Neighborhood
SMALL TOWNS OF SAN DIEGO

FALLBROOK
I often feel in downtown Fallbrook that I have walked through a door into the past, the door I have been looking for all my life. It happens at Jerry’s Barber Shop most often, Jerry’s is on the corner of Main and Alvarado, and I take five-year-old Sam and three-year-old Hank there to have their bangs snipped into a straight, even line, to have the backs of their necks and the curves above their ears mowed and clipped, to see their eyes once again, enormous and brown. They sit still in expectation of Dum Duns, small

CONTINUED ON PAGE 20
Scab Equality
In response to an article in your December 18 issue, “Stink Bomb,” on page 43: I cannot believe you could place an article about a scab’s perspective of this strike. And a story from someone who won’t even disclose their name makes it even more unbelievable.

I have been on the strike line since day one, and in that time the only negative responses I have gotten are from the scabs that are working in my store and from those who drive by and shout at me to get a job. I have a job: the scabs have it. I can honestly tell you that I have not witnessed nor have I been a part of any negative responses to those that choose to shop at my store. I have worked at my job for 18 years with Albertsons, and never would I have voted for a strike if it only meant I would pay $5 to $15 a week for my health care.

Believe me, I am not as stupid or uneducated as those opposed to this strike think I am. I started from the bottom and worked my way up. I never went into this line of work expecting it to last a few years. I thought of it as a career. I don’t want to defend myself in saying I deserve more than others out there. I am willing to pay as much as those in my salary range do for health care. But I do deserve to be treated with a lot more respect than my company has shown me.

And in closing, what am I supposed to call someone who knowingly took my job? I think “scab” is being way too kind. So those who are offended by that word, tell me, what do you want me to call you? An equal opportunity employer? We stopped being equal when you knowingly took my job for your own gain. I bet you would not have taken it if you had to start from the bottom of the pay scale. As I did.

Robert Carlson
via e-mail

The author of the article was not “anonymous,” as the byline noted. The author’s name was withheld by request. — Editor

Lewd Preference
If the Troy Sisters had “Lolita”-upped their image, Elektra would not have dropped them (“Blurt,” December 18). I much prefer to buy CDs from sexy little girls than the Indigo Girls Jr., as I imagine most men would. A good 60 percent of the appeal of seeing Jewel at the coffeehouses was her wonderful (and frequent) “pantie flashes.” Ahhhhh-hhh...those tiny skirts! Harsh? Maybe. Truthful? You bet.

Alfred “Bastard” Huete
Spring Valley

Snotty Reply
Good for Sandra Dijkstra. (“City Lights,” December 11). For some time KPBS has been annoying me more than usual during pledge time by messing with my two favorite programs: Now with Bill Moyers and Charlie Rose. You usually have to stay up until 12:00 for Charlie Rose; 11:00 might be better, but they push it off till 1:00, which is just too, too late. And I can’t find Bill.

So while they are hustling some imagined non-member with repetitious Ormans, they are disrespecting their members who look to them for programs that talk seriously and in depth about big world problems, something a democracy wants more of for an informed citizenry.

I thought Keith York’s reply to Dijkstra was snotty. For my part, I have been giving less and less each year, because KPBS does less and less for me.

So Keith, good-bye and good luck. But I’d rather have you raise the bar on quality, and pardon the words, value intelligent discourse and inquiry, as in the good old days, when KPBS knew it was an alternative to mediocrity. Special, selective, and proud of it. High-minded on purpose. Then I can respect you more, and give again.

Brina Rae Schuchman
via e-mail

continued on page 2
We're Fed Up

I take issue with Bob Kittle’s We’re Fed Up continued from page 1 comments during a recent meeting of the City Attorney’s Office is arguably the most important elected position citywide, as it advises the City as to the legality of its policy positions. The only candidate in this race that people can trust to follow the law is Mike Aguirre. Mike will put the people’s interests ahead of the special interests, and he can be counted on to draft and enforce City contracts in a way that protects the taxpayers of San Diego.

I suggest the Union-Tribune make an effort to treat this candidate who has proven his dedication to the people of San Diego as equally as the others in the race. Thank you for your consideration.

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The research elves are off making some seasonal pocket money (money to have pockets put in their little tunics). They hire out for Christmas parties, which means Grandma spends most of December fluffing up felt and applying a curling iron to the toes of their shoes. Pa Alice took care of Christmas back in ’84, when he put a lighted plastic Santa on the roof and decided to leave it there to save time in ’85. It worked so well, he made it a tradition. And it’s been a great landmark to use when giving folks directions to his big Fourth of July barbecues. So he’s not scheduled to move from in front of the TV until after the Pro Bowl. Ma Alice is back at her annual task of trying to find out what, exactly, mincemeat is, and why anyone would put it in a pie. Guess that just leaves me to grapple with our traditional year-end quiz. We got a great deal on some used punch-card voting machines, so throw away the old pencil and paper, line up behind the police tape, and wait your turn in the booth.

1. I always find Matthew Alice damn fascinating and life-enriching. Believe me, personally and professionally, I wouldn’t be where I am today without one particular question back in 1954 that literally changed my life. But if I’m forced to pick one fact from 2003 that meant the most to me, I’d have to say it was:
   a. Attila the Hun parted his hair on the left.
   b. Locally, each Girl Scout sells about 10,000 calories’ worth of cookies.
   c. Mary Kate and Ashley.
   d. Several actors who played the featured desperadoes in various AMW crime re-creations.
   e. If I do shoot a guy on Pluto, I can’t use a bone-marrow transplant to fool the DNA lab.
   f. The TV show America’s Most Wanted has helped lock up nearly 800 perps since it first went on the air. Among them are:
      a. The Green River Killer.
      b. Martha Stewart.
      c. Mary Kate and Ashley.
      d. Several actors who played the featured desperadoes in various AMW crime re-creations.
   g. Blue-eyed parents can’t have a brown-eyed child.

2. The TV show America’s Most Wanted has helped lock up nearly 800 perps since it first went on the air. Among them are:
   a. The Green River Killer.
   b. Martha Stewart.
   c. Mary Kate and Ashley.
   d. Several actors who played the featured desperadoes in various AMW crime re-creations.

3. It’s the end of an era! What monumental event in 2003 put a halt to many years of Matthew Alice fun at the expense of Hollywood?
   a. Harrison Ford finally got his star on the Walk of Fame, ending a decade of confusion and speculation about how they’d distinguish it from the star they already have for silent-film star Harrison Ford.
   b. The answer is a.
   c. And after all that, they never did make new Harrison’s different from old Harrison’s.

4. Nothing is commoner than common knowledge. We prove this every week. Which of these bits of information are just damn fool nonsense that you Alicelanders believed until I set you straight?
   a. NASA developed Tang.
   b. If you fall asleep in the bathtub, you’ll drown.
   c. But at least your hair and nails continue to grow after you die.
   d. Brown eggs are more nutritious than white eggs; mom said so, so it’s true.
   e. It’s illegal to drive with no shoes on, but it’s smart to walk around a recycling center with no shoes on.
   f. Bra straps hook up boobs the way string holds up cheeses in an Italian deli.
   g. Blue-eyed parents can’t have a brown-eyed child.
   h. Life is fair, and justice will triumph.

5. The cuisine elite must be stopped. Which is the most ridiculous dining-out concept discussed this year?
   a. Hand-harvested, unscrubbed sea salt; $40 a pound to make your vegetables taste as if the kitchen forgot to wash them.
   b. Cotton candy; sugar and air, the newest “fun” dessert.
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Let me tell you, the hive is aflutter with anticipation. In order to gauge just how intense that excitement is, I’ve decided to poll San Diego’s top chefs and ask them a question that will reveal everything we need to know about football excitement and fine dining, to wit: “If you were hosting a tailgate party in a very large parking lot as prelude to the first competitive NFL and/or NCAA Division I football game played in San Diego during the year 2003, what would you prepare?”

This is the question I put to seven celebrated chefs (or their spokespersons), all of whom are employed within El Cajon’s tiny Restaurant Row. First up is *The Best Chinese Restaurant*, on the 300 block of North Magnolia Avenue. A woman, I believe of Chinese origin, listens to my query and replies, “I’m not sure what you are asking for. What is this regarding about, or what?”

Excellent questions. I’m talking to a pro. “What would your chef cook at a tailgate party?”

“Silence.”

“During a football game. Nothing.”

“The Holiday Bowl, Qualcomm Stadium, Tailgating. Transporting large mounds of food into a parking lot the size of Cleveland and then cooking it. They may not be combined with insurance or other offers. See offices for details. Wavefront procedure available for extra-charge.

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### NFL Week 17

**Home Team in CAPS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Favorite</th>
<th>Money Line</th>
<th>Spread</th>
<th>Saturday O/U</th>
<th>Underdog Money Line</th>
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Sheep and Goats

Plances of Worship Reviewed

Denomination: Lutheran Church Missouri Synod
Address: 6749 Tait Street, Linda Vista
858-268-4688
Year founded: Locally, 1946
Senior pastor: Reverend Rodger Gredvig
Congregation size: 80 members
Staff: 1 full-time, 1 part-time
Church school enrollment: 5
Annual budget: $112,000
Weekly giving: $2200
Singles program: no
Diversity: White
Dress: Dressy casual to casual
Services: Sunday worship, 10:00 a.m.

Last Wednesday evening, Christmas shoppers swarming into and out of Mission Valley jammed Highways 8 and 163. I had time to think about an article I’d just read by a Yale professor about the evils of PowerPoint. Microsoft’s glibly “slide”ware program. PowerPoint has migrated from boardrooms into school classrooms and many church services. PowerPoint, the professor wrote, is “smeary and incoherent” and “disrupts, dominates, and trivializes content.”

Peace Lutheran Church doesn’t use PowerPoint.

“We’re a Missouri Synod Lutheran church on a cul-de-sac in Linda Vista,” said Reverend Rodger Gredvig when describing his congregation to me. Reverend Gredvig has served at Peace Lutheran for 21 years. He was born in northern Minnesota and came to Linda Vista as a baby. Peace Lutheran, he told me, was the first church he remembers seeing.

By the time he was ten years old, he knew he wanted to enter the clergy.

“I was surprised when I got to Concordia Seminary and learned that a lot of the guys there had decided much later in life that they wanted to go to seminary. Many of them already had master’s degrees when they’d decided. Some had been working on doctorates.”

Last Wednesday, 40 of the 50-odd people who regularly attend Reverend Gredvig’s Sunday-morning services weren’t out Christmas shopping. They’d opted instead to spend their Christmas at Peace Lutheran’s soup supper and Advent service. When I later complimented Reverend Gredvig on the turnout, he said, “We’ve gotten smaller over the years, and one of the results is that our remaining members take worship seriously. This is our church.”

Homey isn’t a quality many churches desire nowadays. Peace Lutheran feels like the Lutheran churches Garrison Keillor evokes on A Prairie Home Companion. Peace Lutheran’s members have decorated their church’s modest interior with big Christmas wreaths. A hefty Christmas tree stands to the right of the altar. Last Wednesday evening, the meaty, oniony aroma of homecooked soup drifted through the nave while the congregation, bundled in coats and sweaters, started the service by singing “O Tannenbaum.”

Reverend Gredvig introduced his sermon with a “dramatic reading” performed by two gentlemen dressed in choir robes. They were supposed to be Wise Men. Staring at photocopied sheets, the gentlemen read their lines with anxious earnestness. (“Surely this is the fulfillment of what the prophet Micah and the Jewish scriptures predicted.” “Yes, a king of mighty significance born in the land of the Jews.”)

A chubby-cheeked toddler sitting across from me realized that one of the Wise Men was his father. He bolted down the center aisle waving his arms, “Dada! Dada!”

Reverend Gredvig told us that Lutheran tradition suggests, “without much evidence,” that it was Martin Luther who initiated the custom of bringing a Christmas tree inside the home. “It was the shape that inspired him, the way the tree points heavenward, pointing to the stars.”

He went on to list the many significant stars that appear in the Hebrew Bible and New Testament, noting that the “star in the East” heralded not only Jesus’ birth, but the return of the Kingdom of God to earth.

“God knows that there are those who did not want to lift their eyes toward heaven and see the star. King Herod didn’t. Herod was a tyrant who was ruthless to his people, and the image we have of him closely resembles what we know today of Saddam Hussein who was ultimately found cow- ering in a hole. It is God who has victory in the end.”

Reverend Gredvig explained that for Christians, Advent was a time of repentance and preparation in anticipation of Jesus’ return. Part of this preparation, he said, was sharing the Gospel with others, which could be done in simple ways like going with the church to sing Christmas carols in public, or volunteering for that Fri-day’s dinner for families in the church’s Head Start program. Such acts, he said, “demonstrate that we, too, are still look-ing toward God’s return with excitement and anticipation.”

After the service, people lined up to introduce themselves to me and shake my hand and tell me how happy they were that I’d visited their church. When I caught up with Reverend Gredvig, I told him that in the dozens of non-liturgical churches I’ve visited, I’d never heard Christmas described as a time for repentance. He told me that this idea of “Prepare ye the way of the Lord” was built upon the prostern of Advent, the need to ready one’s soul in anticipation of repentance and preparation for the Parousia, the Second Coming.

I don’t mean in any way to demean non-liturgical churches. But following the liturgical year has advantages. The way Advent works for me is that instead of being overwhelmed by the worldly aspects of Christmas, I reflect on God’s presence. Christmas isn’t a bunch of gifts we give to each other. The focus is God’s gift to us.”

— Abe Opincar
San Diego Reader: December 24, 2003

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Dear Aunt Trudy,

My sister has a son who just turned 12. This boy has his birthday one day before mine, so we often celebrate the two birthdays together as a family. Our other sister offered to bake the cake this year.

A few days before we were getting together to celebrate, my sister who has the son—I’ll call her Rachel—called my other sister, whom I’ll call Jan, and said, “I know you’re bringing the cake, and I know we’re celebrating my son’s birthday and Audrey’s (that’s me) birthday together, but whatever you do, don’t put Audrey’s name anywhere on the cake. The cake has to have only my son’s name on it or he’ll have a horrible fit, which will ruin the whole evening.” Jan was surprised and displeased but did as she was asked. When I got to the joint birthday celebration, Jan apologized profusely for leaving my name off the cake and explained that it was at Rachel’s insistence. I don’t care so much whether my name is on a birthday cake, but I was unpleasantly surprised that at 12 Rachel’s son is so immature that he wouldn’t be able to have his aunt’s name next to his on a cake without having an attack about it. Doesn’t 12 seem a little old for that kind of thing? And what do you think of his mother making such a request?

Annoyed San Carlos Auntie

Dear Annoyed,

Your story leaves a bad taste in my mouth. I think that a 12-year-old should definitely be familiar with the concept of sharing. He ought to be able to share billing on a birthday cake with his mother’s sister. If your nephew has problems in this area, as his mother seems to think, then his parents would do well to work with him on learning to be generous, rather than protecting his selfishness from being challenged a little, which is what his mother did by censoring your name from appearing on the cake. In other words, when this mother preempted her son’s having to deal with the fact that it’s also his aunt’s birthday, she’s missing an opportunity to help teach him to consider others and to let them have a turn in the birthday limeelight. Too. You and your cake-bringing sister might have a chat with Rachel about this so that next year you can see your name written in icing right along with your nephew’s. Hopefully he can start to learn to honor other people’s birthdays in a gracious and loving way. He’s missing out on the considerable joys of being happy for others. I think if you can’t allow other people their moments in the sun and take pleasure in celebrating them, too, sometimes, you’re leading a crippled life.

Dear Readers,

I received an avalanche of mail in response to the letter from “Red-Eyed in Oceanside” who complained that their neighbor’s dog was left alone for nearly 24 hours at a time. The poor hound was howling all night as a result. The letters below are typical of readers’ feedback.

Dear Aunt Trudy,

I think that your suggestions to “Red-Eyed in Oceanside” assume that the dog’s new owner has some compassion towards the animal. A note pointing out that the dog is unhappy in his owner’s absence is unlikely to remedy the situation. In fact, it might result in the dog being set loose or being further abused. This dog is being abused by being locked up for such long stretches. Animal control needs to be called NOW!

Linda Vista Canine Advocate

Dear Aunt Trudy,

I must say I am not in agreement at all with your response to “Red-Eyed…” Animal neglect can be just as damaging as animal abuse! Dogs are pack animals and should only be adopted by people willing to include them as part of the family. They are not meant to be left alone all the time. It is not Red-Eyed’s responsibility to confront his neighbor. Just like the TV commercials on child abuse say, “It’s not always that easy to detect it.” We really don’t know what goes on behind closed doors with animals who can’t help themselves or complain. I feel that confronting the neighbor might be a terrible mistake. He might take it out on the dog who he feels is now making his life more difficult. We don’t really know what he might do. He could put a collar on the dog that shocks him when he barks and still leave him alone all day, hit the dog, or even remove his voice box. I would suggest Red-Eyed contact the Humane Society who then could help her out with contacting the proper persons. Their number is 619-299-7012.

