Let's just have a marvelous time, shall we?"

He nodded. "Little bit tight."

Con laughed and patted his knee again. "We have to go to my apartment first."

Her apartment was in a new brick two-story building, just within the outskirts of Hollywood. From inside he could see his Packard drawn up at the curb, streaks of the fading light gleaming off the chrome trim and the radiator ornament. Con immediately adjusted the venetian blinds so the room turned dim; it was a small room, with a dinette opening off of it. A door with a heavy wrought-iron knob led to the bedroom. On the cocktail table there were an overloaded ashtray and two glasses, and in the bottom of one, cigarette butts floated.

"A hundred and twenty-five a month for this stinky thing," Con said. "Hollywood rents are just awful." She said it with pride. Standing with one hip cocked before the glowing backdrop of the venetian blind, she looked small and perfect, like a statuette. She seemed dangerously fragile, who in the light had looked so durable. She came toward him with one hand rising to clutch his shoulder. She kept her eyes open as she kissed him. Holding her, he almost lost his balance, and she laughed and pulled away. "I guess we got boracho, darling. Do you want to make yourself a drink? There's scotch in the kitchen. I can't stand it a minute longer without a shower."

She smiled at him over her shoulder as she pulled the door closed behind her. He sat down. A long low bookcase was stuffed solidly with fashion magazines, and on top of it were several issues of Hollywood Modes arranged in the shape of a fan. Everything had a too neat, unpossessed, unhived-in look, except for the two glasses and the ashtray, and an ugly, brown hole burned in the white shag rug at his feet; and they looked out of place, like smears of grease on a freshly

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Behind the closed door he heard the slap of slippers on bare floor; a door was pulled closed, he heard the shower beating. He sat slumped in his chair, staring at the black door knob. After a time Con came out. She wore blue Japanese slippers and a heavy loose white robe made of toweling. Her hair curled damply around the edges of her face, which looked very pallid without make-up. The robe had a high collar that was tied closed, and one of her hands clutched it together at the waist, the fingernails red as blood. She sat down beside him on the arm of the davenport, crossing her legs.

“Didn’t you make us a drink, darling?”

“You want one?”

“Don’t you?”

He shook his head. The shoulder of the robe brushed against his cheek. When he pulled her down to him her flesh felt cold and still slightly damp. Her stomach contracted under his hand, and he heard her suck in her breath. His hand encountered the soft sag of her breasts; he slid his hand up on to the base of her throat, then pressing, down again over her breasts and over her contracting belly. With a quick motion she turned over, her knee digging into his leg, and lay cool against him with her fingers digging fiercely into his back, the pressure of her breasts slowly hot against his chest, her hips thrust down hard, her mouth clenching at his mouth. It was like being completely enveloped in a frantic, seeking heat.

“Don’t talk!” she said harshly. Her mouth sought his again. When at least she released its pressure she sighed, a long, husky, shivering, frightened sound. She whispered, “When she said a Mr. Bailey from San Diego, I died. I died.”

The door to the living room stood ajar, and light entered the bedroom in a tall shaft across the dressing table with the big mirror and the two wings of mirrors. On the dressing table were more tall jars and squat jars and bottles and lipsticks and accessories than Joe had ever seen in one place outside of a drugstore. They were crowded around the photograph of the dark, balding, thick-lipped man who was Jack Meir, like fans around a matinee idol. The white robe lay crumpled on the rug; the whole room was a disorder of clothes and shoes dropped on the floor and piled on chairs, and overloaded ashtrays and several glasses, as though the clutter on the cocktail table in the living room had seeped out from here.

He could not help comparing it with the night in Washington with Polly, when he had awakened to the shock of seeing her clothes stuck so neatly. Some of this mess must be Jack Meir’s half the dirty glasses and half the cigarette butts, the half of Con’s bed he, Joe, was now occupying. The blue polka-dotted pajamas hanging on a hook in the closet must be Jack Meir. He was surprised that all he could feel was pity. From time to time he could hear the cars passing. It had rained briefly, and the tires made sticky, singing sounds, but other than that it was very still. He turned to look at Con. She was lying with her hands beneath her head, her eyes closed. Her lips were wan and swollen. The sheet was drawn up to
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there with you. Joe, where I'm important." She grasped his arm. "Please," she whispered. "Let's go down there and show them. Let's go down and show everybody, I'll wear my new suit. I'll look just marvelous in it. We'll go down and show —"

"Show who?" he whispered.

"Everybody! Show everybody in that stinky little town! Joe, please, please, please! Leave right now."

"Con —" He shook his head. He felt sick.

Her face changed, her fingernails cut into his arm. "Joe," she whispered, almost reprovingly, "you have to!"

iv  The clock in the driveway on Wilshire Boulevard where they stopped to get something to eat said 1:45. When they left he cut down Firestone, driving slowly to catch the lights. Con was huddled beside him on the seat, her legs drawn up and her black hair rumpled against his thigh; he looked down at her from time to time as he drove along Firestone and then Rosemead, passing steadily the truck-and-trailer with their red tail-lights and amber running lights and the big tankers with rat-tling, sparking drag-chains, and passed by the hopped-up, cut-down Fords and Mercury's with rocketing exhausts and youngsters necking in the front seats. Con was asleep. They were going to San Diego.

They were going to San Diego, and Polly had been betrayed. "Maybe she's dead," Con had said, but it was not Polly who was dead. It was Con Robinson. Con was dead in him, not even a person now but a series of withered symbols of a time and place. He was driving to San Diego with Connie Stockton, the two of them trapped together on the leather seat of the Packard, Con pitifully warped and crushed between that same lost time and the coveted future of the shiny black pain that had peeped and the cheap chrome, and he, Joe, the 30-year-old child who had come always back after the warm safety of a womb long dead and probably never existed, who, realizing it too late, coming in time with that reality in which he had to live too late, was now caught by the very realization, and by the responsibility and the pity.

When Con woke they were driving through Long Beach, past the tall dim shapes of the oil wells, the rack smell of oil, the steady, rocking clank-clank of the pumps. She sat up, rubbing her eyes with her fists. "Remember that night we almost skidded off the cliff?"

"Yes."

"Wanted that a marvelous night? And that time we waited there?" He'd seen you at the Hotel del? Let's go to the Hotel del when we're down there, Joe, oh, and that night at Del Monte — wasn't that wild! Were we crazy kids?" When she laughed he could hear the trembling with it. And after a long time she whispered, "Oh, Joe, I've been so damn unhappy!" He stared steadily ahead at the highway, "Joe, darling. Do you know what I'm talking about?"

"Have you been unhappy, Con?"

"Terribly," she whispered. "Always, oh, Joe, what am I good for? You told me that I was good once, do you remember?"

He remembered. "You are good, Con," he said, and she was quiet for a long time.

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**North County Reader, April 11, 2002 &**
"No," she said, and after another pause, "But maybe I was then. No, I guess I was awful. I was awful, but we had a good time, and we won't either of us ever forget any of it, will we? Because —" She stopped.

"Con," he said. "Con." He put his arm around her thin shoulders.

"Are you going to get a divorce?"

"I don't know."

"You can't just go on living apart, can you? Doesn't something have to happen?"

"I don't know what's going to happen."

"Sometimes there's just no way to happen. You're not really in love with her, are you?"

"Yes, Con."

"But, Joe, don't you love me?" He didn't know how to answer her. "You have to," she said petulantly. "You know you do. I know you do. Don't you?"

"I guess I always have in a way. But — but, Con —" He could neither lie to her nor tell her the truth.

She made a motion with her hand. "Since you were this high!" She murmured something he didn't hear and then said loudly, "We could go to Palm Springs after we go to San Diego. Oh, wouldn't we show them all? Wouldn't that be marvelous? Let's do that. Go to the same hotel."

She laughed shrilly. "Joe, tell me how you love me."

"Let's not talk about it now, Con."

"You said you'd always loved me." Her voice sounded very young again, very spoiled.

He didn't answer, and she was silent too, and after a time lay down once more with her head against his leg. She didn't sleep now; he could see her eyes open and glistening. Once she began to laugh the shrill, hysterical laugh, staring up at him.

In Laguna Beach she said she wanted to drive, and he stopped and they changed places. "How do you put this damn top down?" she demanded. He showed her, and the top performed its ghastly disappearance. "It's a nice car, darling. It's a marvelous car. What kind is it?"

"Packard," he said. "I thought I was going to have to sell it a couple of weeks ago."

She gave him a calm, curious look. She drove along the cliffs to Dana Point and along the straightaway between the cliffs and the ocean north of San Clemente. The air that rushed into the car was once faintly warm and faintly chill; the night was very dark, the moon a fuzzy spot through the clouds into the west, and once in a while he could see the frail white edge of the surf. He sat slumped far down in his seat to escape the wind. Con had put on a pair of severe horn-rimmed glasses.

"I came down with Jack to a party in Laguna Beach last month," she said suddenly. "That's the farthest south I've been. It's a marvelous drive, isn't it?"

"Yes," he said. The flapping of the top in its well behind them was like a distant pursuit.

"Darling, maybe your wife will divorce you. If she has any guts she certainly will, won't she?"

"I don't know." Con clung to the steering wheel with both hands, sitting forward almost against it. "Joe," she said, "did you know I would have married you that time in Yuma? You could have made me. Did you know that? I thought you probably did."

"Would you have?"

"Oh yes," she said huskily. "Oh, I don't know. I probably would just have been awful and you'd have divorced me and then I wouldn't even have you. But maybe —" She slowed down as they passed through San Clemente, then the speedometer climbed swiftly to shake between 70 and 75.

"What's your hurry, Buck?" Polly would have said, "I watched her go psycho," he said to Polly, when he had told her about Con that first time, and it seemed the most stupid and inadequate simplification he had ever made.

They dipped down past San Onofre. It was where he and Peter had always planned to go surfing; he turned his head to try to distinguish the words on the sign beside the tiny railroad depot, but it was too dark and Con was driving too fast. He closed his eyes.

He felt the car slowing. The top flapped and snapped in its well. He opened his eyes to see Con's hands stretching open wide, then tightening, in the steering wheel. "Do you know that I've never done a good thing in my life?" she said. "Not one. Nothing that was any good for anyone else, or for me. Joe, have you ever been to the dog races — that awful little farce that the dogs chase. Have you ever watched the dogs run?"

"No, Con."

"Yes, you have. She gave him a fleeing smile. "Joe, have you been happy?"

"Sometimes. Not very often, I guess."

"I've been so damn unhappy. Nothing's ever been any good. But — but she'll..."
divorce you. She has any guts she'll divorce you right away.”
He watched the speedometer needle swing upward again. Con’s voice took on the
hysterical edge. “We could do it just like the other time.
We’d pretend it was the other
time, and there hasn’t been anything in between. Not anything, Joe, wouldn’t it be
marvelous?” she cried. “Wouldn’t we be happy?”
She turned toward him. The
glasses gave her face a skull-
like look. “Darling, couldn’t we
be happy?”
“I don’t know, Con,” he
tried to say gently. “I don’t
know if you could be happy
with me. I don’t make very
much money, and we could
only live in a crummy little
house in San Diego somewhere. It would be awfully dull
for you.”
She stared at him a moment, then back at
the road. “I’ve never asked you
what you do.”
“I’m a dispatcher for
the Bayside Transit-Mix Con-
crete Company.”
She laughed. It was a
contumacious sound. Her
right hand curled into a small
fist and hit against the steer-
ing wheel. “Oh, damn it,” she
said. “Oh, damn it, hasn’t
there ever been any way?”
She let her fist against the
steering wheel. “Oh, damn,”
she whispered. “damn, damn,
damn, damn,” the word
sounding increasingly hol-
low and dull and lost, and
increasingly frightened.
“Damn, damn, damn,”
Con whispered, and his throat
swelled with pity. They were
coming into Oceanside now.
His eyes felt hot and raw as
he watched the neon signs.
The streets were wet here,
and the lights shone in blunted
soft streaks on the pavement.
From time to time Con’s fist
rose and hit gently against
the rim of the wheel. They
passed through Carlsbad and
came out along the ocean
again. The exhaust roared
sporadically, and the flapp-
ing, galloping, pursuive
sound of the top was louder
as they ran between the
high rows of eucalyptus trees
through Lecania, past dark-
ened motels and open-air
markets and glow-in-the-dark
fabric signs that adver-
tised flowers and avocados
and citrus fruits and pecans.
“Maybe it would be all
right,” Con said. “Oh, dar-
ing, I love you so much, and
maybe it would be all right.
And I’ve got money. Peter
left me almost $30,000. With
the insurance.” Her face swung
at him again, triangular and
deadly pale beneath the dark
circles of her glasses. Her
mouth looked black in the
darkness. “Darling,” she
whispered, “I’ve been hideously
vile. I have to tell you that.
But it wouldn’t matter. Noth-
ing would matter.” Her face
twisted and she sobbed, and
then she cried, “Nothing
would matter, would it?
Woulld it?”
She went on more and
more wildly. She was talk-
ing now as though Polly were
in the process of getting a
divorce, then as though they
were going to palm Springs
instead of San Diego, or as
though they were going to
Yuma. He made her stop the
car and put his arms around
her straining body, trying
awkwardly to comfort her,
and she quickly relaxed and
became lucid. He thought
she must be hysterically
tired, but she wouldn’t let him
drive. When they were mov-
ing again he closed his eyes,
and this trip with Con became
real, as though it were a part
of the distorted past with
those other trips, and mutu-
elly a part, too, of the old
screaming, failing, helpless
nightmare. He heard Con
say, “Encinitas!” as if she too
could not believe they were
on the highway to San Diego.
They passed through Solana
Beach, and as they dipped
down past the racetrack he
could see the beach gray with
the surf a phantom white
along the edge. “Del Mar,”
Con said. “Darling, what
time is it?”
“About four.”
“Let’s stop on top of Torrey Pines. Let’s watch the
sun come up. It shouldn’t be
long till sunrise, should it?”
“No, not long.”
“You could make love to
me, and we could watch the
sun come up. Make me
happy, Joe. Make it like it
used to be. Make—”
“I will, Con,” he
whispered.
“You can’t. I’ve been too
horrible! I’ve been too
awful. To Frank. And, oh, poor Peter! And
Jack’s so awful to me. And
Phil—” She moaned.
“Nothing can ever make all
of it not be so, Joe,” she
whispered, hunching over the

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"What, Con?"

"Joe, I was going to have a baby once. Did you know that? It might have been yours. There was no way of knowing, but it might have been yours. Do you wish you knew if it was?"

He stared at her.

"I don't think it was," she whispered. "But it could have been. I aborted it. In Washington." She gave him a wild triumphant glance as the car raced between the dark buildings of Del Mar.

"Don't you wish you knew whose it was?"

He closed his hot eyes, wondering sickly if she meant, or even knew, what she was saying.

"No!" she cried. "I was lying. It's not so. Oh, God, what have I got to be? That I'd say that to you!" The car slowed again. "It's so funny," Con said, suddenly calm. "I can sit here as though I were sitting there where you are and watch myself. It's like watching a box full of dishes and glasses or something that keeps tilting and almost falling. It tips — way over — but then it doesn't quite fall. But someday it's going to fall and all the dishes will break and then they'll put me some place and give me shock treatment or cut pieces out of my brain or whatever it is they do. Or maybe the dishes just break one by one."

He didn't know what to say. "We'll stop up on top of Torrey Pines, Con," he said. "You must be awfully tired."

"Awfully tired. I'm so tired of running and running — after it. And there's no way —" The car spurted forward faster. Con's voice was muffled when she spoke again. "Joe, darling," she said, "Darling, darling, please stay with me."

"I will," he said. He said it sincerely, because he could feel the obligation like a hand on his shoulder as they started down the grade below Del Mar, toward the overpass and the short straightaway bordered by a stretch of gray beach, at the other end of which the cliffs of Torrey Pines lurked in the darkness. As they approached the sign that marked the city limits, down-rushing faster and faster, he thought Con was singing. It was a high minor sound, almost pleasing at first. She had a hypnotized, cataleptic look; her mouth was open, and she staredfixedly ahead, making the keening sound more loudly as they rushed at 75 miles an hour down the overpass, past the San Diego city-limits sign.

He saw her brace her hands on the wheel, and she did not turn it as they came down along the beach, where the highway curved. There was a bump as the right front tire went off the pavement.

He didn't move. It was no paralysis that held him, but a relaxation, an acceptance. All right, he thought, all right. So it all added up to this, he thought, and this was the end of it, this was what Con wanted. "All right, Con," he whispered, but not to her, straightening and stiffening a little, despite himself, when he heard her terrified moan. Then the back tire went off the pavement, and he lunged for the steering wheel.

It tore through his hand. He was flung against Con as the car swung, fighting to control the wheel from which she had raised her hands. The rear end yawed, and he was flung away from her. The lights sprayed across the road and over the beach and the phosphorescent edge of the surf and still farther out on the black tip of the ocean...

The car was spinning; he was thrown forward against the dashboard and then back against the seat. Con screamed "Joe! Joe!" and in a great, relentless upheaval he felt the seat drop away from under him. Something smashed into his face, and he felt himself hurrying through the air. He struck suddenly on his side with a vast dull pain and a crushing sliding that turned into a black blanket thrown over his head with only the last long screaming of his name as a grip on consciousness.

As the world circled down on him he clung to that scream, and to the long, spaced exhalation of the surf, which was the only real sound now. The asphalt surface on which he lay was rough and cool, and as his eyes cleared he saw that he was lying exactly in the middle of the highway, which stretched emptily out ahead of him in the night, dimming, still within his vision, toward Torrey Pines and eventually to San Diego. He managed to sit up, feeling the gritty surface beneath his stinging hands, singling out the pains now,
and there were sharp pains in his arm and leg, as, pressing down on his hands, he got to his knees and staggered forward to his feet. He tried to walk, and he could walk; he began to run. He ran first in a circle, then zigzagging from one side of the road to the other, each step jolting dully and grating his ribs. Then he saw the silhouette of the Packard, the four wheels in the air. It was lying on the jagged boulders on the shoulder of the road. He ran down to it. One of the front wheels was still spinning.

"Con!" He tried to bend down to where the top of her door was, but it was crushed among the rocks and he could not reach it. Stumbling and slipping, he made his way around to the other side and thrust his arm under; he could touch nothing. He wrenched at the door handle. It came off in his hand. He caught the under edge of the door with his two hands, pulling at it and trying to lift the car. Panting, he retreated a few yards and charged. He hit the side of the car with his shoulder, crying out with the pain, but grabbing, with his momentum, at the under-edge and trying to wrench it up, and screaming again, not with the pain or the effort itself, but with the futile.

He backed away to charge for the third time when he saw headlights weaving down the Torrey Pines grade. He scrambled up the rocks and onto the highway. The car was off the grade and coming toward him along the level stretch; he stood there waving his arms and shouting hoarsely into the blinding, fuzzy-edged glares of the two enlarging circles of light. He was still shouting as the lights veered to one side and rushed past into blinding darkness, to become two red tail-lights rapidly diminishing. He staggered a step after them. He screamed curses after them, screaming anything that came into his mind and finally screaming over and over the combination of obscenities that tore painfully at his aching mouth and lip with their articulation, screaming until the taillights had long been out of sight.

When he limped back to where the Packard lay, the wheel had stopped spinning. He stood beside the car, helplessly working his hands. He rushed at it again, crashing against the metal of the door that gave only slightly beneath his weight, sliding and falling heavily. But he backed off and charged once more, hitting the door and trying to lift, and screaming or grunting or only gasping for breath, again and again, finally merely charging at the car and hitting it with his shoulder and backing off, panting, the blood and spit dripping from his mouth, to charge again.

But it was like trying to push over the burst of the shell in the well of the tractor off the beach at Iwo, or the burning gutted tank, or the bombed battleship, or the flaming disintegration of the plane crash. It was like trying to push over the agony of the poisoned death in the county hospital, the slow and battered bleeding to death on the grass, the struggling drowning in the Pacific with the speedboat given full speed and headed away, even the narcotically eased slipping away on the bed at home with the children and grandchildren at hand; it was like trying to negate the very fact of dying itself, the whole intricately and gradually constructed coffin that began building not at the moment of birth but of conception. This was death, and Con was dead. This was the predetermined defeat, if it was a defeat; this was the universal insecurity; this was the macrocosmic nothingness resisting carelessly the force of his shoulder and the tearing of his hands, immovable and unchanged, however great and dogged the effort, whatever the courage or intelligence or power opposing it. The sum of the insecurity and defeat and nothingness he had felt all his life; he felt no longer any fear of it, no despair of it, as he continued to fling himself manically against the side of the car, seeing himself even now, as he had always had the detached vision of himself, engaged in an idiotic and already defeated fury, struggling against what, since the beginning of time and mortality, had never been anything.
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old to him, and accustomed. He could remember his father standing beside the bed, and a man in uniform who must have been a state trooper, with a red notebook. He remembered asking the trooper if it had been instantly. The trooper had not understood at first because he had been able to neither speak distinctly nor ask the question directly, but finally the trooper had nodded and said yes, instantly. Tears leaked from his eyes now, and he remembered them then, pain too, and he remembered his father’s voice saying, “Now, son,” his father’s hand touching his good shoulder, his father clearing his throat, “Now, son,” he remembered trying to explain in the blurring, strange, garbled words he could not control, and his father gently touching his shoulder and nodding and saying, “You shouldn’t try to talk, son, with that lip.”

The nurse came in on rubber-soled shoes. He was surprised that he knew this to be another penicillin shot, that he should know to turn over on his side. He felt the sudden cold spot where the nurse touched his buttock with cotton dampened in alcohol. He hardly felt the needle. He heard the rasp as his father struck a match, and thought of the other time his father had sat there in the hospital with him, and of his father sitting here with his mother, and with his Uncle Dick.

Out the window it was a dull gray day. Sudden clouds hung over Mission Valley and the mesa. Cars looked very tiny along the valley road, enlarging slightly as they came up the canyon below the bluff, where the hospital was. The nurse plumped the pillows under his head, then silently left the room. When he leaned back his father was standing beside the bed. His eyes looked very deep-set, the flesh beneath them dark and wrinkled.

“Hurt?” his father asked. Joe shook his head. When he spoke his voice still sounded unfamiliar. “Would you call Charlie Brooks and ask him to come see me?”

“He’s been here,” his father said. “He’ll be back. He said he’d be back tonight.” He nodded. “And I’d like to see Hick,”

“Son, what am I to do about Polly?” his father asked, gazing down at him steadily. “Am I to call Polly?”

He looked into his father’s eyes. He saw his father frown, and he realized he was very slowly shaking his head. “No,” he said. “I’ll have to do it myself. Maybe they’d let me get up tomorrow long enough to call her.” He shook his head gently again and closed his eyes.

“You’d better not talk any more now, then,” his father said. “With that mouth. I’ll be back tonight. Better try to get some sleep now, son.”

But he did not sleep. He lay watching the clouds sinking over the mesa, the day darkening toward night. At dinnertime the nurse brought him some clear consommé and a bent glass straw, and he sucked up the soup avidly. When he looked out the window again it was completely dark and rain was falling. The inside of his mouth felt hot and thick from the warm soup, and he lay touching the bandages over this lip and watching the blurred design of the raindrops blown against the glass and wriggling down along the pane. On the valley road headlights crawled slowly through the darkness, like a procession of torches.

Above the gentle sound of the rain the elevator was whirring. He heard the whirring cease, the elevator doors trundled open, the bump and squeak of something on wheels emerging, then the clatter of heels. It was a sharp decisive sound. It was a sound he would have known anywhere, and his heart swelled and beat with

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heavy blows against the base of his throat. He felt a quick fur-
rous resentment against his father, but he thought,
no, his father would not have called her without telling
him. Nor had there been enough time for his father to
call and for her to get down here, more than 500 miles.
He turned his head, and, cupping his hand over his
lip and staring at the bare tiled section of hallway visible
through the open door, listening to the rapid approach
of Polly's footsteps.
She came into the door-
way, stopping, till there, with a
black purse slung over her
shoulder, wearing a light-
colored coat with dark drops
of rain on her shoulders, her
hair damp and hanging
limply and the rim of her ears
showing through the dark
hair. Her mouth was set a
little to one side, as though
she were biting down hard,
and her lipstick seemed
to have been put on in a hurry.
She came a little way into
the room.
"You came down," he
said.
"I've been down here
since noon, looking for you," Polly
said. "I finally got a
hold of your father about
5:00, and he told me you
were here. I've been
downstairs for two hours. They
wouldn't let me up till vis-
iting hours. Those damn
nuns. They never had a hus-
tand." Her eyes evaded his.
Her fingers fumbled at
the front of her coat, unbut-
toning it. "It looks like they
hacked you up a little, Buster," she
said shakily. "Are you
going to be a basket case?"
"You didn't know I
was —"
Polly shook her head,
looking at him levelly. He
could not meet her eyes.
There were creases in the
lap of her black suit skirt, and her
suede shoes were rain-spo-
ted. "Well, my poor old father
has a nifty hook on the eye," she
said, her voice shaking
again. "But look at the other
guy. Joe, I am a little con-
cerned, you know. I can't
tell under those covers. Have
you got all your arms and
legs and things? Are you all
right?"
He could only nod. He
felt a drop of saliva spilt out
of the corner of his mouth.
He wiped it away; he was
trembling. He had to tell
her now.
"Well, disobey orders to
come," Polly said, her voice
held forced and hard. "I guess
you can figure that out. This's
the second time. To join the
Waves and to join you. Only
this is for — "She stopped and
took a quick step toward him.
"Joe?" she whispered.
"You're crying!"

His lip pained him sud-
denly, fiercely, as he spoke.
"Polly — Polly, Com was with me
and she's dead."
"I've already been
informed of that," Polly said.
She said it impatiently, as
though interrupting a joke
she had heard before, but her
cheeks turned hectically red.
Maybe it was better that his father had told her, he thought. Although he had not wanted to let off anything. But what if she had turned around and gone back?

"I wasn't going to let that stop me," she interrupted, as if she had known what he was thinking. "See, when Daddy got back with that eye, from what he said I knew I'd better get down here and — well, we had a bit of an old what-how when I left. So I couldn't just go back again, could I? But — oh, it seems so terrible to be jealous of a dead person — but, Joe, how long had this been going on?"

He shook his head. "She was in Los Angeles. I hadn't seen her. I went up there after I hit your father."

"You were hell on the Davises that day, weren't you?" Polly said coldly, but she moved a little closer to his bed. "Joe, just tell me one thing —"

"Wait," he said. "This first, Polly, when I was up there I had to realize how much of her life I'd been, and how much her life must have gone wrong because of me. My accountability."

He stopped and cupped his hand for a moment over the bandage on his thumbing lip. "So that when I saw she was going to turn the car over, for a split second I thought I'd go with her. Because that was what she wanted. But I did grab the wheel, I did try to stop it, and you have to see that I'm back now. I'm really back —"

He stopped, seeing the shocked awe and pity on Polly's face, the pity for Con, and then the look of horror that was for him and herself. She whispered, "She did it on purpose!"

She stared at him as he nodded, her face white now. She ran her hand across her eyes. "I never knew," she whispered. "I never knew when you told me about her it was so — so — oh, Joe, I don't know what to —" She turned her head from side to side with a trapped motion. "Oh, I should have come before!"

He reached for her hand, but she retreated a step. "You have to tell me the truth, because —"

"Yes," he said, and drew a deep, shaking breath. "I'm not really sure you're here now."

Her face twisted into a grimace. "Did you think I'd rush right off to Reno?" she demanded in the hard voice. "Did you ever get to know me? Oh, Joe, damn it," she said, and the voice broke.

"Let's not talk about it now. Let's try to forget about Con and my father and everything. Just so you're sure you want me."

She let him take her hand then. He gripped it so tightly that she flinched, staring up into her eyes until she bent her head and thrust her wet face hard into his shoulder. And, as he gazed through blurred eyes at her damp dark hair parted to show the pale round of her neck, that she should have come back to him, that she could be here, strained against him, that it could be her warm uneven breath against his throat, seemed a marvel to shake the world.

Book Six: Polly
Chapter 24

Polly didn't like the smell of hospitals. She didn't like the feeling of the cold tile
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Anthony Romero, M.D., FACS, is certified by the Mexican Board of Plastic/Reconstructive Surgery.
just let it alone? She thought again how close she had come to being not just a divorcée, but a widow, by staying up there in the Bay Area being mad at herself and Daddy and Joe all at the same time, coddling her ego and her hurt feelings or whatever, when she should have been down here and maybe none of this would have happened.

Joe was watching her with an interested but slightly inward-turned expression in his eyes, which she recognized as meaning that she had blundered around and somehow plunged in a circuit she had no means of identifying. The look had always made her feel shut out and separate from him, but now his eyes came back quickly, and he put his hand down on her knee. Square and athletic looking, his hand looked as though it had worked and could work, and she thought of her own decisions and resolutions made before she had come down here, which she had not had the courage to present. The ranch — she blew her breath out in a low, scared whistle, thinking that it must be brought up soon — today — and that if she had ever gone hiking around on eggs with Joe, this time would be the most heavy-footed.

"Do you want to take a drive through Mission Hills?" Joe asked. He patted her knee once more. "Let's go," he said. "Turn right at the stop light." She turned at the light.

Jo seemed very casual as he told her how to go, watching straight ahead or out his window with his hand rising to touch the bristly mustache from time to time. "This is Fort Stockton Drive," he said finally. "There used to be streetcar tracks along here."

"Oh," she could see where the tracks had been taken up; the pavement was patched with parallel bands of newer asphalt. There were yellow bus-stop markers on the corners of the street, which was arched over with pepper trees, palms, and eucalyptus. They passed a big yellow bus slowing to a stop. A dog ran out and barked furiously at the rear tire of the station wagon.

She looked around her at Mission Hills, trying to connect it with all the things Joe had told her about it. It seemed a pleasant residential neighborhood, but she had pictured it more well-to-do. The houses were almost all of stucco, with red tile or shingled roofs and narrow, neatly clipped lawns. Some of them were quite large, stolid, and middle-aged but deprived of dignity by the frequent high-pronged television aerials.

"There's the Gormans' house," Joe said.

"Peter!" she asked, and he nodded. "The one with the playpen in the yard?" she asked.

Joe nodded again. "Turn here," he said, and told her to turn once more where
"Dana Street" was stenciled on the corner curbing.

"There don't seem to be any kids around," she said.
"I suppose they're all in school now, but I haven't even seen any trikes or..."

"They've all grown up," Joe sat up straighter as she guided the car down Dana Street. "There's where we lived," he said.

Her foot rose to the brake. The house was set up off the street, white stucco, with a steep lawn and red steps curving up the lawn. The house where Joe had been a little boy; she felt a sentimental surge of emotion toward it as she tried to penetrate those white walls and 20 years to see Joe in it then, and his father and mother, and his friends, and Con.

And she tried to understand what was going on in Joe himself now, what this drive was for, whether he was trying to prove or disprove something to himself. She knew he was not merely revisiting. "Isn't it a nice house?" she exclaimed. "I think it's—"

She stopped and gestured helplessly as he turned toward her with a broad, gap-toothed grin. Then his lips stiffened down to cover the gap, and he said in an amused voice, "Is this Polly Bailey talking? Is it so hard to know what to say, Polly? Are you so afraid of hurting my feelings?"

"Well, it is a nice house!"

His face reddened, but it still showed the last traces of the mocking smile, which she realized was not directed at her. "They've kept it up so well," she continued.

"I kept it up so well," Joe said. "Pure power of imagination." Without looking back he jerked his thumb over his shoulder. "Used to be the biggest plate-glass window in Mission Hills," he said, taking out a pack of cigarettes and putting one between his lips. "Turn left on Balboa Drive," he said, punching in the dashboard lighter.

As she swung the wheel she glanced around at the house. The drapes were drawn shut over the window, which was very large and must show a fine view over the edge of the hill and the flatland below it, and even part of the bay. High, broad, rounded at the top, the window looked like a prosenium arch with the curtain drawn and the

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actors all gone home. She almost blurted out the simile, but still unsure of Joe's mood and purpose she said instead, "It really is a big window, isn't it? Did it ever get broken?"

"Broken?" Joe said, frowning at her. "No—not that I know of. Why?"

"I was just remembering when Daddy was building our house. They'd just put in those windows on the terrace, and Barty and I were—"

She stopped to watch Joe take out the lighter and hold it to the end of his cigarette. Then he examined the lighter and touched its coil with his finger. He put it back into its hole in the dashboard, flipped the unlit cigarette out the window, and looked at her expectantly.

But she did not go on. It had come to her very vividly. Barty pretending he was a knight and chasing her with a board for a lance—and crying in her room afterward because it was so unjust that the broken window had been made her fault. She had not understood then. But she had understood last week, and she hadn't cried when he had shouted after her coarsely, "Crawl back to him, you bitch, you little bitch!" No one else had ever called her a bitch; only Daddy. She thought of Joe hitting him and felt at once the sickening flow of adrenaline in her veins, the tickling of hysterical laughter forced down, and the shrinking—as though her own flesh were receiving the blow.

"It's been so funny all this week," she said, guiding the car slowly down the street, which was a dead end. "It's like we were out in a fog somewhere, looking for each other. And we can hear each other shouting but we can't make out what the other one says or where..."

"I know. But I know what you're thinking now, Polly. Go ahead."

"Thanks." She swallowed hard. "Well, we have to make a trip back up there to try and make peace. Would you do that for me? It means an awful lot. I'll be able to cope with it all a lot better now, but if you can help—"

"I'll do anything I can. Sixty percent, Polly."

"Well, it may take more than that. But maybe if we can be adult about it, he'll be able to treat us as adults. Oh, I don't know, but we have to try."

"Sure," he said gently. He touched her hand, and she gripped his hand very tightly for a moment, bracing to a stop at the dead end, where there was a heavy wire fence.

"This is where we get out and talk," Joe said.

"It's about Con, isn't it?" she said. "Joe, you don't have to tell me any more. Really."

"I have to get something intelligible across in this fog. Try, anyway."

"But she's dead. So
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head slightly. "You mean he did it on purpose?"

"I don't know. Maybe it wasn't a tramp at all. But I got all tied up in it. Because a tramp would have come from Old Town."—he waved a hand out toward the slums below the hill — "and this was Mission Hills. But then there was the other tramp," he said after a pause. "Or the same one. He was real."