Sleepless in Santee

Write to Aunt Trudy to the San Diego Reader, P.O. Box 85803, San Diego CA 92186-5803; 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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“W hen Jesus said, “Love thy neighbor, do you think He meant the ones next door?” That was my friend Allison, coming to the end of another thwarted try. What with the loud noise at night, the trash in her front yard, and the teenage garage-band practice, she has many occasions to practice charity. I tried to be sympathetic, but I’ve been luckier than she has. Jeanette, my closest neighbor, is possessed of an unceasingly sunny disposition and has even gone so far as to sweep leaves from my driveway and set my empty trash cans down my impossibly long driveway. And when I go out of town, she’s always ready to help with garden watering and mail collection.

Yesterday, she hand-delivered a personalized invitation to her New Year’s Eve party. As a thank-you, I decided to bring a bevy of noisemakers to add a service agreement. $200 early termination fee applies, after 15-day trial period (conditions apply). Setup fee of $35 per phone, up to $70 max per account agreement and credit approval. See store for details. [Nextel](http://nextel.com).

**Clacking that sounded like the rapid beat of a fish flopping on a pier delighted us both.**

We had better hooks from the wide-body squawkers blowout ($2.39 for four). “This is the blowout of all blowouts,” laughed Bernice. “It’s got a draw-out, mouth sound. And I like the way it rolls back slowly — like it’s bumbling its way home.” Our testing finished, we blew some more just for laughs — a good sign for a party favor.

Bernice grabbed two more packages: fancy fringe blowouts ($1.37 for 8 at Wal-Mart) and multicolored spiral-patterned blowouts ($1.69). Both had long, sleek blowpipes, which Bernice thought were “like holding a cigarette. It tucks away behind the ear, too. But it’s all for looks; they don’t make any noise. There’s no horn on the tip,” I wanted noise, so I broke out the balloon squawkers ($1.79 for 6). The squawkers had horns, therefore, they were attached to a plastic tube with a balloon on the end. Our deepest balloon-blowing breaths were rewarded with satisfyingly long honks. “Now that’s party noise,” admired Bernice. Of the two foil-fringed squawkers ($1.69 for 8, $.97 for 8 from Wal-Mart), the Party City model gave a more substantial horn blast, but both revealed a fun pop-pom-pom effect when shaken.

For the bigger is-better crowd, I had picked up an 18-inch fringed golden cardboard horn ($1.89). It sounded the goods, ringing out a high-toned toss.

“Could that be part of your party ensemble,” suggested Bernice. “You could wave it around like a baton.” A smaller (but just as expensive at $1.49), horn, black with polka dots and silver fringe, just sounded tired by comparison, though it, too, produced the smaller black-with-silver-fringe number ($3.59) that matched up to the big boy. Out of breath, we turned to a squeeze-bottom horn ($9.99) and let its own blare summon up the spirit of Harpo Marx. “It packs a lot of bang for a little squeeze,” said Bernice. “Good for old-timers or little kids.”

Our final preparations for making merry left us snowed under in confetti. Most of these party poppers were keepers. The ones shaped like champagne bottles ($1.49 for 12 at Party City, $2.25 apiece at Babette Schwartz) popped their contents a full two feet into the air. The spring-loaded Super Party Poppers ($2.99 for 6) let large streamers or confetti a good six feet before they popped their contents a full two feet into the air. The air. The air. We turned to a squeeze-bottom horn ($9.99) and let its own blare summon up the spirit of Harpo Marx. “It packs a lot of bang for a little squeeze,” said Bernice. “Good for old-timers or little kids.”

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“Good for old-timers or little kids.”

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white-wrapped lollipops that taste of cherry, apple, grape, or lime. Jerry's is an ordinary place, archetypal in its particulars. The benches and chairs in the waiting area are upholstered in vinyl, and it's old men, mostly, who sit waiting for their turn. The coffee table is strewn with fishing and golf magazines as worn as dollar bills. The plate-glass window casts the shadow of Jerry's name on our legs. The backward clock tells time in reverse. Combs float in Barbicide. Behind us, stretching the length of the wall in an attitude of leaping, is a blue sailfish as shiny and hard as the linoleum under our feet. "Please do not pet," a sign says.

The older customers tend to look at Sam and Hank and remember their own children, or themselves as children. Once, while Hank's hair was falling to the floor like down and Sam was waiting his turn, a man in glasses and an ironed short-sleeved shirt looked approvingly at him. He started to tell Sam and me about his childhood summers, about growing up on a farm in the Northwest, where he climbed trees and fished. Every morning, he said, he and his brothers and sisters would sit at the table for breakfast. His mother would bring bowls of steaming oatmeal to each plate. No one could start, though, until his grandfather had sat down and blessed the meal. His grandfather was a Lutheran, and he blessed everything. He prayed and prayed, and the children watched the steam rise up, each wisp thinner than the last. It had always stopped steaming before his grandfather stopped praying.

"My mother cut my hair with a bowl," he told Sam. "The same bowl we used for that oatmeal." Outside the barbershop, the street is usually sunny. Cars stop for the light and move past us, windows down, arms resting on doors. As we wait I tend to think of what we'll do after the haircuts. We could eat at the soda fountain across the street, in used to be a drugstore but is now the Café des Artistes and a gallery. We could walk another hundred yards and ask the librarian if there are any new books about the Titanic. If the gem-and-mineral museum is open, we could step into the back room and ask the curator to turn on the black light so that all the fluorescent rocks glow green, orange, and yellow. There's the Book Nook or Chubby Chix, which sells retro candy: Lemonheads, Neccos, and Charms. Slim pink bubble-gum cigarettes, the kind that leave powder on your fingertips. But once Sam and Hank are both in barber's chairs, I'm in no hurry to leave. I watch them the way the man in the ironed shirt watched the steam of his oatmeal all those years ago, willing it to keep rising.


Their blond hair mixes with the gray hair on the floor and I hold myself still between two red vinyl chairs on Main Street, willing it to go on a little longer, for the backwards clock to go forward and the forward clock to go backwards, so that we are always right here. — Laura McNeal

CLAIREDON

Asked where I live in San Diego, I always say "beautiful Clairemont," because I'm a smartass and because it's the truth. I might qualify (place, not beauty) by adding "North Clairemont," to distinguish our geographical locale. North Clairemont is almost paradise: our home rides a large coyoted canyon where ocean breeze and coastal fog are as backyard-regular as hummingbirds and red-tailed hawks. I like its tranquility, despite the nearby barking dog, whose owners we've all complained about. But that's the only rent in the carpet; otherwise, it's immensely democratic — to one Joe, a retirement villa; to another, a middle-class boondock.

I cross the street, get my neighbor Becky Newhouse, and we head to our local Starbuck's. At 51, Newhouse is a lifelong Clairemontian, a part-time substitute teacher at Marston Middle School, and an irrepressible factotum whose cheerful voice can be heard charging Saturday driveway talk with, as my grandmother used to call it, "sunny optimism."

How might you define Clairemont? School-savvy Newhouse surprises me: "It's a forgotten community," she says. Clairemont is not "rich like La Jolla," which is "affluent enough for the school board to grant them autonomy."

Though test scores are up, Newhouse struggles with a school system that no longer bonds the community. She figure-skates over her childhood, when, after class, kids lolled their way through grassy lots to rec centers. Next-door kids were always buddies. Now Amber-alerted parents chauffeur children everywhere.

We chat, sip drinks; then Newhouse treads a new track. As one of San Diego's hubs, Clairemont is supremely accessible, lying between I-5 and I-805/163, south of San Clemente Canyon and north of Mission Valley; it's also supremely in-between. It's near to but not the beach; it's near to but not the condo-bracken of the Great Golden Triangle, the nerd-ridden campus of UCSD, the immigrant carnival of Kearny Mesa, the heat-seeking inlands. It's near to but not Pacific Beach, where summer trash festers in the streets and multiunit-apartment density feels earthquake-ready.

I wonder whether this in-between reality of our suburb explains our relationship. After we gossip for 40 minutes about children and work and college and spouses and elderly parents (one of hers living, both of mine dead) and the block party we've never had, I ask, "Why is it that, despite having
lived across the street from each other for 13 years, we’re still not good friends?”

“We may not be good friends,” she says, “but we’re good neighbors.” Through the nagging rasp of the coffee grinder, the phrase pings with wisdom.

“And being ‘good neighbors’ means?”

“If a neighbor needed a friend, the neighbor would be there.” I would too. It’s indisputable. Newhouse and I are close without my knowing it, without my having thought of closeness in just this way. Up on the mesa, the pickets of our illusionary fence widen once we admit we need each other, once we discover the purposeful in-between-ness of neighbors. That feels supremely Clairemont, a profound acquaintanceship we need elevate no higher than that.

— Thomas Larson

IMPERIAL BEACH

IB? My friend Mark nailed it the other night. We had fallen into conversation outside Cow-A-Bunga, the ice cream and coffee place at the entrance to IB’s pier. It was getting dark. You could just see the teeth of the waves and hear them crack as they broke. “Right now,” he said, “this could be the old IB. Empty beach, dusty streets, no sidewalks, nobody to say, ‘Why’s your dog not on a leash?’”

He talked about when they had a pod of killer whales coming to scratch their backs against the pier legs. Or when he and his buddies stole down into the Tijuana River sloughs in the half-light of dawn. “You’d see least terns take to wing when the tide started coming in. The whole flock’d be white one moment, then turn and they’d be all black. So beautiful. They looked like money falling out of the sky.”

He was mourning something on the way to being lost, as if IB itself were on the endangered species list. And maybe he’s right. The last rough-hewn, working-class, Midwestern beach town on the coast looks all primed to be slicked up. The harbingers are the millionaires’ houses that are starting to block off IB’s oceanfront. How long before real money falls from the sky and low-rent, workaday IB is given the eviction notice? IB has one protector: Tijuana River pollution. Just the thought of icky stuff in the ocean water after rains gives pause to La Jolla investors.

But that’s IB. It’s on the edge. To understand IB, you’ve got to approach it from the border. Walk up, follow the shoreline, a time-honored illegal immigrants’ route. It becomes tense, unpredictable, silent, threatening, especially around Boca Rio, the mouth of the Tijuana River. Folks wading across risk their lives, from the holes and currents and the E. coli in the water. Add to that the sudden battering of chopper rotors and Border Patrol four-wheel drives swooping in, and it can feel like a war zone.

Then, between one sand dune and the next, the beach transforms. Lovers wander past. Kids play. Families picnic. The First House in
America appears, a condo thrusting toward the beach. It’s the southernmost finger of IB, reaching down between the sloughs and the ocean. This place, IB, you realize, is a frontier town.

And you find the frontier people in Ye Olde Plank. It’s been here on the beach since 1886. Sundays, the Plank crowd is a slice of real IBithans. At the horseshoe bar you’ll sit next to off-duty Customs and Border Patrol guys, nurses, teachers, actors, trailer-park retirees, long-bearded musicians, eccentrics, and even the odd millionaire. But the flavor’s set by surfers and retired enlisted Navy, here with spouses for Sunday brunch. Among them, ex-UDT/SEALs (guys who trained up the road in Coronado but wouldn’t live there for a million bucks) can spin hair-raising yarns set in Asia and Central America.

And keeping them all in order was Babs. Sunday mornings, Babs cooked out on the beach-deck barbecue. The last time I was there, she handed me an eight-ounce steak, a five-egg omelet, home fries, and a Bloody Mary, all for around six bucks. She’s just left, but the breakfast deal continues. Al, the owner, says he keeps the price low because most of his customers are friends, regulars, IB lifers. It’s a club. Their cards, pictures, plaques cover the walls. Their puffer fish and diver’s helmets dangle over the bar. And together they often do good works, like going down to Honduras and building a clinic, or helping each other out with medical bills.

Of course, there’s no point in hiding IB’s other sides. The place has had its share of vigilantes, scam artists, racists, and toughs. The pier in the old days was where deals went down. The beach was for bonfire-keg parties that could erupt into big, brawling fistfights. One zonked-out girl named Suzie appeared here and had her baby in the women’s toilets. Later, someone threw her off the pier into the water, dead, murdered. It could be a rough, tough town.

And let’s face it, planned it is not. Palm Avenue’s the worst kind of strip. Just a wide road with miles of…what? Tire shops, fast-food franchises, car-repair joints. Yet it’s also the home of two of my favorite places: the Scoreboard, a bar where people rave about the once-a-month Maine lobster dinners, and Lydia’s Mexican eatery, where Lydia Pimentel’s 6 children, 26 grandchildren, and 44 great-grandchildren get everybody up and dancing, anything from line-dancing to merengue, ranchero, quebradita, and salsa in the evenings. ¡Qué noche! My one big regret? The Pawn Shop has gone, retreated to Chula Vista. Ron Krasner helped me out of financial pickles many a time. What started as a voyage of fear and shame became a kind of social occasion. They’d get to recognize the Fender Strat I brought in. I’d even make stupid offers for the moose on their walls. But Ron kept me under a roof when no bank would look my way.

The truth is, IB’s so uncool it’s cool. Even the surfing is kind of far out. Its secret treasure is Boca Rio. The mouth of the Tijuana River has always had, by legend, two things: a wave that trips over a bump outside the river’s entrance, and a friendly killer whale, Broken Fin, who’s said to have hung around there on and off for years. There are a lot of jokes about first-timers spotting that bent-over fin and paddling like hell for shore.

That’s exactly it. IB’s on the edge, between America and no-man’s-land. For sure, it’s mellowed. Sand-castle-building contests have taken over from the boozy beach keg parties. And they’ve upgraded the pier’s entrance with cute shops and eateries like Cow-A-Bunga. But that doesn’t mean the IBithans have all been tamed.

“Want to come down to the sloughs, tonight?” said Mark to me that evening as we finished our ice creams. “Got a boat. I could take you all through. No telling what we’ll see.”

— Bill Manson

**ROLANDO**

A sense of humanity pervades this little community on San Diego’s eastern fringe, a sense that beauty matters to the souls of all men, not just those who can afford La Jolla. Though the name Rolando has come to include everything between College Avenue to the west, El Cajon Boulevard to the north, the city of La Mesa to the...
east, and University Avenue to the south, the original neighborhood is the eight to ten blocks centered around the four-way-stop intersection of Solita Avenue and Rolando Boulevard. Stamped on the sidewalk on the southwest corner is the name “G. R. Daley” and the date “8-27.”

I don’t know if Mr. Daley built just the sidewalks — the old style with a strip of dirt between the sidewalk and the street for grass or gardens — or if he built the streets and houses too. But the date seems right for this area. In 1927, the Great War had been won nine years earlier and the stock market was two years from crashing. While Europe still licked its wounds, American pride and sense of possibility soared. And I imagine that G. R. Daley and the other men who constructed Rolando wanted to build a neighborhood that reflected that new sense of national joy. If so, they succeeded.

They built ornate concrete gas lamps to illuminate the streets and sidewalks at night. They planted trees along the avenues to green up the neighborhood by day. As you enter from the north on Rolando Boulevard, towering silk oak trees 90 feet tall line both sides of the road. The men made the streets narrow for an intimate feel, with gentle curves that follow the natural contours of the landscape. They gave the streets Spanish names such as Aragon, Serrano, and Valencia. They built staircases that pedestrians could use to shortcut between streets. And they built small but picturesque houses that a veteran of the Great War would be proud to come home to.

Almost all of the houses in Rolando are less than 1500 square feet. Those that are larger have had additions that mar the quaint symmetry Mr. Daley and his cohorts crafted so carefully. They sit centered on modest-sized lots, evenly spaced from each other. Styles include Cape Cod, Spanish Colonial, French cottage, and a sort of Mediterranean bungalow. Smooth, hand-troweled exteriors are the rule, as opposed to rough, spray-on stucco. The houses are on raised foundations, not concrete slabs, and have hardwood floors and wood-framed windows. Even today, the houses look fresh and inviting.

The pride that was put into building Rolando lives on today in its residents. Though you see few gardeners’ trucks parked at the curb, you see well-maintained gardens. Some are spectacular. I can think of only one house that has fallen into serious disrepair. On a recent tour through the neighborhood I saw a single “For Sale” sign. It’s a place people don’t want to leave.