She watched him cup his hand over his mouth again. His eyes squinted up at the sun. She drew on her cigarette; she couldn't taste the smoke in the wind. When Joe did not continue she said, "I don't remember ever seeing any tramps."

He looked at her unbelievingly. "During the Depression?"

"Well, we were — you know. Oh, I guess I did too. The Okies that came to pick peaches on the ranch — I guess they did call them fruit tramps."

Joe turned back toward the canyon. She saw the self-mocking smile twitching at his mouth again. Then his face grew grave. "Well, I can't say this to Con," he said. "And as an apology it's stupid and inadequate and too late. But it concerns you," he said. "See, this is Mission Hills. You've seen it now and maybe it's not so much, but to me once it was the most wonderful world possible. And, when I was yanked out of it, 50 times more wonderful. It got to mean all the values I thought were true and good and enduring. And Con seemed like the spirit of it. "Maybe I never really did look at her as a person," he said, brushing his hand back over his hair. "So much of the time she was a symbol of what I wanted back. And in a way it worked the same with her. This tramp," he said and cleared his throat. "Con and I were down in the fort, and the tramp caught us there and tried to — to submit her to a fate worse than death," His attempt at lightness failed; he abandoned it. "But I knocked him out," he said tightly. "With a club. A piece of chair."

She sat very erect, feeling jealousy twisting and probing in her. She didn't look at Joe as she said. "And that was the start of the pattern we could never get free of. See, a tramp from Old Town coming up to Mission Hills to attack Con. And I saved her. Do you see, Polly?"

"Yes," she said, immediately ashamed that her voice had sounded so cold. She gazed down at Old Town at the foot of the canyon. But she could think only of Con and Joe. If Con had been merely a symbol, she had been a very fleshy one. There was no solace for her jealousy in thinking of Joe lust- ing after a symbol as she was afraid he had never lusted after his wife; Joe always wanted the symbol back as she was afraid he had never wanted her back, his wife; Joe going to bed with his symbol and using their love devices for the compounding of pleasure that had been developed and made so precious over the years of their marriage.

"You said that first time you came to the hospital that it was terrible to be jealous of a dead person," Joe said in a dull voice. "It's more terrible to have to be glad she's dead. You see? It's hard for me to think of her as a person even now."

That sounded very cruel, but she knew Joe was not cruel. Tears burned her eyes, for Con, who was dead.

"I've been trying to work this pattern out in my mind," he went on. "It was like a monster piece of stamping machinery that stamped everything I did or tried to do or wanted into the same shape. And Con too. When I went away to Cal and she couldn't go away to college, I guess she thought I had everything she wanted and couldn't have. But not just back, that was the difference."
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She wanted something else, and I wanted something back. Even the gravel pit—it was all stamped out on the same machine."

He had both his hands extended, as though holding something between them. He tossed it up and away. "Then smash. It broke and I'm——"

"No," she said. "You're not." His face jerked toward her. "You were going to say free, weren't you?" she said. "You're not." She shook her head. "You're married to me. Do you want to stay married to me?"

"You know that." He sounded angry too, and puzzled. "You know I do. What are you——"

"Listen!" she said. Now it was her turn to shout through the fog, and she knew how important it was that contact be made and the fog blown away; she must shout and clearly, and if he didn't hear... "Listen, Joe, my husband, my love, my darling," she said rapidly, intensely. "I've got all these things to say, and you must understand too. And agreements you have to agree to. You can't be married to me and be free. I don't think you could be anyway. I think by being free now you mean free of all the middle-class—oh—fetters or something. Don't you?"

He just looked at her steadily; she could tell nothing from his face. "I was a kind of symbol to you when you married me," she went on. "Wasn't I? I know I was. Pretty much like Con too. And remember the letter you wrote me about the gravel pit?"

"All right," Joe said. "The gravel pit meant those things too. Like new cars—Packards, and I don't mean that as a dig. And living in a nice house in a nice neighborhood and sending your kids to a college you'd be proud of and having them in fraternities you'd be proud of."

She saw the corners of his lips twist, his face reddened again. His eyes looked suddenly hot and hurt, very shaken, and yet, at the same time, she saw in them a respect for her that was the most precious tribute she had ever been given. "Bah," he said weakly, but her heart beat high and hard with hope as he said it.

She reached out to grip
his arm, tears springing to her eyes again at the necessity of knocking him down and stamping on him like this. "Don't kid yourself," she said. "Oh, can't you see it, darling? You are caught, and I want you to be because I love you so, and I can't help being selfish about it. I want to stay married to you and go on loving you and you loving me and having a good time with me and even fighting a little just so it's never serious again until we're 106 years old when we both die peacefully at exactly the same moment."

She stopped, panting a little, staring pleadingly into his eyes. "You have to see" she said. "We're all caught. Maybe somewhere along the line our children's children's children won't be, but we are. And — and — oh, you know that terrible joke: if rape is inevitable, relax and enjoy it?"

Joe had bent his head. Daubing at her eyes, she watched him scrape up a handful of dirt and let it trickle to the ground again. "Agreements, you said awhile ago," he said. "What agreements, Polly?"

"I want kids."

"Okay! And?"

And that about Daddy. I want to live down here, and things — up there — aren't ever going to be the same as they were. But we have to —"

"I've already promised that."

"And — I want to talk about the gravel pit."

His eyes turning toward her slowly, looked cold and wary. "What about it?"

"I think we should do it."

"We can't do it. I don't have any capital. I've used my capital all up, thank God. I don't think I'm kidding myself about that."

"Oh, symbols, damn it, Joe, let's face facts."

"The fact remains."

"Joe —" she said and stopped. She picked up a small pebble and flipped it angrily away. "Joe," she started again. "There's the ranch. Daddy says it ought to be worth about $500 an acre. That's $15,000. I think we ought to use it as collateral for a loan on the gravel pit. Or we could mortgage it."

Joe looked down at his hand, running a finger reflectively over the knuckles of his right fist. "The ranch your father gave us that we never thanked him for."

"Joe, come off it! This is Polly Bailey talking. It's our ranch and to hell with where it came from. I think we ought to use it toward the gravel pit. Just so you're sure — just so you're pretty sure you can make a go of it. Because later we ought to have the income to get the kids through college and..."

"What if there's a Depression? In '59, or '69? What if —"

"Oh, how could any- body help us? You know I wouldn't ever blame you. As long you did your damnedest."

He raised his eyes on the metallic sky. The skin was stretched tight across his face, and she could see the lean muscles along his jaw. With a stiff movement he rocked forward, then back, as though the adhesive tape were a mechanical brace, and suddenly she realized that in her anxiety for this, her sureness that this had to be the way for them, she had almost forgotten him whom she loved so very much as a person, for all his quirks and faults.

"Oh, I'm doing this all wrong!" she cried. "Oh, Joe, do I seem like a horribly pushy wife?"

"It's not that," he said, and his voice was surprisingly calm, "I was just thinking of relaxing and enjoying it. It's not as easy as all that, Polly."

"Oh, I know! But accept it. Don't you have to accept it? Even if you don't want to do this for yourself, don't you have a responsibility to the others? There's Hickey, isn't there? And if you feel the way you've always said, I'd think you'd want to do it for the people who'll be working for you. She took a long, shaking breath and said defiantly, "I'd think you'd want to do it for me!"

He didn't reply for a long time. Then he said, "Col- lateral," half aloud, staring down at the aircraft plant, whose windows shone watery red now in the sun. He seemed to be listening. She heard the sound too, heavy distant scuffling, the keening of steel wheels on rails. It looked like a toy train, the toy engine slowly pushing a string of cars into a black opening at one end of the building. "Listen to the machinery," Joe said. And then he said, "Alright, Polly."

In the silence then, with only the faint sound of the freight engine and the dry rustle of the wind in the canyons, she thought suddenly of the big clock in her schoolroom at grammar school. Just before the hour the clock had always seemed to stop, the long hand hesitating at a minute before the hour, while they all turned to stare at it in this same stillness. Until it clicked straight up, and they could all jump to their feet and leave the room.

She jumped to her feet. Joe doubled one foot back, leaned to one side, struggled to boost himself up. His face went white with the effort, and she stood there, breathless and terrified, yet aware that she must make no move to help him, watching his strained white face and the beads of sweat appearing on his forehead, hearing his harsh breathing and his foot scuffling for another hold, feeling the sudden sympathetic pain in her own ribs for his poor broken, healing ribs. And then he was up.

He stood panting and mopping at his forehead with his sleeve. She grasped his arms and pressed herself against him. She did not try to kiss him, knowing it embarrassed him because of his teeth, but she knew that a terrible moment was over for both of them.

With their arms around each other they started back to the car. "What's the first step?" Joe asked. "Deciding whether we want a boy or a girl?"

"Boy," she said. "I want a boy nine months from tonight and after a short labor."

"Okay," he said. Grinning broadly, with the dark gap showing beneath the dark stubbly mustache, leaner than he had remembered him, in need of a haircut, his face seemed subtly changed, strangely harder, in something lost and something gained, so that she felt frightened, yet proud and sure. He held his arm hard around her, looking back at the canyon once before opening the car door and helping her in. He went around and
painfully slid in behind the wheel himself.

He drove neither rapidly nor slowly along Balboa Drive, past the stucco house in which the boy, Joe, had lived, and on up Balboa to an intersection where a two-story, out-of-place, English-looking house stood, steering the car to the right there and swooping up the hill and around a block so as to go past the house with the playpen in the yard on Fort Stockton Drive, where he raised his hand in a solemn gesture that might have been acknowledged, or farewell.

He drove more swiftly along Fort Stockton Drive, and she could see him staring intently into the rearview mirror. She looked back too, thinking of Lot's wife and laughing nervously to herself, and then understanding Joe's gaze as she saw behind them the street, the trees that hung over, the stucco houses and neat lawns and telephone poles and television antennas melting back, converging in the distance left behind, compelling again finally, fading. She leaned against Joe and sobbed gently while he drove on under the trees and over the splashes of light and shade they made on the street.

"Where shall we live, Joe?" she whispered. "Do you want to live here?"

"Not especially." He raised his arm and put it around her. She pressed closer to him for warmth, chilling and awed at a sudden vision of her vast weakness and her vast power. She must not look back again though; her duty — deliverance or betrayal, whichever it was—done in her most solemn conscience, she must not question it.

"I guess we ought to look for a place nearer the gravel pit," Joe said. "So it won't take me so long to get home at night."

"With gravel in your ears?" she said. She tried to laugh; instead she sobbed aloud. "Boo hoo," she said loudly. "Darn it!" She got out her handkerchief and blotted at her eyes. After a time she asked, "Are we out of Mission Hills yet?"

"I don't know," Joe said. "There isn't any boundary. It's just a name for a part of town."

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LETTERS

continued from page 1

Reader Needs Help
You all need a proofreader badly. I'll give you a couple of examples from the April 4 issue. Your story "Thieves Grab Green Gold" ("City Lights") just comes to a screeching halt with no explanation at the bottom of page 14. The last few lines: "And the DA" — you don't start a sentence with and, by the way — is "is willing to go after them and convict them." Paul Pfingst has assigned deputy DAs to prosecute agricultural.

That's the bottom of the page; there's nothing more. If I turn to page 15, nothing; 16, nothing; 17, nothing. 18 is "Straight from the Hip," Matthew Alice. So in other words, somebody lost the end of the article, and a proofreader would have noticed that, said, "What the hell's going on?"

Okay, here's a second example. Page 197, "Best Buys" by Eve Kelly, second column, last paragraph: "We have the instant-lather machine, which is nicer to work with than the mug and brush. I still have a mug and brush. A hundred years ago, the barbershops would have a mug for each customer, their own personal mug."

"Well, I've got news for you, it should be his own personal mug, that's grammatically correct, not their. Also, a hundred years ago all the customers naturally were men. Did you ever hear of women going into a barbershop to have a shave and a woman having her own personal mug? So it should have been "his own personal mug." A proofreader would have caught that also. And I could give you a few other examples, but I'm sure your answering machine would cut me off before I could finish, so let those two be illustrative. You need a proofreader.

I'll tell you something else you do badly in the Reader from time to time, is breaking words at the end of a line. In other words, your hyphenation sucks. And don't rely on some computer spell checker. You need to use a dictionary.

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North County Reader April 11, 2002
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Calendar

Water Grab
Will San Diego Destroy Imperial Valley?

Water for the city is taken from the country. That's how the biggest potential water transfer of its kind in U.S. history would work. The agreement would provide up to 200,000 acre-feet of water annually to San Diego County. An acre-foot is enough water to flood an acre of land to a depth of one foot. Each of these acre-feet would come as the result of conservation efforts by the farmers of Imperial Valley.

It sounds unfair, but what they save, we get to use.

Before the transfer can begin, however, both the San Diego County Water Authority and the Imperial Irrigation District must review and assess its environmental impact.

David Hogan of the Center for Biological Diversity says the transfer will cause significant harm to the Salton Sea and preclude the likelihood of its long-term restoration.

What does the transfer have to do with the continuing poor health of the state's largest lake? "The water that the farmers save means less irrigation runoff, which is the Salton Sea's only source of replenishment," Hogan says, although he sees this measure as a compromise. "To environmentalists it would be a fairly good deal because a certain amount of water would still flow to the Salton Sea."

The transfer is a central component of the California 4-1 Plan. The plan was a promise made by the state to reduce the amount of water it takes from the Colorado River. Regular use is 5.2 million acre-feet, even though the state is legally entitled to only 4.4 million. The Colorado River Water Use Plan will allow California to continue to receive surplus water over the next 15 years while the state implements programs that will help it reduce its dependence on the river.

For the 200,000 acre-feet of the transfer, that isn't "new" water, Strand points out. "We're just moving an existing source to a place where it can be used more beneficially." But are those uses truly beneficial — and if so, beneficial to whom? Strand will ask these questions when she moderates Tuesday's panel discussion, which is part of a monthlong series on San Diego's major water source, the Colorado River.

"The transfer will bring a much more assured water supply to San Diego," says Hogan, one of the six panelists. "That means development, which wouldn't have been able to occur otherwise, because state law prohibits building where there isn't an adequate water supply. But San Diego doesn't need this water to facilitate reasonable new economic growth, because conservation is the key."

The "key" for Stuart Huribert, a board member of Californians for Population Stabilization, is something he says nobody likes to talk about: preventing overpopulation. A panelist later in the series, Huribert says he will be sure to bring up the high fertility rates of immigrants.

"I got notorious for being outspoken a few years ago, when I was invited to give talks on our Salton Sea research," the SDSU biology professor says. "I'd talk about algae for five minutes, fish for five minutes, and population growth and immigration for the rest of the time. I could hear people whispering, 'Let's not invite him again.' But I'll always bring up population. While ecologists like myself are perfectly happy studying environmental degradation and pretending to offer long-term solutions, we do understand the big picture, even though many of us are reluctant to speak out. But if we fund an engineering project to fix the sea, we're making a mistake as taxpayers. Fifty years from now — I'm sorry: we need the water from the Imperial Valley."

— Jeanne Schinto

Panel Discussions:
Moving Waters: The Colorado River & The West
Tuesday, April 16: "The Story of the Imperial Valley-San Diego Water Transfer"
Tuesday, April 23: "Dreams of a Big City: Water Politics and San Diego County Growth"
Wednesday, April 24: "What will be the Fate of the Salton Sea?"
6:30-8:00 p.m.
San Diego Public Library
820 E Street, downtown
Free
Info: 619-236-5800 or www.movingwaters.org
OUTDOORS

The Tall Locust Trees planted years ago along Julian’s Poway Street are once again brightening this back country (and former Gold Rush) town with blossoms of white, pink, and lavender. Introduced into the West by 19th-century emigrants, locust trees have become almost a trademark of California’s coastal country, from the Mother Lode south to Julian.

The Black Oak, San Diego County’s largest oak species, is sending out new leaves this month, painting the mountain slopes with shades of red, brown, and bright green. The newly emerging leaves are reddish brown in color, creating a pseudo-autumn color in the fall. Without a doubt, this is one of the most beautiful trees in the world. To view it, follow California’s Highway 74 west to Oak Glen and go 2 miles south to the parking area.

Immerse Yourself in Desert Wildflowers when the Sierra Club hosts a bus trip to Anza-Borrego Desert State Park on Saturday, April 13, at 6:00 p.m. The trip is free, and reservations are required. For more information, call 760-342-4741.

San Diego Astronomers Association sets up telescopes to observe the night sky at 6:30 p.m. on Friday, April 12, in Oakville Estates. Find the park at 12620 Wildcat Canyon Road (just past mile marker four on Wildcat Canyon Road). Call 619-361-0580 to sign up. Free. (SMEDG)

Birding by Sound, use your ears and accompanying birding authority Claire Edwards on a journey to learn what kinds of sounds birds produce and what they’re used for. The adventure, sponsored by the San Diego Natural History Museum, is slated for Saturday, April 13, at 8 a.m. The fee is $31 for nummbers, Call 619-232-3821 to reserve a spot. (ILUBOR)

Wear Comfortable Walking Shoes when the Back Country Land Trust leads a hike in Wright’s Field near the Arroyo del Arroz Preserve on Saturday, April 13, at 10 a.m. To reach the trail...
head, take I-8 to Tavern Road; exit and head south approximately one mile to the new Inns of MacQueen Middle. Meet in the parking lot at 10 a.m. Free. For information, call 619-394-8552.

Where Is Osakamis Preserve? Explore the area with a county ranger during a slow-paced family hike planned on Saturday, April 13, at 9:00 a.m. Bring water and comfortable walking shoes. Find the park at 12000 E. Otay Road and drive east until you see the parking area (just past the mile marker for Otay on Wildcat Canyon Road). 619-561-0580. Free. (LA MESA)

Walk Where the River Meets the Sea through several plant communities, with chances to spot some of the 370 species of birds that use the coastal wetland, when a docent-led nature walk is offered at the Tijuana River National Estuarine Reserve on Saturday, April 13, at 10:00 a.m. The free outing starts at 5th and Iris at 10:30 a.m. Bring binoculars if you have them. Call 619-575-3613 to register. (IMPERIAL BEACH)

Learn About Oaks Above Don Greg Schuetz leads a hike to the top of the Volcan Mountain on Saturday, April 13, from 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. Participants will learn about the protection of San Diego’s vanishing species during this 3.5-mile round-trip adventure. To reach the trailhead, drive to Julian, and then take Farmer Road 2.2 miles turn right on Wymol Road and drive 100 yards. Turn left, head onto the continuation of Farmer Road; proceed 100 yards and park on the shoulder of the paved road by the preserve sign on the right. 619-694-3049. Free. (JULIÁN)

What Are "Utility" Art Work? Find out on an adventure planned by Walkabout on Saturday, April 13. The casual walk with no hills starts at 10 a.m. at the northern corner of Park Boulevard and Adams Avenue. The walk is free, bring money for lunch (optional). Information is also available at 619-231-7463. (UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS)


Catalina Getaway Roundtrip Cruise For 2! + 2 Days, 1 Night Hotel + 2 Glass Bottom Boat Tours! Catalina Island Roundtrip cruise for two with roundtrip hotel accommodations, 2 glass bottom boat tours included. $1049. Valid 4/1/13-8/31/13. Call for reservations. 800-718-8830 x 5 or 619-287-8775 x 7, 7 days, Rain Check. Cancellation Fee May Apply. (SAN DIEGO)

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LECTURES

"Extremism in America" is the subject for two lectures planned at the University of San Diego. Detective Leroy Straton, director of the Hate Crimes Victim Assistance Program, speaks on "The Web of Hate" today, Thursday, April 11. "Organized Hate" is the subject for Keith Atkins of the Anti-Defamation League and Detective Cynthia Hanna of Hate Crimes Outreach on Tuesday, April 16. Both talks start at 12:30 p.m. at the Institute for Peace and Justice. Find the campus at 9988 Alcala Park; call 619-260-7509 for information. (LINDA VISTA)

"Object/Concept" is a cross-media series exploring the works of 16 faculty artists in the department of visual arts at UCSD, dedicated to the memory of artist and professor Ido Sanga. In conjunction with the exhibition, participating artists Kim MacConnel and Babette Mangolte plan a lecture today, Thursday, April 11, at 6 p.m., in the University Art Gallery at UCSD. The lecture is free; to make the suggested reservations, call 858-337-3707. On-campus parking permits are required; they can be purchased at the information pavilions at the Front and Northview Drive entrances to the campus. (LA DOLLA)

What Was the "Plastic" of Antiquity? According to independent scholar Marianne Stern, the answer is glass, the most flexible material of antiquity. Learn about the artisans who blew the glass and the impact of this novel technique on society when Stern highlights "The Glassblowers of Ancient Rome" for the Archæological Institute of America on Friday, April 12. Commercial glassblowing dates from the beginning of Emperor Augustus's rule (c. 25 B.C.). The talk begins at 7:30 p.m. at the Lemon Grove Community Center (3146 School Lane). Free. For information, call 619-663-3841. (LEMON GROVE)

Manage Money More Effectively by Marci Ann Gagliardi from the San Diego County Women's Forum discusses "Smart Women and Their Money" for the Retirement Living Class on Friday, April 12, at 1 p.m., at ElderHelp (4069 30th Street). Free. 619-284-9281 (NORTH PARK).

"The Work of Bart Prince" is the subject when Bart Prince himself speaks on Friday, April 12, at 4 p.m., at the New School of Architecture (1249 F Street). Prince is an architect from New Mexico and a student of Frank Lloyd Wright. The lecture begins at 4 p.m., with a reception at 5:30 p.m.

Eric Lloyd Wright, grandson of Frank Lloyd Wright, focuses on "Organic Architecture" when he presents a slide-illustrated lecture on Wednesday, April 17. The talk begins at 7 p.m. (following a reception at 6:30 p.m.). For information, call 619-335-3409 Free. (CONDESDAY)

"Dutch Influences on Japanese Art" will be explored by Hiroko Johnson, assistant professor of art design and art history at San Diego State University, for the Docent Guest Lecture Series at the San Diego Museum of Art on Friday, April 12, at 10 a.m. Admission is $10. 619-299-1966, BALBOA PARK.

"Children under Construction" is the topic when Roberta Pejovich Williams, president of the Arizona Library Association, talks about the Children's Librarian of the Year. The event takes place on Saturday, April 13, at Point Loma Nazarene University (3900 Lamalinda Drive). The ceremony includes a reception, dinner, and address by Keys. Tickets are $50. To reserve a spot, dial 619-229-2800 (POINT LOMA).

Help Create a Bath Banner to donate to Children's Hospital when artist Mimi Levinson guides the Clairemont Art Guild on Saturday, April 13, at 12:30 p.m., at the Clairemont Recreation Center (3608 Clairemont Drive). Bring tubes of acrylic paint, plastic containers to dilute the paint, and large brushes. Free. 619-222-0686, (CLAIREMONT).

"Genealogy Without Documentation Is Mythology -- A Study of the DAR's Proof of Lineage" may be heard when genealogist, author, and music professor Ann Mitchell speaks for the San Diego Genealogical Society on Saturday, April 13. She'll talk about "Hot Spots on the Internet for Genealogists -- A Sharing of Searching and Findings through Technology" at 1 p.m. Beginners are welcome. Take in the talks in the St. Dunstan's Episcopal Church Parish Hall, 6556 Park Ridge Boulevard. Call 619-588-0065 for information. Free. (SAN CARLOS)

"Plot in a Day," this workshop hosted by the Romance Writers of America takes place on Saturday, April 13, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., at the Quality Inn Resort. Participants will learn the basic to create a working story. The $55 fee includes lunch, book pitches with publishers, and more. For reservations, call 858-613-0982, (MISSION VALLEY).

"Appropriate Plant Selections for a Mediterranean Climate" will be discussed by Pam Holmfield when the Second Saturday Seminar is offered on April 13 at 9:30 a.m. at Cuyamaca College's Water Conservation Garden (11212 Cuyamaca College Drive West). Free. Call 619-660-0614 for information. (EL CAJON)

She's Written More Than 50 Books for children and on Saturday, April 13, Kathleen Durye presents "A Five-Year Plan: Art, Craft, and Business" for the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators. The group meets at 2 p.m. in Manchester Hall at the University of San Diego (9988 Alcala Park). The nonmember fee is $8. Call 619-230-9342 for information. (LINDA VISTA)

Clipping Benjamin Bunny's Toe is the exciting story from the beginning of the San Diego Humane Society hosts a "Bunny 101 Clinic" on Saturday, April 13, at 10:30 a.m. Participants will be answered about grooming, behavioral issues, diet, and housing. The class is free. Find the society at 887 Sherman Street; call 619-299-7012 x296 to register. (LINDA VISTA)

"Conversations in Culture: Southwestern Indian Artists Sharing Their Heritage Through Crafts" is the subject for the annual program hosted by the San Diego Museum of Man on Saturday, April 13, from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. In three demonstration and discussion sessions, attendees will see Zuni fetish carver Jeff Shetima, Navajo weavers and brothers Morris Paul Muskett and Myron Muskett, and Zuni silversmith Myron Paneth. Their artwork will be for sale after the seminar. The fee is $45 for nonmembers. To register, call 619-239-2001, (BALBOA PARK).

Focus on San Diego's Energy Future when the League of Women Voters hosts an educational program to inform the public about the range of opportunities for and issues involved in planning our energy future. Moderator Mark Bernstein will lead the talks on a variety of subjects on Saturday, April 13. The program runs from 9 a.m. to noon in the Recital Hall at Balboa Park. Free. For additional information, call 619-299-5944, (BALBOA PARK).

Don't Get Lost, "Land Navigation Skills" will be divulged when the San Diego Natural History Museum hosts a class for adults on Saturday, April 13, at 9 a.m., at Mission Trails Regional Park (One Father Junipero Serra Trail). Participants will learn to use the compass and map, as well as the hand-held global positioning system (GPS). Be prepared for a moderate three-hour hike over hilly terrain. The fee is $35. To reserve a spot, call 619-232-3503 x203, (MISSION GORDON).

Come to Order! What exactly is a parliamentary procedure? The Sigma Delta Delta Unit of California Association of Parliamentarians hosts a public workshop on Saturday, April 13. Sessions will focus on "Member Rights and Responsibilities: Your Participation Matters," "Bridles: The Backbone of the Organization," and "Amendments: Polishing the Motion." A problem-solving session is planned. The workshop runs from 9 a.m. to noon, in the lounge of Christ Lutheran Church (4761 Gas Street). There is a $10 materials fee. For information and to make the required reservations (by April 6), dial 619-435-1350, (PACIFIC BEACH).

The Life of the Russian Orthodox Church Revolved around its icons, images painstakingly created by anonymous artists. Priests and bishops in the church and people in private homes lit candles near these detailed panel paintings, the smoke ascending heavenward carrying prayers and petitions of devotion. "Petitions of Devotion: Russian Icons from the Timken Museum Collection" -- currently on exhibit in the William D. Cannon Art Gallery at the Carlsbad City Library.

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North County Reader April 11, 2002 71
"Imperfect Justice: The Unfinished Business of World War II" is the subject where Stuart E. Eizenstat speaks on Monday, April 15, at 7:30 p.m. in the Price Center Ballroom at UCSD. Eizenstat was the U.S. State Department's special envoy for Holocaust reparations.

Eizenstat will participate in a panel discussion exploring "Justice Delayed: Reparations, Remorse, and Apologies Concerning World War II" with UCSD professors Peter Irons, Lisa Yountayama, and Michael Schudson in UCSD's IR/PS Robinon Auditorium. Admission is free to both events. For more information, call 858-534-4004. (L.A. JOLLA)

What Occurs in the Mind of a Person while listening to a musical work? Almost nothing is known from the standpoint of experimental psychology on the subject, but USC composer and professor Reynold Reynolds and psychologists Dr. Stephen McAdams and Emmanuel Bigand "have been working collaboratively over the past four years on a project" focusing on a number of related issues. Do listeners hear musical materials in the ways that the composer expects?

The trio will examine "The Perception of Form: An Intersection of Art and Science" on Monday, April 15, at 3:30 p.m. in Peterson Hall 108 at UCSD. Admission is free. Call 858-534-4279 for information. This talk is part of the "Humanities Dialogues" series. (L.A. JOLLA)

Examining Dostoevski's "Fears Paupers" during the opera preview addressing the music, drama, and history of this upcoming San Diego Opera production at the Athenaeum Music and Arts Library on Monday, April 15. The speaker at 2 p.m. is vocal music specialist Ronald Shakespear, at 7:30 p.m., listen to Nicolas Reves (education director) at the San Diego Opera. Admission to either talk is $7. Find the Athenaeum at 1008 Wall Street. Call 858-454-5872 for information. (L.A. JOLLA)

Where is McCain Valley? Learn about this transmontane valley in southeastern San Diego County when biologist Tim Coo presents a slide-illustrated lecture on the "Botany of McCain Valley" for the California Native Plant Society on Tuesday, April 16. It's a transition area from Mediterranean to desert vegetation types.

The meeting starts at 7:30 p.m. in room 104 of the Casa del Prado. For information, call 619-685-7321. Free. (BALboa PARK)

"The Practical and Artistic Arrangement of Objects in the Landscape" is the topic, when landscape consultant Jim Stefanlfi speaks for the San Diego Floral Association on Tuesday, April 16, 10 a.m., in room 101 of the Casa del Prado. Free. For further information, call 619-232-5763. (BALboa PARK)

"Moving Water: The Colorado River and the West" explores the institutions and politics of the Colorado River through lectures, panel discussions, and exhibits at the San Diego Public Library (820 E Street). There's a panel discussion focusing on "The Story of the Imperial Water.Sm- San Diego Water Transfer" on Sunday, April 15, at 6:30 p.m. Free. Call 619-236-5821 for information. (DOWNTOWN)

"What Christians (and Others) Could Learn from Hinduism" is the topic, when Lance Nelson speaks on Tuesday, April 17, at 7:30 p.m. in Manchester Conference Center at University of San Diego (3998 Alcala Park). Free. Call 619-260-4815 to make the required reservations. (LINDA VISTA)

"The Scales of Our Universe" provide the subject when Alberto Lopez from the Universidad Nacional Autonoma de Mexico speaks for the Eyes on the Universe series at Reuben H. Fleet Science Center on Wednesday, April 17, at 7 p.m. Guests will learn how the entire galaxy may be influenced by stellar planetary remnants. Admission is $6.75 general, 619-238-1233. (BALboa PARK)

In the Running for the California State Poet Laureate Joe, writer and UCSD professor Quincy Troupe speaks for the San Diego Independent Scholars on Wednesday, April 17. The group meets at 7:30 p.m. in room 111A of the Chancellor's Complex at UCSD. Call 760-945-5583 for information. Free. (L.A. JOLLA)

Art Biz, learn how to present yourself as a professional artist when Lau- renz Becker focuses on "The Business of Being an Artist" on Wednesday, April 17, 6 to 9 p.m., at the Arts College International (840 G Street).

Stop looking like a flaky artist! Participants will learn about resumes, creating a good portfolio, how to gain gallery representation, and more. The fee is $38. Call 619-231-3900 to register. (EAST VILLAGE)

Whaddayas Know About E-Commerce? Learn about web design and web hosting for business sites, online sales catalogs and transactions, and welcome promotion when Mike Alberga presents a seminar on e-Commerce. The lecture starts at 6 p.m. on Wednesday, April 17, in the second-floor computer lab at the San Diego Public Library (820 E Street). For reservations, call 619-238-6630. (DOWNTOWN)

"The Shape of Science" is the subject when Diane Hoffoss speaks for the spring 2002 science lecture series at the University of San Diego on Wednesday, April 17. Also on the program: Michel Boudrias (marine studios) and Jim Bolender (chemistry) focus on "Baja Experience." The program begins at 7 p.m. in the auditorium of the Manchester Con-
Wood relief sculpture by Louise Nevelson. The sculptor didn’t achieve critical recognition until she was 60 years old but went on to become an "institution" until her death at 87 years.

Actress Lyla Graham uses costumes, props, music, and elements of art to portray the life of Nevelson today. Thursday, April 11, at 7:30 p.m., at the Athenaeum Music and Arts Library (1008 Wall Street). The fee is $12 general. For reservations, call 858-454-4572. (L.A. JOLLA)

A Thriller About a ( Fictional) First Family is told by Susan Ford, daughter of President Gerald Ford, in Double Exposure. Ford signs and discusses her book at 7 p.m. today, Thursday, April 11, at Mysterious Galaxy Books (7037 Clairemont Mesa Boulevard). Free. 858-268-4747. (CLAIREMONT)

Artists on the Cutting Edge X, the "Cross Fertilizations" literary and music series at the Museum of Contemporary Art, La Jolla, led by music director Quincy Troupe continues through May 2. The series continues on April 11 with Pulitzer Prize-winning novelist Robert Olen Butler, poet Brenda Hillman, and musician Fred Ho. Additional dates are noon on April 13, with Cuban poet and essayist Dionisio D. Martinez, and musician Victor Bailey. Ticket prices are $30 to $50. For information, call 858-552-0544. (CLAIREMONT)

During a Raid over Japan in 1944, Ernest Pickett’s B-29 was shot down; the captured pilot and crew were subject to a "long nightmare of torture and neglect." In Proof Through the Night, Pickett and daughter K.P. Burk recite his ordeal. Pickett will read from his book on Friday, April 12, at 7:30 p.m. at the third-floor auditorium at the San Diego Public Library (820 E Street). Free. 619-238-5464. (AURYN)

"An Intimate Evening of Bluegrass Music" is promoted when the Roland Hot Band — featuring vocalist Diane Bouska, Herb Pederson (banjo), Bill Bryson (bass), and Gabe Witcher (fiddle) — perform on Friday, April 12, at 8 p.m. at Valley Music (1350 East Main Street). Tickets are $15 in advance, $20 at the door. Call 858-444-4341 for reservations. (GOLDEN GATE)

Celebrate Culture and Diversity when Unity Fest 2002 takes place on Friday, April 12, at 11 a.m. on the lawn at Arizona State University's Tempe campus. The free event runs from 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Sunshine Brooks Theater, 217 North Coast Highway. For more information, call 760-716-5737. (OCEANSIDE)

Solo and Unplugged, Hawaiian slack-key guitarist Willie K. — a.k.a. Willikahai — gives a concert on Friday, April 12, at the Spreckels Theater (121 Broadway). The Duo-Tones — vocalists Paula Johnson and Gil Orr — open the show. The intimate guitar play that lies at the heart of these two genres will be showcased. "Mele Ke Kai Ehu" starts at 8 p.m. Tickets are $17 and $27, available by calling Ticketmaster (619-220-2220). (DOWNTOWN)

Prepare for "A Little Bit of Everything" when the San Diego Art Institute hosts "Art Night" on Friday, April 12, at 6:30 p.m. Expect to see performance art, art installations, and "surprises for the enjoyment of all. Find the gallery at 1439 El Prato; 619-261-0011. Admission is $5 for nonmembers. (BALBOA PARK)

Are You Qualified? The Mid-Month Friday Night Poetry Slam at the Urban Grid (7397 Park Boulevard) is set for April 12, 7:30 p.m. (sign-ups start at 7). This is the seventh of nine scheduled qualifying slams. Slams take place on the Friday closest to the 15th of each month. The suggested donations are $5. 619-294-2925. (MIDCITY)

"Door Mix Episodes: Two Thousand Spaces" is described as a creative arts project including spoken word, visual art, dance, and music "integrating training, theory, and practice through innovative panel discussions, performances, and open mike." The event is slated for Saturday, April 13, 10 a.m. to 7 p.m., in the Mission Beach City College (1313 12th Avenue). Participants include Urban Ave 31 from Baltimore, poets Olga Segovia Garcia and Bao Phi, and more. For more information, call 619-388-3695 or 619-388-3570. (MISSION BEACH)

The "Reading, Writing, and Rhythm" world music series continues when Kim Angeles performs on Saturday, April 13. This event virtuosous and composer is said to have "successfully transcended artistic boundaries...through the territories of classical, folk, and world music." Concerts begin at 7 p.m. and 8:30 p.m. at the Sunshine Brooks Theater (217 North Coast Highway). Tickets are $7. For information, call 619-435-5570. (OCEANSIDE)

Learn from a Pro: when author Brian Senese discusses his latest book "Music and the Rhythm" at 7:30 p.m. at the El Mirador Hotel (1201 El Prado). Free. 619-294-3320. (OLD TOWN)

A Tangled Web of Washington politics, ambition, passion and intrigue can be found in the debut novel by Richard Tallerker entitled The Roll Call. You'll read from and discuss his book Saturday, April 13, at 10 a.m. at the Barnes and Noble store in Mission Bay (7610 Harcourt Center). (MISSION VALLEY)

Local Authors Weekend is slated for April 13 and 14 at the Birch Aquarium. Participating authors will make presentations and sign books. On Saturday, meet Patrick Abbott (The Rise and Fall of San Diego, 11 a.m.), Jerry Schad (Afoot and Afield in San Diego), (1 p.m.), and Wallace (Johannes Gibeau, 3 p.m.).

Sunday’s guests include Judith Garfield (The San Diego-Luja Underwater Park Ecolodge: La Jolla Shores and La Jolla, California, 1 p.m.) and Sam Ridgeway (Delphinium Drought, 3 p.m.). The aquarium is located at 2000 Expedition Way. The event is included in regular museum admission. For information, call 619-534-3340. (L.A. JOLLA)

Trophi and Ribbons will be awarded the winners of the City of San Marcus’s seventh annual talent competition, slated for Sunday, April 13, at 4 p.m. at the Heritage Center (in San Marcus Civic Center, 3 Civic Center Drive). The events include dance, vocal, novelty, and instrumental, with age divisions from 5 to over 40 years old. Tickets are $3 for adults, $1 for children. For information, call 760-744-9000. (SAN MARCOS)
Roam-O-Rama

A Guide to Unexpected San Diego and Beyond - By Jerry Schad

If you’ve put off a visit to the local desert this season due to poor wildflower prospects, it’s not too late, or too hot, for a rewarding visit to Whale Peak. This gently swelling summit, frosted with giant bolters and dotted with pinyon pines, stands in the middle of the sprawling Anza-Borrego Desert State Park, a park known for its extremes of high temperature. During the next few weeks, however, you can visit the mile-plus-high peak without too much risk of encountering a muggy midafternoon temperature higher than about 85 degrees.

The trip described here involves the least amount of hiking, is not too complicated. First, you will need a high-clearance, four-wheel-drive vehicle to reach the trailhead (compact SUVs are insufficient). Second, you will need some well-honed spatial skills to successfully navigate on foot to the peak and back again. The summit of Whale Peak lies within arcades of similar-looking ridges and gently valleys and hidden from view until you are almost upon it. On the return, it is easy to get turned around while descending a promising gully, only to realize later that you are moving in the wrong direction.

At mile 21.4 on Highway S-2 (4 miles south of Highway 78 at Scissors Crossing), turn east onto Pinion Mountain Road. Stay right at the fork at 0.1 mile, and continue up a gentle incline. Watch out for patches of soft sand. A short stretch of protruding rocks is encountered about 4 miles up the road. At 5.7 miles, the road tops a watered divide at 3980 feet elevation in the middle of a saddle called Pinion Mountain Valley. Find a place to park along a spur road going south, or somewhere else nearby. stash in your pack plenty of food and more water than you think you’ll need for the four-mile round-trip hike ahead.

Start by heading directly up a steep narrow ravine to the south, beyond the spur road. The north-facing, partially shaded slopes hereabouts sport an agreeable collection of gnarled pinyon pines, bushy junipers, Mojave yucca, and, occasionally, "nolina," a.k.a. "beargrass." A little hand-and-foot climbing may be required to get past some of the larger boulder clusters in the bottom of the ravine. As you climb, look north across Pinion Mountain Valley to a drier ridge called the Pinyon Mountains, beyond where your vehicle is parked. Memorize its appearance. If you lose your way on the return, this ridge, spotted from some higher elevation, can be your guiding light.

After 400 feet of ascent in the gulley, you will find yourself amid level terrain. Now head generally southeast on an undulating, gently uphill track, boulder-hopping occasionally and dodging wily pinon pines, junipers, scrub oak, manzanita, yucca, and nolinas along the way. "Ducks" (small piles of stones set out by hikers as trail markers) will help guide the way if you manage to work your way up to one of the many informal pathways worn by the foot-steps of hikers. Selecting a reasonably straight route to the summit will put you in two less miles or so, with an elevation gain of nearly 1500 feet.

A climbers register can be found tucked below Whale Peak’s summit boulders. On a clear day, the panorama is superb, the Salton Sea to the east, Baja’s mesquite Sierra Juarez in the south, and the impressive wall of the Laguna Mountains to the west.

To place your ad in the Wedding Guide, call 619-235-7971 (on the Web at SanDiegoReader.com/wedding)
Shelmo Carlebach, composes songs with pianist David Morgan and performs her father's traditional songs along with songs in English and in a variety of styles.

Music for no reasons. Find the center at 42nd Executive Drive. Call 858-362-1475 for information. (L.A. JOLLA)

Drawing on an Extensive Knowledge of Flying and Aviation technology, Stephen Coombs presents his newest military thriller, Sauer, which he'll sign and discuss at 7 p.m. on Thursday, April 18, at Borders Books and Music, 1627 Camino del Rio North. Free. Call 619-259-2201 for details. (MISION VALLEY)

Sous le Grand Chapiteau. 55 artists from ten countries perform a variety of high-caliber acts created specially for Cirque du Soleil's newest show, Dralion. Ancient Chinese acrobatic tradition is fused with the avant-garde in Cirque shows, which feature teterboard, double trapeze, hoop diving, bamboo poles, single hand-balancing, clowns, and more.

Draill will be presented from Thursday, April 18, through Sunday, May 12, at the Del Mar Fairgrounds. This range from $45 to $65 for adults, $5.50 to $31.50 for children. For specific shows and reservations, call 800-478-5440. (DEL MAR)

Listen to the Art. Jacqueline Silver focuses on "The Creative Power of Change" on Thursday, April 18, at 7 p.m., at the San Diego Museum of Art. Curator of Art, 840 Dealers of movable and immovable art, explores the potential of the period of change and the focus is the Silver's musical interpretations. Admission is $15 for nonmembers. Members, 619-239-0522 for reservations. (BALboa PARK)

Are You a Grandparent? or someone who loves one? Author Hannah McCoy criticizes and comments on "The Grandparents' Soul on Thursday, April 18, at 1 p.m., at Vesay Plaza (2048 10th Street). Free. For more information, 858-724-4110 PACIFIC BEACH.

Different Cultures Teach Important Lessons of Life in the multiculturally diverse community. Many Voices, told with red puppets, masks, and storytelling, by the Icups Puppet Company performs on Thursday, April 18, at 7 p.m., at the Westing/City Heights Library Performance Annex (1795 Fairmont Avenue). For information, call 619-641-6100. Free. (CITY HEIGHTS)

Celebrate National Poetry Month when the Full Moon Poets present performance poetry on Thursday, April 18, at 7 p.m. at Barnes and Noble Bookstore (1040 North El Camino Real). Call 760-945-6940 for information. Free. (ENCINITAS)

Two Funny Voices. Two Funny People. satirist David Sedaris and comedic social observer Sarah Vowell present a "night of humor and sarcasm" at the California Center for the Arts, Escondido on Friday, April 19, at 8 p.m. They're often heard on NPR's always intriguing This American Life. Tickets range from $18 to $36.

Shelmo Carlebach, composes songs with pianist David Morgan and performs her father's traditional songs along with songs in English and in a variety of styles.

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Song & Dance: Poems

Houghton Mifflin, 2002; 59 pages; $22

FROM THE DUST JACKET: The poems in Alan Shapiro's new collection celebrate art as a woefully inadequate yet necessary source of comfort. In 1998, Shapiro's brother, David, was diagnosed with an incurable form of brain cancer — just three years after the poet's sister Beth died of breast cancer. David Shapiro was an actor on Broadway whose career embodied the joys of life — he was a song-and-dance man. Shapiro's poem cycle recounts his emotional journey through the last months of his brother's life.

The poems in Song & Dance intimately describe the complicated feelings that attend the catastrophic loss of a loved one, feelings too often ignored in official accounts of grief: horror, relief, impatience, exhaustion, exhilaration, fear, self-criticism, fulfillment. While the occasion for the poems is tragic, the experience of reading them is as complex as the emotions they re-create. They are at times funny, angry, passionate, and heartbreakingly beautiful. Finally, these poems are songs of lament that are also songs of praise, transforming grief through the supreme beauty of human attachment.

A CONVERSATION WITH THE AUTHOR: Alan Shapiro was born in 1952 in Boston, Massachusetts, and raised, he said, on the day that we talked, "in Brookline, a town which is not even outside Boston, it's inside Boston. Boston sort of goes around it, at least the part of it that I lived in. I went to Brookline High School and was the captain of the basketball team."

"You're not," I said, "all that tall."

"I'm not 5'9". But I'm very quick. I even played basketball at my junior year at Brandeis University, which is also just outside of Boston in Waltham." Mr. Shapiro was one of three children. I asked if he and his brother played much ball together.

"We did, but I was a much better athlete than he was. Even though he was an older brother, by the time I was ten or eleven years old, he wasn't much fun to play with anymore because I was so much better than he was."

"You must have been such a scrappy kid."

"That's what I was. I was very quick and scrappy. All the men in my family were rather tall. My father was about six feet tall. He was a basketball player in high school, in Lynn, Massachusetts, in the 1920s, early 1930s. My brother was 6'1", and I am now the same height and weight that I was when I was 13. I'm 5'9", 155 pounds. I grew quickly. It looked like I was going to be the tallest Shapiro ever. My father would say to me, every day, 'Al, you got big feet, you got big hands; keep playing, who knows how far you'll go. Maybe you could play in the NBA, if you get big enough.' By 13 I was a very dominant player. But everyone kept growing, and I stopped. So I went from being a power forward when I was 13 to a small forward when I was 14, to a big guard when I was 15, to a small guard when I was 16. Even now, some 30-old years later, whenever my father sees me, the first thing he looks down at my feet and says, 'I can't understand it, Al, you had such big feet.'"

"They're size ten. But when you're 13, and you've got size ten feet, and you're 155 pounds, that's big."

At Brandeis, where Mr. Shapiro was from 1970 to 1974, he was an English major. "But," he said, "this was sort of the height of the antwear student youth movement, so there wasn't a lot of very serious studying going on in those days. At least not at Brandeis. At least I didn't do much. I played a lot of basketball and then went to a lot of demonstrations. I took a lot of writing classes when I was at Brandeis and studied with a wonderful poet, J.V. Cunningham, who was a very important influence on me. I also had the opportunity of studying with Adrienne Rich, who was a visitor there at Brandeis one semester, and Galway Kinnell, who was a visitor there another semester. So I got to meet and work with a wide range of poets. I think the diversity of approaches and the diversity of poetry to which I was exposed was really useful and valuable to me."

After graduation, Mr. Shapiro went to Ireland, where he lived for a year. "And," he said, "I met an Irish woman, I had a couple of thousand dollars in my pocket when I went and was able to trounce the Japanese Friendship Garden (next door to the Sprinkles Organ Pavilion)." Presentations begin at 11 a.m. and 12:15 p.m. on April 13. Reservations are not required. Free: 619-607-3298. (BALBOA PARK)

WHERE IS THE AVOCADO CAPITAL OF THE WORLD? Fallbrook lays claim to the honor and celebrates its fruit when the 16th Annual Fallbrook Avocado Festival takes place on Sunday, April 14. Expect food vendors, live music, arts and crafts, fun for kids, and more. The festival runs from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Main Street (between Beech Street and East Mission Road). For more details, call 760-728-5845. (FALLBROOK)

Health2002 is described as a health and life sciences event with health screenings, medical education, children's booths, and the latest developments in biotechnology. The festival is scheduled for Friday, April 12, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on the corner of Presidents Way and Park Boulevard. Free. Call 925-455-3500 for more information. (BALBOA PARK)

Ralls Across Time, characters from the past including Casey Jones, John Henry, and Abraham Lincoln will be...
make that last because I met this woman there and moved in with her. So I didn’t have to pay rent after the first few months I was there. I wrote. I hung out and went to pubs and met other writers and had a wonderful year there. While I was there I applied for a Stegner Fellowship to Stanford University, which I was lucky enough to get, and so the following year I came to Stanford as a writing fellow. That was a one-year fellowship, but at the end of that year I got appointed to a three-year lectureship at Stanford, so I got to stay on teaching creative writing at Stanford and I went. I ended up living in the job market and got a job at Northwestern University and was there for ten years and then ended up moving here in the South at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.”

Mr. Shapiro’s memoir "The Last Happy Year" was a finalist for the National Book Critics Circle Award. His collection "Mixed Company" won the Los Angeles Times Book Prize. His book of poetry, "The Dead Alive and Busy," brought Mr. Shapiro the 2001 Kingsley Tufts Award.

About the Kingsley Tufts, Mr. Shapiro said, when I mentioned his winning this prize, "It is even fatter this year. It went up to $100,000. List, $250,000 [which is the sum Mr. Shapiro was awarded] to a poet is not a bag of shells, I can tell you that. I hate sympathy cards and the verses in them — that all maudlin claptap," said. I added that Mr. Shapiro’s earlier book, "The Visit," a memoir about his sister’s death, like this new book of poems, does not sentimentalize sickness and death. "No, it tries to sort of work through all the whole range of emotions that one experiences when you have a loved one who is dying of catastrophic illness. I try to give voice to the experience and all of its detail and try not to tail it to fit some sort of preconceived notion of how one ought to be in those situations. I try to present the experience as it was. The terms of an experience like that don’t conform to a sympathy card." 

Sympathy-card messages, I said, not only tend to be maudlin and mawkish, but they also tend to be false in their sentiment, untrue to the facts of what the bereaved person is feeling. "Yes, that’s the thing. They’re false because they’re incomplete. One well may feel the kind of love and sympathy and sorrow that those cards articulate, and one well may feel even some forms of the consolation that they appeal to, but you don’t feel only those things. You also feel a whole range of other kinds of emotions that don’t often figure in our account of how we are in situations like that.

Mr. Shapiro’s poems, however, as tough and unrelenting as they are in their descriptions of his brother’s death, do offer consolation. "I want to write a kind of poetry that doesn’t seek refuge from the sorrowful facts of experience in some kind of cliché or platitude or even in a kind of beauty that falsifies by failing to acknowledge the beauty-resistant nature of so much of what happens to us. I think there is something deeply consoling about being in the presence of the truth. And feeling like you’re not the only one to have experienced this. So when someone reads a poem that deals very honestly and inclusively with an experience like that, with emotions that someone may have felt and been too ashamed to admit to, there’s something liberating and soothing and consoling about recognizing that you’re still part of a community. Even when you’re experiencing emotions that make you feel very strange and different from other people, when you realize that the emotions are actually shared by others, it brings you back into a kind of human community. It brings you back into a sense of a connection with other people.”

I said that recently someone had given me a horrid book, a collection of wretched poems that were supposed to be "good for you" poems that provided “lessons in life.” I said that I really disliked this approach to literature. How did Mr. Shapiro feel about the notion that literature should be "good for you"?

"I used to believe for many years that poetry and literature in general could provide us with equipment for living. That it could protect us from certain forms of suffering and pain, and one of the things that I’ve realized as a result of going through this experience with my brother is that there is no equipment for living. And that the best poems are the ones that recognize their own limitations. And don’t pretend to offer more than they can deliver.”

“When I’m truly unhappy,” I said, “I often cannot read.”

“Then that’s exactly right. And when you’re in terrible physical suffering you can’t read.”

I asked Mr. Shapiro if he would talk about his poem "The Accident." (See page 50.)

“This is a poem that juxtaposes two events. One event is of the speaker sitting on his front porch and being visited by a hummingbird. That’s one. And it’s an extremely beautiful and sur-

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MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART, SAN DIEGO, PRESENTS

Cross Fertilizations

Join MCA for the tenth season of Artists on the Cutting Edge: Cross Fertilizations, the extraordinary literary and performing arts series curated by Quincy Troupe. This year’s exciting lineup includes innovative artists from the worlds of poetry, fiction and music, and authors’ book signings follow each program.

APRIL 18, 7:30 P.M.

Paula Marshall holds a distinguished chair in the Graduate Creative Writing Program at New York University and is the author of six books, including The Fisher King.

Born in Cuba, Dionisio D. Martinez works with the YMCA National Writer’s Voice Project and is a poet, critic, essayist, and translator.

Victor Bailey is a member of the ground-breaking jazz-fusion band Weather Report, and has been featured on recordings with everyone from P. Diddy to Madonna.

TICKET INFORMATION
Tour the Museum's galleries for free before each performance. Tickets are available online through TicketMaster by calling (619) 231-0100, or at the MCA box office (700 Prospect Street or 1001 Kitmer Blvd., San Diego). Tickets will be sold at the door if space is available.

Individual Tickets
General Admission $15; MCA Members, Students, and Seniors $10
5 Night Series Tickets (Advance purchase required)
General Admission $65; MCA Members, Students, and Seniors $40

MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART, SAN DIEGO
700 Prospect Street, La Jolla

Artists on the Cutting Edge: Cross Fertilizations is sponsored by the Belfach Family Foundation.

TODAY • APRIL 11, 7:30 P.M.
Robert Olen Butler, Fred Ho, Brenda Hillman

For more information, call the ACE Hotline at (858) 454-3341 x444 or visit www.mcasandiego.org

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Thursday, April 18, 7 pm
Borders Mission Valley
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Because I'm calling on these great poets, who have written beautifully and memorably about death, and I'm saying, Look, what would you say to my brother? You wouldn't have anything to say to him. You can talk about death when you're in the presence of hummingbirds, and you can talk about death when you're crossing the Brooklyn ferry and you're looking at life from a great distance, in large sweeps of time. And you can talk about death in the gorgeous language of the way Wallace Stevens does. But what happens when you're in a hospital room and you're faced with someone who has just been dropped on the floor and is lying there, unable to look away from or hide from his own indignity? Where's the consolation, where's the beauty, where's the clarity, where's the value of art at a moment like that?

I asked the title—"The Accident." I said, "An accident is what happened to your brother, but why else did you title the poem in that way?"

"Well, because it was an accident that the hummingbird showed up. I happened to be sitting on the porch when the hummingbird showed up. That wasn't predestined. God didn't suddenly bring the two of us together for some, you know, magic moment. It just happened. Just a happening. So those are the two accidents."

I asked if Mr. Shapira would talk about what Wallace Stevens means when he writes that

Death is the mother of beauty; hence from her,
Alone, shall come fulfillment to our dreams
And our desires.

"Well, my understanding of it is this: what he's really writing about is the nature of desire. And to satisfy desire, whether it's a desire for sex or a desire for food or a desire for anything, you have to move from a state of wanting to a state of having it. Therefore, desire implies change. You can't satisfy desire unless you live in a world of change. And change implies loss. And loss implies death. Therefore, death is the mother of fulfillment. Death is the mother of our sensation of beauty, death is the mother of all of the satisfactions that are available to us as mortal creatures. That's the thinking behind that. Basically, it's that desire implies change, change implies loss, loss implies death. Therefore, Death is the mother of beauty."

"Would you tell me something about your brothers?"

"Sure. My brother. He was three years older than me. He was a professional actor from the age of five. He made his living as an actor. He was one of those people who always worked—no one ever got the big break that made him famous, he lived a lot of commercial. He had a lot of Broadway credits to his name. His last big show was Sunset Boulevard with Glenn Close. I saw him in almost everything he did. He had a lot of small parts. He was a cop. He was an actor on the set when Norma Desmond comes to the studio to see Cecil B. DeMille, and he plays a clown. He was also in the L.A. production. And on the CD, you can actually really hear his voice. He had a very powerful voice, and you can hear him. He had a tenor voice. But it was a very powerful tenor voice. And he was a great dancer. He was a great dancer."

"Did he read your work?"

"Not much. He was very proud of me and of the books I'd written. But he wasn't a reader. He wasn't much of a reader."

"Did your sister read your?"

"Yes."

"Reading The Visit made me like her very much."

"She was a great person. My brother was too. But she was a social activist and was somebody whom everybody loved and admired wherever she went. She was a truly remarkable person."

"Did your brother have a family?"

"He had two daughters. He was married and divorced. Three years before he got cancer, he had met a woman, and they were planning to get married. He was really starting life over again and had everything to live for, and his career was going well, and his daughters were all grown up, and his life was good for him. Then he got sick. Then he got struck down."

—Judith Moore

Celebrate the Visual and Performing Artists of San Diego during ArtWalk 2002. The 19th annual installment of ArtWalk is slated for Saturday and Sunday, April 27 and 28, from noon to 6 p.m. The event is centered in Little Italy, with artists displaying their talents, musical performances, and children's activities. Admission is free. You'll pay $2 for ArtWalk guides with maps and schedules. For information, call 619-645-1000, LITTLE ITALY.

Wings over Gillespie, 60 World War II warbirds and vintage aircraft are being displayed at the seventh annual "Wings over Gillespie" static air show, Friday through Sunday, May 3-5, at Gillespie Field. Expect a "Salute to American Air Power," with the show dedicated to the history of the Douglas A-26 Invader. Planes take off and land regularly throughout the weekend, and rides are available (for a fee) in some of the planes.

The entrance to the show is at the Gillespie Field Administration Building (1960 Joe Crosson Drive). Gates are open daily from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission is $10 general, free for children 9 and under. For information, call 619-448-4905 or 888-215-7000. (EL CAJON)

**FOR KIDS**

*"The Really Hot Jungle Show" is being presented by Puppet Express through Sunday, April 14, at the Marie Hitchcock Puppet Theater. Ventri-loquist Lynn Trimble performs Giddy Up, Cowboys April 17-21. Shows begin at 10 and 11:30 a.m. Wednesday through Friday and at 11 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday. Find the theater near the Del Mar Fairgrounds. Admission is $3 for adults, $2 for children under 12. For more information, call 619-685-5040. (BROOKLYN PARK)

Listen to Spring, Sprang by Lynn Plourde and make butterfly wands on Saturday, April 13, at 11 a.m., at Barnes and Noble Bookstore (1075 Westview Parkway). Free. 858-684-3166. (MIRA MESA)

*"Animal Tales" provide the theme when the San Diego Chamber Orchestra presents a "carnival concert" on April 13. The San Diego Pantomime Theatre and the California Ballet Theatre explore the sights and sounds of animals as depicted in great music. Listen for selections including "Fantasia 2000," "Disney Magic," "Peter and the Wolf," "Hoe-down," and a musical guessing game of famous animal themes. The performance begins at 4 p.m. in the indoor activity center at the Del Mar Fairgrounds. Pre-concert activities start at 3:15 p.m., with an instrument petting zoo, painting, and crafts. Tickets for the one-hour program are $10 for adults, $5 for children. For reservations, call 888-878-7267. (DEL MAR)

Happy-Bard-Day, the San Diego Actors Theatre offers Shakespeare's birthday celebrations during the "Children's Classics" at L'Auberge Del Mar Garden Amphitheater at 11 a.m. on Saturday, April 13. The program includes a kid-friendly Romeo and Juliet, Harold and Grind, Shakespeare's poetry and songs. Call 858-268-4494 for information. Find L'Auberge at 1540 Camino Del Mar. Admission is $4 per person. (DEL MAR)

Classics for Kids, listen to "The Nightingale and the Rose" by German Samuel and David Remelius's "Symphony Street" when this concert takes place on Sunday, April 14. The program is presented in English at 2 p.m. and 4 p.m. in Spanish at the Spreckels Theater (121 Broadway). Tickets range from $7 to $12 for children and $15 to $20 for adults, available by calling 619-455-9111 and through Ticketmaster (619-220-TIXX). (DOWN TOWN)

Bandit the Raccoon, Whiskers the Siberian tiger cub, and other mari-nettes will be on hand to entertain when Kathy Felker presents "Puppets on Stage" on Wednesday, April 17, at 7 p.m., at the Carmel Valley Library (3919 Townsgate Drive). Free. 858-552-1668. (DEL MAR)

Children's Museum of San Diego, "The Art of Skateboarding" is on display through April. The exhibit explores the history and evolution of skateboarding, including a board-making station, fingerboard courses, and film screenings. Colorful 3-D ceramic wall sculptures by local artist Doug Snider are gathered in "Ceramic Puzzles," also on view through April. Clay Art Center's ceramics program with instruction in basic methods of hand building, begins a three-class session on Thursday, April 18, at 4 p.m. Students create projects ranging from wind chimes and fanciful masks to coil pots and wheel-thrown bowls and plates. The fee is $35. Call in advance to register.

Continuing exhibits include "The Book Stop," "Improv Theater," and "Cora's Rainhouse." Find the museum at 200 West Island Avenue. Dial 619-233-8792 for additional details. (DOWNTOWN)

"Accumulator, Excreter, or Ex- clider — Which One Are You?" Answer the question and learn how salt marsh plants survive their salty environment with the Junior Rangers on Thursday, April 18, at 3:15 p.m., at the Tijuana River Estuarine Reserve. The free program takes place at the reserve's visitors' center (301 Capitan Way) for kids 7 to 11 years old. 619-573-3613. (IMPERIAL BEACH)

**MUSEUMS**

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

Antique Gas and Steam Engine Museum, the museum's exhibits include collecting, documenting, and preserving historical gas-, steam-, and horse-powered equipment not only to agriculture, but to the general development of America. The collection is made up of equipment used in lumbering, mining, oil drilling, and construction industries. In addition, the museum has a blacksmith and wholesale shop, a country kitchen and parlor, a steam-operated saw mill, and a 1/3-scale train. Find the museum at 2040 North

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POEMS

A Route of Evansence
With a revolving Wheel —
A Resonance of Emerald —
A Rush of Cochinal —
And every Blossom on the Bush
Adjusts its tumbling Head —
The mail from Tunis, probably,
An easy Morning’s Ride —
— by Emily Dickinson

The palm at the end of the mind,
Beyond the last thought, rises
In the bronze decor,
A gold-feathered bird
Sings in the palm, without human meaning.

Without human feeling, a foreign song.
You know then that it is not the reason
That makes us happy or unhappy.
The birds sing. Its feathers shine.
The palm stands on the edge of space.
— by Emily Dickinson

Of Mere Being
The palm at the end of the mind, Beyond the last thought, rises
In the bronze decor,
A gold-feathered bird
Sings in the palm, without human meaning.

Without human feeling, a foreign song.
You know then that it is not the reason
That makes us happy or unhappy.
The birds sing. Its feathers shine.
The palm stands on the edge of space.

—from Crossing Brooklyn Ferry: An Elegy
What is it then between us?
What is the count of the scores or hundreds of years between us?
Whatever it is, it avails not — distance avails not, and place avails not,
I too lived, Brooklyn of ample hills was mine,
I too walk'd the streets of Manhattan island, and bathed in the waters
around it,
I too felt the curious ardent questions stir within me,
In the day among crowds of people sometimes they came upon me,
In my walks home late at night as if I lay in my bed they came upon me,
I too had been struck from the foot forever held in solution,
I too had rec'd identity by my body,
That I was I knew was of my body, and what I should be I knew I should be of my body
— by Wallace Stevens

The Accident
While it was happening, the absolute not me of it, the all of a sudden see-through whirl of wings beside me
that the late sun just as I looked up turned to a hovering flash, a watery gray green iridescence
as the beak dipped into a funnel of blossom, dipped and was gone, and not even the blossom’s white
tip bent in its going, or shivered —
— by Walt Whitman

While this, which could have happened without me, here or elsewhere, happened the way it did, and would continue happening for others, for no one, for nothing but the blind urge of its happening, this ever-transparent accidental crossing of moments that was, in this case, beautiful but could not have been and so seemed all the more consoling for the thought —
even the thought of death, just then, consoling, shaping itself inside me as the now there, now not there hereovering of bird, flower, late sun iridescences —
all the spring singers, you who in the aftermath —
storms the winds becoming the dust to sing in your different voices the same song. Route of evanescence, Mother of beauty, It avails not, time nor place, distance avails not;
if you had known, just then, three hundred miles away, in another state, that one of the nurses
getting my brother up from the comatose and back to bed, the one who held him on his left side, the dead side, all of a sudden lost hold of him and, as he fell hard, grabbed for the loose paper gown and ripped it off, so that he left there naked, utterly exposed —
beloved singers, tricksters of solace, if you had known this, seen this, if I did not, you would have offered him no suppersmusements, no fire-feathered feelings, or blab about death as being luckier than one supposes. You would have bowed your heads, you would have silently slipped back into the shadows out of which you surged forth, singing to me. — by Alan Shapiro

Santa Fe Avenue. For further details, call 760-941-1791. (VISTA)
Bonita Museum and Cultural Center, the museum highlights the history of the Sweetwater Valley from the mid-1800s, with historical photographs, artifacts, tools, and farming implements; the district's 1953 fire engine; and boundary copies back to the 1930s of the Chula Vista Star News. Find the museum at 4015 Bonita Road. Dial 619-267-5141 for additional information. (BONITA)
Chinese Historical Society and Museum, the museum is located in a building originally built in 1927 for the Chinese Mission. Adjacent to the building is an Asian garden, including a statue of Confucius, a waterfall, stream, and a large Chinese gate. Find the museum at 404 Third Avenue (at J Street); 619-336-9888. (DOWNTOWN)
Chula Vista Heritage Museum, the museum features glimpses of Chula Vista’s past; exhibits feature lemon packing crate labels, photographs of downtown Chula Vista, doors and adobe blocks from the original Star newspaper building, and relics from the Otay Watch Company. Find the museum at 360 Third Avenue. For further information, call 619-420-6916. (CHULA VISTA)
J.A. Cooley Museum, an eclectic collection — includes displays on photographs, clocks, electric trains, and other types of collections — is featured at the museum. The current featured attraction is an "Industrial Product Collection," with examples of the historical progression of auto technology from 1886-1955, with some classics and a concept car. Find the museum at 4233 Park Boulevard. For more information, call 619-296-3112. (UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS)
Creation Museum, a museum contrasting the evolution and creation world views is located at 10966 Woodside Avenue North. For more information, call 619-448-0900 x3231. (SANTEE)
William Heath Davis House Museum, said to be the oldest surviving structure in the new town area of downtown San Diego, the house is a well-preserved example of a pre-furred lumber "salt box" family home shipped from the East Coast to California by boat around Cape Horn in 1850. Guided walking tours focusing on the history and architecture of the Gaslamp Quarter depart the museum each Saturday at 11 a.m. Find the museum at 416 Island Avenue (at Fourth Avenue); 619-233-4692. (GASLAMP QUARTER)
Reuben H. Fleet Science Center, "Explorzone 2," the newest round of exhibits from the Exploratorium in San Francisco, boasts more than 30 exhibits designed to make science, math, and technology engaging and fun. These interactive exhibits involve learning about hearing, speaking, color, electricity, and magnetism and continue on display through Tuesday, June 4. Ongoing exhibitions include "Technovision," "About Faces," and "Skyscapes II." The permanent exhibits present a variety of hands-on exhibits illustrating scientific principles. Explore the various methods of transmission and storage and retrieval of information, such as lasers, flashing lights, waveforms, and more. Films are shown daily in the IMAX theater. For further information, call 619-238-1233. (BALBOA PARK)
House of Pacific Relations, international Cottages are open every Sunday from noon to 4 p.m. to present the history and traditions of 30 ethnic groups. Select Cottages are also open on the fourth Tuesday of every month, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., and Children Around the World videos are shown in the Hall of Nations on the fourth Tuesday of every month. 619-338-4069. (BALBOA PARK)
Marine Corps Recruit Depot Museum, housed in a historic building, the museum features five permanent galleries with artifacts, uniforms, vehicles, weapons, and photographs depicting Marine Corps history. The museum is located in Building 56 at MCRC, just inside Gate 4, off Pacific Highway; 619-524-6038. (MCRC)
Parsonage Museum of Lemon Grove, "Play Ball! The Story of the Lemon Grove Little League" is charted in the exhibit closing on Saturday, July 27. Uniforms, trophies, photographs, and documents "reveal a story of small-town determination not only to provide top-notch baseball training and fun for kids but to secure their own ballfield," thus didn't enter the league until the "70s, but Mary Moore, a pitching "virus" of the 1940s from Lemon Grove, joined the Rockford Peaches, whose exploits were the basis for the movie "A League of Their Own." Vintage photographs, books, desks, cafeteria menus, and other school paraphernalia are on display in "From Barn to Cyberspace: Lemon Grove Schools Evolve." The current Lemon Grove School District has its roots in the town's once thriving orchards. William Hurst, an early pioneer in the local fruit-growing industry, offered his barn in 1893 as a schoolroom, and a district was born. "Our Agricultural Roots" provides a look at the "sea of lemon trees" that once dominated the town's landscape. The display features stacks of lemon crates adorned with fruit labels. "The Parson's Study" is a decorated late-Victorian room with original furnishings, including a pipe "Chortier" organ, evoking the museum's origins as the town's first church. Find the museum at 7175 Church Street; 619-460-4553. (LEMON GROVE)
San Diego Automotive Museum, surround yourself with the fantasy of exotic sports cars, luxury convertibles, limousines, and other expensive dream cars when viewing "Champagne Wishes, Caviar Cars." The exhibit — featuring vehicles of the Lamborghini, Delahaye, and Rolls-Royce variety — continues through Monday, May 27. More than 80 automobiles and motorcycles from homeless cars to future prototypes are included in the museum's permanent collection. Find the museum near the Starlight Bowl; 619-231-2886. (BALBOA PARK)
San Diego Hall of Champions, the museum — dedicated to promoting, recognizing, and preserving athleti achievement — is located at 2131
POEMS

Last Impressions
When the doctor asked you, "If we deem it necessary to perform the surgery, will you be able to afford the operation?" you held up one talmudic finger à la Jackie Mason as you answered, "And if I can't afford the operation, will you deem it necessary to perform the surgery?"