— Ernie Grimm

PACIFIC BEACH
Once or twice a year, I try to walk all of Garnet Avenue between Mission Boulevard and Ingraham. I like to do it on the Saturday in early May when the PB Block Party is in full swing. Strolling down Garnet when it’s closed to cars and swollen with throngs of young men and women dressed in skimpy clothing who’ve gone through hell to find a parking space, I feel smug. I live a mile north of Crystal Pier, so I can walk or bicycle. I never have to worry about parking.

My complacency is fleeting. I moved to Pacific Beach in 1974, a 20-year-old from Chicago. Apartment-hunting, I’d been charmed by the bejeweled street names: Diamond, Tourmaline, Sapphire, Emerald, Felspar, Opal. No neighborhood I’d ever known in the Midwest had names like that. Behind the Vons, my husband and I found a large two-bedroom unit where the rent was $185 a month. Some evenings we walked toward the beach on Diamond, returning along Garnet. Almost all the shops were closed at night back then. We passed few other pedestrians.

I don’t remember what year the changes began. At some point, a rock-and-roll club called Mom’s opened across Garnet from the New Seed. Diego’s, a huge Mexican restaurant and nightclub, started drawing crowds near the pier, and a comedy club appeared. My husband and I joked that Garnet Avenue was turning into the Boulevard Saint-Michel of San Diego. But we weren’t paying much attention to Garnet. We’d had our first baby and had moved from the apartment into a house near Bird Rock Elementary.

ROLANO: I imagine that G. R. Daley and the other men who constructed Rolando wanted to build a neighborhood that reflected that new sense of national joy.

PACIFIC BEACH: So many boutiques have opened that girls now arrive in packs to spend their afternoons trolling for fashion finds.
We still shopped at the Vons out of habit.
But years passed before we walked the avenue again. We knew, of course, that the Walker Scott at Garnet and Bayard had closed, as had Susan’s Toys and the See’s candy outlet.
We’d noticed that the Whereshouse and Café Crema and Zanzibar had moved in. Only on foot, however, did we realize how many sushi joints (seven) have opened. At an equal number of storefronts, you can get a tattoo or have your navel pierced.
So many boutiques have opened that girls now arrive in packs to spend their afternoons trolling for fashion finds.
At night, the clatter of cutlery and conversation spills out from restaurants and bars to fill the street.

My timing seems off. When I was 20, PB was full of 20-year-olds. Today, an elderly Mexican woman, brought me a big bowl of chicken soup. In the fall, I know that another neighbor will leave sacks of persimmons by my front door. I know that my neighbor across the street is depressed because the company he works for has filed for bankruptcy. I know that his next-door neighbor’s 15-year-old daughter has started taking insulin.
The lots in Normal Heights are small. Clearances between buildings are narrow. Our streets are narrow.
This intimacy was compounded during the 1960s and 1970s when many of the single-family homes were demolished to make way for high-density apartment buildings. Sixteen people, for example, live to my immediate right. A family of five to my left. We can hear each other laugh, cough, sneeze, and weep. Without really wanting to, we share in each other’s lives.

Eighteen different languages are spoken at Adams Elementary. In the late afternoon while I water my lawn, I watch Eritrean women pass by in their long white cotton shawls. The Cambodians who live across the alley have an elaborate setup of plastic wading pools in which they grow Ipomea aquatica, or water spinach. At North Park Produce, a store three blocks away, I shop beside veiled women, turbaned men, and people wearing national dress I can’t identify. There are a number of idle young African-American men who live on my block. They flirt with gang activity. They sell a little weed on the side. They always smile and address me with formality, “Good morn- ing, sir.”

It’s not quite heaven. A few weeks ago, late at night, Mexican teens gathered across the street, rapping from their car stereos. I stood on my porch and hollered, “Excuse me, but the judgmental white people in this neighborhood are trying to get some sleep!” They looked at me. They looked at each other. They laughed. They dispersed.

We judgmental white people are growing in number here. The small house I bought two years ago has doubled in value. A block or so away on Meade Avenue, the owners of a two-bedroom, one-bath, 800-square-foot home have put it on the market for $410,000. Rents have also increased. Over at the Normal Heights Community Planning Committee, well-intentioned activists fret that housing costs are driving immigrants and other low-income minorities from the neighborhood.

Most of us, I think, would like to preserve the diversity we enjoy and admire. We’re not
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**MISSION VALLEY**

It’s a difficult thing for a man to admit, but I’m going to have to come clean: I’m an unadventurous person. It’s unfashionable, non-PC, and virtually ensures the end of any social life I might have, but it’s time for me to admit it. I’m dull.

I’m one of those people who love to eat in chain restaurants, who shop at big-box retailers, who get excited when a new outlet mall opens. I can ooh and aah over a review of a daring new Brazilian-Thai fusion restaurant while I’m eating at KFC, and I’ve been known to check out online samples of hot new goth bands right before ordering the new Celine Dion CD.

So it’s only natural that I’m drawn to Mission Valley.

If you placed all the malls and chain stores in the world end to end...but, hell, they already have, haven’t they? Restaurants, bars, clothing stores, multiplexes, all of them nationally known, with convenient parking, strewn along Friars Road like hookers lined up in front of a Navy base. I spent today running from mall to mall, from Fenton Marketplace to Rio Vista Center to Park in the Valley to Mission Valley Center to Mission Valley West to Fashion Valley. I’m exhausted but high, as if I just ran the Rock ‘n’ Roll Marathon.

I’m not the only one. Based on the ever-present traffic, with more and more condos being built (and what are condos but the chain-store version of home ownership?), there’s a whole population out there who not only worships at the shrine but wants to live next door.

Mission Valley during the day is for amateurs, though. Hit Benignan’s or In Cahoots on a Friday night, say seven-thirty, and you’ll see the valley at its wildest. Both Caminos Del Rio are packed, every parking lot is full, and every restaurant and bar has a line out the door. And for what? The same restaurants and bars are duplicated all over town. Why here?

It’s the mating ritual of the urban heterosexual. Not a game I play, for assorted reasons, but certainly a popular one. You might not have to wait for a table at the T.G.I. Friday’s in Rancho San Diego, but there won’t be as many cute singles at the next table to flirt with either. There are enough happy hours in the valley to keep every man, woman, and child in San Diego County ecstatic for life.

In his 1991 book *Edge City*, Joel Garreau described places like...
Mission Valley as the cities of the future: urban/suburban hybrids where people live, work, and play, all of them designed to resemble malls (even the condos look like shopping centers), every inch connected by wide, crowded roads. Be honest — does anyone take the trolley into Mission Valley? Garreau’s vision of the future was bleak, a picture of identical urban sprawl from coast to coast. And Mission Valley fits that description.

So what? I say. Bring it on! Pave every freakin’ inch! I’m not the only one who feels this way, or else it would have failed years ago. Let the hipsters go to Hillcrest or Del Mar; Mission Valley is ours. It’s safe, predictable, and comfortable, and you know exactly what you’re going to find wherever you go. Hey, no one goes to McDonald’s for the taste of the food; we go because TV commercials tell us to.

Mission Valley is one big McDonald’s — supersized. Now excuse me while I line up for my Happy Meal.

— Patrick Brassell

LA JOLLA: Some bloated examples of third-rate modern architecture up on the hill scream to be noticed.

know exactly what the tennis courts, batting on the baseball fields, or swimming with each other in the pool.

It dawned on me just how diverse the area is the other day while I was riding the trolley. I saw a mother speaking Spanish to her kids, I saw two elderly women laughing and speaking Lao (I think), and of course there were people speaking English. In fact, many of my friends from my high school are from the Philippines, Mexico, and Eritrea.

Southeast San Diego may have some common inner-city problems, but I still feel a sense of community from the majority of the law-abiding citizens in the area. I’m glad to see the area being rebuilt and restored, which started with the Malcolm X Library a few Imperial and Euclid at night, and a few streets where I know drug dealing and gang activity occur. Theft is also a moderate concern. I almost learned this the hard way when I nearly had my backpack stolen at Martin Luther King Park by a small, innocent-looking woman who was pushing a stroller and walking her young son. This made me realize that I can never be too careful.

Despite the backpack incident, Martin Luther King Park is my favorite, and that’s where the diversity of the area can be seen firsthand. It is not unusual to see Laotians, Mexicans, African-Americans, and Filipinos playing basketball in the recreation center, hitting tennis balls to each other on

SOUTHEAST SAN DIEGO

Although on any given day I don’t usually come in contact with gangs, violence, or drugs, subconsciously I am aware that they are near, and I think that most people in Southeast San Diego are conscious of that fact. I still feel safe in the neighborhood though, because I know that as long as you mind your own business, you’re fine. However, I try to avoid some places, such as the intersection of

rubio’s on the northeast corner of Sports Arena Blvd.

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The distinction is chronological, but also a matter of attitude. You can see the contrast along a few yards of Girard Avenue, in what used to be fondly called "the Village." D.G. Wills’ bookstore is Old LJ, crowded, disorderly, friendly, and host to a gang of the owner’s buddies who watch Monday night football there. The Pannikin, next door, has a charming shabbiness and an atmosphere of casual amateurism, along with coffee to dwell over at the outside tables. But then comes the cold, spotless Ferrari store, often proudly empty, but occasionally visited by sleek thirtysomethings who themselves look like Ferraris. That is New LJ.

The town’s architecture shows the same division. Old LJ boasts a few beautiful buildings by Cliff May, William Templeton Johnson, and — along a glorious stretch of Prospect Street — Irving Gill. And there also remain some simple, perfectly proportioned cottages in the old-fashioned taste, although every day another one is smashed to bits by New LJ.

New LJ means oversized mansions: Roman villas, medieval fortresses, Spanish haciendas, French chateaux, faux-Tudor country houses, pretentious dwellings by which the reigning plutocracy proclaims its right of descent from the ruling classes of earlier centuries. Some years ago and now includes the new Elementary Institute of Science. More projects like these will continue to improve and help solve the problems that plague our neighborhood.

— Brian Lawless

LA JOLLA

Which La Jolla? Old La Jolla or New La Jolla? The distinction is chronological, but also a matter of attitude. You can see the contrast along a few yards of Girard Avenue, in what used to be fondly called “the Village.” D.G. Wills’ bookstore is Old LJ, crowded, disorderly, friendly, and host to a gang of the owner’s buddies who watch Monday night football there. The Pannikin, next door, has a charming shabbiness and an atmosphere of casual amateurism, along with coffee to dwell over at the outside tables. But then comes the cold, spotless Ferrari store, often proudly empty, but occasionally visited by sleek thirtysomethings who themselves look like Ferraris. That is New LJ.

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bloated examples of third-rate modern architecture up on the hill scream to be noticed, while everyone passes by an occasional masterpiece by Dave Lorimer. Public buildings have been blighted in the same way. The most notorious example is the La Jolla Museum of Contemptible Art. Desiring to make the building's exterior as ridiculous as the collection inside, the museum paid postmodernist Robert Venturi to transform the once-handsome façade into a squat parody of the Gill structures across the street. New LJ rejoiced.

We can't go without mentioning Newest La Jolla. This is the creation of real estate speculators, filling every available inch with drab, chintzy, identical townhouses and independent-dwelling stacked units (they used to be called apartment houses). The builders profit, while the community becomes more hectic and more anonymous, with traffic in and out regularly clotted to a standstill.

La Jolla is a shoreline and a mountain. Not a big mountain — only 822 feet of it, far shorter than the Empire State Building — but it is a lush beauty spot, the higher the lusher. There isn't much solitude left, for Mount Soledad has been built over from all directions. But on the side overlooking the Pacific, the narrow, winding streets, the thick foliage, the estates hidden behind elaborate grills, and the ever more stupendous views make a trip up the mountain an inspiring experience.

At the very top, surrounded by fabulous prospects of coastline, mountains, endless suburbs, and the sweet blue California sky, stands the Cross. For the sake of this dominating object, the government of San Diego has spent a lot of taxpayers' money to support its claim that, first, the Cross is not a Christian symbol but a war memorial, a historical monument, heritage (like the Confederate flag in Georgia), or an abstract design; and, second, that in selling a minuscule patch of city property at the foot of the historical monument to a carefully selected private group guaranteed to maintain it as a Cross, the city has wiped its hands clean of any establishment of religion. Every court has laughed these arguments to scorn.

DEL DIOS: Neighbors began recounting

Hodgee sightings around the bar at the Del Dios Country Store.

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We should not forget, though, that the Cross firmly belongs to Old La Jolla. It comes from the era during which there was a gentleman's agreement among realtors and property owners not to sell to people belonging to the wrong religion (and, of course, the wrong race). Like everything in America, Old La Jolla had its profound moral defects too.

— Jonathan Saville

DEL DIOS

No one's seen Hodgee lately. Some hoped that as Lake Hodges disappeared, the monster would have fewer places to hide. That one day they'd be watching the sunrise from their quiet porches and suddenly catch a glimpse of a dark, lizardish hump — snaky Hodgee undulating...
ing through the water. At least it would provide something fun to talk about at the next town meeting or fire-station pancake breakfast. A Hodgee sighting would be a welcome break from the stress of dealing with the county water authority, building codes, lake-draining drought, arson fires, mud slides, shortcutting commuters, cars missing curves up on Del Dios Highway and tumbling into their back yards. And the newest influx of commuters who prefer $2 million North County clone houses with a Rancho Santa Fe address on a sterile golf course to 70-year-old fishing cottages under hundred-year-old oaks. But now the lake’s little more than a puddle, and Hodgee’s still nowhere to be seen. Maybe he’s just had enough and moved on.

Every lake needs its own secretive monster, but Hodgee took his time making an appearance. About 1918, a year-round stream, a growing population, and a need for water begat the Lake Hodges Dam. The dam begat the lake, which of course attracted fishermen. The town of Del Dios (population in the mid-hundreds) began as a cluster of getaway cottages for San Diego anglers. Off the beaten path. A hamlet you wouldn’t know was there unless someone told you. Eventually weekenders became year-rounders. Poets, authors, artists, lawyers, retirees, die-hard hippies who maybe fished, maybe not.

Hodgee surfaced in the 1970s with a sighting report in a local newsletter. The community welcomed the amphibian; neighbors began recounting Hodgee sightings around the bar at the Del Dios Country Store. Disappearing cattle and hay bales were sure
hairy hippies on Wall Street. Grant me Kodachromes and unicorns, abaci and handset phones, any obsolete history reawakened and made contemporary.

I'm a fan of the enclave and a champion of the underdog; my favorite color is black sheep, and my favorite fashion's the ugly duckling. I want my pegs squared and my jewels shine from roughs. I like my beauty difficult, on the principle that easy pleasures are for the intolerant. And when I see where America's headed today, I'm compelled to post some cautionary notices: "Open up, fearful country, and embrace your differences!"

Some of San Diego is undeniably slouching off into the Sad, Great Homogenization, but some of SD's retro, some of it's rich, and some is "alternative." In short, we San Diegans have still got options. And option number one, the angel of my appreciation, the element that buck's convention, San Diego's last true neighborhood and earthly connection, indeed, the soul of this good place, is Ocean Beach. If SD were the Beatles, then OB'd be George Harrison.

I will tell you a parable about Ocean Beach, from an event that actually happened to me, one recent afternoon, a sunny midsummer Saturday in this summer community, when the beaches were almost full. Ocean Beach busted, lunchtime, people going, bright sandal-traffic, motorcycle-traffic, music from the boardwalk and Newport Avenue, the smells of ocean and asphalt and Hodad's and beer. A late arriver, attempting to park, I found myself winding farther and farther from the choicest spots, far from the beach. It was a long time before I came upon a space big enough for me, fronting an abandoned building, but an elderly woman was standing in the lines, wearing a darkly flowered housedress and staring at the ground. I honked once, politely, inching closer to the old woman and the spot. I smiled. But her face was furious, a
Grudgingly, you finally buy one — not to read, but to carry around, hoping the annoyance will decrease. Now that you’ve ditched the high schoolers, your attention focuses on staying close to whomever you came with amidst the sea of bodies. As you circle the stadium, a plethora of smells approaches your nostrils, from cow dung and dirt to delicious barbecue. The bright midday sun temporarily blinds you, helping you realize you haven’t applied nearly enough sunscreen. You can hear the announcer over the intercom from three streets away: the proceedings are about to commence. The cowboy boys enter the arena, some to take on bulls ten times their size, some just to make the audience laugh. Saddle up your horses and tighten your belt buckles — you’re at the Lakeside Rodeo!

Huge crowds gather for this April weekend to see steers wrestled, broncs ridden, and cowboys trampled. You can’t live in Lakeside long without attending, and stories of gorings and top performances.

LAKESID
It seems as if a hundred kids have been trying to sell you a program.
fill the streets like urban legends.