And after the surgery, the Grocho Marx you whispered in my ear when the neurosurgeon, grim as an accountant, though without the personality, presented the two paths of treatment you could take — do nothing and live pretty well (little or no "premorbidality") as he's here to tell you to do it to the end or go to the standard route of chemoradiation and be very sick but increase the odds of living more than a year from zero to one percent — your voice so perfect I could smell the smoke from the invisible cigar you held between two fingers as you whispered, "It's like having to choose your favorite Menendez brother."

On the eve of your second surgery, your invention of the James Brown Alarm Clock that goes off, shouting, "Help me now! Help me! Help me!"

The Jimmy Cagney you reserved exclusively for the examination room, where the two of us would wait sometimes for hours for the doctor to arrive with the MRI results; you pacing in that room that was hardly bigger than a closet, agitated, cursing, unreachable inside your mounting panic, and when you finally had had enough and opened the door and stood there in the doorway looking out at the doctors, nurses, patients bustling to and fro, you'd catch a nurse's eye and suddenly Cagney, hanging on to imaginary prison bars, would ask, "Any news from the governor?"

The freakish taffy of your face doing Crazy Guggenheim whenever my kids would call, the lower jaw askew, the mouth wrenched sideways, only the corner of it moving as the exuberant dumb voice says, "Hiya Joe, hiya Mista Dunaher-hee-hee."

Or later, toward the end, your Bette Davis, when the nurse would ask you every morning how the paralyzed left arm was doing: "Dead," you'd say, the right hand lifting up the left, the futile breathlessness between the s's just right, the nurse who knew what to expect by then still cracking up when you say it twice more, "Dead. Dead." before you let the hand go and it falls like someone else's hand back to the bed.

Comedy, from the Greek komedia, out of kom-nes — kome meaning revel, and oides, singer. The comic, then, is the singer in the revels.

So if your cancer was the gravity that pulled you every moment down into the isolating black hole of your dying, could the impressions, comebacks, quips, the little shuffle-off-to-Buffalo you'd do for the nurses after each examination, even after the last one — two days later you'd be paralyzed — could all that comedy have been the grace that kept you here among us where you could go on being the comedian, the singer in the revels, joking as if your life depended on it?

But where's the rage in that? The rage that ran through all the voices, all the manic bitch, the refusal not to be funny — "Death, where is thy sting-a-ling-ling?" — as if the cancer wanted all the jokes to end, as if the cancer wasn't a random spin of the genetic wheel, a biochemical mishap run amuck, absurd for its impersonality, but a character from Central Casting, Utah Heep or Scrooge, or worse in your pantheon of villains, a pukerberry Pooh-Bah in a white tuxedo on a busy corner hailing a cab, and your Jerry Lewis's "AAAADIT!" or your Arnold Schwarzenegger's "This is not a TATU!" the cab that doesn't stop but roars by through a puddle that sprays the immaculate white suit black with mud.

— by Alan Shapiro

Pan American Plaza. Call 619-234-2544 for information. (BALBOA PARK)

San Diego Historical Society Museum, created in 1903 when an irrigation project backfired, the Salton Sea has had a "boom and bust" history. Developers in the 1950s and 1960s dubbed this desert area "California's New Mediterranean," envisioning a tourist haven. The sea's salinity levels have increased dramatically in recent years, driving away many of the tourists and boaters. "In Search of El Dorado: The Salton Sea" features black-and-white photographs by Christopher Landis, digitally reproduced by Nesh Edizioni. See these haunting works through Sunday, May 5. The museum is located in the Casa de Balboa building; 619-232-6203, (BALBOA PARK)

San Diego Maritime Museum, almost every year for 250 years, a ship loaded with silver from Spain's New World colonies crossed across the Pacific to to Manila, then made the hazardous return trip laden with treasures from Asia. "Treasures of the Manila Galleons" focuses on the Manila galleon trade, the original commercial link across the Pacific. The exhibit includes recently discovered pieces from the cargo of a ship that wrecked on the shores of Baja California about 1757, the earliest known Manila galleon shipwreck; Spanish silver and pieces of eight; and artifacts, documents, and hands-on activities. View the exhibit through November.

The museum features permanent exhibits documenting the history of San Diego's waterfront and the building of the West Coast by sea, including exhibits concerning the old San Diego Coronado ferryboat, the tuna fishing industry, and the military. The museum's fleet consists of the 1903 bark Star of India, the 1898 San Francisco ferryboat Berkeley, and the 1904 Scottish steam yacht Maida. There are also nautical exhibits, ship carpenters, model building, ships' bells, woodcarvers, and a complete research library.

The museum is located at 1306 North Harbor Drive, Embarcadero at the corner of North Harbor Drive and Ash Street; 619-234-9515 (BALBOA PARK).

San Diego Museum of Man, the renovation of the museum's west wing is now open to the public, housing the new anthropology exhibit "Footsteps through Time: Four Million Years of Human Evolution." This permanent exhibit features five galleries filled with more than a hundred touchable replicas of early humans, primates, and futuristic cyborgs (part human, part machine). The exhibit offers an in-depth look at human evolution.

Fetishes are carved objects representing animals or other beings revered by American Indians and others for their beauty and power. The exhibit "Zuni Fetish Carving: Past to Present," available for viewing through June, celebrates contemporary fetish carving. Expect to learn about fetishes, history, symbolism, process, and materials.

For more information, call 619-239-2001, (BALBOA PARK)

San Diego Railroad Museum, over 80 pieces of railroad equipment are collected here. Among the pieces are: five antique steam locomotives, seven large diesel electric locomotives, a number of small switchers, old freight cars and cabooses, a U.S. Army kitchen car used on supply trains during World War II and Korea, and a variety of passenger cars.

The museum also offers train adventures through San Diego's backcountry. Miller Creek trains depart every Saturday and Sunday from the Campo Depot at 11 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. Find the Campo Depot off Highway 94 and Forrest Gate Road. For information, call 619-595-3030 or 619-478-9557 (BALBOA PARK)

San Pasqual Battlefield State Historic Park commemorates the clash (on December 6, 1846) during the Mexican War between the U.S. Dragoons, bolstered by volunteer volunteers from San Diego, and California militia. A narrated slide show screens throughout the day, telling the story of the war in Mexico and California. A self-guided tour recounts the events of the battle and profiles the leaders of the forces and also describes the lives of the Indians indigenous to the valley. The museum is located at 15808 San Pasqual Valley Road. Call 760-737-2201 for additional details. (ESCONDIDO)

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North Coast Reader April 11, 2003 9
Trying Desperately to Avoid Comparisons

There can be a legitimate range of reactions to Gorchakov's singing.

I Amore. San Diego Opera's previous offering, was a rarity. Tosca is a staple. Every opera lover knows it, and we all have memories of great productions and great performances. To appreciate this magnificent melodrama once again, there is no point in making comparisons with Callas or Tebaldi, Carreras or Domingo, Renato Bruson or George London. What counts is the freshness and truth of the performances before us onstage. Does the direction involve us in the drama? Do the singers make us believe in the characters and their emotions? Does their singing (along with the orchestral playing) convey Puccini's genius? Are we moved and delighted?

On these criteria, the enthusiastically received local production comes off respectfully, if by no means spectacularly. The familiar Piero Ponelle sets are still impressive; the naturalistic interior of Sant'Andrea della Valle in Act One, the sumptuous elegance of Scarpia's quarters in Palazzo Farnese (Act Two), and the imaginative high-point of the design - the situation of the Act Three battlements of Castel Sant'Angelo behind the gigantic hovering statue of the angel. On the other hand, the grand stage sets do not have the artistic permanence of great paintings. After a while, you grow tired of them, however amusing they may have appeared on first encounter. Ponelle's Tosca designs may have reached such a point.

That is particularly the case because the stage action of this opera is so precisely indicated in the libretto and so closely tailored to the music that the director's hands are pretty much tied. If a Tosca is to look in any way new, it has to be through new visual designs (and even they can only be variants of the stage pictures conceived with superlative dramatic purpose by Puccini and his librettists, Ilica and Giacosa). Ian Campbell, in his third foray into stage direction for San Diego Opera (he, of course, the company's general manager), showed once again his careful attention to tradition, with the principal aims of clarifying and communicating action and motivation and of reinforcing the dramatic implications of the music. There have been more dramatic stagings of the crowd of celebrants and worshipers pouring onto the stage for the Te Deum in Act One, but Campbell's emphasis on stately symmetry had its own valid effect to make. At times, in Acts Two and Three, there were static periods when all life appeared to have deserted the stage, but these were due less to the director's invariably reasonable blocking than to a certain lack of dramatic conviction in the way some cast members carried out the requisite stage business.

I am thinking especially of Galina Gorchakova, whose Tosca always seemed to be calculating her next move while counting the measures. The authenticity of an actor - whether you believe in what he or she does or not - is a subjective matter, and others might have found Gorchakova's finely tuned gestures and movements more persuasive than I did. There can also be a legitimate range of reactions to her singing. Surely, one must be grateful to a soprano for phrasing with sensitivity and intelligence, for bringing the notes for having a strong and beautiful voice, and for thoroughly understanding the personality and emotions of her character. That said, I must add that the rather covered quality of the voice (exactly the opposite - thank goodness - of what one can so often expect from a Russian soprano) somewhat muddied its dramatic impact. There was also a sameness of coloration at all pitches and in all dramatic circumstances, which made for ear-pleasing vocalism but tended to deprive the singing of variety and edge. The only alternative color to the perpetual full-bodied creaminess was Gorchakova's extraordinarily resonant chest voice, which she used in just the right places, but with such startling power that it disturbingly undermined Tosca's femininity.

Tener Richard Leech is a dependable singer who masters his roles with complete professionalism but who rarely provides any personal insights into them. His Mario was standard stuff, without complexity, vigorous but rather monotonous in his consistent loudness. Leech was at his best in the Act Two paean to Napoleon's victory at Marengo, where his heroic, stentorian singing is what is required. But the delivery was little different for the romantic idealism and tender passion of "Rendi m'armonia" or the poignant melancholy of "E lucevan le stelle." I was reminded of the inflexibility of the supremely audible Mario del Monaco, a tenor of similar gifts and limitations, but one whose voice never suffered from the pronounced breath that Leech's instrument seems to have developed.

The third major character, the tyrannical Baron Scarpia, perpetually tempts baritones to sing him as a nasty stage villain - and San Diego Opera's Kim Kuan succumbed to the temptation. The result was bad in two ways. It became tiresome to hear the exaggerated and disagreeable "evil" timbre of the voice (the ugly way Julian bore down on the low notes was apparently aimed at achieving volume as well). But this style of singing also reduced the dramatic interest of what is one of opera's (and drama's) most fascinating psychological portraits. Baritones who have made Scarpia sensual and seductive in his sadism, giving his singing a frightening gravity, have brought out the twisted lust and cruelty (and political ruthlessness) of the man more effectively than Julian's cruder and more melodramatic approach succeeded in doing. It should be said, by the way, that with his formidable appearance (he is quite tall) Julian certainly looked the part; the sudden sight of him in the church, candelabrum underlined by Campbell's direction, was the most stunning moment in the entire production.

Among the smaller roles, two singers stood out. Francois Loup, as in all his Dumas appearances with San Diego Opera, showed a consummate mastery of Italian bufiello singing and acting in his interpretation of the comical, pious, narrow-minded Sacristan. Bass-baritone Jamie Offenbach made a remarkably strong impression in his three very brief scenes (all in Act One) as the condemned prisoner, Angelo. He also doubled in the tiny role of Scarrone, where just a few lines once again forced the listener to take note of him. His is a fine, dark voice, well produced, and expressively inflected - the sort of voice which (provided that it has the upper range) would make one think of the right kind of Scarpia.

There is nothing new to say about Eduardo Muller, who is the most brilliant of San Diego Opera's stable of conductors. He never disappoints - and this time he was truly inspired, backing up the singers with the suppleness and resilience of a born opera conductor, evolving...
their very best from the excellent orchestral players, and (when weaknesses there may have been in the production) making the audience aware at every instant of what a masterpiece of musical theater Tosca is.

Events that are underlined occur after April 18.

HOW TO SEND US YOUR LISTINGS
For your listing to 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, cost, the precise address where it is held (including zip code), a contact phone number (including area code), and a phone number for public information to READER CLASICAL MUSIC, Box 85803, San Diego CA 92138-5803, or fax to 619-233-5881. You may also submit online information at www.SanDiegoReader.com by clicking on the events section.

The Jacobs' Masterworks Series hosted by the San Diego Symphony continues with concerts April 11-14. Maestro Rafael Frühbeck de Burgos and pianist Angela Hewitt will join the symphony to perform Ravel's "Bolero" and Mozart's Piano Concerto in G Major," Debussy's "La Mer," the overture to Orpheus in the Underworld by Gluck, and Faure's "Ballade."

Concerts begin at 8 p.m. on Thursday, April 11, at Copley Symphony Hall, 750 Washington St., tickets $15-$36, phone 619-235-0541. For information, call 619-233-5881.

A variety of events will be held by the La Jolla Symphony and Chorus from April 13 to 28, including "The Magic Flute," "Amahl and the Night Visitors," and "Einstein on the Beach." For information, call 619-455-3111 or visit www.lajollasymphony.com.

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Political Slasher

In his early 20s, after a gunpowder accident more or less blew off his left hand, he began his career.

In a 1923 manifesto, the great Mexican muralists Diego Rivera, David Siqueiros, and José Clemente Orozco announced their position: “We repudiate so-called easel painting and all the art of ultra-intellectual circles because it is aristocratic, and we glorify the expression of Monumental Art, because it is a public possession.” They were calling for an art of immediate ideological value to the masses, which would replace wasteful subjectivity with a shareable, public beauty.

In the 1920s, Álvaro Obregón’s new revolutionary government commissioned large mural projects for Mexican painters. Rivera, the senior of the group, made for the Secretariat of Public Education in Mexico City a fresco titled Rural Schoolteacher: an armed revolutionary on horseback watches over campesinos plowing a field while their children cluster around a schoolteacher dressed as poorly as they. It has Rivera’s trademark idealizing of revolutionary egalitarianism, as well as his mystical treatment of the land, and has a dignified serenity quite unlike the ferocious work Orozco was beginning to produce.

All three were leftists to some degree, from Rivera’s membership in the Communist Party to Siqueiros’s Stalinism, and spent time in North America executing mural projects, Rivera’s most famous being the one no longer extant, executed in 1933 for the Rockefeller Center then under construction, later destroyed because of its celebratory depiction of Stalin, Lenin, and Trotsky. Siqueiros established a school briefly in 1936 in New York where he and students — Jackson Pollock among them — made paintings by dripping pigment onto canvases spread on a floor. Orozco’s 1927–1934 sojourn in the States, the subject of a very good, historically loaded show at the San Diego Museum of Art, resulted in some of his best work, easel paintings as well as mural projects. He had been to San Francisco briefly between 1917 and 1919, when he ran a movie-poster business — he referred to the speedy lithograph process as his new toy — and worked for a time in a factory painting plaster angels. Although he made easel paintings that displayed a focused fury about revolution and class conflict, Orozco all his life remained a vehement partisan of populist mural painting. He called it “the highest, the most logical, the purest and strongest form of painting” and praised it because “it cannot be made a matter of private gain; it cannot be hidden away for the benefit of a certain few.”

He began studying art at an early age — he was born in 1883 — and in his early 20s, after a gunpowder accident more or less blew off his left (nonpainting) hand, he began his career in earnest by entering the Academy of San Carlos in Mexico City. There was no gallery culture to speak of in Mexico, no system of private subsidies or public grants, and so not much opportunity for a painter to earn money. Mural painting was state supported, so a painter could earn a little notoriety and a little bread by snagging a commission. As a young man Orozco published political cartoons that are like acid burns of radical fervor, and he soon developed a slashing, abrasive painting style. Rivera, by contrast, was a more decorative, emblematic artist, a kind of Hispano-French painter who translated into a Mexican idiom the sophisticated experiments of Gauguin and Cezanne.

Orozco’s style raced from sardonic to mournful without missing a beat, and his palette — for the easel pictures, at any rate — was often the colorist equivalent of musical tedium, viscous sepias and keening reds. When he came to North America he wasted no time picking up on the sharp social awareness of Ashcan painters like John Sloan and Reginald Marsh. We see their influence in Orozco’s street scenes and in his pictures of vaudeville and Coney Island.

Prometheus

José Clemente Orozco in the United States, 1927–1934
San Diego Museum of Art, 1450 El Prado, Balboa Park
Through Sunday, May 15. For additional information, call 619-232-7931.

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Calendar

ART

are suspended from the ceiling and move in response to passing visitors are gathered in "Carrie Mae Weems: Ritual and Revolution." The images are of people and places from around the globe and throughout time; the central image depicts the artist as a pre-Hellenic goddess -- a black Athena. The idea is to "de-center Western conceptions of history as the province of white men and to transform the traditionally male image of the artist."

The exhibit is on view through Wednesday, May 8, in the University Art Gallery at San Diego State University. Weems presents a slide-illustrated talk on Friday, April 12, at 6 p.m., in room 100 of SDSU's Nasatir Hall, followed by a reception in the gallery at 7:30 p.m. Regular gallery hours are noon to 4 p.m. Monday through Thursday and Saturday, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday. The gallery is located at 5211 Campanile Drive.

"Disfigural Evolution," a collection of ceramic sculpture creating a narrative of human existence by Justin Van der Mei, has been on exhibit at Clet Wooding Graphics in the "Legends of San Diego" series. The show features a 6-foot tall sculpture of a woman draped in cloth. The exhibit can be viewed from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Saturday. The gallery is located at 1461 K Street.

"The Art of the American Frontier," a traveling exhibition of American art from the 19th and early 20th centuries, is on display at the San Diego Museum of Art through July 20. The show features works by such artists as John Singer Sargent, Thomas Eakins, and Winslow Homer. The exhibit can be viewed from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., daily. The gallery is located at 1415 Oberlin Drive.

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"The Art of the American Frontier," a traveling exhibition of American art from the 19th and early 0
Superficial Sunset

“We lived exactly as we chose... The world may not have been a better place because we were in it.”

Quick Sarah Bernhardt story. In what was billed as her final trip to America, the Shubert brothers booked Bernhardt in theaters, barns, tents, even a skating rink — never the same place twice. She acted in plays by Daumet, Sardou, and Rostand and spoke her native language, French. According to Jerry Stagg’s book on the Shuberts, despite these drawbacks, the “divine Sarah” played to sellout audiences every night and made a fortune. Lee Shubert was astonished: “English she couldn’t talk, English she couldn’t pronounce, boy, could she count in English!”

She played Hamlet, performed before three American presidents and generations of European royalty. Sarah Bernhardt (1844-1923) ranked among the most beloved of her era. In fact, more people probably saw her, in person, than any other 19th-century figure. Her life was as extravagant and melodramatic as her art, but when John Murrell’s play, Memoir, begins, her “triumphs and transgressions” are behind her. It’s 1922. She hasn’t long to live. As the August sun sets on the terrace of her Belle-Ile-en-Mer estate, Bernhardt tries to “make sense of all this somehow.”

She plans a second volume of memoirs, “recollections for the enlightenment of the civilized world — and America.” As she dictates to Georges Pitou, her amanuensis, they enact the scenes she describes. She performs with Bernhardtian flair, but here he resists the roles he’s forced to play “like children’s games.” Pitou, it turns out, may be her exact opposite. He’s lived the safest of lives (still a virgin!), and early signs of senility, which they both share, enable him to forget not only her frequent demands but also his unremarkable existence.

Memoir has the makings of a charismatic superstar, her comedic foil, plus territory drama rarely goes near, the final stage of a life and the “last things” thinking that accompanies it. What ultimately matters? How do you sum up the years? How could anyone “make sense somehow” of a life as Wagnerian as Bernhardt’s? Memoir isn’t a clue. It shifts between sketchy biographical information, the sort you’d find in any encyclopedia, and the childlike byplay between her and Pitou. It’s as predictable as superficial: there hasn’t been this much sun-symboism since Ra ruled over ancient Egypt and when she recalls a meeting with the dying Oscar Wilde, Bernhardt spouts end-of-era pieties: “We lived exactly as we chose... The world may not have been a better place because we were in it. But it was large, more interesting, more innocent.” Though epic in tone, these lines avoid tougher questions percolating in the play.

The Cassius Carter designers give the script every chance. Robert Morgan’s set — bailed by Trevor Norton’s late-summer sun, slumping into an obsidian-dark night — uses an autumnal palette of orange-browns, beiges, repressed

Shylock

Written by Mark Leiren-Young
Starring Ron Campbell (2002 Helen Hayes Award Nominee)
Directed by Todd Salovey

“Ron Campbell is remarkable...” — San Francisco Chronicle

An actor fights for the right to perform his play. What’s it worth? A pound of flesh?

Must close April 14.
The evening’s highlights.

The songs come in two halves: Act One describes the range of music from the era (from Harry Wood’s “What a Little Moonlight Can Do” to Gershwin’s “Summertime”). At the top of Act Two, the seven women, who sit at table 12 when not performing, return to the stage in elegant, deep blue dresses and sing songs of a similar hue.

The show had sound problems, and Act Two needs tightening. But it was on much more often than not, especially when Anassa performed. She spoke as Lady Day and did “I Was Cool,” in which the singer, beset with myriad woes, almost loses her cool several times; accompanied by Melinda Hayes’s haunting dance solo, Anassa sang “Strange Fruit” (in which composer B.B. Mark packed enough pain for an entire Greek tragedy); and when it was time to turn the place out, she grabbed a handheld mike and commanded us to “Let the Good Times Roll” with such spirit, following orders was a cinch.

Everyone in the cast, and Harry James Williams’s four-piece backup band, makes a contribution (Nettice Pope’s “Evil Gal Blues” alone is worth the price of admission).

In reality, we were at the Cady Theater, enjoying a meal and a show, but it didn’t take much imagination to transport us back to Emerson’s Bar & Grill, during the Harlem Renaissance. Seven women — including Billie Holiday in a shimmering white cocktail dress, gardenia in her hair — belted out songs just like that town Bessie Smith sang about, which was so blue all the birds sang bass.

Along with a tasty meal of baked “jerk” chicken, or vegetarian entree, Harlem offers songs and poetry from the 1920s through the 1940s in revue format. The poetry comes from Langston Hughes and from Manson, whose “This Time the Blues Drew Blood” ranks among the two actors: Pitou is selectively servile (and in more control than would appear), Sarah ambivalent about her dependence on him. The two veteran actors serve each other, feeding and receiving focus, sharing the stage with subtle artistry. But it that’s what you end up doing — appreciating how actors interrelate — then the play hasn’t grabbed you at all.

Before the first performance of the Ira Aldridge Players/Creative Visions’ Harlem, Harlem, director Calvin Manson announced that the production is “the first black dinner theater in San Diego.”

Come hear the story!

Directed by Joshua Duggan Choreographer: Jayita Bhattacharya Musical Director: Maya Sukumar

April 11, 12 & 13 Mandeville Auditorium, UCSD

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Music by Stephen Flaherty

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Ballade

Ravel
Plano concerto in G Major

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La Mer

Ravel
Bolero

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**MYSTERY CAFE. OPENENDED RUN, FRIDAY AND SATURDAY AT 8:00 P.M.**

**Chalk It Up to Murder**
In HIT Production’s newest mystery dinner-theater show, Texas Ranger Slate Montana must find the truth. Did Butch Spicemore kill Hank Anderson, as people have long believed, or was it someone else? **SHIRLEY’S KITCHEN, 1288 EL CAJON BOULEVARD, LA MESA, OPENENDED RUN: SATURDAY AT 7:00 P.M. FOR INFORMATION CALL 619.561.4873.**

**Closet Land**
Radha Bhuradwaj’s drama, based on a movie starring Madeline Stoer and Alan Rickman, raises crucial questions about censorship, government surveillance, and unthinkable brutality in the name of order. A woman writes children’s stories for seven- and eight-year-olds. Paranoid functionaries read allegations of subversion into these “harmless pieces of fluff.” Several interrogate her relentlessly — for days, years — using harassment, manipulation, and severe torture. By the end of the 90-minute piece, she’s battered but unbowed; her prior, “closed” life’s garnered preparation for government intelligence tactics. The play and its message, which includes an outreach-like citizenry that enforces such horrors to occur, are disturbing. The Meuse Theatre’s production, however, plays as a series of unrelated moments, the only difference being the stance of the interrogator (sometimes he’s slick and trusting, others draconian). Although Mary Burt Godwin has some strong moments as the woman, Michael Scali rarely convinces as her antagonist, and the production has a one-note quality: each time the lights come up, you wonder, “Now what?” It’s probably unfair, but inevitable, to imagine Stoer and, especially, Alan Rickman giving the roles more nuance and depth.

MMAC, 3030 JUMPER STREET, SAN DIEGO, THROUGH APRIL 14, FRIDAY AND SATURDAY AT 8:00 P.M. SUNDAY AT 7:00 P.M. FOR INFORMATION CALL 619.239.2894.

**Cloud 9**
One of the most important plays of the past 50 years enjoys a polished, hilarious staging at Diversionary. Caryl Churchill uses humor as an analytical tool, which makes Cloud 9 (1979) funny and thought provoking, often in the same instant. These qualities also make it a theatrically complex, tonally tricky monster to produce, though you’d never know it at Diversionary. Act one takes place in Africa, in 1898. Amid homages to Empire, members of a British colony exercise true Victorian hypocrisy by doing the exact opposite of what they say. In Act two, set in London 100 years later (though the characters are age 25), sexual liberation’s a fact. But here Churchill ups the stakes. Though individuals become sexually open, the ruling orthodoxy hasn’t changed. To break through colonialism on the home front, they must forge a new kind of order. To stress differences, and taking her cue from Joan Genet, Churchill requires cross-gender casting. After intermission, the actors reverse roles again. Diversionary’s performers show such precision and versatility it’s unfair to single any out. Under Fred Fox’s savvy direction, and house by minimalist, effective design work, each actor does terrific work. But, like the collaborative society Churchill envisions, it’s their ensemble efforts that make the production so remarkable.

Critic’s pick.
DIVERSIONARY THEATRE, THROUGH MAY 12, THURSDAY THROUGH SATURDAY AT 8:00 P.M. SUNDAY AT 7:00 P.M. MATINEES SUNDAY, APRIL 21, APRIL 28, AND MAY 5 AT 2:00 P.M.

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DIRECTED BY MARK LAMOS

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The Cocktail Party
Patio Playhouse stages T.S. Eliot's comic of manners, which "examines marriage and adultery over cocktails." Richard Grant directed.

Comedy Codpendents
The Improv comedy troupe performs the first Friday of every month at the Creativity Centre in Normal Heights.

Compleat Female Stage Beauty
The Globe Theatres present Jeffrey Hatcher's "provocative new play" about famed Shakespearean actor Edward Kynaston, banned by the king's new regime from playing the female roles that made him a star. Mark Lamos directed.

Dribble
For a limited engagement, the spectacular Cirque du Soleil performs its latest piece, "a celebration of life and the four elements that maintain the natural order: air, water, fire, and earth." THE GRAND CHATEAU, 1620 24TH STREET, SATURDAY, APRIL 21, THROUGH SATURDAY, APRIL 28, 8:00 P.M.

Culture Clash in America
The San Diego Repertory Theatre hosts the popular Latinx satirists for a limited engagement. The show asks: "What is an American? When is that moment when we become an American? Do we pay a price for that privilege?"

Lyceum Stage, Friday, April 12, through May 5

The Dazzle
South Coast Repertory presents the West Coast premiere of Richard Greenberg's comedy about shut-in brothers — really shut-in brothers. Mark Rucker directed.

Death Rides the Stage
HIT Productions new interactive comedy-mystery, written by Beth and Scott McNellen, is set in Texas. "You've survived a stampede, Lucy Tyler is looking for your underwear...and there's a dead body in the next room.

Djinlan
For a limited engagement, the spectacular Cirque du Soleil performs its latest piece, "a celebration of life and the four elements that maintain the natural order: air, water, fire, and earth." THE GRAND CHATEAU, 1620 24TH STREET, SATURDAY, APRIL 21, THROUGH SATURDAY, APRIL 28, 8:00 P.M.

Everybody Loves Opal
If the title of John Patrick's comedy is true, then why does a trio of con artists want to "do her in"? Keith A. Anderson directed.

Coronado Playhouse, through May 12; Thursday through Saturday at 8:00 P.M.

Far East
The Laguna Playhouse stages A.R. Gurney's drama about a young reserve officer on an American naval base in Japan, seeking "romance, adventure, and the chance to escape his rich family back home." Jules Aaron directed.

Gettting Frankie Married — And Afterwards
The South Coast Repertory Theatre offers the world premieres of Horton Foote's comedy about Fred. He "means to do the right thing by Frankie," his sweetheart, but may have something to hide. Martin Benson directed.

Godspell
Lamb's Players Theatre restages one of its most popular productions, the John-Michael Tebelak/Stephen Schwartz musical, based on the gospel of Matthew. Robert Smyth directed.

Gothic at Midnight — A Tribute to the Masters of Macabre
For one performance only, Joshua Kane performs his seriocomic tribute to the gothic tales of Poe, Dickens, and Ambrose Bierce.

Joey and Maria's
Comedy Italian Wedding
The Culy Theater hosts "not-so-ordinary interactive dinner theater," as Joey and Maria tie the knot.

The Lady Cries Murder

Harlem, Harlem: Women Who Sing the Blues
Reviewed this issue.

The King and I
California Center for the Arts, Escondido, hosts a 50th anniversary touring production of Rodgers and Hammerstein's musical, songs from which include "Getting to Know You," "Hello, Young Lovers," and "Shall We Dance?"

Irish Dance Cabaret
Dublin Square Irish Pub & Grill presents "San Diego's answer to the Celtic wave," an evening of contemporary and traditional Irish dancing, music, comedy, and song — and a three-course Irish dinner.

Irish Dance Cabaret
Dublin Square Irish Pub & Grill, 554 Fourth Avenue, Downtown, through April 25, 8:00 P.M.; Mardi Gras Sunday at 2:00 P.M. FOR INFORMATION CALL 619-238-5618.

It's My Party (and I'll Die if I want to)
H.I.T. Productions' new interactive mystery takes place at Ted Sterling's birthday party. But ask his wife: Ted hasn't been all that sterilizing, and "now he must pay!"

Lips Together, Teeth Apart

The Longest Day
The Laguna Playhouse stages A.R. Gurney's drama about a young reserve officer on an American naval base in Japan, seeking "romance, adventure, and the chance to escape his rich family back home." Jules Aaron directed.

Lips Together, Teeth Apart

Cassius Carter Centre Stage
SUNDAY, APRIL 28, 7:30 P.M.

MON EDISON CENTRE FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS, THROUGH MAY 5, TUESDAY THROUGH SATURDAY AT 7:30 P.M.; MATINEES SATURDAY AND SUNDAY AT 2:00 P.M.

My Hands are Dirty
Login Left, Sushi's "collective in-residence," performs its exploration of "living as a conservationist in a consumer society." SUSHI PERFORMANCE & VISUAL ART, THURSDAY, APRIL 18, THROUGH APRIL 28, THURSDAY THROUGH SATURDAY AT 8:00 P.M.

National Comedy Theatre
ComedySportz's "new act" turns out to be the same old thing. Improvisational comedy, making up funny stuff on the spot, is difficult enough. Years ago, however, Keith Johnstone thought it'd be more exciting, if done competitively. He got the idea from pro wrestling ("where Terrible Turks mangled defrocked Priests, while mums and slimy yelled insults and грannies waved their handbags"). National Comedy Theatre, an offshoot of Johnstone's Theatresports (artistic director Gary Kramer says the two compare like "rugby and American football"), resembles an athletic event more than an improv. Teams wear uniforms and compete on AstroTurf. The night I caught the show, three San Diego comedians played a "challenge match" against players from the San Jose franchise. Using suggestions from the audience, they played "Emotional Sympathy," "Shakespeare," "Blind Line," and "Freeze Tag," with judges awarding points to the best scenes. Klinkers and grouns got going well, and the "Freeze Tag" (one of the most refreshing parts of the contest: people acknowledged failure, absurdly, then forgot it). It made for a lively, often quite
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funny, evening. And Gary Kramer is one talented comedian.

Worth a try.

MARQUIS THEATER, 3717 INDIAN STREET, MISSION HILLS, OPENED RUN, FRIDAY AND SATURDAY AT 7:30 P.M. AND 9:45 P.M. FOR INFORMATION CALL 219-295-4999.

Pageant

Beauty pageants rank among the safest of targets. Robert Longbottom's satire teases into the genre but raises the stakes twice. While his contestants send up the various competitions - talent show, Q&A, swimsuit - the actors are in their own contest, "Miss Glamourosa," judged each night by the North Coast Rep's audience. Other one thing: men play the six female contestants. And play them so well you become convinced that, say, Jeffrey Merritt's Miss Texas is a woman playing a man playing a woman. Some of our hobbies include "working with the beauty-impaired." After a while you wonder what you are judging talent (as when David McBean performs triple ventriloquism with two puppets and stops the show cold), likeness to actual contestants, or the ability to satirize the baroque hoopla of pageants.

On the Grand Scale of Comic Significance, Forever Floaty probably stands closer to Hamlet than Pageant. The latter's a one-note show, but a game cast, decked out in wigs and an almost endless array of cheap/crunchy costumes, sounds that note with all they've got. Pageant's a hoot. (Note: due to popular demand, the North Coast Rep extended its run.)

Worth a try.

NORTH COAST REPETEROIRE THEATRE, THROUGH MAY 8, THURSDAY THROUGH SATURDAY AT 8:00 P.M. SUNDAY AT 7:00 P.M. SATURDAY AT 7:00 P.M. MATINEE SUNDAY AT 2:00 P.M.

Rhinoceros

Body snatchers invade a provincial French town. People succumb to "rhinoceritis" - literally becoming rhinos - so readily that soon humans appear "abnormal." Eugène Ionesco's allegory (1960) traces the rise of "feminization," particularly in Nazi Germany. "Ideologies which become clichés, automatic systems of thought," he wrote, "arise like a screen between the mind and reality" and "prevent co-existence, for a rhinoceros cannot go on with anyone not of his kind." Rhinoceros resembles what it depicts. It's a talky, cur-crazy, three-act monster. Further complicating matters: Ionesco argued it isn't a comedy ("it cannot be anything other than painful and serious.") The Fritz Theater honors Ionesco's dictum. The opening night performance, however, didn't honor the play. Everything from the set to the acting looked unfinished. The show was understudied, cramped (so much that actors bumped into each other), dry, long (especially Act three, in which two characters gab for at least 20 minutes), and badly directed. Each scene remained on a single noise level and made little use of the script's potential theatricality. The acting, much of it amateurish, offered one gem: Jim Chovick undergoes a "rhinocerotic" metamorphosis from the fastidious Jean to a four-footed beast.

ST. CECILIA'S PLAYHOUSE, 1620 SIXTH AVENUE (AT CEDAR), SAN DIEGO, THROUGH MAY 8, THURSDAY THROUGH SATURDAY AT 8:00 P.M. SUNDAY AT 5:00 P.M. MONDAY AT 7:30 P.M. FOR INFORMATION CALL 219-233-7055.

The School for Wives

The La Jolla Stage Company presents Molière's comedy of love - a game of strategy, skill, and chance. Kathryn Lee Moss directs.

LA JOLLA STAGE COMPANY, THROUGH APRIL 21; THURSDAY AT 7:30 P.M. FRIDAY AND SATURDAY AT 8:00 P.M. MATINEE SUNDAY AT 2:00 P.M.

NEE SUNDAY AT 2:00 P.M.

Seven Weeks of Greek!

The Tragedies

What a great idea! To reenact local audiences with the masterworks of ancient Greek tragedy, 6th @ Penn Theater offers a series of staged read-throughs, produced by Linda Castro and David Cohen. I caught the first, Euripides' Medea, and it was a huge success. The approach is refreshing. There is no attempt at polished work or characters set in stone. Instead, the actors treat the text as if this were the first day of rehearsal: the threshold of exploration. They read in a semi-circle. There's some movement, slight suggestion of costumes, and (rejecting, but the emphasis is on "and") as in all Greek tragedy, on unfolding story at once hair-on-fire irrational and as logical as a courtroom debate. It doesn't take long to see how pertinent and compelling these plays are. An informal discussion follows the reading. Admission is free (though 6th @ Penn greatly appreciates donations for new lighting instruments). Next play: Sunday, April 21, at 2:00 p.m., Euripides' Iphigenia at Aulis. Worth a try.

6TH @ PENN THEATRE, THROUGH APRIL 28. FOR INFORMATION AND A LIST OF FUTURE READINGS CALL 619-688-4972.

Shylock

"I was not for that one pound of flesh," an actor named Jon Davies tells a post-show forum, "Merchant of Venice would just be one big happy family comedy." Davies has played Shylock as a moustache-twirling villain. Controversy erupted, closing the show eight weeks early. In Mark Leiren-Young's 80-minute piece, Davies playing the title role, Shylock raises questions about art in society, censorship, and responsibility - but doesn't push them far. When he hears definite assertions, in fact, Davies backs away, preferring the tactics of persuasion to the logic of argument. He wins his case by the force of his personality. Shylock/darwin where it should probe. There's one compelling reason to see the show, however. Ron Campbelletch in solo performances and does first-class work here. A subtext for the play, and the San Diego Rep's staging, is choices: choosing a script, selecting an interpretation (and taking responsibility), artistic self-censorship is evil, true, but Davies learns that all choices have consequences, and also various ways of playing a "moment." Campbell gives a tour de force with the latter. We watch an actor, behind the scenes, showing how one choice works where others don't. "I'm an actor," Davies/Campbell says, "that means I think I'm brilliant while I'm onstage and in the bar afterwards and incompetent when I'm driving home, picturing all the things I could have done better." Campbell's performance makes you suspect he'll see few "pictures" on his ride home.

Worth a try.

SAN DIEGO REPERTORY THEATRE, THROUGH APRIL 21, THURSDAY THROUGH SATURDAY AT 8:00 P.M. SUNDAY AT 7:00 P.M.

The Sopranos' Last Supper

Dibtar Productions presents an evening with the notorious Barzino family: gambling, dinner, dancing, and good old mobster fun.

CIVIL THEATRE, 330 SEVENTH AVENUE, DOWNTOWN, OPENED RUN, FRIDAY AT 7:30 P.M. FOR INFORMATION CALL 619-944-1300.

TheaterReports

A cross between improvisational comedy and Family Feud. Improv, making up a funny scene as you go along, is tough enough. Add competitive scenemaking, with the audience awarding points to the winning team. Purists might balk at
In Dillibar Productions' interactive dinner theater show, the audience pays last respects, dances a jig, sups Irish food and drinks whiskey, and tries to consude the O'Malley family. CILY THEATRE, THROUGH JUNE 22: SATURDAY, APR. 20, MAY 18, AND JUNE 22 AT 8:00 P.M. FOR INFORMATION CALL 800-346-5353.

West Side Story
PSCA Foundation and LimonCarr Productions present the landmark musical about Jets, Sharks, and star-crossed lovers.
POYNER THEATRE FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS, THROUGH APRIL 14: SATURDAY AT 8:00 P.M. AND SUNDAY AT 4:00 P.M. FOR INFORMATION CALL 800-262-8458.

Who Wants to Murder a Millionaire?
Mister Mystery Players, Inc., present an interactive murder mystery set "on the big stage, where death takes a holiday." DAVE & RUSSELL'S, 2931 CAMINO DEL MAR NORTH, SAN DIEGO, THROUGH JUNE 29; ALTERNATE SATURDAYS (4/20, 5/18, 6/15, and 6/29) AT 8:00 P.M. FOR INFORMATION CALL 800-262-8458.

The Wake of Matty O'Malley
In Dillibar Productions' interactive dinner theater show, the audience pays last respects, dances a jig, sups Irish food and drinks whiskey, and tries to consude the O'Malley family. CILY THEATRE, THROUGH JUNE 22: SATURDAY, APR. 20, MAY 18, AND JUNE 22 AT 8:00 P.M. FOR INFORMATION CALL 800-346-5353.

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PSCA Foundation and LimonCarr Productions present the landmark musical about Jets, Sharks, and star-crossed lovers.
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Calendar
MUSIC SCENE

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"They would have a stranglehold over every major venue in San Diego," said one operative involved with live music.

According to an April 4 article in Denver's Rocky Mountain News, Clear Channel Entertainment has made an offer to buy House of Blues.

Clear Channel Communications is America's largest radio conglomerate (with more than 1200 stations), and Clear Channel Entertainment is the biggest U.S. concert company. The second largest is House of Blues Concerts. Currently Clear Channel Entertainment oversees the
exclusive booking arrangement with Viejas Casino, and books the bands for the Del Mar Thoroughbred Club's Friday 4 p.m. concert series during race season.

The Rocky Mountain News reported that Fred Rosen, the former head of Ticketmaster, also put in an offer to buy House of Blues Concerts, which includes the nightclub chain and concert promoters across the country.

"Well, I suppose when you're $9 billion in debt you might as well borrow and spend more and go out in grand fashion," said another industry insider.

Last year Colorado promoter Nobody in Particular Presents filed an ongoing antitrust lawsuit against Clear Channel's alleged restrictive activities in radio and concert promoting in Denver.

"A lot of people...are really disappointed that Jello Biafra is not in the band. They show up and they see [new lead singer] Brandon Cruz reading Jello's lyrics off a sheet," says Randy Wolpin, a Ft. Lauderdale talent agent who used to book an act called "Dead Kennedys Reunion Tour" featuring former members.

Car windshields at the March 30 Ganeshafest at Balboa Park were hit with flyers promoting last night's show at Brick by Brick with the name "Dead Kennedys" and the original DK logo.

Last night's show featured original members Ray "East Bay Ray" Pepperrill, Geoffrey "Klaus Flouride" Lyall, and Darren "D.H. Peligro" Henley. But it did not include the DKs' most famous member, singer/songwriter Exene Cervenka, who moved on to other projects.

In his place is Cruz, who was first known as Bill Bixby's TV son in The Courtship of Eddie's Father. Cruz's name was nowhere on the flyer.

Two years ago Jello and his Alternative Tentacles label were sued by the other three DKs over fraud and unpaid royalties. They won more than $200,000.

Last week it was announced that Jello was launching a lawsuit of his own, asking for $25,000, claiming the other DKs shows fraudulently used his name, picture, and identity.

"I heard Cruz is even imitating Jello's stage moves," says Wolpin.

"We have bent over backwards to advertise it honestly," said East Bay Ray by phone from his home in Oakland. "We can't control every single promoter. It's on our website.

"We were never really interested in selling advertising in San Diego," Editor Will Swaim was describing why Orange County's OC Weekly was ending-distribution in San Diego County after three years.

Although Swaim said the OC Weekly had a "100 percent pickup rate," he said he never really knew why 2500 papers were distributed
south of Camp Pendleton. "The purpose of putting papers down there was never really clear," said Swaim.

Based in Costa Mesa, the OC Weekly publishes 70,000 copies every Thursday — covering Orange County arts, politics, and events. It was launched by sister paper the L.A. Weekly in 1995. The papers are part of a chain of seven weeklies owned by Village Voice Media, named after the flagship New York City weekly.

Part of the writing staff of the OC Weekly is local guitarist Buddy (Blue) Seagal. He is back on the staff after temporarily being laid off for eight weeks. "That was only supposed to be temporary," said Swaim. "That was a short-term financial deal.

Three years ago a New York press columnist said the LA/OC Weekly group (then owned by Hartz Mountain pet products mogul Leonard Stern, now owned by Village Voice Media, a group run by former Village Voice publisher David Schneiderman) was about to

launch the SD Weekly. "There is absolutely no truth to that rumor," said Swaim.

— Ken Leighton

"We were playing at the Whiskey, and boy, they jumped over ten people into the mosh pit." Andrew Lincoln and Barret Baumgart are 14 and play in the rock band the Dekory. They are telling me about the haywire behavior of their 14-year-old lead singer Kyle Bueser.

We are at Casey's Place, a community center run by Kevin Clarke Kinslow, off Jackson Drive in San Carlos. Every third Friday, "Casey" (which is what everyone calls Kinslow) lets local bands use his center. The Dekorys were the first to play, but other Patrick Henry bands like Fxst and Crossroads play there.

"We're not good at describing our music," says Kinslow. "The drummer, Lincoln, the bass player, pulls back the hood of his blue sweatshirt. His head is shiny up past the ears, with a single strand flopping down as he talks. "We call it Kettler."" You know, you're kettler, in a kettler?"

"No, like the name of the Ping-Pong table," says Lincoln, jerking his finger back toward the Ping-Pong table at the far end of the warehouse.

I check later: Kettler manufactures the Ping-Pong table.

"Some people say we're like a cross between Rage Against the Machine and Suicidal Tendencies." The Dekorys play April 19 at 7 p.m. Cover is ten bucks.

— Allan Peterson

"MP3.com... today announced a historic milestone with the addition of its 200,000th artist. The Itinerant join MP3.com's family of diverse artists."

That was part of an industrywide press release sent out last week by Derrick Oien, president of the Vivendi Universal Net Music group, which owns locally based MP3.com.

But as that release touring this event hit the streets, a cover story in Billboard magazine was telling a much different story. Entitled "Loses Mount for Music Industry's Digital Services," the article pointed out that more than $4 billion has been spent on buying or launching website music services and that these services won't stop losing money until 2006.

"Recent studies suggest that consumers will not be warming up to these services in sufficient numbers anytime soon," said Billboard, which also projected that by 2010, downloads will only account for 7.4% of music sales. "Their prospects for profitability seem murkier than ever."

The sound of downsizing was heard at MP3.com two weeks ago when its sister company, eMusic.com, closed its San Francisco office. The 10 remaining employees (down from 55 a year ago) moved into the MP3.com headquarters in the UTC area.

"Consumers don't feel the value is there," said Oien about why subscription services like Pressplay, MusicNet, and emusic are struggling. "It's up to the labels and publishers to charge the services a reasonable licensing rate."

Oien says MP3.com is different since it does not rely on monthly subscriptions. eMusic.com, for instance, charges $10 a month to its 46,000 subscribers, who can download music files of major-label artists. MP3.com claims a catalogue of 1.3 million tracks of unsigned artists, which are accessible for free. It's the resulting Web traffic that Oien says attracts advertisers. "MP3.com relies on advertising, not subscriptions... We had our first positive cash flow in the second quarter of last year," said Oien. When asked if MP3.com is profitable now, Oien would not comment for the record. But he did admit it's a struggle.

"It's tough being in business, it's tougher being in the Internet business, and it's really tough being in the Internet advertising business."

He said the MP3.com staff includes about 120 who work on the technical side and another 120 who work in marketing/content. Would further consolidation force MP3.com to relocate to New York or LA?

"There are no plans for that," said Oien. Meanwhile, one longtime supporter says he has given up on MP3.com. Geoff Johnston said his band NoisePie made as much as $1200 in one month from MP3.com's Payback for Playback service, which
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"We used to make hundreds of dollars a month. Now we're lucky if we make back our $20 monthly membership fee. MP3.com is now only a shell of what it once was."  
— Ken Leighton

"We found a surfer" who worked at Universal Music. They control the rights for 'Magic Carpet Ride.' This guy recognized that Steppenwolf could reconnect with a market [i.e., surfers] that they haven't reached since the '70s. He took care of us because he was a surfer.

Justin Krum of Opper Sports in Solana Beach has put together soundtracks for over 30 different surf features. He thought Steppenwolf's 1968 classic

was the obvious choice for the opening sequence of Opper's new longboard movie Wordz, but he was skeptical that he could get it. Rock standards can command large licensing fees.

"We were lucky," he says. Krum says for a nonmajor studio production, publishers often ask for an up-front base fee "in the thousands of dollars" for the use of a known song. Opper Sports' Surfer's Journal series and features like Superslide and Powerglide have given international exposure to local artists like Solid Foundation and Waxing Pathetic. These surf documentaries have appeared

Krum says exposure in his movies has helped local artists advance their careers.

"After Surfer's Journal [came out], Archie Thompson was asked to score the soundtrack for the Del Mar Fair ad campaign. Dan Cote of Waxing Pathetic went on to make the TV commercial for Sycuan [Casino]."

The world premiere of Wordz is April 22 at 7 and 9 p.m. at the Museum of Contemporary Art, La Jolla. Admission is $10. It's a benefit. "All the proceeds go to stop the seawall at Cardiff reef. If the seawall is built, it will keep the parking lot intact but destroy the beach and destroy the surf."

— Ken Leighton

CD review: Deadbolt, "Hobo Babylon" (Cargos Music, 2002)

Now here are some ironic ambassadors for these "troubled times." In December, just as President Bush was mapping his Axis of Evil, San Diego's Deadbolt toured Germany, Belgium, Denmark, France, and Switzerland, bent on spreading the American Story. But instead of preaching the usual yarn about a freedom-loving and progressive nation — that tale so carefully orchestrated during the Super Bowl halftime show — Deadbolt delivered a deadpan dramatization of an illicit America, an America populated by homicidal hobos (think Rafael Recendez Ramirez), "boxcar quars" ("gay train-riding prostitutes"), and "mattress-back Sallies" (not-gay train-riding prostitutes) — all of whom gather in Frisco Circles ("Hobo booze-a-thon") and waste one another.

Hobo Babylon is Deadbolt's ("The Scariest Band in the World") sixth album. Prior projects include Shrunken Head, Tijuana Death Squad, and Zulu Death Mask, though it's hard to imagine any of these match this LP's brutality. How to describe the medium of this message? Gothabilly? "Twisted reverberockably" (according to Spin)! Dick Dale on tequila and mescaline? Postmodern folk?

Deadbolt take Guthrie's and Dylan's Boxcar Willie's — America's Robin Hoods —

and rob them of their victimhood, laconic dignity, and estimable intentions. What remain are dirty, vengeful frontiersman who need a ride. They'll "cut your fucking head off" and make you "dance like a chicken." Then they'll steal your car.

— Justin Wolff

To get your local CD reviewed, please mail it to Jennifer Ball, Local CD Reviews, San Diego Reader, P.O. Box 85803, San Diego CA 92186-5803.

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"They tied the other guy they had been fighting to the car and dragged him up Fifth Avenue."

Kevin Muir (he claims to be John Muir's great-great-grandson), the server/manager at Moose McGillycuddy's downtown, points to the sign near the entrance listing their dress code requirements. It reads, "No tank tops for guys. No plain white T-shirts. No flip-flop sandals. No baggy or sagging jeans. No beanies, skullcaps, or bandanas. No torn or ripped clothing. No athletic gear, workout clothing, sweat suits or jerseys. No bad attitudes."

Muir says that people are turned away. "Often it's people who just don't read the sign. On a busy Saturday night, we might turn away 10 to 15 percent of the people in line. Tennis shoes and sneakers are fine. We had some people get upset in the past, but nothing real major. When people go to [our club] in PB, it's a lot more casual, but a lot more of the places downstairs here are more dressed up. Sometimes people get confused. They might get offended if we tell them they can't come in with the real baggy stuff on or a sports jersey or something like that. We like people to be comfortable when they come in. We're not a real high-end place, but we just want people to look presentable."

General manager Ken Lovi says that even the Pacific Beach comparison no longer holds true. "We actually just reid our whole Pacific Beach location. They went a little bit more like us on the dress code now. This is a hot spot."

Waiting in line, Sam and his girlfriend Marie think the dress code at Moose's is just right. Marie says, "It's really not that bad of a dress code." Sam agrees. "It's pretty casual. I mean, it's not like you have to come in with a suit and tie."

When asked if she knew that they couldn't wear a plain white T-shirt or ripped clothing, Marie starts laughing. "No! My underwear is ripped!" Sam cuts in. "If your shirt's all ripped up like you've been in a fight or something, then that's..." Marie finishes his idea, "White trash."

Marie goes on, "We just tried to get into the Blue Tattoo, and because he didn't have black shoes on, they told us to get out of there. We don't like the Blue Tattoo."

One Gaslamp bar manager, who asked not to be named, confirmed that the two clubs that had the most problems were also the clubs with the most stringent dress codes.

"They've probably had more fights at a particular club than any other club here. There was an incident where there was a fight inside and the doorman kicked the people involved out onto the street and let the fight continue right in front of their business. After that, one of the guys went to get his car and they tied the other guy they had been fighting to the car and dragged him up Fifth Avenue. And the doorman sat right in front of them and didn't do one thing. The bars are responsible for 100 feet in front of their club, and this happened right in front of their doorway, and they did nothing about it. A lot of them figure that once it's out, it's not their problem."

"It got so bad at [one club] that they had to hire a private security company. So did [another club]. They fired all their original guys and now it's even worse."

Dominic, a doorman at the Bitter End, says that there is a dress code, but it's only enforced on the dance floor. "There's no tennis shoes, jeans, flip-flops. Jeans are allowed, but you can't go to the upstairs lounge with jeans on. Upstairs is the lounge — couches, love seats, and a fireplace. It's a little more low-key, with a little more jazz going on. We also don't allow tank tops or baseball caps. During the week, it's a lot more laid back, but we still don't allow tank tops or baseball caps — that's for men and women. Women have all sorts of shoes they can wear, but if they wear tennis shoes, they can't come in here."

He explains why the dress code is so strict. "That's the way the owners want it, and that's the way they get it."

The Bitter End sends out a newsletter. In the fall/winter 2001 issue, there is a picture of the band Metal Shop in athletic shoes and funky workout gear topped with jackets. Dominic says, "There's no dress code for the bands. Like tonight, we have Night Fever, so they're coming in dressed as disco. There've been no complaints from customers about bands not having a dress code. They're employees, and they're dressed in costume anyways."

Twenty potential patrons are waiting in line at the Blue Tattoo. Armando, the head of security, knows exactly what the dress code is. "No denim; athletic gear; caps; tennis shoes; shorts; ripped, torn, or frayed jeans of any kind. The dress code helps us out with the element: We get a good crowd. Everybody stays happy, and nobody wants to get into trouble when they're wearing their good clothes."

The E Street Alley has a long line waiting to enter, composed almost entirely of Asians. Don, the head of security, seems uncomfortable discussing anything, but speaks reluctantly in a monotone, refusing to make eye contact. "Basically, our dress code is no hats, no dongs, or bandannas of any sort." He points to a small sign that reads "NO CASUAL CLOTHES ALLOWED" with a list of specifics below the bold print.

"It varies from night to night, depending on whether or not we have promoters in here or not. Tonight we are a little more dressy down, so we'll let them get away with baggier jeans or tennis shoes, whatsoever. Normally, we try to keep everyone in slacks or khanaks and..."
dress shirts. No printed Ts. That's on a normal night, but on nights like this, it's a little more lenient."

Don says the dress code went into effect last Decem-
ber. "When we first implemented it, we had some problems with people, but now that we've been doing it for a while, nobody has any problem with it. That's what the owners wanted."

Maloney's on 5th is a casual bar, downstairs from the street. James Bonolie, a bartender at Maloney's since it opened two years ago, says that the dress code is minimal.

"Basically, we just have a shirt-and-shoes policy. We don't have to enforce it much. People are pretty good about it, being that we're down in the Gaslamp area. We get more complaints about the other places that are more stringent — the upscale martini bars...places like the Bitter End and On Broadway."

On Broadway is not an easy club to find. Open only on Friday and Saturday nights, the "secret" is its patrons know to look for is the pink-curtained window. There is no sign with the club's name, but there is always a line to get in. Eileen, the hostess, says that the dress code is strictly enforced. "We don't allow jeans. No athletic attire. No baseball hats, tennis shoes, sleeveless shirts, or baggy clothes. People come here in cocktail attire."

Even though tennis shoes are not allowed, Eileen insists there is no problem of women tripping in their high heels. "They can wear comfortable boots, nice sandals, you know, the platform sandals — just no flip-flops. We've never had any complaints about injuries or heels hurting or anything like that. Nobody complains about the dress code. We remind everybody who calls on the phone, and we have a big sign at the entrance outlining the dress code. It's well publicized."

On this Friday night, On Broadway has the longest line of any club in the Gaslamp quarter. Most of the guys in line are dressed in collared shirts and slacks. Many of the girls are dressed more scantily, like Brenda Herd. "They won't let guys wear tank tops...We pay a lot of money to get in here, and we want everybody to dress very nice here. Like me — all the girls are very beautiful here, so that's why you have to dress perfect!"

Herd's friend, Sholeh Noirbokhan, also likes a strict dress code. "We're appealing to a higher clientele and a higher class of people. You can get thugs coming in here, and they would cause ruckus and chaos. There are high-class people who choose chaos, but not as many. But the thugs stay away from here because they don't approve of the dress code."

Joseph Brown thinks On Broadway's dress code has a double standard. "There should be a dress code, but I think they use it as a bias against men. Women can wear anything, but with men, if you're wearing jeans, it's like, 'Oh no you can't. Nope. Sorry. Good-bye.' Women can wear sweats and a hoodie and top and get in, whereas men aren't allowed to wear the same thing and they don't get in. I think it is because women shave."

He laughs. "I think it's the whole female form, and they get numbers, and numbers bring in more people to drink. It's not that bad here, but some places make you tuck in your shirt, which I think is pretty stupid. Cafe Sevilla is pretty strict and Ole Madrid — they want pretty people."

When entering Ole Madrid, its well-sized reproduction of Picasso's Guernica is so overwhelming that it's hard to notice what anyone is wearing. Monica, the hostess, says that their dress code varies from night to night. "I know that Wednesday nights are more enforced than weekend nights. I don't know if there's a specific. I can tell you that we sometimes have to refuse people at the door. You should talk to Craig, the bar manager. It's really the doorman's job to screen people out."

Craig is unavailable, but Gonzo the doorman offers more generalities than specifics. "It's the manager's discretion...Most of the people inside are more than just casually dressed, so most of the people who come in would feel out of place if they were dressed otherwise. I guess they've done data somewhere that says people who
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are dressed in jeans, shorts, thongs, and sandals are more likely to get into altercations than people who are wearing proper dress.

Alex is the doorman at the Gaslamp’s other major Spanish bar, Café Sevilla. Dressed in a dark suit, he sets the tone for the people he will admit inside. “We don’t allow beachwear. No flip-flops, shorts, tank-tops. On weekends it’s more strictly enforced. We don’t allow tennis shoes. No hats of any kind.”

When presented with the high-heeled dancing problem, Alex says that the prohibition of tennis shoes applies mostly to men. “We’re not as strict with the women. We make exceptions. If it’s a big group or they’re having dinner and they want to go downstairs to dance and one or two have tennis shoes, we’ll allow that.”

The Gaslamp’s Irish pubs all seem to have the same dress code: Come as you are. At Dublin Square, bartender Colm Marrion says that the only dress code is for employees. At the Blarney Stone Pub, Tony the bartender says that the only dress code restrictions are based on the health code. “You have to have shoes and a shirt on. You’ll find this anywhere in the general health code at a law library. Girls have to have their nipples covered — indecent exposure isn’t allowed.”

The customers at the Field seem to be having the most fun of any Irish pub patrons. With an almost cavernlike atmosphere, the music is more Irish and less pop. The patrons here are better dressed than in the other pubs. Owner Daniel Drayne says that like the other pubs, the dress code is casual. “His is casual too. ‘Inappropriate dress’ can mean someone that is dirty or has slept on the street or something to that effect. Or maybe they’ve been in a fight up the street and there’s blood on their clothes — those sort of things.”

Susa, the floor manager at Henry’s Pub, says that their dress code is nonexistent. “We just want you to have a shirt and shoes on. We never have a problem. The only thing we do is if someone has a mask on at Halloween or something, we ask them to take it off so we can see their face.”

The doorman at Patrick’s II, Barney Plomato, says that the dress code is casual. “All you got to do is behave yourself. As long as you’re not too outrageous, like really bad porn stuff or something like that. It’s very casual: Beachwear, flip-flops — we don’t care.”

Quattro Gatti, an elegant-looking Italian restaurant and bar, has an implied dress code, but it’s not enforced. Simona Pinzari, a waitress, tried to explain in broken English. “This is supposed to be formal. We would not refuse service to anybody unless they behaved badly.”

At the Martini Ranch, Josh, the doorman says that there is no need for a dress code. “I have never had to ask anyone to leave or refuse entry to anyone.”

Next door at the Tsunami Beach Club, Greg, the doorman gives the most honest assessment of a dress code that anyone has offered. “There’s no sports apparel. No overly baggy jeans. That’s basically it. We have a long list of things we could use just to keep out the more rough crowd. If they look like they’re going to be trouble, I can find something on them to turn them away. Some people don’t like that. Some people just stand out here and yell and scream and want to fight over what they’re wearing. It’s pretty ridiculous.”

At Roger’s on Fifth, Roger Hedgecock’s upscale restaurant, the former mayor of San Diego says that there is no dress code.

“We get a nice quality of people, and they come dressed comfortably. You don’t have any formality here, but you also don’t have any slovenliness either. It’s a good crowd. The only time this issue has come up was last summer. There was a British tourist who came to the front of the restaurant and said, ‘Can I get in with shorts?’ And he looked at him very seriously and told him, ‘With those legs, no problem!’ He didn’t know how to react to that! I told him I was just kidding and said, ‘Come on in.’”
Locked-Hand Style

On his return to Chicago he opened a "dry" nightclub. Predictably, it was not a big success.

I went with my pal Zumnadzinski, the cab driver, to listen to Ahmad Jamal play with his trio the other day. It was a Sunday, with a couple of good ball games on TV, Jamal, now 71, had enjoyed his greatest popularity in the late 1950s, when he recorded several best-selling albums. I had done some desultory listening to Jamal over the years and had no strong opinion about his work pro or con. I had always taken note of Miles Davis’s fascination with Jamal’s playing. “I live like he makes another record,” Davis said, at a time when Jamal’s playing (in part because of his commercial success) was being dismissed by influential jazz critics like Nat Hentoff as “cocktail music.”

The room was packed, to my surprise, and it was my favorite kind of audience: white and black; young and not so young; eager couples on a date; grizzled, savvy jazz buffs. Piano trio music is one of the few kinds of music I’ll go out of my way to hear, and only the best. Still, I’ve been around 70. Hank Jones, Tommy Flanagan, the late Jaki Byard — that’s the vintage partake of.

Jamal is a Pittsburgh native, like Errol Garner, who would not have been known students of Art Tatum’s playing as well. As Garner, Ahmad Jamal was not a booger, unlike most of their contemporaries, but looked back in his music to earlier piano giants like Nat “King” Cole and Teddy Wilson. Jamal swings, really swings, but doesn’t go in for the propulsive rhythms of a Bud Powell, say. Jamal was an anomaly in the 50’s, and were it not for Miles Davis, who recorded a number of Jamal’s trademark tunes like “Billy Boy” and “Green Dolphin Street,” not much in the way of attention would have come at Jamal’s way. “He doesn’t throw his technique around like Oscar Peterson,” Davis said. “Things flow into and out of each other.”

Miles Davis, like Ellington, had a real genius for recognizing something special in instrumentalists and then either incorporating what he heard into his own sound or bringing the musician into his band. What Davis heard, among other things, was Jamal’s way with time and space. The pianist would simply lay out at a critical beat and let his bass and drummer fill in. Jamal has a curious and effective style, at once capable of the baroque, even rococo, design and flourishes, and, at the other end, decidedly minimal, a great deal suggested with very few notes. This last that Davis went for in a big way, and one can hear it in the trumpeter’s playing everywhere.

Jamal, born Fritz Jones in 1930, was already playing professionally by the age of 11. At the same time the young pianist was playing Listz etudes in competitions. The musical atmosphere of his childhood didn’t distinguish, qualitatively, between traditional classical music and jazz. Starting piano at the age of three, Jamal would study Art Tatum transcriptions as assiduously as he would Beethoven or Bach. He formed his first trio in 1951, the Three Strings, after having played in George Hudson’s orchestra in the late 40’s. The trio was along the lines of Nat Cole’s, with piano, bass, and guitar. In 1956, a Jamal substituted drums for guitar, adding Vernell Fournier. The bassist Israel Crosby came to work for Jamal in ’55.

At this point, Jamal now had his perfect trio, and it was this perfect trio that would produce what Jamal always called his "perfect record," Ahmad Jamal at the Pershing: But Not for Me, a live Chicago date recorded on January 16 and 17 in 1958. It ranks with Bill Evans’s 1961 Vantage Vanguard sessions as among the greatest live piano trio music in jazz.

Bill Evans, like another Miles Davis pianist, Red Garland, was also listening to Jamal. In Evans’s case it was in Jamal’s uncompromising interaction with his bassist and drummer, who were given a lot of room to improve separate lines that served to enhance, not merely support, the pianist. Jamal knew what he had in hand with Fournier and Crosby and kept that trio together for five years. Evans, on the other hand, would lose his splendid bass player Scott LaFaro shortly after the ’61 sessions in a tragic car crash.

Like Evans, Jamal was very taken with the so-called French Impressionist composers of the turn of the last century: Debussy, Satie, and Ravel. You can hear it in the voicings of both pianists and their complex harmonies. Erroll Garner, as well, would have been listening to the Frenchmen and their chordal treatises. With Red Garland, it wasn’t Jamal’s use of block chords in his locked-hand style that caught his attention. (In the locked-hands method, a separate chord parallels each note of the melody because both hands operate as if they were locked together, thus striking the keys and semitones simultaneously. Bill Evans and Lennie Tristano also made use of this technique.) Jamal’s innovative flexibility within the trio format, his light touch, economy, and subtle sense of swing combine to make him, in retrospect, one of the most important jazz artists of his generation. Which sounds like an epitaph, I am here to tell you that Mr. Jamal is very much alive, playing wonderfully and looking great. He is a beautiful, old gray beard. A Muslim, he doesn’t drink or smoke, and it shows. In 1959, Jamal, always his own man, disbanded his trio and made a pilgrimage to the holy places of Islam.
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EXTENSION 4001

UPCOMING CONCERTS

MAY
Almás Morissette (151) and Ryan Adams: Cox Arena, Wednesday, May 8, 8 p.m., $25,501 campus, College Ave.
619-233-9797
The Temptations: Cox Performing Arts Center, Thursday, May 9, 7:30 p.m., 210 East Main Street, El Cajon. 619-440-2777 or 619-233-9497.
The Satoko Fujii Quartet: Smokey Street Inns, Friday, May 9, 8 p.m., 301 Santee St., Banker's Hill.
619-293-0301
Cubabono (675): Belly Up Tavern, Sunday, May 14, 143 South Cedars Avenue, Solana Beach. 858-488-1700 or 619-233-9497.
Face to Face (392): Cox Arena and Golf, Monday, May 9 and Tuesday, May 10, 2105 Ocean Front Walk, Mission Beach.
619-233-9797
Martin Secker: The Coach, Tuesday, May 9, 7:30 p.m., 5210 Kettner Boulevard, mission Valley. 619-233-4700.
Yacht, Wind, Fire & Fire (570): Cox Casino Concerts in the Park, Wednesday, May 11, 8 p.m., 5005 Willows Road, Alpine. 619-233-9497 or 614-455-9400.
RED Speedwagon (567): Cox Casino Concerts in the Park, Thursday, May 12, 7:30 p.m., 5005 Willows Road, Alpine. 619-233-9497 or 614-455-9400.
Molly Holmec (615): Cox Casino Concerts in the Park, Friday, May 13, 8 p.m., 5005 Willows Road, Alpine. 619-233-9497 or 614-455-9400.
Dynasty: Smokey Street Inns, Saturday, May 14, 8 p.m., 301 Santee Street, Banker's Hill.
619-293-0301

ZZ Top: Coxie Casino Concerts in the Park, Sunday, May 15, 8 p.m., 5005 Willows Road, Alpine. 619-233-9497 or 614-455-9400.
Jars of Clay (504): Smokey Street Inns, Sunday, May 15, 7 p.m., 121 Broadway, downtown. 619-233-9797 or 619-233-9497.
The Dave Matthews Band (207) and Government Men: Cox Performing Arts Center, Tuesday, May 17, 7:30 p.m., 210 East Main Street, El Cajon. 619-440-2777 or 619-233-9497.
Inca (584): Waterfront Station, Thursday, May 19, 10 p.m., 5005 Willows Road, Alpine. 619-233-9497 or 614-455-9400.
Garbage and Abandoned Pools: Coxie Casino Concerts in the Park, Friday, May 20, 8 p.m., 5005 Willows Road, Alpine. 619-233-9497 or 614-455-9400.