Due largely to the publicity from the rodeo, Lakeside has a reputation of being just another old-fashioned country town inhabited by a bunch of tobacco-chewing, horse-riding, “sheep-luvin’” hicks, not to mention being racist, perverted, and generally ignorant. But although the rodeo might be the town’s main attraction, Lakeside has more to offer.

The majority of Lakeside’s large Catholic population gathers regularly at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church, two blocks from El Capitan High School. Within a 200-yard radius of the sanctuary you can find yourself at Mapleview Baptist or the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. Every year the men from about 15 churches, from many denominations, gather for the Steak-Out, where they can share fellowship, eat good meat, and be men. Fragments of plastic knives often go flying as overly zealous (or overly muscular) gentlemen try to cut through their steaks only to find the knives too flimsy. The plastic tablecloth and squeaky folding chairs don’t deter them. A bundle of volunteers helps to keep the food hot and tasty, the music sharp and melodious, the message sharp and inspirational. Lakeside is more than just “Cow Pie High” and the rodeo. These men, along with their families, are out to make their community a better place.

— Greg Finley

LITTLE ITALY

Date & India

Friday night

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Church bells signal and the parking lot’s full. Our Lady of the Rosary spills its contents — confections of white wedding gown and rose-petaled bridesmaid — down steps and onto street, where red-vested weekday workers sweep the asphalt clean. Children shriek. Mothers shush. Fathers shake hands.

Will the day’s brightness seem garish for that afternoon’s funeral? Or will the black suit-and-ties and dark, somber dresses just seem chic in contrast? — Sue Greenberg

SAN MARCOS
Looking for a representative cross-section of San Marcos residents? Try the 24 Hour Fitness in the Vons center at San Marcos Boulevard and Rancho Santa Fe Road any weekday morning around 6:30. As you walk through the automatic doors, you’ll see the early-20-something Front Desk Girl hauling out the racks of spanex workout gear (20% Off!), her long blond hair pulled back in a ponytail. You can almost see the bubble above Front Desk

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India at Date & Fir Saturday afternoon
Tourists gamble on the best bet: lines at Filipp’s shout family; couples next door say “Table for two”; across the street, four-tops, two umbrellas, more strolling, much staring. All menus speak Italian, but the real language is gesture. Talk climbs to tones that warrant wrought-iron railing. Talk climbs to tones that warrant wrought-iron railing.

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Girl's head: “Work out here and you'll look like me.”

Just beyond the glass partition, standing beside the weight machines, Trainer Man meets his first client of the day. Trainer Man: mid-50s, receding hairline, firefighter mustache. He doesn’t look like Ahnold, but he’s toned and trim in his baggy black workout shorts and white T-shirt. Trainer Man makes small talk with Overdressed Senior Citizen Lady. The sun’s not even up, and she’s in full makeup regalia, white hair teased to within an inch of its long life.

 keras Lady wears a soft

Overdressed Senior Citizen Lady. The sun’s not even up, and she’s in full makeup regalia, white hair teased to within an inch of its long life. Overdressed Senior Citizen Lady wears a soft pink French terry workout suit. A matching pink bow perches in her hair. Her manicured fingernails are exactly the same shade.

Past the weight machines, in the inner sanctum, the free-weight room, you’ll find Popeye. Popeye is tall, his red hair swept up in a semi-pompadour. In his black sweatpants and sleeveless black T-shirt, Popeye grunts and sweats and trades stories with the other early-morning weightlifters. He lifts impossibly large stacks of weights. His massive biceps ripple like Ahnold, but he’s concerned with working his jaw, not his muscles. Blond and petite in powder blue shorts and white T-shirt, Popeye looks as if she might fit comfortbly in a child’s windup music box. Brunette Fatty sweats away in baggy black workout pants and a green striped V-necked shirt, probably purchased in the Plus Size department at Wal-Mart. Behind Fatty and Skinny, Heart Attack Man flails away on a treadmill. Clutching the front of the machine with a deathlike grip, Heart Attack Man chews gum or talks to himself while running. His chest heaves. Sweat flies off his body. He seems ready at any moment to collapse in a heap and be hurled backward off the machine. When Heart Attack Man’s breathing grows especially labored, Fatty turns to Skinny. “Call 911,” she whispers.

MISSION HILLS: Every newlywed couple should have such a love nest: oodles of style, worn around the edges, reasonable rent.

MISSION HILLS: First the guy was dead, and then he was not, a significant detail that changed during the telling of the story. But dead or alive, said my neighbor Matt, there was a body in the vacant lot by the crack house downtown. The police were already there. The trash-strewn lot was Matt’s dog’s territory. “The cops said it was in the weeds at first,” Matt said, “blame it on the light. Blame it on the thing. There was a body in the vacant lot, and you and I were already there.”

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against the city noise. Once, when I was on the phone with my boss, the line went dead for a tick, and then she yelled, “Where the fuck are you? The San Diego Zoo?”

But the subculture of South Mission Hills is not all that obvious. Most of my neighbors are Hispanic. Central-Mexico Hispanic, as my Mexican-American friends are quick to point out. Somehow, they’ve gotten a toehold on Reynard Way, a cheap-rent zone below the luxe homes on the hill. For a few blocks, multiple families live crammed into single apartments. For rent money, they work car washes, stock drugstore shelves, hang Sheetrock, and wash dishes. A guy named Pedro sells them groceries out of his van. At night, they blast norteño music and drink beer and gather around the dead or dying carcasses of cars kept alive well past their prime with liberal use of Armor All.

We might as well be from different planets. Oblivious to white culture, my Hispanic apartment mates won’t even make eye contact unless I get things going first with my hatchet Spanish. “¿Qué pasa?” I say to my neighbor who is putting out her trash. I am wrestling my infant grandson into the car seat. “Este es mi, uh, ¿como se dice in español, uh, grandson?” I ask. “Gran-son,” she mouths, tasting the word. “Abuelo.” She smiles. Abuelo is grandfather — that’s me. “Sí — para esto” — I point to the baby — “el niño de, uh, de mi hija, ¿sí?” He is the little boy of my daughter, right? I think I say this. “Sí, ” she says, smiling a smile so huge the gold fillings are showing. “De su hijo. Sí.” She walks back up to her porch. Then she turns and says, with emphasis, “He beautiful. He berr-y beautiful.”

— Dave Good

MISSION HILLS

As State Street crosses Laurel heading north, its name changes suddenly to Reynard, and a little blue street sign welcomes you to Mission Hills. Don’t be fooled. This is Baja Mission Hills, like Kensington too far south of Adams. Reynard winds its way along a canyon floor, carrying you past close-set single-story homes that share space with small businesses and big apartment buildings, and there is the tendency to look up, to gaze upon the funk-some, enviable cliffside houses above, often with decks jutting improbably into space. This is where I lived for a little over a year, in a fabulous two-bed-room Spanish guest house just down the corrugated, bare cliff from the house proper. (Every newlywed couple should have such a love nest: oodles of style, worn around the edges, reasonable rent.) There have been improve-

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minds of late — vinyl windows and remodels in the apartments, the arrival of the Frame Maker shop (featuring the frames of Jerry Solomon) across from the 7-Eleven — but Reynard still has the slightly worn, oddly developed look I (fondly) remember.

A little beyond where I lived, the street climbs out of the canyon, levels off at a respectable elevation, and changes its name again (this time to Goldfinch), as if it needed a new identity at this altitude. Bigger needed a new identity (Goldfinch), as if it again (this time to Reynard still has the 7-Eleven — but

Stop by and enjoy a complimentary gourmet cookie!

Mission Hills

Driving along Fort Stockton, gazing at majestic manses after majestic masne, it’s easy to believe that here, the aristocracy never fell. (I used to imagine dinner table conversations before the airport went in: “Oh, Walter, it will be such an eyesore. And so noisy. Can’t you put a call through to somebody and get something done about that?”) And even if it’s not true, even if the only real difference between the rich and us is money, it is easy to see that Mission Hills is our best neighborhood for housepecking. That is, looking at houses simply for the pleasure of looking at houses.

Here, the $1 million-plus ($2 million, $3 million...) homes are not hidden along hillsides or behind gates or hedges. Here, they stand forth proudly in grandeur, many two or more stories, one after another, a model community for the age of the renovated home and the personal castle. Which is not to accuse the neighborhood of homogeneity; the streets offer a fine mix of Craftsman, American stucco giants, mid-century designer ranches, and outright Moderns. To see what I mean, drive to the corner of Sunset and Couts, site of the Italianate mansion that gets my vote for the finest home in America’s finest city, and check out the surrounding built environment.

— Matthew Lickona

MISSION HILLS

The wheels of my red, slightly rusted Radio Flyer wagon rattled as they fought the pebbles for a place on the pathway. I sighed, exhaling anxiety with every bump, the bumps blending into a low hum that would grow deeper as I loaded my wagon with basil, thyme, sage, succulents, lion’s tail, and whatever else caught my eye and as I struggled to make my way through the newly hedges and hedges. Here, they stand forth proudly in resplendent, ungaudy grandeur, many two or more stories, one after another, a model community for the age of the renovated home and the personal castle. Which is not to accuse the neighborhood of homogeneity; the streets offer a fine mix of Craftsman, American stucco giants, mid-century designer ranches, and outright Moderns. To see what I mean, drive to the corner of Sunset and Couts, site of the Italianate mansion that gets my vote for the finest home in America’s finest city, and check out the surrounding built environment.

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Anytime I’m near Mission Hills, instinct and habit combine to steer me toward the Mission Hills Nursery — San Diego’s oldest, says the sign; established in 1910. When I shop there, I feel more as if I’m out for a stroll; I never feel the tug of commerce, just the pull of overflowing beauty. The nursery is a little like a favorite and worthwhile book, offering the pleasure of the familiar and the delight of discovering something new every time. It is my garden away from my gar-

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den, with the added bonus that I may pick the flowers and then plant them at home.

During my time living in Mission Hills (and beyond) I began to think of the surrounding neighborhood sort of like a garden, or an exceptionally well-decorated yard. For a front lawn, the pretty space that makes a good first impression as you come up from Mission Valley, there was Presidio Park and the brick-fashioned Serra Cross. For the back lawn, where kids can run and play, I used Mission Hills Park, with its noble stands of eucalyptus and its curious row of gravestones in the back corner. Houses were my judiciously mixed flower beds. Craftsman homes were my African daisies, all the street at Monet’s Garden (since departed); next door, I munched croissants and strawberry crepes at A La Française. I left the neighborhood before Phil’s Barbecue arrived, but now that it’s there, my husband brings me back on gustatory pilgrimages.

Every garden has its weeds — a few overgrown ‘70s-awful apartment boxes, one or two prickly office complexes, a curiously unglorious church. But such errant growths are easy to overlook, especially as the houses sprout new coats of paint in ever more alluring combinations: gold-green with rust trim — amazing, it works. Another discovery, another delight, and perhaps another

EL CAJON: “I could look out the back door right now,” says its manager, “and see tents and sleeping bags and coffeepots on a grassy spot between my building and the courthouse.”

grand and brilliant and up-front about it but also full of quiet details: purple veins in an orange petal on a daisy, a clever alcove or overhang on a house. Little Spanish gems lounged in more rounded, starker state, like succulents or cacti. And the modern homes were my exotics — fancy neutral grasses and outrageous blooms echoed by bleached woods and angular glass fronts.

Certain businesses became my useful gardens — lively vegetables and herbs to make life more delicious. Maison en Provence remains my favorite home store, bold Provençal colors jumping from the linens and heady aromas wafting from the soaps — orange, lavender, sage, rosemary. Cut flowers I bought across...
Valley in the 1860s, so tent communities of homeless people are likely to pop up in various places in El Cajon today. One did recently behind the Gold Coast Apartments on Ballantine Street. “I could look out the back door right now,” says its manager, “and see tents and sleeping bags and coffee pots on a grassy spot between my building and the courthouse.” There seem to be 10,000 apartments in El Cajon; more than houses, anyway, says a resident who has lived in the community since the early ’50s. In the 1980s, city hall put a moratorium, still in effect, on building new apartment buildings. But low rents, relative to those in San Diego, have always been a magnet to the poor. Then some renters can’t pay their bills and end up on the streets.

What to do about the homeless is the dominant civic issue that divides Cajonians (well, it beats Cajones) these days. East County Republicanism seems torn between Christian values and property values. Some citizens favor a proposal to build a transitional-housing facility for the homeless at the Fabulous 7 Motel on East Main. But opponents have filed a lawsuit against it. One of their arguments is that the project will bring convicted felons into close proximity to the area’s children.

In front of the Grand Bar, back toward downtown El Cajon, a righteous drunk fumes to me about the transitional-housing project. Especially exercised about the hookers who may go there, he shouts out, “Why don’t they build them a whorehouse and get ‘em off the street that way?” — Joe Deegan

POWAY

Poway: “The City in the Country.” I was born and raised in Poway, and I can tell you that the slogan has never been accurate. At the time of Poway’s incorporation in 1980, any passer-by could spend all day searching for a city. By now, the country is the elusive part.

Due to its split personality of both city and country, Poway exhibits interesting contradictions. Rusty pickup trucks share the road with BMWs and the resident Ferrari. Hicks and yuppies pick through fresh produce together. In addition to a Target and a Walmart, there is a feed store, a stable, and random chickens. Housing ranges from mansions to mobile homes to the token homeless man.

The best way to describe Poway is in moments — both Kodak and daguerrotype. Five Christian churches share a short stretch of road, their signs declaring the righteousness of each over the others. The nostalgic apparition of the old Applebee farmhouse stands alone in a barren field, a fading memory of Poway as it once was. I remember wading through Rattlesnake Creek in red rubber boots, collecting rocks and planks to build rickety bridges, enjoying the squelching mud, forests of reeds, and darting tadpoles.

Near the creek is the Poway Valley Riders Association arena and stables. Poway horseback riders create demand for a snaking network of horse trails, and their horses supply the perpetual peppering of droppings that adorn so many east Poway sidewalks. Due to rural residential zoning, people can keep horses in their back yards while leading an otherwise suburban lifestyle within stuccoed walls. East Poway is dominated by such people.

On the flip side, a nearly unchecked onslaught of tract houses provides the support necessary to maintain Poway’s three Starbucks. These houses would be pleasant enough, were it not for their chillingly identical design. My friend Courtney remembers a man who stayed three minutes in her house before realizing that he actually lived two doors down.

Overlooking everyone is the land of the very rich, consisting of million-dollar dream houses, tennis courts, and automated gates. The gates are successful in keeping out alien vehicles, non-fence-climbers, and the mentally impaired.

Perhaps the best illustration of the contradictory nature of Poway is its treatment of the city mascot, the
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Poway Oak. Once a venerable living landmark, it was suffocated and killed by nearby road expansion, a most ironic demise. Other strange occurrences take place as well—a stranded duck made it into the crime log, a skateboarder jumped a flight of stairs and hit a horse.

Throughout the contradictions is a basic understanding that Poway will always have understanding from simple baseball and bare ridgelines. Of trees, numerous parks, horse.

flight of stairs and hit a skateboarder jumped a into the crime log, a take place as well —a ironic demise. Other expansion, a most

killed by nearby road it was suffocated and

erable living landmark, Poway Oak. Once a ven-

trees are now paved over. Perhaps the slogan will become “the City in the Suburb,” with a harder mascot — a Starbucks or an SUV.

— Alana Firl

BORREGO SPRINGS

Ten Reasons Why You’d Have to Be Crazy to Live in Borrego Springs:

1. The average temperature in July is 107.
2. To paraphrase what Gertrude Stein once said of Oakland, there is no there there — no people (population: about 3000), no movie theater, no stoplight, no convenience store, no hospital, no home mail delivery, no McDonald’s. And not only are these things not there, but it’s a 50-mile ride over rough roads (to Brawley or Ramona) before you can get to them. This distance can prove daunting if you, for example, run out of cigarettes late at night.
3. Flood insurance is mandatory. Borrego Springs is built on top of several drainage systems running out of the San Ysidro Mountains to the west of town, notably the one that drains Hellhole Canyon. My house, like most of the others in one of which nearly wiped out the De Anza Country Club.
4. Earthquake insurance isn’t mandatory (because insurance companies don’t want to issue policies), but it should be because Borrego Springs is located smack-dab in the middle of one of the most active and violent fault systems in the world.

BORREGO SPRINGS: The average temperature in July is 107.

Borrego Springs, is built in the 50-year floodplain. People visiting the area usually laugh when they hear that I’m required to own flood insurance, but they wouldn’t have been chuckling if they had been here during the 70s, when Borrego experienced two 50-year floods within a single 3-year period,

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San Marcos: (760) 510-1734 or
Child & Adolescent Center: (858) 571-KIDS (5437)

Unable to ENJOY the Things You Used To?