JUNE
The Neville Brothers (571) and the Fabulous Thunderbirds (574): Coxie Casino Concerts in the Park, Sunday, June 1, 7 p.m., 2147 Shoreline Island Drive, Shaler Island. 619-233-9497 or 614-455-9400.
B.S. King (963): Coxie Casino Concerts in the Park, Saturday, June 4, 8 p.m., 2147 Shoreline Island Drive, Shaler Island. 619-233-9497 or 614-455-9400.
Bobby Bare Jr. (285) and the Caverns (285): Coxie Casino Concerts in the Park, Sunday, June 5, 8 p.m., 2147 Shoreline Island Drive, Shaler Island. 619-233-9497 or 614-455-9400.

Trenton: The Coach, Tuesday, June 7, 7:30 p.m., 5105 Kettner Boulevard, mission Valley. 619-233-4700.

The Robert Cray Band (971) and Taj Mahal & the Phantom Blues Band (983): Coxie Casino Concerts in the Park, Thursday, June 9, 7:30 p.m., 2147 Shoreline Island Drive, Shaler Island. 619-233-9497 or 614-455-9400.

June Lewis: Smokey Street Inns, Friday, June 10, 8 p.m., 301 Santee Street, Banker's Hill.
619-293-0301

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EXTENSION 4001

UPCOMING CONCERTS

AUGUST

David Sanborn: Humphrey's Concerts by the Bay, Tuesday, August 7, 7 p.m., 2241 Shelter Island Drive, Shelter Island. 619-220-4097 or 619-223-1010.

Big Red & The Beavers: Humphrey's Concerts by the Bay, Friday, August 3, 8 p.m., 2241 Shelter Island Drive, Shelter Island. 619-220-4097 or 619-223-1010.

Gordon Lightfoot: Humphrey's Concerts by the Bay, Sunday, August 5, 8 p.m., 2241 Shelter Island Drive, Shelter Island. 619-220-4097 or 619-223-1010.

"Guitars & Sax" feat. Marc Anthony, Warren Hill, Jeff Golub, and Della Coates: Humphrey's Concerts by the Bay, Monday, August 6, 7:30 p.m., 2241 Shelter Island Drive, Shelter Island. 619-220-4097 or 619-223-1010.

Michael McDonald: Humphrey's Concerts by the Bay, Tuesday, August 6, 7:30 p.m., 2241 Shelter Island Drive, Shelter Island. 619-220-4097 or 619-223-1010.

Soulful, April 11, Belly Up Tavern.

September

2241 Shelter Island Drive, Shelter Island. 619-220-4097 or 619-223-1010.

Chicago: 6/20: Humphrey's Concerts by the Bay, Sunday, September 2, 7:30 p.m., 2241 Shelter Island Drive, Shelter Island. 619-220-4097 or 619-223-1010.

October

Ozomatli: Humphrey's Concerts by the Bay, Thursday, October 1, 7:30 p.m., 2241 Shelter Island Drive, Shelter Island. 619-220-4097 or 619-223-1010.

Daryl Hall & John Oates: Humphrey's Concerts by the Bay, Sunday, September 29, 7 p.m., 2241 Shelter Island Drive, Shelter Island. 619-220-4097 or 619-223-1010.
Jonny Lang
Thursday & Friday, May 16 & 17

B.B. King
Monday, May 20

Cowboy Junkies
Wednesday, June 12

The Robert Cray Band/
Taj Mahal & The Phantom Blues Band
Thursday, June 20

Celebrating Our 21st Anniversary!

The Neville Brothers
with special guest The Neville
Tuesdays
Sunday, July 1 @ 7:00
Saturday, July 8 @ 7:00

Keb’ Mo
June 27 @ 7:30

Nevada Social Club
Featuring Crossing Jordan
Wednesday, June 27 @ 7:30

The Robert Cray Band/
Taj Mahal & The Phantom Blues Band
Friday, July 20 @ 7:30

Sinbad
Friday, June 30 @ 7:00

The 50’s
Tuesday & Wednesday, July 17 & 18 @ 7:30

Indigo Girls
with guest JTVA
Thursday & Friday, July 18 & 19 @ 7:30

Collin Raye
Wednesday, July 31 @ 6:00

Trisha Yearwood
Friday, July 31 @ 6:00

K & The Sunshine Band
Wednesday, August 1 @ 7:00

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179...Black Heart Procession: Brick By Brick
Bono Special: Billy I'll Be In Town
The Brees: The Candle
Ryan Callahan: Times Bar and Grill
Call Me Allie: 'C'mon Bar and Grill
Can't Decide: Dream Street
Center of Five: Joff's Joe's (Las Vegas)
Center Market: The Candle
Clench: Dream Street
The Classified: The Candle
Cincinnati: Dream Street
Compass: Shanty Rock Shack
Countertops: The Candle
Copes: Brick Bar and Grill
Death on Wednesday: The Candle
Dinner: Dream Street
Down in the Lake: Brick By Brick
DropBomb: Dream Street

Drama: The Scene
Dwayne: Epicentre
EXP: Fan Club
Eurhythms: Epicentre
Edgy: The Scene
181.5: The Scene
Electricity: Dream Street
The Fulfilled: Dream Street
Fast Eddie: Times Bar and Grill
192...Fiction Engine: Borders Books and Music
Dissension Toversy
Five and Dime: Joff's Joe's (Las Vegas)
Fiver: The Candle
Fridge Buzz: Brick By Brick
Four: Blunt Meters
107...Furioius (FV): The Candle
Glovis: Joff's Joe's (Escalades)
Glydys Purps: Dream Street
Glen: Dream Street
The Good Chinese: Dressed Jim's Nightclub
Grub: The Candle
Handsome Devil: Epicentre
Holy Ghost: The Candle
98...Honey Bucket: Westers
I Like Girls: The Playhouse
556...Imperial Teen: The Candle
Inciting Riots: The Playhouse
Jack the Ripper: The Playhouse
200...Jason & Jon: Lonz's Coffeehouse

Jukebox: Brick By Brick
Kathryn: Brick By Brick
Katherine: Brick By Brick
Lauren: Brick By Brick
Kitten: Brick By Brick
Klne: Brick By Brick
Klone: Brick By Brick
Knights: Brick By Brick
Life Nest: Brick By Brick
The Lobster Tank Divers: Blind Meters
Ludus: The Scene
The Long Winters: The Candle
Loving: Brick By Brick
Lovers: Brick By Brick
M2: Brick By Brick
Maori: Brick By Brick
Mandolin Crewe: Brick By Brick
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- Moonshine Music -
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April 19th
- Dave Aude -

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In The Ultra Lounge - X-Ray - 70's and 80's
In The Gallery Bar - Scott Martin - hip hop and R&B

SATURDAYS
- David Patrone -
NIGHTLY
6pm-9:30pm

RESIDENT DJs
Scott Martin  X-Ray  MARC THRASHER

Karma
Club Montage
House music
Thursdays
10pm-4am
April 11th
Theron "Karma"

Arkona vs. Kazy
Global Journeys  Mileage music
April 18th
Jason Overell
Arkona
Hunter
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This week: Coast to coast
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A DJ Hyper at the winter music fest.

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EXTENSION 4003

ROCK

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Chapter 11: Blind Melon
Climbing Man: Blind Melon
The Moderns: Blind Melon

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Taco Tuesday
Every Tuesday 1/2 price fish tacos 'til the kitchen closes.

Every Thursday
$5 selected martinis, $3.50 well drinks, $2.50 Bud bottles & tacos drafts.
I have always thought of Imperial Teen as the ultimate San Francisco band: a little gay, a little straight; half male, half female; simultaneously professional and amateurish, poppy and arty. And its eight-year career mirrors the recent history of the city.

The debut, Seaside, was full of sweet melodies and scratchy vocals. Two of the band members, Roddy Bottum and Lynn Perko, were rock veterans (of Faith No More and Sister Double Happiness, respectively), but the other two, Jone Stebbins and Will Schwartz, were not. Nonetheless, they switched instruments between songs and all took turns behind the mic.

The year was 1996, and the city seemed on the brink of something new. By the time the long-delayed follow-up, What Is Not To Love, came out in late 1998, the city was nearing the height of the dot-com boom — and skyrocketing rents were driving out artists and musicians. The melodies were darker, the pepper yarn of Seaside replaced with electronically-inspired repetition.

Over the next few years, when I’d catch Imperial Teen, I was shocked by how lifeless their stage presence had become. And, in my mind anyway, it looked like the band was loosing its identity the same way San Francisco was. My theory got a boost when word came out that the men in the band had moved to L.A. But in the last year, with the dot-coms gone, San Francisco’s culture has started to bounce back, and so has Imperial Teen.

The new album, On, has that old melodic magic, and there’s something new: really strong harmonies — the sound of people dedicated to singing together. Kalto and Fiver also perform.

- To hear a sample of Imperial Teen, call 619-232-9797. Wait for the prompt, then punch in ext. 45565. 

Imperial Teen, The Casbah, Thursday, April 11, 8:30 p.m. 619-232-4355 or 619-220-8467. $10.

Upright Bass: The last Saturday of every month, Club, jingle, hip-hop, turntablism, and wisdom. 9 p.m. to 2 a.m., 21 and up. Chaussé, 213 N. Coast Highway, Oceanide, 760-966-3677. www.earmilk.com.

Imperial Teen: The Casbah, Thursday, April 11, 8:30 p.m. 619-232-4355 or 619-220-8467. $10.
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Musical Zen master Neil Young returns with "Are you passionate?". It's just $14.69 on CD. This is also a good time to fill those holes in your Neil back-catalog with classics such as: "Harvest Moon", "Silver & Gold" and "Decade". Feel the passion.

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Grand Opening Party Sat., April 13 • 6 pm
Free food & drink specials all night • Meet the Budweiser & Jäger Girls!!

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FRIDAY & SATURDAY
APRIL 12 & 13 • 9 PM
BLIND LUCK

NAVAJO
THURSDAY, FRIDAY & SATURDAY
APRIL 11, 12 & 13 • 9 PM
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NAVAGO • Sunday-Tuesday at 9 pm. Hosted by Jerry Hulce (Sunday), Bob Eyer (Monday & Tuesday).
SANTEE • Saturday 7-7 pm hosted by Bob Eyer. Sundays at 9 pm hosted by Bob Eyer.
Monday & Tuesday at 9 pm hosted by Jerry Hulce.
ESCONDIDO • Sunday 8 pm-Midnight. Monday & Tuesday 9 pm-1 am.

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9:30 PM
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ROY ROGERS makes his regular Monday night appearance at the Casbah in Hillcrest. For reservations call 232-4355.

ROY ROGERS, Humphrey's Backstage Lounge, Saturday, April 13, 6 p.m.; 619-224-5877. 614

THURSDAY, APRIL 11

IMPERIAL TEEN / KAITO / FIVER
FRIDAY, APRIL 12

THE CLASSIFIED / FURIOUS IV / KUT U UP
DEATH ON WEDNESDAY

HOLY GHOST
(VIC. EX-SKELETON KEY)

SATURDAY, APRIL 13

CONGREGATION A.M. VIBE / GUSH

SUNDAY, APRIL 14

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MARCH 15, APRIL 12

LOVE LIFE / THE PEPPERMINTS / AVETTARO / PANDA BEAR

TUNE PALE

TUESDAY, APRIL 16

THE BRIEFS / SIN SIN 77 / SLOW TIME MONDAYS

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 17

VARNALINE / CENTRO-MATIC / THE LONG WINTERS

www.casbahmusic.com

THURSDAY, APRIL 18

CONTROLLING RECORDS / BOSTICH / THE SILVER WIZARD / IKAH LOVE / MAURICIO

DIETRAK

FRI, APR 19

NEW WAVE JIVEWAVE (UNDO ROBOT CONSORTIUM) WITH DANCEDO

FIREWATER

TUESDAY, APRIL 23

DAN BERN / JASON MRAZ

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 24

THE SHINS / ROCKET FROM THE CRYPT


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Thursday, April 25th

**Toga Toga Toga**

**The Best Party in the Gaslamp**

- Happy Hour: Mon-Sat 4-8pm
- $150 domestic drafts
- $250 import drafts
- $1/2 price appetizers
- Thursday, April 11th: No cover

**Uproot Reggae**

- 4 Days x 3 Nights at Villa La Paloma
- Plus $50 in cash & prizes
- Including: Pride tickets
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Saturday mornings

does open at 6:30? 21 & up w/proof id

resident DJs:
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- The Rooster+

plus special guests weekly.

---

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Sunday mornings

does open at 9am? 21 & up w/proof id

resident DJs:
- Mike 'E' Euphoria
- Fat Albert
- Chad Fortin
- Disco Mike
- Sandman

plus special guests weekly.

---

**Sandiego Reader Calendar**

**Music Scene**

- 8 pm, Cedro, acoustic, Saturday, 8 pm, Patti Stake, acoustic
- Bob's Whiskey Drive, 301 Pier View Way, Oceanview, 760-757-BUBS
- Friday, Newquay, alternative, Saturday, Rock-A-Billy with Chuck & Moonshine
- The Camellia Inn, 807 San Marcos Boulevard, San Marcos, 760-744-1332, Friday, The Strange Woods, Celtic folk, Saturday, Gene Joolz, acoustic
- Carvers, 19400 Bernardo Plaza Drive, Rancho Bernardo, 858-566-2400, Friday, Footloose rock and roll, Saturday, The McNallys, rock
- Coyote Bar and Grill, 300 Carlsbad Village Drive, Carlsbad, 760-726-4605, Thursday, 5:45 pm to 7:15 pm, Friday, 6 to 10 pm, Saturday, 7 pm to 10 pm, Sunday, 6 to 10 pm, Monday, 6 to 10 pm, Tuesday, 6 to 10 pm, Wednesday, 6 to 10 pm
- Del Dios Country Store, 20151 Lake Drive, Escondido, 760-429-2733, Friday and Saturday, The Unicorn, country
- The Flying Bridge, 1040 North Coast Highway, Oceanside, 760-722-1511, Friday, 7 pm, The Upstarts Jazz Club
- Figgerty's Pub, 12020 West Valley Parkway, Escondido, 760-440-8833, Thursday, Identity Crisis, rock, Friday and Saturday, Downtown Underground rock, soul
- Hennessy's Tavern (Carlsbad), 2777 Rochester Street, Carlsbad, 760-729-6931, Friday, Rare Groove, acoustic rock, Saturday, Who We Are, rock
- The Hot Java Cafe, 2738 Carroll Mountain Road, Suite 182, San Diego, 858-673-1111, Friday, Jody, acoustic folk
- Jock's Joe's, 717 North Escondido Boulevard, Escondido, 760-743-7660, Friday, Gines, Sunday, Doo Drop, and Black Bird, Saturday, Nixons, Blues, Rock
- L'Auberge Del Mar Resort & Spa, 1340 Del Mar, Del Mar, 858-973-6460, Friday, Lori Bell, Jazz
- La Costa del Zorro, 3651 Pacific Drive, Solana Beach, 760-726-5332, Friday, Thursday through Saturday, 7 pm to 11 pm, Tony Lewis, Sunday and Monday, 7 pm to 11 pm, Dick Mazzar, piano and vocals
- La Costa Coffee Roasting Co., 4960 El Camino Real, Suite 208, La Costa, 760-439-8101, Music starts are from 7 pm to 10 pm, Friday, Joe Cox, jazz, Saturday, John Lovers, folk
- La Costa Tournament of Champions Lounge, La Costa Resort and Spa, 1340 Del Mar Road, Carlsbad, 760-439-9111, Friday and Saturday, live pop music
- Martini Ranch, 455 South Coast Highway (at 7th Street), Encinitas, 760-943-9011, Call club for information
- McCabe's Beach Club, 1145 South Tremont, Oceanside, 760-439-6646, Call club for information
- The Metaphor Coffeehouse, 258 East Second Avenue, Escondido, 760-489-8930, Thursday and Monday, Dixieland jazz, Friday, The Lel Taylor Band, rock, blues
- Miracle Cafe, 1023 San Elijo Avenue, Cardiff, 760-743-9234, Friday, 7-10 pm, Brian Kroler, acoustic, Saturday, 7-10 pm, Jarrid, Sunday, 7-10 pm, The Nibbler, acoustic, 10 pm, The Nibbler, acoustic
- Mocha Marketplace, 1020 West San Marcos Boulevard, San Marcos, 760-744-2112, Friday, 7-10 pm, Carl Robinson, soft rock
- Neiman's Bar and Grill, 300 Carlsbad Village Drive, Carlsbad, 760-729-4131, Friday, and Saturday, call club for information
- The Rainiers, 755 Rainier Drive, Carlsbad, 760-431-1122, Music hours are from 6 pm to 10 pm, Friday, Saturday, contemporary, Saturday, Cali Sun, jazz
- Second Wind (Escondido), 1360 East Valley Parkway, Escondido, 760-746-2408, Friday and Saturday, Serious Groove, classic rock
- Surf 'N Saddle, 123 West Plaza Street (Lomas Santa Fe and Highway 101), Solana Beach, 858-755-9474, Thursday, open mike, Friday, Forbush, rock, Saturday, the Free Range Chicks, rock

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**Beaches**

Blind Melon's, 705 Garret Avenue, Pacific Beach, 858-481-7444, Thursday, Six Cent, Watch Keepers, and Friends, Friday, the Nickel Project, Manic 830, and Friday, 9:30 pm, The Shapers, 8:30 pm
- Small World, Monday, the Larber Tuna, Tuesday, the Last Rainey and the Midnight Players, black Wednesday, Suza, hip-hop
- Canes Bar and Grill, 495 Oceanfront Walk, Mission Beach, 858-488-1780. Music is rock and roll unless otherwise noted. Thursday, Call Me Alice, New Wave, Unplugged For Teens, and Witches Thursday
- Something Corporate, Counterfeit, Abandoned Ponds, and Red Eye Carcoal, Thursday, Donuts and Red Flag, Sunday, Summer, Nothing to Lose, One Track Mind, and Off By One, Wednesday, Love Lord and Jason Mraz
- Chateau Orleans, 826 Turquoise Street, Pacific Beach, 858-488-6744, Thursday, Tomcat Country & the Blue Dusters, blues
- Dream Street, 2228 Bacon Street, Ocean Beach, 619-222-8131, All shows start at 8 pm. Music is rock and roll, Thursday, Biff Curbus, Glue, Electrcity, and chloroform, Friday, Chaftterbox, Canoiles, Distructor, and Witches, Saturday, the Fallen Fire, Try To Get In The Sound, and System Decay, Wesley Brown, Klatest, Absolute, and Gladys Patches
- Elixir's Bistro & Sky Lounge (atop the Hotel La Jolla, 5935 La Jolla Shores Drive, La Jolla, 858-499-0541, Friday and Saturday, 8 pm, Judy Chamberlain, jazz

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Carlsbad Art Center, 5300 San Dieguito Drive, Carlsbad. 619-434-5101. Friday, Saturday, Sunday, and Monday, 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. Bar. Live rock, blues, jazz.

The Catamaran, 3999 Mission Boulevard, San Diego. 619-434-5101. Friday, Saturday, Sunday, and Monday, 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. Bar. Live rock, blues, jazz.

The Catamaran is offering a $1,000 reward for the return of the hippo water fountain.
Kiss of Fire

When I heard a rumor that an authentic Argentine grill had opened in Chula Vista, I took me back to Patagonia. I tasted my first Argentine "mixed grill" (parillada mixta) in Comodoro Rivadavia — a bustling oil-boom town on the South Atlantic Coast, where pampas turns to tundra and the autumn sun never aspires higher than its 9:00 a.m. position. We'd crossed the pampas west to east, in a dented, old red pickup truck. The local grass-fed beefsteaks, delicious if chewy (and invariably overcooked), had given way, as the land grew barer and the grass shorter, to several days of nothing but pasta in red sauce or batter-fried baby beef milanesa, resembling chicken-fried steak, no gravy.

Then, suddenly, a real city, real food again: set to sizzle on a tabletop grill was an array of steak, chicken, several fantastic sausages, and a number of those interesting comestibles that American cookbooks politely call "variety meats." So begins today's story.

The rumor was true: Tango Grille serves a very similar parillada, even though it's grilled not on a tabletop hibachi but behind the scenes in the kitchen. The owner, José Cohen, hails from Mar del Plata, Argentina; his wife, Jenny, is from Mexico City. After two years of running their own Argentine restaurant in Miami, they moved to Chula Vista to be close to family members who live here.

Their restaurant looks, feels, and smells very much like the small restaurant where I met my mixed grill, 10,000 land miles away. The walls are the deep turmeric gold of the brief Patagonian sunset adorned with photos of — what else? — tango dancers. There are booths along one wall, an old wooden bar along the other, displaying racks of Argentine wines, and a few tables in the center. On each tabletop is a bottle of red wine — not complimentary, merely a palatable hint. As soon as you sit down, warm rolls arrive along with a ramekin of chimichurri, a delicious relish used as a dip for both breads and meats. It's a garlicky, parsley-laden vinagrette with a touch of hot pepper, and Tango's rendition is exemplary.

Before addressing the centerpiece grill, it's worth a detour to the appetizer list. Although Argentina is best known for its beef, its most interesting dishes are its snacks and starters. The country's best-known contribution to world cuisine is its empanadas, a savory turnover (like a "Hot Pocket") — very handy for a gaucho to tuck into his pack when he's out on the pampas all day. Sometimes empanadas are baked, sometimes (as at Tango) fried, and nearly as flaky as filo dough. Made with light, fragile pastry wrappers imported from Argentina, these bite-sized treats arrive in pairs, with a choice of four alluring stuffings that you can mix and match. The beef filling is juicy and scented with cumin. The chicken — perhaps my favorite — is slightly tangy and bafflingly complex. An intriguing tuna filling benefits from the tartness of chopped, pickled red bell pepper, and a spinach empanada holds only young, tender greens, carefully cooked.

An alternative "stuffed" starter is a crêpe. Unlike French crêpes, the batter here is much thicker and rubbery. When the crêpe is stuffed with spinach, it's impressively overbearing, but in its more companionable version with a woody mushroom melange filling and a topping of a light cream sauce, it was almost delightful. A salad also makes a good starter course or side dish to a grilled-meat extravaganza — especially the very Argentine "Tango Salad," an extravaganza in its own right that includes greens, tomato, onions, hard-cooked eggs, hearts of palm, olives, and carrots. Other choices include an oregano-sprinkled grilled slab of strong-flavored Argentine provolone cheese (similar to provolone), a fried mozzarella with tomato sauce, and several items featuring "Russian salad," which (though housemade) tastes exactly like all-American deli potato salad with green peas added.

The entrees cover a wide range of grilled meats, including numerous beefsteaks, poultry, and fish. There are two meat versions of the mixed grill. There's the "parillada Argentina," which serves up several "variety meats," in real gaucho cookout style, or a slightly more expensive "beef parillada" that sticks to more conventional cuts. Tango's "Argentina" grill is most similar to the one I ate in Comodoro, which included not only several cuts of beefsteak but a couple of chicken legs, but also beef spleen, veal kidney, calf's liver, smoked pork sausage (chorizo), and, best of all, morvola, which the English call "blood sausage" and the Irish, more discreetly, dub "black.
pудинг" and serve as part of an "Irish breakfast."

Because of an outbreak of hoof-and-mouth disease in Argentina about two years ago, Argentine beef is now embargoed from the U.S. (although some of it still sneaks in under a Uruguayan or New Zealand passport). As a consequence, Tango uses certified Angus beef from Colorado and has the pieces cut thinly, Argentinestyle, rather than in North America's thick steakhouse slabs. The short ribs, for instance, are sliced perpendicular (rather than parallel) to the bone, so the bones form a small rack along one edge. This judicious treatment turns a "stewing cut" into meat that's suitable for a fast, hot time on the grill. The ribs emerge deliciously smoky and chewy-tender. Similarly, flank steak is juicy and rich, done to exactly your specification—quite unlike Argentina; if you ask for "rare" here, you'll get just what you ordered. The steaks are simply seasoned in appropriate seasons— that's the job of the chimichurri sauce on the table and the fire of the grill.

Two distinctive sausages grace Tango's mixed grill. The chorizo is not the loose, spicy, fatty Mexican version but a tight-knit smoked sausage. A tender-textured morcilla (blood sausage) is on the platter, too. Butterflied sweetbreads seem light and spry, coming from the grill, a change from their unctuous character when they're more typically braised. There's also a sample of the meats called chicharrones or trips in Spanish, and "tripe" on the menu. What they actually are is chichitas—well-cleaned small intestines. Their bitter, faintly fusty overtones finally beat my resolve to swallow them. My dinner guest, newly returned from a long trip across Patagonia, went down to defeat by swallowing just one bite—so much for culinary madness. The rest we left behind. Returning to the familiar, a chicken breast completes the "Argentina" grill, which is served with your choice of fries or a side of pasta marinara.

Tango also offers a "seafood parrillada" that is not strictly Argentine, but has made its way to San Diego tastes. Argentinians do, of course, eat plenty of seafood, with their long Atlantic coastline running past the Falklands to wrap around windswept Tierra del Fuego — the last landmass before the icy waters of Antarctica. The seafood array on the grill includes salmon, tender slipper lobster tail, flavorful shrimp, and (also) tasteless wet-pack scallops. Alongside you get an alluring, creamy dipping sauce lent character by white wine, lemon, and garlic. It comes with buttery rice amoned with peas, shredded carrots, and seasoned salt. Seafood lovers can also choose a mussel appetizer, seafood pastas, and grilled fish plates.

You've probably already surmised that, though Argentina's language is officially Spanish (albeit spoken with a unique accent), its population is a European melting pot of Spanish, Welsh, German, Chileans, Middle Eastern Jews, etc. in which Italians play an especially prominent cuisine-shaping role. Hence all those "milanesas" (which are presented in several variations on Tango's menu, although I didn't order one) and an array of splendid pastas. Sorrentinos are large, thin-sheeted cousins of ravioli, fat-bellied with their generous stuffings of meat, cheese, or (our choice) a rich, woody fresh mushroom medley, served in a lovely Maitake mushroom cream sauce. A lasagna was just like an Italian grandma's—except it was twice as high and three times as meaty.

Desserts are not a strong point of Argentine restaurants at any latitude. The national sweet is dulce de leche, a creamy caramel that's now become familiar as an ice cream flavor. By itself, as a sweet fluffy blob inside, say, a crépe, it's toothache-inducing. Nor does Tango's thick crépes grant any favors to the fruit fillings. The flap, however, is acceptable.

The Mixed Grill at Pampas is in some ways less authentic than Tango's, but what it loses in versimilitude, it makes up for in healthfulness. This is one steakhouse that won't appreciably raise your cholesterol level: All the beef comes from organically raised, grass-fed Angus cattle. Grass-fed cattle, it turns out, are not only healthier and drier but still pleasing. They're about four-bite size and come one to a serving, with a choice of six fillings. The beef empanada is savory, with its touches of chopped hard-boiled egg and raisins, flavored with cumin, but a choco filling of corn in bechamel sauce is dominated by the bland white sauce, with no appreciable corn flavor. Other possibilities include a chicken filling similar to Tango's and three different cheese fillings.

The salad extravaganza here is called ensalada rústica and features mixed greens decorated with a dozen other foodstuffs, including hearts of palm, beets, and goat cheese. An interesting alternative is the "Make Your Own Salad" option: You can choose your favorite ingredients (at least three, at $2 per ingredient) from a long list of salad fixings.

The menu divides entrees into "grill" and "kitchen" dishes. Most of the kitchen entrees are variations on "milanesas"—breaded cutlets of chicken or beef—plus a Brazilian moscou de peixe (fresh fish in coconut milk sauce). Entrées come with a choice of crisp, exciting herbaceous sauce of the day, comforting garlic mashed potatoes, plus the usual restaurant veggie medley of broccoli, summer squash, and carrots. While South American restaus rants rarely stress presentation, here the plates are prettied up with a scattering of minced herbs around the perimeter.

From dessert, dulce de leche runs rampant. Every dish sports it. Thick, fluffy, killingly sweet, it's the central ingredient of Pampas' flan, crépes, ice cream, caramel cake, and even makes surprise appearances between the layers of the flan cake. The crépes here are exquisitely delicate. The dulce stumps them all over the place.

Yet this plethora of variations on a theme bespeaks an underlying sincerity. "We were always looking to create a plate that would specialize in homemade-style food," says Bran. "We don't have a microscope at Pampas. Everything is done daily and we try to keep it that way. We sell 100 percent organic grass-fed meat that we get from New Zealand. Some of it is Argentine meat, which is still banned from the USA but not from Europe, so you have to go abroad to get it. It's air-packed [in Cryovac], and that keeps it very fresh—it's never been frozen, and you can taste the difference. We make our chimichurri (without oil) and that goes fast. We get our fish from Leong-Kuba, and I pick it out myself every day. The quality of our food—I'd put my hands in fire for that."
Infectious Larkiness

“This little old lady ran it — swore like a trooper, smoked like a chimney, ran it like boot camp.”

Don’t worry about Mookie and Runt. Okay, they slam their paws against the chain-link fence and bark their heads off at you, but that’s just because you’re a first-timer.

Never in a thousand years would I have found this place if not for Hank. This Sunday, around three in the afternoon, we hump over the hill past Market and 25th. “Wait for the dogs,” says Hank, and sure enough, there’s the barking and the bent-out chain-link fence with the dogs’ paws and noses sticking through. And next to their dirt yard, this little old building. Looks about a hundred years old. They say it used to be a carriage house. It’s about ten feet wide, weatherworn chocolate brown, and hidden by a big pepper tree. There’s a sign in the window: “Yes, we’re OPEN.” Last time I was here this little old lady ran it,” says Hank. “Swarmed like a trooper, smoked like a chimney, ran it like boot camp — Pauline.”

We creak open the door. In the gloom, you make out this tiny bar. Could be 1940, could be 1840. Ancient-looking wooden cabinetry, low ceiling, creepy plank floor. Half a dozen customers leaning over the counter. Guy behind the bar with a ruddy face and a few teeth missing.

“Have draft beer?”

“Nup. Bitter or can.”

Name’s Mike. He points to the sign on the wall. Bottles $2.00, cans of Milwaukee’s Best, $1.25.

I get a bottle of Miller Draft. Hank orders a Coors Light.

“Pauline still run this place?” asks Hank.

“Nup. Passed away. Been in when she was running it.”

That’s it. Hank’s soon talking with everyone about Pauline’s iron hand and sailor’s tongue.

A brass plaque on the wall says “On This Site In 1897, Nothing Happened.” A card says “Boiled Eggs 25 Cents.”

“Still 25 cents!”

“Well, I put that sign up years ago,” says Mike.

“And he’s still got the egg,” says this old guy named Bill. Everybody cackles.

“So has anything changed in here any of the last 50 years?”

“Well, we did close for remodeling once,” says Mike.

“Jeez — could you make it any worse?” says Bill. More laughs.

“Used to have a pool table in the back,” says Mike.

“Yeah, and toothpicks for cues, the space you’ve got,” says Bill. “He gets up. ‘So where’s the toilet since the remodeling?’”

“Which do you want, the ladies’ or the gent’s?” says Mike.

“Maybe it’s the small space. Everyone gets infected with the larkiness. Meanwhile, I’m looking at the backboard. Mike has screwed up a menu of sorts. ‘Pork Chop Plate, $3.75. Swiss Steak Plate, $3.75.’

Chops or steak for $3.75? “Hank, buddy. We gotta eat.”

“Only one chop left,” says Mike.

Hank and I haggle over the chop. Hank wins. Mike goes to the back, hauls out a white surgical glove for his right hand, and starts stirring and cooking away.

When he arrives with Hank’s plate, I can’t believe this is $3.75. He has one big breaded pork chop filling half the plate, a wide splotch of rough mashed potatoes with a deep steaming puddle of gravy in the middle, and sweet corn beside it. Mike brings habanero hot sauce too.

“Sure you don’t want to swap, buddy?” I say.

“Here, try this,” says Mike. He has my steak. It’s the same corn-and-mash deal, but with a slab of hammed steel covered in a thick gravy.

“It’ll always get good meat here,” says Bill.

“Mike used to be a butcher. He knows his cuts. My steak is tender, filling, and the gravy’s rich — different from the dark gravy on the mash. ‘How do you do it?’”

“I follow meat sales,” he says. “Couldn’t make it, otherwise.”

During the week he just does hot dogs, but football-season Sundays, he does the chops and steaks as breakfast (with two eggs, hash browns, and coffee, $3.25). Then, afternoons, he fires up his smoker in the dog yard and does BBQ spare ribs (about $5.25). “You’ll never finish them,” says Mike.

They’re closed Tuesdays and Wednesdays. The guy who runs them is my brother’s friend. He’s a cheap guy with a passion for NASCAR. I’ll stop in occasionally, but he’s not worth the price of admission. He’s cheap. And he’s a cheap guy with a passion for NASCAR.

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Blend Scandal

“They make a decision about how far down in that muck they want to go.”