You could be suffering from clinical depression…

Depression symptoms include:

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- Decreased energy

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RESEARCH STUDIES
BARRIO LOGAN
Just inside the entrance to El Mercadito Market, a dreamcatcher the size of a large gong dangles feathery tentacles toward the floor. In other neighborhoods, this yarn-threaded novelty might seem out of place in such a store, but here in Barrio Logan, it fits in with the lipsticks sold sans packaging, with the bin of red beans swallowing their clear scoop, with the modular piles of TVs waiting for repair at the back of the store. Across the aisle, brooms with neon plastic bristles spike out of a canister, lighting a fuse of color that snakes through the surrounding blocks. It touches the art gallery across the street, circles a red umbrella used as a parasol, runs through the Dulcera Peninsular, where piñatas in the form of fish and monsters and misshapen cartoon characters hang from the ceiling like so many bright potted plants.

Across the trolley tracks, the color fuse tangles in great coils inside the warehouse that houses the farmer’s market, where innumerable vendors peddle mangoes and sweetbreads, Coke in glass bottles and shiny little girls’ dresses, DVDs and hundreds of glittering gold crosses.

The spark reaches its end in Chicano Park. Color explodes across the cement underbelly of the Coronado Bay Bridge, murals of Quetzalcoatl and the Mexican Revolution seeping into every empty space. San Diego muralist Victor Ochoa painted many of the murals; some were done by students. Chicano Park is a striking manifestation of a historically Mexican art form, a political and recreational space in one. Miguel Hidalgo and Pancho Villa smile out over Logan Avenue from the Mural Histórico.

Yet the paint on Barrio Logan’s historic clapboard houses is fading. The community is almost entirely Hispanic, and incomes are low. César Chávez Elementary School feeds nearly half of its students free or reduced-price lunches. Political battles abound: from combating corporate environmental abuses to protesting tighter security at the United States–Mexico border. As a result, in part, of ballpark construction, many residents are being forced out of the area; rents increased 41 percent in the first half of this year.

But Barrio Logan is a united community. Organizations like the Barrio Logan College Institute and Calaca Press foster group identity and political strength. Crime rates are much lower in Barrio Logan than in nearby Gaslamp or Lincoln Park. Still, wrought-iron bars curl over the windows of Chepina’s Bridal Gowns.

BARRIO LOGAN: Brooms with neon plastic bristles spike out of a canister, lighting a fuse of color that snakes through the surrounding blocks.

They’re pink.

— Dorothy Kronick

Clinical Trial
recurrent genital herpes

Adult volunteers are needed for a research study of an approved medication to observe recurrent genital herpes outbreaks.

Qualified participants must be 18-65 years old and have had four or more outbreaks within the past year.

All study-related care (doctor visits, physical exams, laboratory tests, and study medication) is provided.

Participants will receive monetary compensation. For more information please call:
Genesis Center for Clinical Research 619.491.0490
Naval Station that frames one end of Barrio Logan. To the south along the bayfront are various businesses, mostly in support of NASSCO, an oil-storage facility and trains, all effectively blocking any view of the bay. To the north, 1-5 divides and isolates the community. The new Petco Park brackets the west side.

And at the heart is Chicano Park.

When the tuna industry came into the area in 1932, Barrio Logan became a distinct ethnic/Mexican-American neighborhood. In 1963, with the construction of I-5, the community became even further isolated. In 1969 when the pillars of the Coronado Bridge were sunk into the heart of the barrio, it was again divided and the community begrudgingly accepted this. But in 1970, when a highway patrol station was about to be built, the people of Barrio Logan, such as Mike Amador and Salvador Torres, stood up and said ya basta (that is enough).

With the construction of the bridge, the community had been promised a small park, but when construction of a California Highway Patrol station was about to begin, the community rose up and created a human chain to stop the bulldozers. A park was promised, and a park was delivered. Barrio Logan became the symbolic center of the Chicano movement in San Diego.

The community of Barrio Logan fought for a health clinic, which is here today in part because of activists such as Laura Rodriguez, who started hosting tamale luncheons to raise funds. The Chicano Free Clinic is now called the Logan Heights Family Health Center.

The cry was “All the way to the bay.” The community wanted access to a waterfront park. It took ten years, but finally a bayside park was created, hidden behind trains and industry buildings, and wedged in between old tuna piers and the Tenth Avenue Marina.

HILLCREST:

-- Daniel Muñoz Jr.

HILLCREST

I’ve been living in Hillcrest more or less continuously for the past 16 years. I say “more or less” because in 1998 a friend asked if I wanted to move into his house in Del Mar, and since I had always wanted to live near the coast, I packed my belongings and moved. I lasted four months. While driving through Hillcrest one afternoon, I saw that the apartment I had vacated had been renovated and was up for rent again. I called my old landlord and moved back in. So much for change. I couldn’t take the Del Mar suburban yuppie lifestyle, especially the endless bumper-to-bumper excursions along the I-5/805 merge.

I originally moved to Hillcrest in 1986, shortly after going through a divorce. While Hillcrest is well

-- Daniel Muñoz Jr.

HILLCREST:

Divorcées like it because many of them are happy to leave the suburbs behind and start life anew in a more urban setting.

Barrio Logan is a mixture of homes, markets, Mexican restaurants, and a lot of small businesses that are not exactly environmentally friendly. It is registered as one of the ten most polluted communities in California. And Perkins Elementary is probably the only elementary school that has monitors on its rooftops to collect and gauge pollution.

But the people love their community and continue to fight for it; they fight for their children, they fight to be recognized as a people. And just about every weekend you can see them in Chicano Park, celebrating their life and culture and looking toward the future.

— Daniel Muñoz Jr.

RESEARCH STUDIES

ATTENTION DEFICIT DISORDER

Do you know someone 18-49 years of age who has Attention Deficit Disorder/Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder?

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- Right-handed.
- Between the ages of 18 and 59.

Volunteers compensated financially.

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known as San Diego’s gay community, two of its lesser-known distinctions are that it is a mecca for the divorced and a haven for ex–New Yorkers. Since I was both, it seemed perfect for me. New Yorkers like it because it is San Diego’s only real walking community; from my house on First Avenue I can walk to bookstores, movies, restaurants, supermarkets, boutiques, and San Diego’s greatest concentration of coffee shops. Divorcées like it because they are happy to leave the suburbs behind and start life anew in a more urban setting. I’ve watched a great many changes take place in Hillcrest over the years. At this point in my life it’s a neighborhood of ghosts. I’ve been through a few relationships there, and each had certain specific associations. One girlfriend and I used to love to eat at the Chicken Pie Shop on the corner of Robinson and Fifth, now a Starbucks. Every time I sip a latte there I recall the distinctive smell of chicken pies and the classic ’40s-style waitresses who served three-buck dinners. Across the street, in the middle of the block, is the ghost of Hammond’s, one of San Diego’s strangest stores. They sold things like shaving brushes, thimbles, fuses, ladies’ compacts, and puzzles of all kinds. There’s the ghost of Quel Fromage, San Diego’s original coffee-house, on University...
between Fifth and Sixth, and the ghost of the Guild Theater, now one of the area’s ubiquitous trendy furniture stores. One by one, the mom-and-pop businesses have given way to chains and high-rent retail outlets. Rite Aid, Starbucks, and the Gap have crowded out some of Hillcrest’s unique charm. But some of the ghosts remain, like Pericano’s Casa di Baffi, the mysterious empty nicano’s Casa di Baffi, which apparently sur-

hvides by proudly pro-

me introduce some of these homeless folks; they’re a part of Hill-

crest — and many other San Diego neighbor-

hoods — we don’t much talk about:

Neighbors
Each day on the way to

points to a plastic Batman
in the cart
and shows off his new
haircut.
Near him, a hairy, ragged
beast of a man
sits cross-legged on the
sidewalk,
wrapped in the shards of a
filthy blanket.

DOWNTOWN: She would pour herself her
drink of choice — rum and Coke — light up
a Marlboro, and breathe in the view.

work
I pass the same homeless
crowd —
the young man with a large
crucifix
around his neck, pushing a
shopping cart
packed with everything he
has. Today he

Most of the time he sits on
the edge
of the bus-stop bench,
head bowed in his
hands,
body hunched like a weep-
ing Buddha, but
today
he’s sitting on the side-

walk, staring at the
sky.
Around the corner, though
I haven’t seen her yet,
will be the old woman,
who sleeps sitting up
in a potted plant. She
comes prepared each
night
with a clean blanket and
several bags of clothes,
to find the
only patch of dirt for
blocks,
a large half-barrel that
holds a small tree
between the stationery
shop and the
pharmacy.
When she sleeps late, the
young who buy office
supplies
and the old who buy med-
ications pass her on
t heir daily rounds.
Then there’s the skinny
woman with skin like
a saddle
who sips 7-Eleven coffee
against a brick wall.
She’s mostly wrapped in
plastic, and some-
times she talks
to passersby, but never
asks for money, unlike
the woman
with scabs on her face
who sleeps in the doorway
of an
abandoned restaurant and
looks at you head-on
with her
hand outstretched, palm
filled with pennies
and nickels.
Meet my neighbors;
they’re probably yours
as well.
— Fred Moramarco

DOWNTOWN
A tarnished little plaque
is embedded in the side-
walk at the corner of

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Just steps from the border...
Fifth Avenue and J Street. It bears a small legend: “Shirley Bernard, Gaslamp Pioneer.” Thousands of extravagantly attired feet heading for bars, cafés, and various basement disco dens tromp across her name, not realizing it is there. She died in October 1992 at the age of 69, well before the explosive development that has overwhelmed her old neighborhood, transforming it from a once-charming historic district into something more resembling Canal Street in New Orleans during Mardi Gras. The formerly sleepy old harborside quarter has lost its harbor, which has been walled off by the sprawling convention center, blocking the once-sweeping night-time view of the bridge to Coronado and the twinkling hills of Tijuana beyond. The new Omni Hotel at the Park towers ominously near the new Padres baseball stadium will be turned into a once-interesting mall. That came about while Winter Garden was stalling on his declaration that he could gain no more control of the shopping center, while “bums were piss-drunk...”

Years ago, on hot summer nights, Shirley would climb onto the roof of her four-story Grand Pacific, the old fleabag hotel she had restored with her boyfriend Glen. She would pour herself her drink of choice — rum and Coke — light up a Marlboro, and breathe in the view. The only voices to be heard would filter up from broken-down drunks coming out of the crammed dive bars farther up Fifth Avenue toward Market. That tranquility is long gone, replaced by raw commerce.

The insides of historic buildings have been gutted and their legacies shredded, replaced by high-priced designer versions of history. Tourists and conventioneers crowd the sidewalks, marching into trendy “theme” restaurants with names like Gaslamp Strip Club and Acqua. Within a year, the lights of the new Padres baseball stadium will be turned up, flooding the neighborhood with garish illumination and unchecked traffic congestion. Rum-and-Cokes have been replaced by flavored martinis favored by patrons who were born well after 1975, the year Shirley arrived from Rancho Santa Fe. Today’s drunks are under 30 and drive Hummers. Their voices are much louder and are much more “boom.”

It’s hard to know if Shirley would approve of what has become of the Gaslamp. Maybe she’d like it. After all, she was in the real estate business, a true capitalist, and she bought the hotel — for an outrageously low six figures — to make a buck off the eventual rehabilitation of the neighborhood. She never contemplated moving in. That came later, in the late ’70s, as then-mayor Pete Wilson and Ernest Hahn, the shopping-mall magnate from Hawthorne, sought to gain control of the quarter, with the expectation of leveling all but a few token historic structures.

...Hahn, the developer of Horton Plaza, was stalling on his promised construction of the shopping center, declaring that he could not interest mall tenants while “bums were pissing in their shoes” just across the street in the Gaslamp Quarter. The

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solution, he said, was to use the city’s power of condemnation to seize the old buildings, quickly demolish them, and turn the land over to big developers at prices to be subsidized by city taxpayers, just as Wilson had done for him and the Horton Plaza project.

But when his redevelopment czar, Gerald Trimble, declared war on the quarter in 1977, Shirley and her fellow Gaslamp property owners, mostly upper-middle-class small investor types from the suburbs — not your typical radicals by any means — surprised Wilson by fighting back. They formed the city’s first “Project Area Committee” and invoked a state law requiring a “super majority” of the city council to approve a redevelopment project that the committee had rejected. Wilson lost the narrow vote, one of the rare defeats he encountered during his iron-fisted, decade-long domination of city hall. The wrecking ball of Trimble and Hahn was stayed.

After the battle was over, Shirley declared, “Let’s get the bricks in the street,” and a compliant city council obliged, initially dumping more than $6 million of federal funds into installation of new brick sidewalks and wrought-iron light fixtures. More money followed, as did favorable media attention. The Tribune’s Neil Morgan adopted Shirley as one of his regulars and spent months hanging around the Grand Pacific, showering her with glowing mentions in his column.

**BONITA:** No more do I hear the high yapping of foxes at midnight.

The battle with Wilson turned out to be the high point of Shirley’s relationship with the Gaslamp. She stayed for a while but eventually seemed to tire of the politics that were an ever-present part of the rehabilitation effort. She sold the Grand Pacific and moved to a house in Golden Hill, which she restored. A chain smoker, she died of lung cancer. After she had passed from the scene, the city made another grab for power and this time succeeded in putting the area under its redevelopment authority. By then, though, existing property owners were powerful enough to bar any future condemnation actions, forcing the city to deal fairly with them. But that wasn’t enough to save the Gaslamp from drowning in its own success. The once-strict sign ordinances and design controls were ultimately abandoned, encouraging a honky-tonk culture to flourish. As the city packed more and more development into the area, it neglected issues such as parking and traffic control. The neighborhood’s burgeoning popularity led to the construction of condominium projects affordable to only a slim slice of well-to-do residents, many of whom came out of town to buy second homes they saw written up in the “Escapes” section of the New York Times. The middle-class property owners of yore took their profits and departed the scene. What had started as a grassroots historic preservation effort led by live-in owners morphed into a corporate free-for-all, aided and abetted by a city council dependent on the campaign largesse of well-connected donors such as Padres owner John Moores.

Perhaps fittingly, an overbearing bust of Ernie Hahn commemorates his contribution to downtown development. A similar monument to his friend and beneficiary Pete Wilson is promised. Thanks to Shirley, at least the shell of San Diego’s lost history remains in the Gaslamp. Her obscure little plaque at the bot-
tom of Fifth Avenue is the least she deserves.
— Matt Potter

BONITA
Bucolic Bonita first bloomed in my experience during a 1965 visit to the shallow valley scooped out across millennia by the Sweetwater River on its run to the Pacific. Even in the mid-‘60s the lemon groves, lima bean fields, and dairy farms east of Chula Vista were fading memories. Subdivisions of homes on half-acre lots had been built where migrant workers had picked fruit and vegetables while farmers tended herds of Guernsey and Holstein. Still, the heart of the valley remained largely untouched, stretching eastward from the future route of I-805 to the Sweetwater Dam — a six-mile expanse of mini-wilderness broken by two golf courses.

Even with the rough beast of development slouching ever east and south to be born, Bonita retained at least a semirural aspect: the half-acre lots had been zoned for two horses each; wide bridle paths coursed for miles between homes and through the brush, bamboo, palms, and weeping willows of the Sweetwater floodplain. Trails climbed high hills on both sides of the valley, untouched by bulldozer or backhoe.

The southern hills were first to go: Corky McMillin built large houses on lots decidedly not zoned for horses. Corky did retain bridle paths, but now where the paths crossed roadways, vehicles of a swelling population menaced horse and rider.

Except for a huge berry tree. But as luck would have it, I still endure — as we all do who live in the valley — the god-awful stench of skunk, which is especially distressing for those of us with dogs.

A more pleasant Bonita odor is the light camphor smell of rain-washed eucalyptus along Sweetwater Road as it passes Rohr Park, where families congregate most weekends to grill carne asada, celebrate birthdays with piñatas, and just generally have one hell of a good time. The families often come from National City, Chula Vista, and points south. Sweetwater Road also skirts the northern boundary of a three-mile jogging path that loops around the Chula Vista Golf Course to link up with the southern boundary along Bonita Road. Men and women, boys and girls,

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— Bill Salisbury

CORONADO
A well-known fact about Coronado is that it tends to sink a few inches each summer. The weight of tourists from inland cities, of college students returned home, of Navy families back for the Fourth of July — Orange Avenue becomes awash in beach cruisers and sunburned shoulders every year when the summer season arrives. But somehow, even with the throngs of vacationers, Coronado holds on to its small-town feel. It’s a place where neighbors bump into each other on Sundays at the park or at the Ferry Landing’s farmer’s market. You can’t go to the grocery store without running into someone you know, whether it’s the pharmacist, neighbor, or landscaper. This is what keeps Coronado quaint, what keeps real estate prices high, and why Navy families return here to retire. It’s a beautiful gated community surrounded on nearly all sides by water.

But summer isn’t Coronado’s only season. Each Halloween Margarita Avenue dresses itself in cobwebs and jack-o’-lanterns for costumed children. And Christmas pours down Orange Avenue with holiday floats iced with garlands and candy canes. This is when Coronado emerges from its pure patriotic summers as a small town full of families.

As a teenager full of angst, I loathed the town’s conservative mentality and traditional values. Being the only one among my friends who didn’t have a driver’s license, I was forced to jog or bike there. I’d see studded black rags and sagging pants hanging out in front of Starbucks on the main street. Back in my day it was the Kensington Coffee Company on First Street. The funny thing is that these frustrated kids are Coronado’s golden children, the truly privileged. Believe it or not, some of them graduate with honors and head off soon after to upper-crust schools like Stanford. The shock value of their dyed hair and piercings goes only so far. Once you meet their proud parents or see the cars they drive, you get an honest glimpse, if not into the nature of Coronado, at least into human nature in

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general.
A little older now, and after nearly seven years away, I’m able to see Coronado differently. There’s something to be said about neighbors who still borrow sugar and bookstores whose clerks know your name. Like La Jolla and Del Mar, Coronado is the land of plenty, where presidents vacation and celebrities live. But beyond all that, beyond the consumerism and conservatism that once drove me mad as a teenager, Coronado is still just a sleepy town.
— Daniel Ridge

CHULA VISTA

Have you ever focused your camera so that you captured the beautiful and cut out the ugly? Seated at a wooden table, at sunset, with your glass of crisp chardonnay beaded with condensation and your Bob’s by the Bay shrimp and cheese quesadilla melting before you, you might be inclined to forget that Chula Vista has garnered the unfortunate description of “the fifth-fastest-growing city in the United States.” When a light wind simultaneously lifts your hair and romantically clangs the halyards against the masts, you might decide to live in the moment, let the pyrotechnics in the sky and in the wine have their way with you — because Chula Vista’s bayfront is an insular gem.

The bayfront is bounded by three separate parks and encompasses two marinas. According to Dockmaster Ashe, it is the quietest and cleanest harbor and marina in San Diego. The only thing that might be better than sitting here with your food and your drinks and the fuzzy mallard babies milling around your feet would...
be to toast the sunset from your own yacht. About 10 percent of the boats moored in the two marinas have a live-aboard population. Although Mike Norton's wife tells him living aboard "feels like camping," he says, "It's a great life." Norton says live-aboards go out to sea only about once a month because it's work to transform your home into a ship, to put away your TV, to tend to your cats, and, if the trip is long, to stock up on water and food. Normally, he says his wife and he take shorter trips, out around the bay or to Catalina Island, but last year they sailed for a leisurely 21 days to La Paz. Norton also says that the community of live-aboards is diverse, comprising doctors, lawyers, even the president of a turtle society. However, he warned me, don't get them talking about anchors — it's as if you're a Chevy person or a Ford person — strong feelings abound about anchors.

The bayfront is replete with mythical creatures: green turtles, which everyone has heard of but few have seen, and the occasional sea horse, which Dockmaster Ashe swears to have seen. Mythical creatures also exist on the northern fringe of the bayfront at the Chula Vista Nature Center. In one aquarium, rainbow trout swim in their upstream disguise. According to the director of the center, Dan Beintema, these rainbow trout, which were collected above the Sweetwater Dam, are genetically endowed to become steelhead trout but, like Clark Kent without a telephone booth, lacking saltwater they can never transform themselves. Another indigenous and magical creature displayed at the center is the ghostly moon jellyfish, which floats like an iridescent bloom against a purple backlight.

But what is the angle of the camera cutting out? Swing south, just beyond the children's play structures, and you will see the South Bay Power Plant, which the Environmental Health Coalition
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SOLANA BEACH
I discovered Solana Beach because of a pig — well, two pigs, actually — Sporky and Frances Bacon.

Frances (name variation because she was female) lived on the middle Barbara in Solana Beach. Before I met Frances, I didn't know that there are three Barbara Avenues in this town and that none of them connect. Frances Bacon belonged to Linnea Dayton and her family. Sporky was my pig.

We (the pigs, Linnea, and I) went on a walk back in 1989 that started at North Rios, wound east through the San Elijo Lagoon Preserve, and eventually headed south, up through Holmwood Canyon. It was so beautiful, this piece of undeveloped land. We walked by a bench with a plaque thanking Gemma Parks for saving Holmwood Canyon from developers. I thank her every time I walk past.

When we went on this hike, Linnea and I were hoping we could pigsit for each other. I met Linnea because I wrote a how-to article for a computer graphics publication she edited.
Eight years later, I ended up moving to Solana Beach, coincidentally within a block of her house (and perhaps more importantly, within walking distance of the Belly Up Tavern). Twenty-five years ago, Linnea, along with Linda La Grange and Bobbie Hilton, started the alternative class that has become the Global Education program at the Skyline public school in Solana Beach. My seven- and ten-year-old children attend this program and have since kindergarten. I even ran for the school board (and lost) because I feel so beholden to these teachers. It is a breath of fresh air for people with inquisitive children — kids who want to participate in their own education and not have it force-fed to them. And for parents who want to participate as well. My daughter learned her geometric solids in kindergarten. At the same time, she learned about the domestication of wheat and the rise of Egypt, and the domestication of corn and the rise of the Aztecs — cultures that share the pyramid as a focal point. Bobbie and Linda still teach at the school. My children live within blocks of their teachers. We regularly stop by their houses to say hi. That kind of stability, of localness, is very rare in growing urban communities. This is exactly why I moved here six years ago, after living ten years in La Costa (a community that’s being raped by Carlsbad).

I always used to say that no house in Solana Beach is completely up to code. That endears me to a city. But with the recent gentrification driven by high housing prices, I’ve had to stop. Admittedly, Solana Beach is a town with a schism. Besides the wealthy influx, there’s the artistic community (some members have lived in Solana Beach for over 20 years), who helped install the big, voluptuous woman named Star (created by the late Niki de Saint Phalle and on loan for only a while longer) on the corner of Lomas Santa Fe and Cedros Avenue.

There’s the developer posse, which can be seen throwing its money around with the Gateway Hotel (and muches condos), which is being foisted upon the Solana Beach public. The developer is having private meetings with important locals to try to subdue the community. (If it were so good for the community, why would the meetings be private?)

But what makes Solana Beach interesting for me is not only the Hispanic history, which infuses the area with words of Spanish origin: Rios, Cedros, and Granados (rivers, cedars, and pomegranate trees), but that the town, because of these roots, has adopted the feeling of a zócalo — where people walk just to walk and to talk to friends and neighbors, and they don’t rush to get anywhere in particular.

I moved here because the town has a beautiful view and was unpretentious. I worry about it becoming more affected as it goes upscale, but Linnea assures me a pig could still go on a walk in Solana Beach these days.

— Jennifer Ball

POINT LOMA
Point Loma’s essence is found in a blur of military installations, dilapidated restaurants that have been around so long they are considered classy, million-dollar ocean-view homes, and lampposts placed directly in the middle of streets that virtually all
dead-end in canyons or gullies.

The main arteries of Point Loma — Rosecrans, Nimitz, Chatsworth, Catalina — are well-traveled by Lexuses, BMWs, and Mercedes-Benzes. The neighborhood is home to judges, attorneys, and doctors, among other high rollers who have found their piece of heaven in the coastal suburb. Until the last decade, many elderly people inhabited the neighborhood. As they passed away, their houses were either left to family or purchased by other Point Loma residents. Portuguese immigrants used to call Point Loma home. After the collapse of the tuna industry in the ’80s, many left, although some succeeding generations remain in the area beyond Nimitz dubbed “Tunaville.”

From the mansions dotting Rosecrans to the secluded residences near Point Loma Nazarene University to the homes above Chatsworth in what realtors call the “affordable zone,” most residents are standoffish, to say the least. There are no block parties or street fairs, nor many community events. Most community spirit lies within the activities of select groups, such as the Point Loma Optimists, who erect flags along Rosecrans each Sunday, and the Portuguese community, which hosts the annual Portuguese Festa Parade. The Point Loma philosophy is “you do your thing, and I’ll do mine,” an impolite attitude among neighbors. The people of Point Loma will unite for certain causes, for they do not adjust well to change. Presently, the concern plaguing the community is the expected overcrowding and traffic congestion resulting from the development

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OCEANSIDE
Eight years ago at 6:30 in the morning, if you surfed the beach breaks closest to downtown Oceanside, you’d see the underworld scurrying home like cockroaches getting back to the rocks. The crystal meth/prostitute element has been largely squeezed out for two reasons. For one, prices of homes west of I-5 have exploded. My house has tripled in value in the past decade. Brand-new townhomes near Coast Highway start at $719,000, a startling change from two years ago. The other reason may have to do with Oceanside cops and their overzealous activity: in September homeless kids testified before the city council that police arrested and beat them just for being homeless.

I was born and raised in Oceanside and have had an office on Coast Highway for three years. My parents went to Oceanside High with children of Japanese-American farmers from the San Luis Rey Valley who were interned during World War II. Some of those families now sell produce at the downtown farmer’s market Thursday mornings.

While housing values have skyrocketed, Oceanside’s economy seems mired in a swamp of small-minded politics and semper fi inertia. Some businesses complain that the chamber of commerce is more interested in local politics and collecting handouts from the city than in promoting business. Downtown Oceanside is still dominated by check-cashing joints, used-car lots, and military dry cleaners. The ubiquity of the Alberto’s and Robertito’s is underscored by the taco shop named To’s. Four months ago a city council majority agreed to pay developer Doug Manchester $2.2 million not to build an oceanfront hotel complex that had been nixed by the California Coastal Commission. Our city council also paid $1 million-plus for an all-nude, 18-and-up Playgirl club, with hopes that the building would be leased by a high-end restaurant. One year later the building still sits vacant.

But resourceful businessmen have popped up to bring in their own concept of a new Oceanside. Two doors from me, an out-of-business hubcap store is being replaced by a surfboard shop. A recording studio has moved in. A Cuban restaurant has opened one block away, and six blocks down an attorney/businessman is attempting to bring live music to his Hill Street Café (Coast Highway was called Hill Street until ten years ago). A shop with hip-hop gear thrives, as do two stores with secondhand clothing for the hip.

At 60 years old, the Coronet full-service newstand was one of the oldest businesses in Oceanside when it closed last August. (It opened three months after Camp Pendleton.) Longtime Oceanside businesswoman and native Jamaican Ras Charles, who bought the shop, already ran two reggae-oriented stores next to it: a Caribbean food store and a clothing/gift shop. His third Coast Highway business will be called Yard Records, dedicated to reggae, world beat, and gospel music. Its opening runs counter to the closing of music retail stores countywide.

The two largest downtown movie theaters tell two different stories. The Star is used occasionally for talent shows and plays. The Crest Theater, a couple of blocks away (and which my grandfather helped build), has been occupied by a populist religious group that has also taken over adjacent offices and storefronts. But many of my neighbors know that Oceanside is about contrast. As the city council swears it wants upscale nightlife attractions, the bowling alley prospers. And as housing prices boom, Coast Highway remains home to two RV-trailer parks and three mobile-home parks. The joke is that one of those — Miramar, at the north end of Tremont — offers its renters a better ocean view than any new multimillion-dollar high-rise ever will.

— Ken Leighton

COLLEGE AREA
As soon as you leave the SDSU district, where College Avenue collides with El Cajon Boulevard, libraries and frat houses give way to liquor stores, check-cashing places, 99-cent emporiums, and plenty more clear signposts that you’ve entered an urban, merchant-driven neighborhood. The Campus Drive-In Theater operated that intersection from 1947 until it was torn down in 1983. You can still see its four-story-tall neon sign, a miniskirted majorette spinning her baton and wearing a full Indian headdress, behind the College Grove Shopping Center off Highway 94. The old drive-in lot currently houses yet another nondescript modular shopping center, where few stores outlive their first lease.

One rare long-standing retail landmark is the Subway sandwich shop near 63rd, which opened back in 1982, the East Coast company’s first
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franchise in San Diego. Today, our city has more Subways than Roberto’s/Alberto’s/fill-in-the-blank-Berto’s, but in a neighborhood where everything around it has changed, this original location maintains its mom-and-pop-hangout atmosphere, despite the newfangled bread machines and a Tolstoy-like menu that now takes up the entire back wall.

One shouldn’t pull over or park in the proximity of women who stand around the bus stop in front of the AM/PM or who stroll up and down El Cajon Boulevard between the 92175 post office and 70th Street. It doesn’t matter how you look or what you drive; you don’t even have to make eye contact for the more aggressive entrepreneurs to walk right up to your passenger door and try to climb in. It’s easy to fend off unwanted contact with a lady of the night (or of the morning, afternoon, or lunchtime). Simply point a little disposable camera at her, flash, and you’ll hear the clip-clop of her high heels fading into the distance.

The huge Ralphs supermarket is open all night, and you’ll often see furtive, undernourished-looking people there buying lighters, steel wool pads, and tire-pressure gauges they use to make crack pipes. Ralphs is the only place you can get such smoking necessities at night in this neighborhood, since 7-Eleven stopped selling Brillo pads and 7-Eleven stopped selling cigarettes. Ralphs is the only place you can buy lighters, steel wool pads, and tire-pressure gauges they use to make crack pipes. Ralphs is the only place you can get such smoking necessities at night in this neighborhood, since 7-Eleven stopped selling Brillo pads and 7-Eleven stopped selling cigarettes.

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less or far-from-home people “renting” the bathroom and, most importantly, its lockable door, rare in this part of the city, often to make use of those Brillo pads, tire gauges, and butane lighters they just bought down the street at Ralphs.

— Jay Allen Sanford

ENCINITAS
While some towns form inland and grow toward the coast, the roots of Encinitas are coastal and its heart is beachside. This is where the core of the town is, where people and their families have lived for decades and grown up with their neighbors. These are the people who remember the days of bicycling to work, when there were no stop signs on Highway 101 and when newcomers were immediately noticed, none of which are in the too-distant past. Things are not nearly the same, but needless to say they are still agreeable.

In spite of this laid-back atmosphere, there exists a strong sense of localism that is tied to a tightly knit surf community. Outsiders are viewed with misgivings and are not always welcome, often for reasons like traffic, both in and out of the water. Locals sometimes take some warming up to, as they become frustrated in dealing with the effects of an unstoppable tourist industry. Community events and street fairs are common west of the 5, and aside from the localism there is a calm, friendly, live-and-let-live vibe.

The greater La Costa area, however, is a different story. Businesses like Target Greatland and a dominant LA Fitness center, as well as the all-too-familiar four-minute stoplights, are signs of recent growth. With seemingly every square acre of land either under construction or host to a tract home, La Costa has undoubtedly lost some of its unique appeal. Newer citizens enjoy the convenience of the shopping centers, with a gas station and a Starbucks on every corner, but many established locals miss the simpler hum of a town.

With this recent spurt of housing development in the rolling hills of back-yard Encinitas come the daily appearances of overly aggressive soccer moms in minivans and ers were immediately noticed, none of which are in the too-distant past. Things are not nearly the same, but needless to say they are still agreeable.

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Encinitas that borders Olivenhain and consists of well-spaced, large homes and a fair share of multimillion-dollar estates. Much more reserved than the colorful, often eccentric coastal profile, the estates mingle with respectable homes and working-class people who can contribute to an uptight atmosphere.

It is the typical small-town story: the world discovered Encinitas, and things will never go back to what they were before this place was washed, starched, and pressed by developers and suburbanites. The changes that have taken place in La Costa are undeniable proof that Encinitas has evolved from a little surf town. However, even with all of its stop signs and sightseers, beachside Encinitas retains its soulful charm.

— Gabrielle Clifford
my holiday wish list...

- beautiful breasts
- sparkling eyes
- luscious lips
- dazzling face
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But she could argue that golf costs money and walking doesn’t, and we live in La Mesa, arguably the best walking neighborhood east of I-5.

For serious hiking, Cowles Mountain is maybe ten minutes by car from our home, and for strolling, Lake Murray’s even closer. But why drive at all when our part of La Mesa, which newcomers call “the Village,” is surrounded by three pretty hills?