Last year, the brothers François and Phillipe Marion, former owners of the Burgundian winery Chanson Pére & Fils, were charged with fraud. The crime? Blending wines from different government-delineated apppellations in an effort to improve overall quality. Blending wines is a noble art, but in Burgundy, where so much is made of (and so much is charged for) a wine’s ability to communicate the place in which its grapes were grown, blending is explicitly forbidden. The scandal was not singular enough to be truly shocking: what was noteworthy was the response of the accused. According to a story in Wine Spectator, the brothers’ lawyer, Olivier Morrice, said he would “argue that the laws must be changed to reflect the fact that a lot of wines are made in Burgundy.” Apparently, the Marion brothers were not alone.

That there are scandals in a region where the law defines certain vineyards as possessing more capacity for greatness than others (grand cru, premier cru, etc.) is hardly surprising. For example, a producer’s Chambertin is supposed to be amazing; it’s certainly priced that way. To admit defeat in a difficult vintage could be a financial disaster. If adding a little (less-expensive) Charmes-Chambertin would somehow perk things up, the temptation to blend would be powerful. The Chambertin would be both better and more plentiful, and almost everybody would be happy. Even a true believer like Allen Meadows, author and publisher of the Burgundy review Burghound.com, readily admits that “you have people who abuse the system. They have great vineyards. They know they’re going to be able to put ‘Richebourg’ or ‘Musigny’ or other grand cru names on the label — which will help sell it — and they’re trying to make as much money as they can.” So, they may overcrowp, letting more grapes hang on the vines than can be brought to full ripeness. They may blend across apppellations. There are even tales of tanker trucks, loaded with cheap wine from the Languedoc, arriving in Burgundy in the dead of night, contributing much-coveted body and ripeness to a less-than-stellar vintage.

In at least one area, the rules have changed. It used to be forbidden to add both sugar and acid to a wine. Now, says Meadows, “You can [add sugar to] one barrel of wine and acidity another barrel, and then blend them.” But that is only one area; abuses still abound. For example, French law attempts to insure quality by limiting the production from a given vineyard. Otherwise, growers would be even more tempted to overcrop their grapes into a dilated oblivion. The law also requires that wines made in excess of a vineyard’s legal limit be sent to a government distillery — free of charge. Some domains, understandably hesitant to give away their precious juice, will “filter” a better vineyard’s excess production down into wines supposedly made from lesser vineyards. Thus, they are able to produce a less exalted wine that is that much better (if that much less typical of its origins) and so enhance their reputation. And, they still get to make money off of it.

In Issue 5 of Burghound.com, Meadows notes that in 1999 “filtering” was practiced by some less than scrupulous winemakers. The harvest was so large and the fruit so good — why would you send wines like that to a distillery instead of selling at every level of production? In 2000, a much more difficult vintage, there was far less “filtering,” and when it was done, it was done to save the lesser wines from being downright awful. Not every manipulation is illegal, of course. Some, contrary to the mantra of the moment, the winemaker does need to do more than baby-sit his wine — even in Burgundy. In 2000, grapes were large and skins were thin. The wines, as Meadows puts it, “started out a little skinny. The classic formula [for unfermented grape must] is one-third solid material — skins, seeds, pulp, and sometimes stems — to two-thirds juice.” (Solid material contributes much to a wine in the way of tannin, color, and acidity.) “In 2000, you were getting 80 to 85 percent juice and only 15 percent solids. One of the things they’ll do is called a saignée — they’ll bleed some of the unfermented juice to try to restore that ratio. The problem is that they have to do it immediately after crushing, and typically what gets bled off is the juice with the highest sugar content.” That’s bad news in a region where naturally produced grape sugars are at a premium.

“...adds Meadows, “a saignée above 10 percent of the liquid generally results in a highly tannic, astringent wine.” Such “little fixes” are scorned by top producers as being the work of Monsieur Dernier Moment — Mister Last Minute, trying to correct months of poor vineyard management with a behind-the-scenes burst of trickery. But since even a well-executed saignée cannot fully correct a vintage like 2000, other measures — less crude but far riskier — are called for. Explains Meadows, “What a number of guys are doing — and this is a good thing, not a trick — is to try to flatten the wines by aging them on their lees,” letting them sit on the solid material, including dead yeast cells, that precipitates out of newly fermented wine.

Extra time in contact with the skins can mean greater extraction of what they have to offer. As for the yeasts, “The Burgundians use the concept of autolysis. Autolysis is a secondary fermentation resulting from the decomposition of the yeasts after they die. The decomposition releases complex proteins that a lot of people believe add to the complexity of the resultant wine.” (Meadows notes this is the same process used to garner complexity in high-quality Champagne.) Normally, after the primary fermentation is completed, the wine is racked (drained) off of the gross lees — the really big stuff like stems, seeds, and skins — in what is known as débourbage. Sometimes it goes from there straight into the barrel; sometimes it makes a stop in another tank so that the maker can assess the quality of his lees. “They may let it sit there for as long as a week. The longer it sits, the more solid material will fall to the bottom of the tank.” Eventually, the cleared wines are racked into barrels. “Then they’ve got this sort of thick layer of mucic — lees and it gets clearer as it goes up. They make a decision about how far down in that muck they want to go” and then drain those lees off the top of the thicker stuff and add them to the barrels. The lees are left in the barrel until after the secondary fermentation — in which bacteria convert the wine’s malic acid into lactic acid — has taken place. This fermentation can cause off-flavors to arise from the lees, and usually the wines are racked again to avoid the possibility of their being tainted. But in a year like 2000, some winemakers opted against taking this final step. In “some cases, the only racking that occurred was right before the bottling.” The procedure is theoretically sound, but, says Meadows, “Your triage — grape sorting — has to be almost perfect. If it’s not, then not only do you have rotting grapes in the initial vinification, now you’re going to have some percentage of those skins in contact with the wine for a long time. And thanks to their thin skins, 2000’s grapes were especially prone to rot. ‘It’s a little bit like playing with dynamite. If they misjudge the quality of those lees, those wines are going to be miserable.’”

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4465 Mission Boulevard, Pacific Beach, 858-483-4141; Fashion Valley Center, 858-219-1886; 56th & I, Chula Vista, 858-420-8660. — E.B. (80%)
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North County Reader April 11, 2002 135
Lebanese feast at low cost. Open daily, lunch and dinner. Moderate. — E.W.

JACK AND GIULIO'S ITALIAN RESTAURANT 2391 San Diego Ave-

ue, Old Town, 619-294-3704. The for-

er owners of Giulio's in Pacific Beach

now operate Jack and Giulio's. Best bets are angel hair pasta, minestrone soup, and their famous scampis. Old-style chicken caesar starts always on the menu. Outdoor patio is one of the strong fea-
tures. This is a low-cost family restaur-

ant with fresh, casual food. Open daily, lunch and dinner; continuous service weekends. Inexpensive to upper moderate. — E.W.

PREGO Hazard Center, 1370 Frazier

Road (at Friars Road), Mission Valley, 619-321-4750. In a stylish North Italian restaurant set in a come-as-you-are mall, a million-dollar renovation at the turn of our century has turned down the noise level to match the plesing, easy-going North Italian cooking. Good starters include the antipasto platter, sparkling salads, and yeasty, fresh-baked rosemary-garlic bread (ac-
tually a mini-pizza crust). Pastas (many featuring fresh seafood) are near per-

fect and the sauces are rich. The menu offers a wide range of seafood options, including fresh fish, such as salmon and tuna. The pasta dishes are well prepared, and the sauces are rich and flavorful. The wine list is extensive and includes a good selection of California wines. The service is attentive and friendly, and the atmosphere is cozy and inviting. Overall, Prego is an excellent choice for Italian cuisine lovers. — E.W.

EAST COUNTY & STATE COLLEGE

ALPINE INN 2225 Alpine Boulevard, Alpine, 619-445-3712. If you're a beer lover, try the Texas burger served on a Kaiser roll with steak fries. Stay with the beef here. Dark interior with large booths. Very crowded for both brunch and dinner on Sunday. Early bird din-
nner Monday through Saturday for $7.95. Call for hours. Open daily. Lunch Monday through Saturday, din-
ner nightly. Brunch Sunday. Moderate
to expensive. — E.W.

ARGATA 5957 Baltimore Drive, Suite

110, La Mesa, 619-469-3157. Here's a
great bargain Japanese restaurant.

Among the best are the combination plates which contain savory chicken, tempura, and gyoza dumplings. The vegetable and shrimp tempura is out-

standing. Closed Sunday. Lunch and
dinner Monday through Saturday. In-

expensive. — E.W.

ASIAN 1754 University Avenue (at

Lowell), La Mesa, 619-697-0361. Louisi-

ana and East Africa share the menu at this spacious restaurant where the Mississippi meets the Nile. Most dishes are made to order, so don't expect to eat and run. Start with a sam-

pling of Maryam Suliman's Somalian sambushe (of chicken, beef, fish, spin-
tich, potato, lentils, shrimps, cheese, fruit) —

each savory filling is different season-
ed. Then dive into a bowl of co-

owner Vernon Sukum's exemplary seafood gumbo. You can taste the Big Easy in every bite of NOLA-born chef

Patrick Kavanagh's Louisiana dishes, including an unbeatable jambalaya, or you can opt for African specialties such as injir, zippe, Somalian spaghetti, or a vegetarian sampler. "All you can eat" weekend brunches offer items from both cuisines, including fried turkey. No algebra, no pork, all meats halal (Muslim-butchered). Lunch/dinner

Tuesday through Friday, brunch/din-
ner weekends. Low moderate. —

N.W. (2012)

BURNING TREE NATIVE AMERI-

CANE GRILL 4080 Old Highway 80, Bou-

levard, 619-766-3442; www.na-

tivegrill.com. This place feels like some-

one's baronial country retreat. Since

1987, it has sat under a grove of Cali-

fornia Live Oaks 60 miles east of down-
town. It once housed the Chateau Basque restaurant. EH heads, dark tim-
bers, mottled yellow windows — you

start seeing you'd brought your tie.

But don't worry, Jim Buel and his fam-

ily keep prices reasonable and attitudes casual. They collected Native Ameri-

can recipes throughout the Southwest to create a pretty interesting fusion of American Indian recipes. Try Co-

manche fried frogs' legs in a cornmeal

crust, or hunter's stew with venison and rabbit, stilton of buffalo, or "Skokomish Huckleberry glazed duck." Open Wednesday through Sunday for lunch and dinner. Inexpensive to expensive. — E.B. (901)

D.R. AKENS' Avarado Plaza, 690 Al-

varado Road, College Area, 619-265-0218. Surely the best Jewish deli in San Diego. Soups are wonderful, and so are the 110 sand-

wiches, especially the corned beef. The

knishes and chopped liver easily rival

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standing, fully stocked bakery. Open,

daily, breakfast, lunch, and dinner. In-

expensive to moderate. — E.W.

EFFIN'S PUB AND GRILL 6164 El

Cajon Boulevard, College Area, 619-

229-9020. Come here after a hard-

day's hit the books at nearby State. It's a brass-on-the-face-blades, wild-

west-looking place where things can get pretty lively. The surprise is, they have

some pretty good food, especially the pizzas. Check the house specials. Monday-

madness (an "x-large pizza with domes-
tic draft pitcher"), Taco Tues-

day (tacos are bi-gig, and Wing Wed-

nesday (hot & spicy wings go for a

song). But, best of all, you can come up to the bar and say "Gimme an Effin

beer" and not have to duck. Inexpen-

sive to moderate. Closed Sundays. —

E.B. (11/01)

L.Y.'S GARDEN 6011 El Cajon Bou-

levard, College Area, 619-303-1885. Al-

though the extensive menu offers Chi-

nese as well as Cambodian specials, it's best to order the Cambodian food. Be sure to ask Mr. Ly for suggestions. Live crab and lobster as well as fresh oysters and shrimp available. Open daily. In-

expensive to moderate. — E.W.

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tion’s food tastes fresh and sharp in the mornings. Check out the "Macho Man" bredbread; three eggs, two bacon strips, two pancakes, country potatoes or fries, and toast. Or the "Big Honker’ Omelet": six eggs, ham, turkey, bacon, sausage, bell pepper, mushroom, tomato, onion, country potato or French fries, and toast. On the lunch menu: The Junction Burger — with or without cheese — big and juicy. Also good: "old fashioned" BLT sandwich and chunky chicken breast salad. Early breakfast through lunch, Tuesday through Saturday. Inexpensive. — E.W. (801)

CENTRAL SAN DIEGO

ASAMRA RESTAURANT 4133 Euc-a-
Javier Boulevard at Fairmount, 81693-3666, www.asamra-san-diego.com. The file here is Eritrean (which proves very similar to Ethiopian), and the menu is long and uncommonly inter-
nesting. The best way to order is with a terrific array, including top-notch tahiti dish (known as doro wat on Ethiopian dishes), chicken and egg on a stick in a red sauce, a similar dish with beef, and ground meat in a sauce with broccoli. The restaurant is a blessing to our community. You can eat for lunch or dinner, and you don’t have to order a variety of dishes to get a good meal. — M.N. (2009)

LACHI & CHINESE 4122 N -
Figueroa, 81693-0619. This restaurant is a sim-
ple, large space and spare around for
food. The menu is very extensive for
food. The service is very friendly for
food. The menu is very extensive. — E.W. (801)

LUNA CHINA 4133 La -
Figuerza, 81693-0619. This restaurant is a sim-
ple, large space and spare around for
food. The menu is very extensive for
food. The service is very friendly for
food. The menu is very extensive. — E.W. (801)

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DI 3975 Fifth Avenue, Hillcrest Cin-
ema complex, 81693-3135. Don’t miss the
elegant food, the lovely set-
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cated. This Indian restaurant is a bless-
ing to our community. You can eat for lunch or dinner, and you don’t have to order a variety of dishes to get a good meal. — M.N. (2009)

ICHRAN 1494 University Avenue, 81693-2970. Is this Paris or
Tokyo? At night, the cafe outside gives
life to a Venetian cafe, except that
the customers are eating sushi and drink-
ing green tea. The best courses are at lunch, with weekly spe-
ciallettes like Bento combo (sushi rolls, crab, salmon, rice) and filling sushi. — E.W. (801)

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ZIA’S AFGHAN CAFE 4118 20th
Street, 81693-285-1830. This storefront
cafe with only eight tables serves inex-
pensive but very well-prepared Afghan food.
Try three-bean stew, stuffed peppers and
asparagus with spicy yogurt sauce. Lunch and
dinner. Inexpensive. — E.W. (801)

ADAMS AVENUE GRILL 2301 Adams
Avenue, University Heights, 81693-8440. The frequently chang-
ing menu tries to describe several
large dishes, and can’t quite get in
arms around any of them. The dishes
are often ambitious; a few sour, but
many fater due to flaws in conception, execution, or both. Largely hot-
spiced lentil stew well seasoned with
sweetness to stand up to items featur-
ing sweet and sour — where are the
Stars? Still, the place seems full of hap-
iness and friendliness: yellow and
orange walls, plenty of smile and ambiance. The brothes receive lavish attention, and sometimes try to keep it
about — the blood orange and roasted
butternut squash soup is delicious, dark
and complex. The generous, marvelous
lavender-infused crème brûlée makes this a dessert destination — place it
right after dessert after a movie or other cul-
tural event, keep this dessert cafe in
mind. Baker-owner Karen Kreame pre-
pared
tures, carrots, cooked, and all manner of chocolate goodness. In
summer, the patio is especially charming,
for Open breakfast, weekend breakfast,
Tea and lunch, and until late, ending
Thursday through Saturday, for brunch,
and weekends until midnight. — E.W. (801)

FIFTH AND HAWTHORN 515 Hay-
worth Avenue, University Heights, 81693-3725.
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dishes are to be found here. The price
of the entrees includes soup or salad, but
the bet is the bargain-price per couple
price for fish dinner, which consists of four
courses (with a choice of three) with
the bottle of wine. A la carte choices are
available, too. This restaurant is often
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A Review by Sean Brennan

In a world of donuts, pierced tongues & decal, non-fat, no froth, double lattes, it's nice to know that some things never change!

Things like Hennessey's - your neighborhood meeting place, that recently has landed right here in San Diego's historic Gaslamp Quarter. For over 25 years, Hennessey's has graced the beaches of Southern California, offering good food, cold drinks & the atmosphere of a & little place in the middle of the Irish Highlands. The secret to their success - their mouths are closed, but I'm guessing it has something to do with their staff. To serve good, reasonably priced food is one thing, but to serve it with a smile, a brief conversation & a promise to make you their personal VIP guest on your next visit, is key.

See for yourself. Visit for breakfast, lunch or dinner, 7 days a week. With items such as their Irish Country Breakfast Platters, Famous Giant Burgers, Red Irish Chicken Salad, & "Bar-D-Dew" New York Steak, all your taste buds will be thrilled.

Now, I know you're thinking, we've all seen restaurants & bars come & go - it's a tough business. But there's something about Hennessey's that just feels right. During my visit, I was mesmorized by Pacific Beach location, I felt very comfortable & taken care of, without feeling succumbed or annoyed.

Many new restaurants I've visited can appear fresh & exciting, offering you exotic dishes & trendy drinks, but, like fashion, they can only be popular for so long. Hennessey's has proven to be an uncomplicated, be-yourself kind of place where you can meet your college frat pack, hold your business lunch or network with your soon-to-be clients over cocktails & an appetizer.

During their first few weeks downtown, Hennessey's plans on throwing a couple of Grand Opening parties & celebrations, catering to all age groups, plus, there's rumored to be an industry party on the 21st for all you hospitality gurus.

Check Hennessey's out - you'll be pleasantly surprised!

708 4th Avenue, San Diego (619) 339-2994

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moist, sweet, buttery. The priciest la carte sides are either bad or mediocre. The Godiva chocolate mousse cake is ex-
ceptinal. But go for the steak.
Expense. — M.G. (9/10)
PETE'S QUALITY MEATS 1742-1/2
India. Little Italy, 619-234-1684. Pete's Meats was just a butcher's shop until Pete's daughter and sister-in-law got the idea to set up a grill there. Now al-
fornadors line up for Sicilian specialties like Italian-sausage sandwiches, steak sandwiches, and especially specials — veal rolled around two cheeses, onions, tomatoes, pine nuts, currants, parsley, raisins, and bread rounds. Pete stuffs all of that into a hot bun with marina sauce, sautéed onions, and mushrooms as packing. Nuff said! Inexpensive.
Expense. — E.W. (11/01)
ROYALE BRASSERIE 224 Fifth Ave-
nue, Gaslamp District, 619-237-4000. Like a theme park for nostalgics yearn-
ing for bygone Bohemian Paris, Royale's eye-popping Art Nouveau deco recreates a fin de siécle brasserie — but "recreation" or not, it makes dinner a recreational activity. You'll find competent competitors of French bourgeois classics — escargots, frogs' legs, charcuterie, et al. — with an emphasis on impeccable seafood. The nestled yellowfin tuna with fresh saffron marinated in fennel and pink peppercorns is a divine introduction to the large menu. But the whole dining experience is as impressive as the setting itself. Ambiance, service, and food are top-notch. Be sure to sample the seasonal Noir, a playful and most affordable tasting menu. — E.W.
TAKA 555 Fifth Avenue, Gaslamp Dis-
trict, 619-237-0555. This restaurant is a well-hidden gem known for its tasty and at-
tractive settings, which combine Asian and Continental elements, can be ordered in half portions. Don't miss the linguini and seafood, flitet mignon, salmon sashimi. Highly satisfying food, prices are affordable. Open nightly for dinner. Inexpensive to expensive. — E.W.

South Bay & Coronado

CAFE 1341 1341 Orange Avenue, Coronado, 619-437-1134. Rick Chap-
man has created a French cafe atmos-
phere with round Parisian tables and slat chairs outside and a balcony inside. Here Corrandis's artsy vibe mix with admirals, CEOs, and SEALs. Big fat cup of tea is a favorite drink. Break-
fast is not too shabby either. But the steamed eggs plus ex-
tras, such as the Americano with two steamed eggs, Swiss cheese, and ham, a side of fruit and sliced baguette. Lunches are sandwiches (like curried tuna or brie with pesto) or salads (try the chicken). Best deal: The Combo Special, a half sandwich and soup or salad. And there's always an art exhibi-
tion going on inside. Open daily, 11 am to 3 pm, 5 pm to 9 pm. — E.B. (11/01)
DADAF 838 Fifth Avenue (at E Street), Gaslamp District, 619-338-2008. Ve-
getarian-friendly. Quiet and relaxing with a wonderful, room becoming an ear-
splitting mob scene whenever (even be-
fore the restaurant goes disco at 9:30). The Harry's boys wearing Persians face centers on well-marinated kebabs and herb-rich stews, served with various savory rice dishes. There's excellent
tbspinach feroi, sautéed yoghurt reli-
shish with cucumbers, lamb shop kebabs, and a vibrant, sweet sour feroi viand (sesame-
atefound in a kitchen — that's easy to slip into and, the huge cold shelf display cases are to share and to swoon over. To accompany the feast, the wine-by-the-glass choices are super-sassy. Often very noisy; heated

Tijuana

The (pre) for all Tijuana numbers is 011-52-564. From the United States use the pre-prefix 011-52-564 when calling Tijuana; when calling in Tijuana use only the restaurant's seven-digit num-
ber.

ANTOJITOS DEL PAIS Gobernador Balderas, 7950 Fraccionamiento Ame-
rica, near Atardeceres, 684-2424. Open by
clearing 247 from midnight on Sunday to 7 a.m. Monday. Open at lunch hour, 2:00 to 4:00 p.m., and you'll find 2000 and dozens of others cooking on the street, stirring, boiling, and frying patio on

El Rodeo 1647 Blvd. Salinas, Ti-
uta. The Rodeo is on the right side of the street. Highly visible and easy to find. Moderate. — E.W.

LA ESCONDIDA Santa Monica #1 in the LA area. Modern and immediately beautiful at night. The roasted meat and roasted fish are exceptional. The Chateaubriand (for two) are all worth-
while. Very civilized experience, com-
plete with live music on Fridays and
Saturdays. Take Revolution until it bends to the left to become Aqua Caliente. Proceed on Aqua Caliente past the racetrack, approximately one-
half mile. Turn right at El Palmas. Two short blocks up, turn left at the "Pecador Playas" sign. The entrance to La Escondida is straight ahead. Open Monday through Thursday, 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.; Friday and Saturday, 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.; Sunday, 10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Moderate. — E.W.

Free

Lunch or dinner entrees 1/2 price. See the menu for details: sandwiches, salads, desserts, and more. Valid for dine-in only. Cannot be combined with other offers. Expires 12/31/09.

Café 1341

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MOVIE LISTINGS

All reviews are by Duncan Shepherd. Priorities are indicated by one to five stars and asterisks by the black spot. Unrated movies are new and reviewed.

Amélie — Cutey art-house item looks at the world (at Paris, more precisely) through the prismatic-colored glasses of Jean-Pierre Jeunet's fevered, delayed-maturing romance. The sense of wonder, the sense of possibility, is all there, and Audrey Tautou, prone to conspiratorial glances at the camera, and the gag line a waggish narrator, is a self-denying do-gooder whose secret mission seems to be the spiritual enlightenment of others, often by the most direst means: reprogramming a speed-dial button from "Mother" to "Psychiatric Helpline." The boundless, boundless imagination tends to be grounded, however, by the air of effortlessness. The best of it— the broad, omniscient view of humanity combined with an eye for random trivial detail— was done better, and funnier, in Jane Campion's The Piano. 3/4 stars. Matthew Kassovitz. 2001.

[INLCOREST CINEMAS]

A Beautiful Mind — Laundered biography of the Nobel Prize-winning mathematician, and madman, John Forbes Nash, Jr. It's his madness, of course, and not his math, that makes him a viable screen subject, and director Ron Howard nurtures it with care. (And with more taste and restraint than is his custom.) But between the West Virginia accent and the medicinal interpolation, much of what he says— or rather, what an emasculated Russell Crowe says— is lost in transmission. With Jennifer Connelly, Ed Harris, Christopher Plummer, Paul Bettany. 2001.

[SHAWさえ-0 to 824x1013]

Big Trouble — The all-purpose title tells little about a slender, threaten comic caper adapted from a novel by Dave Barry: a lengthy eighty-five minutes. (Its release was postponed after the attacks of September 11, 2001, owing to worries over the black-market nuclear bomb smuggled aboard a jetliner: heh-heh.) The opportunities are spread very thin over the large cast: Tim Allen, Rene Russo, Stanley Tucci, Jason Lee, Zooey Deschanel, Janene Garafalo, Omar Epps, Tom Sizemore, Dennis Farina, Patrick Warburton. Sharpent gag the off-screen voices in illustration of the inanities of sports-talk radio. Directed by Barry Sonnenfeld. 2001.


Blade II — The opening re-cap — how we got to where we are — plays like the weekly opening of a vintage TV series (think of The Fugitive, for instance, or The Incredible Hulk), and the first dramatic sequence brings Kris Kristofferson back from the dead as the comic-book hero's sidekick and personal friend (no, not a Mr. Spock, but the god of metalworking and weapons-making). The main postulating thereof, about a new strain of bald-headed blue-veined vampires immune to garlic and silver, and about an unnatural alliance between our half-human half-vampire hero (Wesley Snipes, alias Wesley Smirks) and a commando team of ordinary old vampires known as the Blood Pack, is pretty much incomprehensible, and in any event only a pretext to conscript all vampires in some other war of good versus evil. 2/5 stars. Matthew Kassovitz. 2001.

Clockstoppers — Tom Swiftian science fiction about a clean teen who comes into whatever — old, new, and half-breed alike — into the martial arts. Director Guillermo del Toro's earlier vampire film, in his native Mexico, Cronos, was a genuinely original and thoughtfully contributive to the genre. Here the only naivety is in the sense that a late model automobile is new: new gadgets and gimmicks, new special effects, a new two-way mouth opening — vertical in addition to horizontal, for laster bloodsucking — and new Cronenbregian degrees of sciency. Granted, the film is3/4 stars. Matthew Kassovitz. 2001.


Changing Lanes — Revenge drama with Ben Affleck and Samuel L. Jackson, directed by Roger Michell.


Clockstoppers — Tom Swiftian science fiction about a clean teen who comes into whatsoever — old, new, and half-breed alike — into the martial arts. Director Guillermo del Toro's earlier vampire film, in his native Mexico, Cronos, was a genuinely original and thoughtfully contributive to the genre. Here the only naivety is in the sense that a late model automobile is new: new gadgets and gimmicks, new special effects, a new two-way mouth opening — vertical in addition to horizontal, for laster bloodsucking — and new Cronenbregian degrees of sciency. Granted, the film is3/4 stars. Matthew Kassovitz. 2001.
possession of a wristwatch. It can essentially stop time, or more accurately, stop the wearer's sense of time, thus giving the user the illusion of being able to slow down to a standstill. Apart from one escapee of youthful pranksters, there's little imagination in the use of it, and less imagination in the nefarious federal agents who want to get their hands on it. Jesse Bradford, Paula Garcés, French Stewart, Julie Sweeney, Michael Biehn, directed by Jonathan Frakes. 2002.

Crush — Andie MacDowell headlines a British romantic comedy written and directed by John McKay. (MIDLOST CINEMAS: FROM 5/12)

Death to Smoochy — Garish dark comedy, if that's imaginable, set in the cutthroat world of children's television. Kid's star attraction, Rainbow Randolph, is exiled to a "degenerate" shambles, forcing the network to replace him with foursquare Smoochy the Rhino. "He's a bottle of pancake syrup with legs." Danny DeVito directs him to death, along with everyone else, even before Randolph hatch's his revenge plot and before Smoochy rakes the money men with his inexhaustibility. Overstatement runs wild, but nowhere wider than Robin Williams. With Edward Norton, Catherine Keener, Jon Stewart, Harvey Fierstein, and DeVito. 2002. (FLOWER HILL; 4 LA COSTA; POWAY 10)

Dragonfly — Communication from beyond the grave. Kevin Costner loses his wife in a Venezuelan bus mishap, searches the river in vain for her body, attends her memorial services, and performs a seance that same day on a deceased mother in the ER, all before the end of the opening credits. A total nonbeliever ("When you never wake up again," he counsels a would-be suicide, "don't say I didn't warn you.") Costner nonetheless starts to doubt his own mind, even his sanity, when a series of funny happenings (funny-strictly, not funny-bah-ha) suggests his wife is trying to get in touch with him. Director Tom Shadyac, far removed from Aaah, was an instant fan. "The Nasty Professor," seems intent to demonstrate that Patch Adams revealed his true self: a pig for massage. (Even visually, the movie has something of the pug about it; the muddy dullness.) Costner, meanwhile, gets to add another portrait to his gallery of droopy, doleful heroes. (Not that he hasn't already done a whole wardrobe: Message in a Bottle.) His perpetual boyishness — the cracking voice, the of-the-moment, the awkwardness — transforms the effect, though, into an unattractive and over-dramatic case of the silences, such that the Costner oeuvre emerges as one of the most reliable remedies yet discovered for suffers from self-pity, just pop a Costner tape into the VCR and they'll be back on your feet in no time. Kathy Bates, Linda Hunt, Joe Morton, Ron Rifkin. 2002. (VOUGE)

E.T., the Extra-Terrestrial — Nothing more ought to be required to dismiss Steven Spielberg's pretense of sweetness and innocence, or to dismiss the movie's innocence; than a glance at the death-scene of the monogrammatic spaceman. This sickening spectacle is muddled for all it is worth, with the normally-uncolorful creature having turned to the color of ash, his full-moon eyes narrowing to mere crescents, and the ten-year-old boy who has befriended him, and who is symbolically wedded to him, at first waiting away in tandom, then regaining sufficient strength to walk in protest when the selfless little alien severs all ties. For cruelty to characters and audience alike, the equation of E.T. bears comparison to Dickens's polishing-off of Little Nell. No one but a card-carrying masochist would want actually to carry out such a comparison, and, in any event, the relevance of the comparison is very soon squashed. For sheer manipulativeness, for utter shamelessness in pursuit of popular approval, Spielberg leaves Dickens in his exhaust when, once having shown that E.T. away in his coffin, he arbitrarily brings him back to life again. The threshold of shamelessness is crossed over at many other points as well, particularly in Spielberg's courtship of the under-invested viewer, or of any other viewer willing to switch off his brain in an effort to feel that young again.

From the Academy Award-winning producer of Schneider's List and Jurassic Park...

"I loved this movie! An astonishingly beautiful film and an amazing story!"  
Larry King  

"Skilfully crafted, heartfelt, and altogether refreshing!"  
Michael Moore

the Other side of Heaven  
An epic journey. An enduring love.  
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• FASHION VALLEY 18

Ice Age — Three mammals and a baby. A computer-animated woody mammoth, sloth, and saber-toothed tiger (your species needs to have an interstellar sound in it — oh... oh... oh... — in order to join this fraternity) on a trek to restore a founding to his migrating tribe. The wordless prologue — of a high-strung squirrel looking to bury an acorn in a winter landscape, wedging it forcefully into the ice, and creating a fast-growing fissure and a major avalanche — is practically a cartoon unto itself, and very funny. Then the talking starts (voices of Ray Romano, John Leguizamo, and Denis Leary), and we revert to the stock-in-trade of contemporary animation: smart-ass repartee, hipness, hardness, abrasiveness, and anarchonism: "Hey, does this look like a petting zoo to you?" and "I don't eat junk food" and so forth. (The intermittent reappraisals of the nonverbal squirrel are always welcome.) The inconspicuous end of an ice-age menanarchola is restricted to one scene of animated cave paintings depicting the extinction of the mammoths, and is a soggy coda. Co-directed by Chris Wedge and Carlos Saldanha, 2002.

Human Nature — Michel Gondry's offbeat comedy of civilization vs. nature, with Patricia Arquette, Tim Robbins, Rhys Ifans. (FASHION VALLEY 18: LA JOLLA VILLAGE: FROM 5/12)

Ice Age:

ITALIAN FOR BEGINNERS — Danish romantic comedy made in strict adherence to the Dogma '95 guidelines for unwatchable cinematography. Pity, because the loose-knit cast of characters — a widowed pastor, a cranky restaurateur, a shy hotelier, a clumsy baker, a somber hairdresser, and a sunny Italian waitress — is not without its charms and its chemistry. The newspaper ad and the promo trailer want you to believe the film takes place, rather than merely ends, in Venice. What with the indoor, up-close, hand-held camerawork, it doesn't give you a very clear sense of where it does take place. With Anders Bertelsen, Anette Stovborg, Ann Eleanor Jorgensen, Peter Gamitzler, Lars Kaalund, Sara Ingrid Jespersen: written and directed by Lone Scherg. 2001.
* (HILLCREST CINEMAS)

Kissing Jessica Stein — An alternative lifestyle romantic comedy starring and co-written by two unknowns, Jennifer Westfeldt (reminiscent of Lisa Kudrow around the mouth) and Heather Juergensen (reminiscent, for those with longer memories, of Susanne Pascal's enthusiasm around the eyes). Their characters are, in their separate ways, thwarted heterosexuals — a routine dates-from-hell montag is entered in evidence — who are primed to switch teams. Of one, a SoHo art dealer, is grieving the loss of the go-go. The other, a copyeditor at the fictitious New York Tribune, and hence attracted by the first one's citation of Ellie in her women-seeking-same women ad and by her use of the word "marinate" in a fresh context, is more hesitant: indeed, "the Jewish Sandra Dee." The two writers and actresses, as distinct from the two characters, achieve a certain level of perception and personal chemistry, dragged down a bit by their proromises to preen and boast, but nudged up again by the seeming honesty of the ending. Scott Cohen, Tovah Feldshuh; directed by Charles Herman-Wurmfeld. 2002.
* (FLOWER HILL 4: HILLCREST CINEMAS)

Lone Star — Ominous, possible murder mystery. Two sourstring hunters on a long-deserted rifle range in a remote corner of a
nononsense military base discover, among the cacti and yucca, a single set of human remains. Initial indications — the Mason's ring that got the attention of the metal detector, a rusted tin star — point toward the infamous corrupt sheriff who went missing forty years back. And initial suspicions point toward the late, legendary sheriff who succeeded him. The current sheriff happens to be the legen's son, and if for no other reason than the heaviness of the shadow under which he toils — "Sheriff Deeds is dead, honey. You're just Sheriff Junior" — he would not personally be all that unhappy at posthumously proving the old man a murderer. A choice to see Chris Cooper in a lead role, and looking, under the added exposure, even more worried, burdened, squashed than usual. Director, writer, and editor John Sayles, and lodestar (though not lone star) of the American independent cinema, makes use of this situation to survey a Texas border town geographically and architecturally, in crisp, clean photography. And, clearly more important to him, to dispense civic lessons and history lessons, liberal editorials and human-interest vignettes. He does not use the situation, at the same time, to develop anything resembling suspense, excitement, pace, or narrative lucy. The outcome is broad in scope and broad in mind (in scope, as broad as anything of his except maybe City of Hope in mind, as broad as absolutely everything of his), but ostentatiously flat on tone and slack in tension. Elizabeth Peña, Joe Morton, Kris Kristofferson, Frances McDormand, 1996.