Suppose we start from the trolley stop at Spring Street and La Mesa Boulevard. Rather than take the boulevard with its countless antiques shops, we go east on Allison, make a left on Pine, the greenest and homiest of the cross streets that take us to University Avenue. After crossing University, we’ll turn right and perhaps look down upon a game of Little League baseball or old-timers’ softball before we make a left on Memorial Drive, into MacArthur Park. If we’re lucky, as we pass Porter Hall, an AA meeting will be happening and we’ll overhear a confession or testimonial. Then, using the second stairs on the right, we’ll cut through the Community Center, pausing to glance at the seniors doing yoga or the tiny girls dancing, and pass the playground where moms chat while their kids hang precariously from the jungle gym. With an eye out for errant golf balls, we make a left and continue upward to the crest of the hill that overlooks the Sun Valley Golf Course clubhouse and the community swimming pool, and before the descent, we turn onto a paved path that leads us to a cul-de-sac and a modest but gracious neighborhood.

A few hundred yards along Porter Hill Terrace, we make a left and climb again on Tia Maria, go right on Tio Diego, and proceed to the top of Porter Hill, to peer southeast between houses across pleasant old La Mesa or a short hill, and make another left onto Alta, where we continue ever upward to the intersection of Alta and Fairview, where we look for the steps, a walker’s trail between yards.

Olga, a fiery Russian prophet who lives here on Mount Nebo, tells of a route of steps like these that would take us to the mountaintop and down the other side, if the previous two hills, albóndigas, and beer hadn’t sapped our will to explore.

MIKA MESA: I loved the smell of the lumpia and panis their elders cooked at our recreation center on weekends.

Atop the steps on Pasadena Avenue, we admire old houses and a mansion or two — Mount Nebo was an early haunt of La Mesa’s prosperous. It’s a good place to catch our breath and ponder some mysteries. Why is it, we wonder, that old mansions appear graceful, while new ones look obscene, or at least pretentious?

And why doesn’t someone appear and offer us lemonade on one of the decks that overlook La Mesa, from Lake Murray to Mount Helix?

At Vista Drive, we go left, then make a right on Prospect and march on. The road has flattened out. We’ve climbed all we’re going
Whiter teeth in one hour! NO TRAYS, NO STRIPS, NO MESS!

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— Ken Kuhlken

**MIRA MESA** I’ve lived in Mira Mesa all but 6 of my 34 years. I watched it grow from a community with one gas station, one grocery store, and the main street, Mira Mesa Boulevard, ending at Parkdale. The boulevard now goes from the 1-15, past Parkdale, through Sorrento Valley to the 805. I remember the ribbon-cutting ceremony, which we walked to, since we lived around the corner. The ten-year-olds hung out with were mad that we would no longer be able to ride our bikes down the dirt road to the old abandoned ranch or the olive grove where we shot BB guns. Sometimes we’d get adventurous at night and ride through the fields up to the cemetery and tell ghost stories. We’d always leave with security chasing us.

When Challenger Junior High School was built across the street from my house, I was bummed to be losing my favorite canyon. It was a canyon where my friends and I played cowboys and Indians, caught lizards and king snakes, and watched fires rage. My older brother caught rattlesnakes by pressing a tree branch against their heads and pushing them into a box. He’d ride his Huffy bike home, laughing as it rattled. Eat your heart out, Crocodile Hunter!

When they started developing the land leading to Sorrento Val-

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If the road ends in a circle around some grand eucalyptus trees. We gaze west, from south to north, through sparkling air or smoggy haze, at the Pacific, from below the border to Del Mar, and congratulate ourselves for following doctor’s orders.

San Diego Reader December 24, 2003 9
ley, they found Indian artifacts. As when the school was built, development stopped while the area was excavated. My brother and I went out there hoping to get rich finding arrowheads, but all we found was a teenagers’ fort with empty beer bottles, cigarettes, and a porno magazine (which our parents eventually discovered after we brought it back to our fort — which was, unfortunately, in our own back yard).

Mira Mesa High School was built in 1977. I graduated from it ten years later. We had close to a thousand kids in our graduating class because Scripps Ranch had yet to build its own high school. We had a lot of Asians, and Mira Mesa was often called Manila Mesa. I played basketball with the Filipino guys and dated Filipinas. And I loved the smell of lumpia and pansit, which their elders cooked at our recreation center on weekends.

I read in the paper that there are Asian gangs in this area, although I don’t see them. I do see their cars some nights, in a long caravan down the boulevard. They meet at In-N-Out Burger before heading off for illegal street races on Kearny Villa Road or in Sorrento Valley. Although I don’t see gang activity, I’ve been close to my share of violence. A guy I played basketball with, Tony Giles, was shot and killed at our rec center. At the same place 20 years later, my girlfriend’s daughter had an undercover friend who died there because of drugs. The library next to the rec center has become the Epicentre, which is a teen center and an all-age music venue. A new library was built next door. But there are so many things I love about Mira Mesa, like the House of Ice, which was fun in the summer, before we were old enough to drive to the rink at UTC. We have Lake Miramar, which we always fished at, although we never caught anything. Apparently somebody does, because the largest bass in San Diego was caught there in the late ’70s. We are one of the few places left that has a Farrell’s — the old-fashioned ice cream parlor, with old-fashioned candies and a player piano.

We didn’t have many celebrities in Mira Mesa. All through high school, I worked at the McDonald’s, and it was a big thrill when sportscaster Ted Leitner or Padres Tony Gwynn came in for a Big Mac. Both lived in Scripps Ranch. On the subject of baseball players, 1989 MVP Kevin Mitchell was often in Mira Mesa, playing pickup basketball and baseball games. We’ve had a few Mira Mesa High alumni make it into professional sports, including my high school teammate Ray Rowe — who had success at SDSU also. But the most famous athlete we had was Michael Pittman, who is now a running back for the Tampa Bay Buccaneers.

My stepdad delivered mail here for over 20 years (and it’s how he met my mom, just like in the mailman jokes). On Halloween, we walked his route with him and racked up lots of candy. It’s a middle-class neighborhood, with modest three-bedroom houses. My parents paid $21,000 for their place on New Salem Street. My mom and stepdad paid $46,000 for the three-bedroom, two-bath on Parkdale in 1977. While I sit in an apartment in Mira Mesa, I long for the good ol’ days. Especially for those house prices.

And some of that Halloween candy. — Josh Board

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LETTERS
continued from page 1

Wrong Service
Re: Penasquitos Lutheran Church (“Sheep and Goats,” December 11). Abe went to the wrong service! Eight and 9:30 are more animated. You would not think you were at the same church — please note the difference in attendance. At 8:00 you would see many hands raised in joyful praise and clapping to the music led by Pastor Greg and an ensemble of singers accompanied by guitars, drums, keyboard, piano, and other instruments. At 9:30 you would be surrounded by kids — children are a priority at PLC — the message and children’s message would be the same, though. Marjie Joram
Member PLC
via e-mail

Historical Housing
In the December 11 “Picture Story,” there is a photo of the Midway Post Office taken in 1972.
For your information, that photo shows another area of some historical interest. In the lower right-hand side is the first Navy housing project built of concrete. I think it is now called Gateway. I don’t remember the original name. The units were two-story, with four two-floor apartments; the end ones were two-bedrooms, and the two center ones could be converted into one one-bedroom and one three-bedroom. It has been remodelled and updated and is still a desirable place to live.
That project, I believe, is the only one left of the many built in that area. All the area around Midway and what is now Sports Arena Boulevard was filled with housing for the military and “war workers.”
My father, William DuCharme, U.S. Naval Medical Corps, was stationed at the U.S. Marine base across Barnett Avenue. Our family moved into the project while it was still under construction. I can’t remember whether that was 1939 or 1940. Our unit was on Uphur Drive. Every morning, while eating breakfast, we watched the planes taking off from the adjacent airfield. (Those were the days before TV.) When Dad was transferred to Norfolk, Virginia, in 1942, we moved into another project that was under construction. One of the first Levitt built. But that’s another story.
Lorraine Trup
Pacific Beach

John And Paul Might Disagree
I came across Mary Montgomery’s little review while I was looking for coupons (“Hometown CDs,” December 11). As to her cliché comments about repetitive lyrics: “Speaking words of wisdom / Let it be / Let it be, let it be / Whisper words of wisdom / Let it be.” Artist: Beatles. Album: Let It Be. Song: “Let It Be” (Lennon, McCartney) 1970.
Perhaps John and Paul might disagree with Montgomery’s assessment.
The real information on this CD [22 Mountains, Danielle Le Presti and the Masses] is that the messages are powerful, the voice reaches into your soul, and the band is one of the best. Yes, this CD is different compared to the first; it has a little more hope in it. The song “22 Mountains” helps remind the listener that you can keep going, no matter what. This album gets me through my days dealing with corporate America when nothing else does.
Laura K. Sutherland
via e-mail

Fishless Fan
I especially enjoy “Tin Fork” columns. Mr. Bedford has what it takes. I quit reading the other food critic when she gave top rating to a restaurant at the Marriott in Del Mar in spite of its deafening acoustics and no tablecloths. Whenever a U-T salesman accosts me, I tell him I don’t have any fish to wrap. And then to really crap him out, I tell him they should have never lost Don Bauder! Charlie Edmonds
Calendar

Catastrophe Menu
Titanic New Year’s Celebration

Marta Corrales searches for the right word in English. "Authentic," she says. "We’re going to raffle an authentic replica of the ‘Heart of the Ocean’ necklace. It looks like the one they used in the movie.

The movie, of course, is the overwhelmed, ever-schmaltzy Titanic. At the Hotel Calafia, where Corrales is sales manager, the necklace raffle is part of the Titanic New Year’s Eve Celebration. But "authentic replica" — it’s an oxymoron. Maybe that’s the point.

Historical accuracy isn’t.

Calafia has a year-round Titanic Room, decorated with movie props lent by Fox Studios. For New Year’s Eve, Foxploration will lend them others, including the prow of the ship. Vanessa Armanino, Foxploration’s marketing manager, says, "That’s the tip of the ship, where Leonardo tells Kate, ‘I’m the king of the world,’ or something. I think they’re going to put it where people can take pictures posed on it. It’s the actual one used during the filming. And we’re also going to lend them two outfits, a tuxedo and a dress that was worn by Mrs. Astor.

Armanino means the actress who played Mrs. John Jacob Astor IV, the 19-year-old second wife of the richest man in the world. Mr. Astor was 29 years his new wife’s senior. The couple had been traveling in Europe and Egypt to escape the scandal caused by the divorce of the first Mr. and Mrs. Astor and subsequent marriage of the second. They had booked passage on the Titanic back to New York, because the young Mrs. Astor had discovered she was pregnant. He drowned; she didn’t. So did the Astors’ three servants and their Airedale, Kitty.

"The dress is black with burgundy, a long evening gown," says Armanino. "And a tuxedo worn by one of the main characters (she doesn’t know which one) will be worn by mannequins. Corrales says some guests will come dressed in period clothing. ‘It’s not an obligation, but if you wish to do so, you can. Some of the housewives will be dressed like that, too.’"

Marjorie Cutter, owner of the Elite Costume House in Escondido, says, "We rent Titanic stuff. My Fair Lady is the same time period. It was just before the First World War. Women were still wearing long hobble skirts. That meant it was tight ‘round the ankles, so they’d have to hobble along. High-neck blouses. Big hats. It’s the transition to the flapper time. The men’s evening wear would be white tie and tails. I have it all in stock."

As for footwear, says Cutter, "I don’t do shoes or boots. They could get those in a lot of the regular shoe stores. The heels should be about two inches high, and they should have the straps across. The women also wore the little button-up ankle boots in those days." Much has been made of the last person to be taken aboard the rescue ship Carpathia.

In 1999, a collector from Houston, Texas, paid $74,750 for a Titanic menu sold by Houston’s Hart Galleries auction house. Edward Kamuda, founder and president of the Titanic Historical Society in Indian Orchard, Massachusetts, says it’s a reproduction of the last person to be taken aboard the rescue ship Carpathia. Kamuda says is authentic, shows that the menu sold by Sotheby’s in London, a lunch menu from the ship, was sold for $49,500. The size and weight of a souvenir), it was bought by a private museum in Belfast, Northern Ireland, where the ship was built. The menu wasn’t recovered from the deep. It was given by Titanic senior officer Charles Lightoller to his wife before the luxury liner left Southampton, England. Lightoller survived the disaster; he was the last person to be taken aboard the ship.

Earlier this month, at the auction house, Edward Kamuda, founder and president of the Titanic Historical Society in Indian Orchard, Massachusetts, says it’s a reproduction of the last person to be taken aboard the rescue ship Carpathia. Kamuda says is authentic, shows that the menu sold by Sotheby’s in London, a lunch menu from the ship, was sold for $49,500. The size and weight of a souvenir), it was bought by a private museum in Belfast, Northern Ireland, where the ship was built. The menu wasn’t recovered from the deep. It was given by Titanic senior officer Charles Lightoller to his wife before the luxury liner left Southampton, England. Lightoller survived the disaster; he was the last person to be taken aboard the rescue ship Carpathia. In 1999, a collector from Houston, Texas, paid $74,750 for a Titanic menu sold by Houston’s Hart Galleries auction house. Edward Kamuda, founder and president of the Titanic Historical Society in Indian Orchard, Massachusetts, says it’s a reproduction of the last person to be taken aboard the rescue ship Carpathia.

Corporate events often pay for the authenticity. In 1962, the Astor family gave out to its members in the 1960s. They were printed in Pasadena. ‘People dip them in tea and write on them in charcoal, then try to pass them off,’ says Kamuda, who has been collecting Titanic stuff since 1952. (He lent some to Fox for the movie.)

The menu sold by Sotheby’s, which Kamuda says is authentic, shows that the Astors and others in first class were served salmon, sweetbreads, roast chicken, spring lamb, and golden plover on toast for that afternoon meal in April 1912. Calafia will have its own Titanic-inspired fare. Corrales recites: "Carapés, lemon sorbet, lettuce salad with balsamic vinaigrette, lobster with mousseline sauce, filet mignon ‘Lili’ with a wild-mushroom sauce and a Madeira wine reduction, mashed potatoes, carrots, French pastries."

Dinner will be served until 11:00 p.m. Live music begins at 10:00 p.m. and goes until 3:00 a.m. You can choose the dining room without the music and dancing if you prefer. The deaths of 1523 real people don’t exactly inspire frivolity, do they? Corrales’s reply: “That’s why on the publicity we say there’s a breathtaking ocean view, without the iceberg.”

— Jeanne Schinto

“Titanic New Year’s Eve Celebration at Calafia”
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Km 38.5 Carretera Libre Tijuana-Ensenada, Ensenada $44.95 per person (includes dinner, no drinks except coffee and tea) 877-700-2093, 011-52-661-612-1581, or www.hotel-calafia.com

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Dancin' in the Street, New Year's Eve celebration on Avenida Revolución between First and Fourth Street kicks off at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, December 31. Free. (TOMAS)

Titanic New Year's Celebration planned at Hotel Calaf on Wednesday, December 31. The party includes actual props from the movie Titanic, courtesy of Foxtale, live music. $43 U.S. Reservations: 770-790-2169.

OUTDOORS

The Christmas Evening Sky (evening of Thursday, December 25) will be highlighted by a picturesque conjunction between the brilliant planet Venus and the slender crescent moon. Both celestial objects will be visible in the western sky for nearly three hours after the sun sets.

See Native Flowers, Wildlife, and views during Black Mountain Open Space Park nature walk, Saturday, December 27, 9 a.m., at 12115 Black Mountain Road. Wear hiking boots, bring water. 858-538-8021. Free. www.mendocotrail.com

Treking the Refuges, new migratory waterfowl and wildflowers of South Diego Bay National Wildlife Refuge during outing hosted by Chula Vista Nature Center, Saturday, December 27, 8:30 a.m. Free. Required reservations: 619-593-5613. (BAJA)

New Year's Morning Walk, 12th annual walk in north Poway with Walkabout walkers, Thurs-
day, January 1, 2004. Moderate-
plus pace. Starts at 8:45 a.m. Meet
in front of Rancho Bernardo Win-

DANCE

Great Expectations play music for con-
tradance with calling by Graham Hempel. Saturday, De-
cember 27, at Trinity United Meth-
odist Church (3030 Thorn Street). Dancing begins at 8 p.m.,
following beginners’ instruction at 7:45 p.m. Admission: $6. Dress for
Dickens dance and wear soft-soled shoes. 619-283-8550.

International Folk Dancing, Sat-
urday, December 27, 8 p.m., at Folk
Dance Center (4569 30th Street). $5.