**MUSEUM OF PHOTOGRAPHIC ARTS, 4/11, T.P.M., and 4/12, 1:30 and 8:00 P.M.**

The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring — Dr. Tolkien's home-cooked myth. First course only. All manner of visual invention, photographic trickery, computer magic, etc., cannot alter what is in essence an overblown bedtime story. They can only blow it up bigger. And the burden of it is more or less tripled by the knowledge that these three hours are just a third of it. Elijah Wood, Ian McKellen, Ian Holm, Viggo Mortensen, Sean Astin, Liv Tyler, Cate Blanchett, directed by Peter Jackson, 2001.

**AMERICAN VALLEY 10, PARKWAY PLAZA 18, VOGUE**

Monsoon Wedding — A gathering of the clan for an arranged marriage in modern Delhi. You won't be alone if you have a hard time telling who is who and how they're related: each one of the invitiess voices the complaint. It's a standard comic situation (Father of the Bride, etc.), almost a cliche, and the Punjabi exoticism goes far to compensate for all the conventionality. It may not, however, go far enough to compensate for the bald, naked turn down the side street of molestation: a new comic convention, but no less a convention, now that every TV sitcom feels obligated to Address Important Issues. The conflict between the old ways and the new, too, is standard for Eastern cinema (Qura, etc.), although Mira Nair's scrabbling catch-as-catch-can camerawork — 16mm blown up to 35mm — leaves no doubt, for every moment, where her own sympathies lie. The movie comes to a somewhat premature climax, albeit a moving one, at the cathartic celebratory dance the night before the ceremony. It would all feel a lot more barren, though, without the delightful figure of the weaselly wedding planner ("Ten minutes, he promises, exactly and approximately"); with his polka-dot scarf, his leisure suit, his calculator wristwatch, his slip-on pager. By himself, this inch-by-inch social climberembodies the strangeness and weaknesses of the whole: complacently formulated yet infused with a palpable humanity. However large a laughingstock, he is not denied his own romantic yearnings and his inhibiting self-awareness. Naini Arathoon, Shilpa Dabbe, Vasantbhai Doshi, Vidya Raz, 2002.

**COME**

Monster's Ball — Swiss-born filmmaker Marc Forster focuses on the middle man (Billy Bob Thornton) in three generations of Georgia corrections officers. The film starts right out throwing haymakers — first thing-in-the-morning vomit, wham-bam thankyou-ma'am sodomy, good-ole-boy giddy, Death Row, the Last Walk, more vomit, a suicide, and a hit-and-run fatality — before it settles down to a banal, awkward, muted interacial romance (with Halle Berry, a Death Row widow), and more vomit. By that time, it's all punched out. The electric-chair diaper is a new screen detail, if you're keeping track. With Peter Boyle, Halle Berry, and Sean Combs. 2001.

**AMERICAN VALLEY 10, PARKWAY PLAZA 18, JOLLA VILLAGE**

Outta Time — College student (Mario Lopez) smuggling mysterious package into Mexico, directed by Lorenz David. (CHULA VISTA 10, GILAKÁMPA 15, RANCHO DEL REY 16, SWEETWATER 9, FROM 4/12)

Panic Room — After his Fight Club, The Game, and Seven, David Fincher's next step is apt to seem a rather modest and old-fashioned thriller: a straightforward damsel-in-distress tale, two damsel to be exact, a well-compensated divorcee with mild claustrophobia and her diabetic daughter, held up together in an improbable secret chamber—a kind of "castle keep" in their New York brownstone, besieged by three intruders whose objective happens to lie within the chamber. Weighing against the old-fashionedness are, among other things, the splatter measurements of the violence and the meandering, atmospheric sort of photography — all in moody, molly, scummy shades of green, as if the action were taking place after-hours in a public aquarium. However, the central situation, in constant danger of petrification, is efficiently set up (the arrival of the invaders outside the windows in the rain, in the dark of night, is creepy in the extreme), well sustained, credibly complicated — in spite of any unhappiness you might feel over the handling of the cops-at-the-front-door — and ingeniously rearranged on the fly. (The script is by David Koepp, writer as well as director of the underrated, site of the Echoes and the Trigger Effect, and writer only on the exemplary Bad Influence). Jon Foster and the bephy Kristen Stewart are both excellent in their clenched and controlled manner: no time, under the circumstances, to explore "character" and "relationship." Forest Whitaker, Jared Leto, Dwight Yoakam. 2002.

**CHULA VISTA 10, ENGENIES 8, FASHION VALLEY 18, FLOWER HILL 4, GALLAXY 6, HAZARD CENTER 7, LA COSTA 6, LA JOLLA 12, MISSION MARQUEE 3, MISSION VALLEY 20, OCEANSHORE 16, PALM PROMENADE 24, PARKWAY PLAZA 19, PORPOIS 10, RANCHO DEL REY 16, SANDY SHORES 9, FROM 4/12)

Resident Evil — Brand-new brainstorm
from the maker of Mortal Kombat, Paul W.S. Anderson (not to be confused with the maker of Boogie Nights, Paul Thomas Anderson) back to the video-game shelf for an ugly, ultra-violent, five-act action-drama, set somewhere called the Hive, underground headquarters of something called the Umbrella Corporation, sometime in the near future. It keeps you in an extended state of not knowing what the hell is going on — extended, to be more exact, well past the point of caring. Befuddled tends to nullify suspense, no matter how many lethal laser beams and flesh-eating zombies are coming at you. Michelle Rodriguez, as a second-banana commander, again demonstrates her tightness and readiness for a wild, chick-flick role ("Blow me," if ever one should come along in a decent movie. Mills Jowitch, Eric Mahans, James Ponsoldt, 2002."

**CHINA VISTA 10; FASHION VALLEY 18; MISSION VALLEY 20; OCEANIA 18; PALM PROMENADE 24; PARKWAY PLAZA 18**

**The Rookie** — Off the Disney conveyor belt of inspirational sports stories comes the live-action comedy of Jim Morris, high-school science teacher and extrapolactic car salesman at Big Lake, Texas, who with only a head start in the pitching career was cut short by shoulder surgery, then revived when he tried out, on a dare from his players, for the Tampa Bay Devil Rays and made it to the majors. He was thirty-five. (The movie makes him out to be thirty-nine, maybe to conform closer to the actual age of forty-eight-year-old Dennis Quaid, or maybe out of concern that the average viewer would not be duly amazed at the younger age.) There's a certain family-film blandness to the thing, and yet there is also a fine feel for the rustic West in the setting, and the second-class status of the sport of baseball in the heart of football country. (While automatic slipknots maintain the immaculate turf of the gridiron, a pack of deer gobble up the seeds on the dirt diamond.) And the entire last act of the drama — the hero's wide-eyed arrival at the palatial Ballpark at Arlington, the finding of his locker and uniform in the clubhouse, the limbering up in the bullpens in front of the Texas home fans, the ultimate onto the playing field, the first batter faced — is a payoff tantamount to an escalator to heaven. This is not (what the hero had fantasized as a boy) the seventh game of the World Series, it is only a mop-up relief appearance in a blowout. But that's several miles beside the point. With Rachel Griffiths, Brian Cox, Beth Grant, Jay Hernandez, Russell Richardson; directed by John Lee Hancock. 2002.

**D** (DEL MAR HIGHLANDS 8; ENCINITAS 8; FASHION VALLEY 18; GALAXY 6; HAZARD CENTER 7; HARBOUR DRIVE 11; FROM 4 12; LA JOLLA 16; MISSION MARKETPLACE 13; MISSION VALLEY 20; OCEANIA 18; PALM PROMENADE 24; PARKWAY PLAZA 18; POMAY 1; RANCHO DEL REY 18; SANTÉE DRIVE IN)

**The Royal Tenenbaums** — Not just a dysfunctional family, but a determinedly unrelentingly oddball, eccentric, wacky, weird, kooky, cracked family; but only a rarely and very mildly funny family. (None of this dirtier Gene Hackman, as the long-absent head of the clan, from his normal excellence.) Wes Anderson, the director, favors frontal and centered compositions, or frontal and symmetrical ones — the visual equivalent of hammer blows. (Nailing down, if nothing else, the sameness and monotonicity of it all.) And no scene would be complete without a musical selection from the eclectic soundtrack: Ravel to Vivaldi, the Ramones to the Beach Boys, Dylan to Nicks. With Annette Bening, Gwyneth Paltrow, Ben Stiller, Luke Wilson, Owen Wilson, Danny Glover, Bill Murray, 2001.

**2 PLAZA 1; LA PALOMA; FRIEDMAN 14; GILROY 14**

**Scratch** — Music documentary on hip-hop DJs, from the maker of Hype, Doug Pray.

(HEC 4/12 THROUGH 18)

**Showtime** — Genial spoof, too innocuous and lary minded to be construed as satire, of "reality television." A no-nonsense LAPD detective, in the departmental doghouse after putting a bullet in a TV news camera ("He's done Harry, he's real ... and we've..."
Call 444-FLMT for theater or missing information. Bargain showtimes are in parentheses.

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Town Square 14
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A Beautiful Mind (PG) Fri. (12:30) 4:30
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involved in tricky negotiations with unidentified homosexuals, forced to brush up on English for the purpose. And the focal relationship, the one that bridges the widest gap, is his tenacious crush on a aging stage actress (the dolorous Anne Bancroft), an actual stage actress unknown to American moviegoers, and as such, a real revelation). who moonlights as the industrialist’s English instructor. The mismatch of philistine and artist — along with associated matters of personal taste, bias, judgment, and the like — is at the heart of which Hollywood would be afraid to make of any. One can readily imagine, or even recall, an equivalent to this event when the industrialists attempt to regulate the theater folk with folk-color jokes. But a Hollywood comedy would inevitably feel obligated to enlist the audience on one side or the other (better snub or yes!), sign them up as roseators or hussies, or in short, encourage their ingrained biases and snap judgments. Jousai, same as Renais in Old Song, is in contrast ever-present, subtle, dispassionate, tolerant, broad-minded, truly sophisticated, and civilised. And in a word, an artist. And he’s done, what’s more, ten times further than the Hollywood average. (E.g., the rejected and humiliated suitor buries his head in his uncomprehending wife’s shoulder and fails to see that her next question is addressed not to him but to the family dog. "Want a cookie?" The film may be, for most tastes, rather meandering and

question addressed not to him but to the family dog. "Want a cookie?" The film may be, for most tastes, rather meandering and
dawdling, but the presiding sensibility makes it a pleasure all the same.  

III * SAN DIEGO PUBLIC

Librarian: 4/15 6:30 P.M.

The Machine — Remake of the

H.G. Wells classic, directed by the novel's great-grandson, Simon Wells, whose allegiance is plain to his time and not to his illustrious ancestor. The special effects are perhaps not too excessive (too novel, as compared with the current norm rather than with the George Pal version of 1960. And although the machine itself — all flash and thrill — bears roughly the same relationship to the story as the thirty-years-old model as say, the alien spacecraft in Close Encounters bears to those in War of the Worlds (another Wells adaptation). The very fact that the machine could be used as a sort of vehicle for the film's educational purpose. But the actual trip through time, from 1899 to 802,701, is well handled. But the class-war aspect — the widening divide between bourgeoisie and proletariat — has dated far less badly than might, in a bit more than a century, have been expected (except maybe by Wells himself), and certainly not so badly that it needed to be, as it was, exported egalitarian. On the contrary, the only reason to avoid it is to avoid stepping on anyone's sensitive toes. The revised concept, while not as successful as the original in communicating with the PC sentimentalities of the present, whereby the elfie Elays have been converted into a truly happy breed of noble savages (santas included), with something of a Native American feel about them, something of a Rain Forest feel, something of a South Seas feel, underscored by the soaring tribal
Time Traveller (Guy Pearce, an Aussie like Rod Taylor last time out), thrusts into the thick of it, transforms himself overnight from the Absent-Minded Professor into Mad Max. A superior intellect will take you only so far; eventually push must come to shove. Samantha Mumba, Orlando Jones, Jeremy Irons. 2002.

Van Wilder — Campus comedy with Ryan Reynolds, Tara Reid, and Tim Matheson, directed by Walt Becker.

We Were Soldiers — The post-Private Ryan fashion in war films now reaches the treacherous terrain of the Vietnam War. Call it the all-guts-all-glory look: the stomach-turning level of mayhem commonly associated with the anti-war film, and yet a crispness of salute more typical of the wartime flag-waver. Writer-director Randall Wallace, who wrote but did not direct Pearl Harbor and Braveheart, has plowed some fertile new ground — what came to be known as the Valley of Death, site of the first major battle between U.S. troops and Vietnamese in November of 1965 — and he has harvested from that soil the provocative afterthought that the real tragedy of the event was not the number of Americans who lost their lives there (the максим of the Vietnam commander, "Kill all they send, and they will stop coming"), but rather the possibility that the outcome could be viewed as an American victory. i.e., encouragement to press on until 58,000 had lost their lives. Somehow, though, Wallace remains impervious to his own irony. Nothing will wilt the crispness of his salute. The big drawback, even for that purpose, is that the film enters the tribute mode so early, and with such unwavering resolve, that it leaves itself no room for emotional development. Everything is prefigured, predigested, telegraphed, heavy-handed. With Mel Gibson, Chris Klein, Greg Kinnear, Sam Elliott, Barry Pepper, Madeleine Stowe, Keri Russell. 2002.

Y Tu Mamá También — Mexican horny-teenager comedy tells of two buddies, one affluent and one not, who, to their astonishment and delight, are able to entice the ripe Spanish wife of a bumptious philanderer to accompany them on a trek to an imaginary beach named Heaven's Mouth. En route, she offers a sexual tutorial that brings the knowledge to all boys to such depths of self-realization as to uncock a geyser of vomit. (The intrusive, third-person, know-it-all narrator heightens the feeling of patronization.) Filmmaker Alfonso Cuaron, unlike the makers of American horny-teen comedies, tries at all times to serve the characters and the story rather than simply to twist the arrow off the laugh meter. Or to put it another way, he tries at all times for realism, even when trying for raunch. And the two young actors — Gael García Bernal and Diego Luna — are resoundingly convincing. But the character of the woman — the starved-looking Maribel Verdú, whose entire intake of calories appears to go straight to her bosom — is something of a contrivance, perhaps a more complex contrivance than some, but not a more believable one, for all that. There are numerous points of cultural interest along the road to the beach (which turns out to exist after all), though the paltil color and casual camerawork fail to make the most of them. 2001.

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- U.S. citizen or process of becoming a citizen
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- High school diploma or GED

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Bilingual men/women encouraged to apply

**Test dates:**

April 13, 2002
April 27, 2002

**Time:**

8:00 am only

**Location:**

County Administration Center
1600 Pacific Highway • San Diego 92101

Testing: first come, first served basis to a maximum of 80 applicants each session. Applications available at the test site.

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Senior High Financial Clerk
$2596-$3156 per month ........ closer April 19, 2002

Student Information Systems Site Technician I
$2188-$2659 per month ........ closer April 16, 2002

Student Information Systems Site Technician II
$2412-$2932 per month ........ closer April 16, 2002

Transportation Information Clerk
$2188-$2659 per month ........ closer April 16, 2002

For more information, visit www.sandi.net/personnel and click on the classified and management classified job postings button. Request an application packet by phone at: (619) 725-8195, e-mail: jobs@mail.sandi.net (specify title), or visit: 4100 Normal Street, Annex 9, San Diego, CA 92103
All required application information must be received at the above address no later than 4:30 pm on the closing date indicated.
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Meet your match! Use the form below to place your free, 2-week Reader Matches Ad and get your free Voice Mailbox.

OPTIONAL HEADLINE: 20 characters per line including spaces; the first initial of each word is capitalized; abbreviations and unusual punctuation will not be accepted; the cost is $12. Continue on a separate sheet if necessary.

PRINT CLEARLY: First 25 words are FREE. $1.25/additional word. Do not abbreviate words. Continue on a separate sheet if necessary.

FREE AD DEADLINE: 7 am Saturday
Mail: Reader Matches, P.O. Box 8803, San Diego, CA 92186 Fax: (619) 233-7907
Online: SanDiegoReader.com
LATE DEADLINE: 5 pm Tuesday
Fax: (619) 233-7907 Phone: (619) 235-8200
Walk-in: 1703 India St. (at St. and 12th) downtown

Reader Matches Voice Mailbox: $5
Headlines $1 each line
First 25 words of printed ad $5
Additional words $0.20 each word
Late fee/fax-in fee: $20
TOTAL

No cancellations. No refunds. Make check or money order payable to San Diego Reader. To order using Visa, MasterCard or Discover, please fill out the following:

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1. Pay with Visa, MasterCard, Discover, check or cash. The cost is $20.

2. Write your 25-word Roommate ad on the following worksheet and be ready to dictate it when you call.

3. Your print ad may not describe you or the person you are seeking.

4. The system dictates a mailbox number and security code.

5. To retrieve your messages call (619) 235-2415. You may get responses on the Hotline before your ad is printed, so call frequently. Messages are erased after they are heard, so have pen and paper ready. Your mailbox will expire after you have listened Wednesday, six days after publication.

6. Renew your mailbox and ad if you don't make any changes in your ad copy or mailbox recording. Call (619) 235-2415 and choose the renewal option. You may not renew your mailbox any time Thursday through 6 pm Monday.

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**OFF THE CUFF**
by Sue Greenberg

Robert Peretto

Whitefish, Montana

The last few years have been making jewelry. I like the idea of making something and leaving it forever; someone will always be wearing my jewelry. It's a great career. Teaching was neat, but this is different.

Paty Peretto

Whitefish, Montana

A accountant. I do like that line of work. I always put my taxes together, and do the books in my office, but that's a lot different than real accounting and having that be something I do all the time.

Paula Visconti-Chesser

San Jose

I probably would have enjoyed being an attorney. I like to see justice done, and I like to argue. Growing up, I always wanted to be an attorney; banking fell in my lap.

Kerry Davis

Engineering Architect

San Jose

A patent attorney. Because it's a technical degree that would allow me to work on the legal side of what I'm doing right now. It's still possible, but it requires time and effort; that's why I haven't done it.

Joe Chandler

Unemployed/Delivery Person

Milwaukee

Lottery winner! A musician. I play guitar, I would have liked to play jazz, but there isn't no money in it!
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DISPLAY DESIGN -- Ingram brand, built-in, white walls, 2 years old, barely used, island, large new, walks perfectly, 24" width, $110. David, 619-989-3322.

DISPLAY DESIGN -- Built-in, type in very good condition, $50. 619-279-6565.

DISPLAY DESIGN -- Comes with bar, chair, large, removable Bonco board, new, excellent condition, $200. Complete set, all $350/8ea. 619-269-9430.

DRAFTING TABLE -- 32"x44", adjustable, includes parallel bar, chair, large, removable Bonco board, new, excellent condition, $200. Complete set, all $350/8ea. 619-269-9430.

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DRAFTING TABLE -- 32"x44", fully adjustable, 4 wheels, can be moved, $1,000. Can e-mail photos. 619-269-9430.

DRAFTING TABLE -- Solid oak, on wheels, can be moved, $400. 619-974-6211.

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The dance you have wrought resembles a man with a ferret in his trousers.

By John Brizzolara

American Heritage dictionary has a couple surprises concerning "skate," roller-skating in particular. I was hoping to find interesting backgrounds, origins, little known facts, etc. Like, "The Mayans, while they used wheels on children's toys, did not employ them to grind meal or rotate water. Neither did they use them between carts for carrying heavy loads or passengers. Children, however, would fashion crude roller skates for recreation." The preceding is only half truth: the Mayans had the wheel, and it seems they did use them for children's toys, but the roller-skate thing is just bull. But the Mayan mystery of the wheel is verydude.

The dictionary above (it's American and I stand by it) has as a first definition for "skate": "An ice skate. Roller skates. The act or a period of skating. To glide or move along or as if on skates." The second definition is "To act in an irresponsible or superficial manner. Du schaust still; skate..." On Fr eschelle still, perh. of Gmc. org.

Another definition just beneath it is this: "A person in "black" gen- raja having a flattened body and greatly expanded pectoral fins that extend around the head. The final definition here is "A. person. 2. A deceptively handsome nag. Skite. Contemptible person prob. Skite. To defecate."

According to the Columbia Desk Encyclopedia, skating is "gliding along an ice surface on heel-like runners called ice skates." Skipping down to roller skates, we have American Jackson Flaines inventing skate in 1860. As the body goes nuts about it, but not everyone can afford or ice skates — or use them in warm weather. "Roller skating, gliding over a smooth surface on skates with rollers or wheels, gained a large adult following after dance movements."

On Friday nights (or any night, I suppose), one can roller-skate beneath black lights and iridescent glow-painted symbols (flowers, etc.), play a battery of video games, mechanical games, interactive dance games, or throw a birthday party in a special room with cake, pizza, hot dogs, popcorn — all the best junk food.

But the Mayan mystery of the wheel is verdad. Dude.

The location is 626 I Street in Chula Vista, Rollerskateoland, and Friday nights it's a big night at this steel-wheel joint. "Friday night is the special," says Zack Chesire, keeper of the blades, leather, and wheels. "It's six dollars a head for admission. It's $2.50 extra for these kind," he demonstrates high button shoes with blades. And it's "$3.50 extra for these kind, which brings your total to $8.50 or $7.50, depending on whether you want blades or quad."

Listening to the deftly teching disco/pool-party tunes at ear-canal bursting volume, I ask Zack who selects this background stuff (that's more of a foreground).

"It's usually Ramone and Brian, but tonight it is gonna be Ramone's last as a DJ. Now it's gonna be Brian, Chris, and myself on the floor. I tend to play everything they play here, but I'm more of a fan of alternative rock. I throw in something like that once in a while."

Around me are banks of video games — later models, most likely too sophisticated for me.

Here is Cyclone, all neon and metal, and Sports Ball (no doubt derived from Rollrball, written by a guy I had brunch with once. He also wrote Barton and Speake and Mountains of the Moon. I digress, I know, but I learned how to write columns — nowhere near as well, of course — from reading Tom Blair for more."

Ah, here is a timeless arcade kiosk: a transparent box containing little dragon-shaped switches, a 1943 penny. All of which are bent, broken, looking mechanical claw, or "Waldo," that one must manipulate to gain whichever of these items you might think would be good to have.

Second Mix: Here We Go!" Konami is one of those solitary dance machines — a little lade. You must place your feet at suddenly lighted intervals. I watched this before and I thought that perfectly done, with a perfect score, the dance you have wrought resembles a man with a ferret in his trousers.

You can eat here too: pizza, chicken wings, hot dogs, nachos, Surfpees and Snow, a corn pop and taquitos, corn dogs, French fries — the kinds of snacks that will fuel a night of circumnavigating a large room, expending energy, sweat, and a wake of nutrient-rich air in the windless chamber. The skaters are mostly children and teenagers, far more wholesome-looking than I would have expected given the fact that they are about to engage in their roll-by-shootings. Security is tight but unobtrusive. The on that one detail is large enough to discourage Stone Cold Steve Austin from wanting to come in after a few pints and letting it roll.

I skated on sidewalks as a kid, had a key and everything. I used to race my older sister, and usually won, possibly due to the fact that I would sometimes spit out my Ritalin when Mom wasn't looking. Other than that, I have no nifty associations with roller skating, other than skinned knees and raw hand pads.

I spent a lot of time watching a kid with a perfectly round head, augmented by his crew cut, play a video game in which evil entities try to take over a carnival from Hell. In fact, the game is called CARN EVIL. What is it about amusement arcade and whatnot that summons the sinister in our imaginations, the dark supernatural hysteria that lies on the shadow side of the coin of the mighty? "WELCOME TO CARN EVIL," the screen reads. "WE'RE VISITING YOUR TOWN. NO, THAT'S NOT THE WALKING DEAD, IT'S JUST A SOLID CLONE. WE OPEN EVERY MIDNIGHT AND CLOSE BEFORE THE DAWN. YOUR MOMMY, MAY COME LOOK FOR YOU, BUT BY THEN WE'LL BE GONE." On the screen at the moment is a Twilight Zone type with a white spiral against a black background. In the foreground is a laughing Jester, his face contorted into a rictus of hilarity, the kind of ecstatic madness one might encounter at an emergency room in a psych ward. The purpose of this graphic is to introduce you to the enemy. Once the game begins, you will be shooting these heinous harlequins off ferris wheels and blowing them away before they can hide behind the fat lady. Another adversity is a giant flying wasp. Than I would grow bored with it soon enough, I would like to sit down with its creator and chat.

In the anteroom for private parties a birthday celebration is just winding up. This is possibly the handsomest family I have ever seen outside of movies and TV. Also, the kids are happily compliant to Mom's calling them in for photos.

Nate is eight years old today and roller-skating was his party activity of choice. They are the Jones-Hanzy, or Hanzy-Jones family (a Brandy Bunch deal). I couldn't kid six kids, but they were a buzz. They came in off the rink for photos and more of a giant birthday cake. Mom, Kenya Jones, says the deal with Rollerskateoland for birthdays is a minimum of ten skaters for $110. You get pizzas, sodas, and skates for ten kids. They clean up while you skate, and then you come back for the cake. Afterward, you have ample opportunity to burn off the calories.

Zack Chesire

FROM J. W. BRUNNER

"There's a lot of confusion about the word 'automotive,'" writes J. W. Brunner. "It's come to mean anything at all, and it's often used as a synonym for 'cars.' But the word has a specific meaning: it comes from Latin, meaning 'self-moving.' What we call 'automotive' today is the result of the development of the steam engine, which made it possible to build machines that could move themselves without human help. The word has come to mean all of this — and more."

I'm afraid I can't disagree. The word 'automotive' is one of those words that is hard to define. It means a lot of things, and yet it doesn't mean anything at all. It's like a word that is both specific and general at the same time. It's a word that is both clear and ambiguous. It's a word that is both useful and confusing.

But the word 'automotive' is not the only word that is hard to define. There are many words that are hard to define. For example, what is the meaning of the word 'love'? It's a word that is used in many different ways, and yet it doesn't mean anything at all. It's like a word that is both specific and general at the same time. It's a word that is both clear and ambiguous. It's a word that is both useful and confusing.

But the word 'love' is not the only word that is hard to define. There are many words that are hard to define. For example, what is the meaning of the word 'justice'? It's a word that is used in many different ways, and yet it doesn't mean anything at all. It's like a word that is both specific and general at the same time. It's a word that is both clear and ambiguous. It's a word that is both useful and confusing.

But the word 'justice' is not the only word that is hard to define. There are many words that are hard to define. For example, what is the meaning of the word 'freedom'? It's a word that is used in many different ways, and yet it doesn't mean anything at all. It's like a word that is both specific and general at the same time. It's a word that is both clear and ambiguous. It's a word that is both useful and confusing.

But the word 'freedom' is not the only word that is hard to define. There are many words that are hard to define. For example, what is the meaning of the word 'equality'? It's a word that is used in many different ways, and yet it doesn't mean anything at all. It's like a word that is both specific and general at the same time. It's a word that is both clear and ambiguous. It's a word that is both useful and confusing.

But the word 'equality' is not the only word that is hard to define. There are many words that are hard to define. For example, what is the meaning of the word 'democracy'? It's a word that is used in many different ways, and yet it doesn't mean anything at all. It's like a word that is both specific and general at the same time. It's a word that is both clear and ambiguous. It's a word that is both useful and confusing.

But the word 'democracy' is not the only word that is hard to define. There are many words that are hard to define. For example, what is the meaning of the word 'progress'? It's a word that is used in many different ways, and yet it doesn't mean anything at all. It's like a word that is both specific and general at the same time. It's a word that is both clear and ambiguous. It's a word that is both useful and confusing.

But the word 'progress' is not the only word that is hard to define. There are many words that are hard to define. For example, what is the meaning of the word 'change'? It's a word that is used in many different ways, and yet it doesn't mean anything at all. It's like a word that is both specific and general at the same time. It's a word that is both clear and ambiguous. It's a word that is both useful and confusing.
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The intense tea, delighting in its rich smoothness, I felt a feather-touch of sweetness play about my tongue. Honest Tea’s Community Green Tea ($1.29 for 16 oz. at Whole Foods) was lighter-bodied, but still very flavorful — and again, the perfect amount of sweet.

I phoned Honest Tea and spoke with Pete. “We use about one-sixth the amount of sugar that better-tasting teas use. We use natural sugars (cane sugar and maple syrup) because we think it’s better for you. Corn syrup and granulated sugar are bad for the body.” While I was on the line, I asked him to describe the differences among teas. “If you were to walk up to a living tea bush, the leaves would be green. Green tea is not fermented, Oolong tea is partially fermented, and black tea is fully fermented. Black tea has been oxidized and fermented all the way through. It is more malty (than green tea) — heavier. Bitter, almost.” Place can also be a factor. “It’s kind of like wine. There are parts of China where tea plants are grown at really high elevations, and that apparently changes the flavor profile.”

“Once the tea is picked, it’s sorted into grades, depending on how large the leaves are. Higher grades have larger leaves. A sieve technique is used in sorting — it’s like a series of sieves. Higher grades stay on top; lower grades, like dust and fanning, sink to the bottom. When you open your average bag, it’s tea dust — that’s the lowest grade. We use a higher grade for our teas, because it gives you a fuller flavor.”

Pete noted that Honest Teas were true teas, made from tea-bush leaves, as opposed to herbal teas, which may be made from anything from peppermint to chamomile. Honest Teas also steer clear of teas labeled with such health-booster terms as echinacea and ginseng. “We don’t deal with a lot of that. Our teas are for refreshment.”

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I awoke Easter morning to the sound of Angie's little girl singing, "Mommy, my seven-year-old daughter whispered in the almost darkness. "Can we go downstairs and see the Easter Bunny?"

I lifted my head and glanced at the clock across the room. The red LED numbers glowed 5:59.

"No," I croaked back. "It's too early."

Angie sighed. "When can we?"

"When everyone else wakes up," I whispered. "Maybe in an hour."

Angie wandered down the hall to the room she shares with Rebecca and Lucy, aged nine and five. Beside me in my husband's arms, bandaged Jack slept in his shift. Between us, 18-month-old Benji sprawled with his arms and legs thrown out. Three-year-old Johnny curled against my other side. I closed my eyes and tried to fall back to sleep. Jack and I had been up late straightening up the house and preparing the kids' Easter baskets. Instead, we ended up wandering over the road we'd taken to Easter.

Because Jack works for a Catholic organization, he'd gotten Holy Thursday and Good Friday off work. Rebecca and Angela attend a small Catholic academy near our home in San Marcos. Their Easter vacation started Thursday, and after the last day, we took the kids to the zoo. That evening after dinner, Jack took the three girls to a two-hour Holy Thursday mass. I stayed home and tried to put the boys to bed. But Jack said he'd fish for the night and so we walked the doors with the girls. "They're both went out from the zoo. They should go right down," I was wrong; I gave Johnny and Ben a long, warm bath. We read books. We said prayers. I began to recite a Rosary, a nightly bedtime ritual that usually puts Johnny to sleep. Instead, seeing my sleeping, he kept asking questions about the day.

"Hail, Mary, full of grace," I prayed. "Mary, why does the hippopotamus have such a round body?"

"Because that's how his God made him," the Lord is with thee."

"Mary, do you have a bear to swim with?"

"Yes, here, let me show you two.

Blessed art thou among women."

Meanwhile, Benji wandered around the darkened room and made as much noise as possible. He pulled the hard plastic blocks off the shelf. He switched on Johnny's remote-controlled car. After half an hour, I gave up and took the boys downstairs. Everyone went to bed as my mind wandered and the girls came home. "At least they'll probably sleep in," I told Jack. They didn't. Friday morning, Rebecca and Angela tromped into Jack's and my room a little after 7:00. "Can we do downstairs and play a computer game?" Rebecca asked.

At the words "computer game," Ben lifted his head and smiled. He clamped off the bed and started heading for the stairs. "Can I play a computer game, too?" Johnny opened his eyes and asked.

"Sure, go ahead, you two," I told them. "This is Good Friday. It's the day Jesus died. It's the most solemn day of the year. No computer games." They let out a collective moan. "What can we do, then?" Rebecca whined.

"Read a book. Play with your toys. Color. The things you always do."

"But those are boring."

"Well, then that can be your little sacrifice for the day."

The kids bickered all morning. In the afternoon, Rebecca and Lucy came to the Benedictine Abbey outside Oceanside to visit the Stations of the Cross. On a chaparral-covered mesa looking out to the ocean, we walked along a dirt path and looked for flowers or, shiny rocks to place at the stations. Every hundred feet or so, we stopped at the simple wooden A-Frames that depict the 14 stages of Christ's Passion. We knelted and said our prayers. The children's voices rose and fell with ours. Little birds whisked in the underbrush.

Back home, we ate an early dinner and went to Good Friday Communion service. The priest, joined by other members of the congregation, read the Passion. The kids wiggled in the pew. The girls whispered and giggled. Jack and I threw them thunderous glances. Halfway through the service, I carried Ben out of the church. Let him walk around outside in the warm, cool sun while. When it got too cold and dark, we went into the cry room and waited for Communion. Ben wandered back forth and back in the cry room chewing on a can of cherry Jesus, made from a hank of string. "Food for the Poor." Every few minutes, he held the can aloft and said, "TUM."

After what seemed an eternity, the service ended. The kids got to bed late again. Saturday, we colored eggs and went shopping and baked and decorated our bunny cake, another annual ritual.

Sunday morning, when I opened my eyes again, the clock read 7:00. All the kids gathered at the foot of Jack's and my bed. "Okay." Jack looked at me. "Let's go. They ran downstairs. I followed with Ben in my arms. The kids oohed and ahed over their baskets. Shiny green fake grass littered the floor. As I took eggs out of the refrigerator, I unwarped the plastic wrap and popped a small chocolate Easter egg into my mouth. In the chaos and the clatter, chocolate never tasted so good.