San Diego Nutty Tim o’ Year, Cali-
ifornia Ballet Company performs
with live orchestra Saturday and
Sunday, December 27 and 28, at
Poway Center for Performing Arts
(15498 Espola Road, at Titan
Way). Tickets: $29 to $45. Perfor-
mancess at 5:30 p.m. Saturday,
1 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. on Sunday.
858-560-6741. (DOW)

Leaping Cossacks, snow flur-
rries, dancers twirling and
leaping — San Diego Ballet pre-
ts The Nutcracker, Saturday, December 27, 2:30 and 7:30 p.m., at
East County Performing Arts
Center (210 East Main Street).
Tickets: $27 general, $17 for chil-

San Diego N Line Dancers host monthly dance socials with
guest instructors and open danc-
ing for all levels and ages, including
Every Monday at 7 p.m., at La Casa del Sol, 828 2nd Ave. (El Caja-

Whale Parade — Men’s, Women’s & Coed
SOFTBALL — Women’s only
BASKETBALL — Coed only
TEAM REGISTRATION: December 15-1 January 21
Free Whale Watching
Sightseeing Guaranteed!

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San Diego International Auto Show at Convention Center
December 31-January 4 (see Special)
A day-long event with hundreds of
the newest luxury cars, motorcycles,
everyday cars, antique vehicles, and
motorcycles. See thousands of
people enjoying the show. All ages.

December 31- January 4, 2004. Moderate-
plus pace. Starts at 8:45 a.m. Meet
in front of Rancho Bernardo Win-
**LOCAL EVENTS**

**WEEKEND**

**Holiday Tandem Special**
Now through January 2

Free Video & Stills
Only $199 (No Weekends)

Not valid with any other offers or discounts. Must be 18 years old and weigh less than 230 pounds.

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**Make a snowflake at The Magic Wand, December 30–31 (see For Kids)**

**IN PERSON**

“Kingdom of the Shadows,” multimedia play about the birth of

**November 14, 2003**

**WEEKDAY**

**Holiday Tandem Special**
Now through January 2

Free Video & Stills
Only $199 (No Weekends)

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**SPORS**

Christmas Morning Ride planned by Terra Club bicyclists, Thursday, December 25, rambling north through Mira Mesa and east of Rancho Santa Fe, returning down the coast. Rolling hills, peppy pace, about 30 miles. Meet at 8:45 a.m. in University City. Call 858-587-0722 for meet place. (University City)

Ice Skating Outdoors! The ice rink is open for skating daily from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. through Monday, January 19, 2004, at Horton Plaza (225 Broadway). Admissions: $6, skate rentals: $2. 619-234-1031. (DOWNTOWN)

The San Diego Sockers host Monterrey Fury, Saturday, December 27, 7:00 p.m., at San Diego Sports Arena. Tickets range from $12 to $25, available through Ticketmaster (619-220-TIXS). (SPORTS ARENA)

The Season Draws to a Close for San Diego Chargers, who host the Oakland Raiders, Saturday, December 28, 11:15 p.m. on CBS. Tickets: 877-CHARGERS. (DOWNTOWN)

New Year’s Eve Ball-Bucking Ritual at Shelter Island, December 31 (see Special)

**GULLS vs. WRANGLERS, San Diego Gulls host Las Vegas Wranglers at San Diego Sports Arena, Sunday, December 28, at 3:05 p.m. Tickets range from $12 to $25, available by calling 619-244-4623 x7. Games are broadcast on KSIO (AM 1130).** (SPORTS ARENA)

**Whale Watch by Kayak with Bike San Diego (2246 Avenida De La Playa) on Sunday, December 28. Tours leave at 9 a.m. and 1 p.m. $60. Reservations required, call 858-551-9510. (LA JOLLA)**

**Bumble Bee Seafood Skates 5K Run/Walk steps off Thursday, December 30, at 9:30 a.m. Course follows much of the Bay Big Parade route, starting at Harbor Drive at the B Street Pier. $25 to participate, spectators free. 858-268-1250. DOWNTOWN**

**Holiday Bowl, Washington State University Cougars take on Texas Longhorns for 2003 Pacific Life Holiday Bowl, Tuesday, December 30, 5 p.m., in Qualcomm Stadium. Pregame show: 4:30 p.m. Tickets: $50 to $56, available through Ticketmaster (619-220-TIXS). (MILENION VALLEY)**

**New Year’s Day Century Ride, join San Diego Bicycle Touring Society riders for journey through Camp Pendleton to San Clemente and back. Thursdays, January 1, 2004. Riders gather at 7:45 a.m. at Doyle Park (1175 Regents Road at Nobel Drive). Bring money for lunch in San Clemente. 619-421-0325. (LA JOLLA)**

**New Year’s Resolution 5K Run/Walk at 12 p.m on Thursday, January 1, 2004. Retired judge Roy Cazes will administer New Year’s resolution oath to all participants. Music and refreshments following. Sunridge Park (Beech Glen Drive and East 1st). Fee: 619-234-2003. (CHULA VISTA)**

**Smucker’s Stars on Ice, 2004 cast members are joined by guest skaters Kristi Yamaguchi, Scott Hamilton, Okawa Rui, Ekaterina Gordeeva, Paul Wylie, Kurt Browning in performance on Friday, January 16, 2004, 7:30 p.m., at San Diego Sports Arena. Tickets: $27 to $82, available through Ticketmaster (619-220-TIXS). (SPORTS ARENA)**

**2004 San Diego Marathon events are set for January 17 and 18. For more details and free San Diego Matador Club coupons at www.bridalbazaar.com.**

**Sunset Poets Sets 2003 with open poetry reading on Sunday, December 28, 5 p.m., at Flying Bridge (1105 North Coast Highway). Free. 760-758-2410. (OCEANSIDE)**

**Vienna's New Year's Concert is recreated in "Salute to Vienna," Thursday, January 1, 2004. Cast of over 75 professional musicians, singers, dancers. Performers include Austrian soprano Elisabeth Lang, Viennese tenor Alois Haselbach, members of Hungarian National Ballet, Strauss Symphony of America led by Gerhard Track.**

**Edward Allan Poe — Once Upon a Midnight** presented by John Austin, Saturday, January 10, 2004, 8 p.m. at Poway Center for Performing Arts (15498 Espola Road). The one-person play based on life of Poe “blends the historical with the supernatural” to journey through Poe’s imagination. Tickets: 858-748-0505. (AMERICAN CIVILIZATION)

**Comedienne Vicki Lawrence entertains for one night only at the California Center for the Arts Concert Hall (340 North Escondido Boulevard) in Vicki Lawrence and Mama: A Two-Woman Show. Sunday, January 18, 2004, at 800. $50. 760-839-4120.** (ESCONDIDO)

**Black Ambition Tour, impressively talented comic Chris Rock performs Thursday, January 22, 2004, at Copley Symphony Hall (750 B Street). Tickets: $39.50 to $59.50, available through Ticketmaster (619-220-TIXS).** (DOWNTOWN)
Sunday: marathon walk at 5:30 a.m.; early marathon start at 6:30 a.m.; half-marathon start at 7 a.m.; marathon wheelchair start at 7:25 a.m.; marathon start at 7:30 a.m. 858-792-2900. (SAN DIEGO)
It’s the holidays. And you’re probably going to get your fair share of gifts that, be honest, you’d rather not get. Which is why this is an especially good time to stop by your Volkswagen dealer and get a great year-end deal on something you really want. Because no one is going to get it for you.

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Snowbound

What I don’t like about where I live is that it doesn’t snow. The other day I saw one of those glass balls that has a snowman in it; you shake the globe up and down, and “snow” falls. It is a piece of kitschy junk. It cost $13.95. I bought it. I brought it home and put it in my bedroom. I get up in the morning and shake the globe and watch the snow drift and swirl down onto the rim of the snowman’s little black top hat. I really miss snow. And now that it’s December, I go to my bookshelves and search — in poems, novels, essays, short stories — for snowfalls, snowstorms, blizzards, icicles, sleigh rides, ice-skating.

The poem with snow in it that we all learned in school is Robert Frost’s “Stopping By Woods on a Snowy Evening.” Even the title stirs memory. Robert Frost’s “The Snow Man” is one of those killer poems — for snowfalls, snowstorms, blizzards, icicles, sleigh rides, ice-skating.

The teacher always asked, “What do you suppose the poet intended with his mention of ‘promises to keep?’” I didn’t care then — and don’t now — what Frost intended and am satisfied to say out loud to myself merely the title “Stopping By Woods on a Snowy Evening.” Those seven words start snow sifting through cold air, sticking on bare black boughs.

Frost’s poem “The Onset,” less well-known, offers a more closely observed snow that is as wonderful as the Frost snow poem is his eight-line “Dust of Snow” whose first quatrain so quickly establishes its presence with his mention of “promises to keep?” “I didn’t care then — and don’t now — what Frost intended and am satisfied to say out loud to myself merely the title “Stopping By Woods on a Snowy Evening.” Those seven words start snow sifting through cold air, sticking on bare black boughs.

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Easily as wonderful a Frost snow poem is his eight-line “Dust of Snow” whose first quatrain so quickly establishes its presence with words vanish and nothing remains but

The way a crow
Shook down on me
The dust of snow
From a hemlock tree.

Basho’s “On Love and Barley” contains three haiku, the first of which “works” much like the Frost four lines — the words disappear, the world to which the words point, remains.

Snowy morning —
One crow

The poem with snow in it that we all learned in school is Robert Frost’s “Stopping By Woods on a Snowy Evening.” Even the title stirs memory.

Whose woods these are I think I know,
His house is in the village though;
He will not see me stopping here
To watch his woods fill up with snow.

It is the poem that ends with that grim quatrain to which teach-

ers resorted to introduce us to the enigmatic element in poetry.

The woods are lovely, dark and deep,
But I have promises to keep,
And miles to go before I sleep,
And miles to go before I sleep.

Snowbound

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To regard the frost and theoughs
Of the Pine-trees crusted with snow;
And have been cold a long time
To behold the junipers seabed with ice,
The spruces rough in the distant glitter
Of the January sun; and not to think
Of any misery in the sound of the wind,
In the sound of a few leaves,
Which is the sound of the land
Full of the same wind
That is blowing in the same bare place
for the listener, who listens in the snow.

And, nothing himself, beholds
Nothing that is not there and the nothing that is.

None of these is my favorite snow poem (although the Stevens comes close). That is reserved for Robert Penn Warren’s “Function of Blizzard.” Back when I lived where snow fell every winter, a friend and I, on the occasion of the year’s first snow, would get together to recite this poem. I guess, really, we didn’t “recite.” We never learned the poem by heart, so we would take the book with us, outside, and stand on the street corner under lamplight and read the poem out loud together. Last week, standing at his window, he saw that snow was falling on the mountains. He called me and read:

God’s gone, neck neatly wrung, is being plucked.
And night is blacker for the plethora
Of white feathers except when, in an air-tower beam,
Black feathers turn white as snow. Which is what they are.
And in the blind trajectory travelers scream toward silence.

current museum artifacts include a 1926 warford’s bed, exhibits on Chinese foot binding and Chinese-American veterans. The museum is in a building originally built in 1927 for the Chinese Mission. Adjacent to the building is an Asian garden with koi pond and waterfall. Find the museum at 403 Third Avenue (at J Street); 619-338-9888. (CLOSED)

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. (CLOSED)

Creation Museum, a museum contrasting the evolution and creation world views is found at 10946 Woodside Avenue North. For more information, call 619-448-0900 x231. (SANTE)

Gemological Institute of America Museum, unlike gemstones, which form deep within the Earth, organic gems are the products of living organisms, formed by biological processes. Organic gems such as amber, coral, ivory, jet, and pearls are showcased in "All-Natural, Organically Grown Gems from Plants and Animals," on view through April 2004. Exhibits include a mastodon tusk (carbon dated at around 30,000 years).

"The Magical World of Ilya Schar," a collection of creations that resemble paintings but are composed solely of gem material, is also on display. Continues through April 2004. Permanent exhibits include displays depicting science and art of gemstones and history, lore and cultural significance of jewelry. Find the GIA at 5343 Armada Drive. Required reservations: 800-421-7250 x 4161. (CARLSBAD)

George White and Anna Gunn Martha House, historic home sits on five acres of land-sca ped grounds with a formal English Romantic garden. Built for civic leader and department founder George Marston and his family by San Diego architects William Hebbard and Irving Gill, the Marston house design is in keeping with the early 20th Century American Arts and Crafts period, emphasizing simplicity, function, and natural materials. The museum is located at 3525 Seventh Avenue; 619-298-3142. (PACIFIC BEACH)

House of Pacific Relations, International Cottages are open every Sunday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. to present the history and traditions of 30 ethnic groups. Select cottages open on fourth Tuesday of the month. Children Around the World videos are shown in Hall of Nations, fourth Tuesday of every month. 619-538-4069. (ROCK RIDGE)

J.A. Cooley Museum, an eclectic collection of items — including displays on photographs, clocks, electric trains, and 20 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 1886-1915, with "some classics and a concept car." Find the museum at 4233 Park Boulevard. 619-296-3112. (UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS)

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 26 at MCRD just inside Gate 4, off Pacific Highway: 619-524-6038. (MCRD)

“Isn’t it true that a pleasant house makes winter more poetic, and doesn’t winter add to the poetry of a house?” Reading Baudelaire’s passage, Bachelard suggests that we too are “swathed” in the blanket of winter.

And we feel warm because it is cold out-of-doors. Further on in this deep winter “artificial Paradise,” Baudelaire declares that dreams like a severe winter. “Every year they ask the sky to send down as much snow, hail and frost as it can contain. What they really need is Canadian and Russian winters. Their own nests will be all the warmer, all the downier, all the better beloved.” Like Edgar Allen Poe, a great dreamer of curtains, Baudelaire, in order to protect the winter-girt house from cold added “heavy draperies that hung down to the floor.” Behind dark curtained windows sat the white. “Indeed, everything comes alive when contradictions accumulate.”

Russians, of course, dependably produce paragraph after paragraph after paragraph after... (continued on page 76)
From Chekhov’s terrifying “An Attack of Nerves”:

If one looked upwards into the darkness, the black background was all spangled with white, moving specks: it was snow falling. As the snowflakes came into the light they floated round lazily in the air like down, and still more lazily fell to the ground. The snowflakes whirled thickly round Vasilyev and hung upon his beard, his eyelashe...
The snow on the distant mountains was soft and creamy, as if veiled in a fairy smoke.

The cedars, under a thin coating of snow, rose sheer from the white ground to the sky, each cut off sharply from the rest.

The earth lay white under the night sky.

The brightness of the snow was more intense, it seemed to be burning icy.

Presently, as the mountain chasms were far and near, high and low, the shadows in them began to deepen, and the sky was red over the snowy mountains, bathed now in but a wan light.

The cedars, under a thin coating of snow, rose sheer from the white ground to the sky, each cut off sharply from the rest.

California grizzly bear, described as “the only one on view in San Diego.” Also on view: model of an 1867 settler’s cabin, collection of Indian baskets, and aerospace display. Find the museum at 29200 Cole Grade Road, 760-749-2993.

Valleymontezuma, built in 1887 as a sun and snow. All about us the snow was crusted in shallow color under the dazzling light, and stood the palest possible gold forty years, a log cabin at the edge of the Wisconsin Big Woods, Wilder from 1870–1889 traveled with her family by covered wagon through Kansas, Minnesota, and Dakota Territory. A section from Wilder’s The Long Winter furnished me with material for what must have been my earliest childhood snow nightmares. A late fall snow-storm has hit the prairie. Cattle have taken shelter by the haystacks.

Pa, concerned that the cattle will tear down the stacks, goes out to drive them off. Laura follows.

Outdoors the sun-glitter hurt her eyes. She breathed a deep breath of the tingling cold and squinted her eyes to look around her. The sky was hugely blue and all the land was blowing white. The straight, strong wind did not lift the snow, but drove it scudding across the prairie.

The cattle were standing in sunshine and shadow by the haystacks — red and brown and spotted cattle and one thin black one. They stood perfectly still, every head bowed down to the ground. From the airy ski reeds and brown reeds all stretched down from bony-gaunt shoulders to monstrous, swollen white heads....

They did not seem like real cattle. They stood so terrible still. In the whole herd there was not the least movement. Only their breath sucking their hairy sides in between the rib bones and pushing them out again.... Their legs were braced out, stiff and still. And where their heads should be, swollen white lumps seemed fast to the ground under the blowing snow.

On Laura’s head the hair prickled up and a horror went down her backbone.... Pa went on slowly against the wind. He walked up to the herd. Not one of the cattle moved.

Kawabata’s descriptions of snow are some of the most satisfying I know, and I look forward to leaning to the bookcase and reading them aloud to myself until I feel the cold he writes clump up on me. Yet Kawabata’s story of a man who can’t love and the woman who loves him is so irredesemably sad that I’m never sure Kawabata’s snow is worth the pain my memory of his character’s end causes me.

The Long Winter furnished me with material for what must have been my earliest childhood snow nightmares. A late fall snow-storm has hit the prairie. Cattle have taken shelter by the haystacks.

Pa, concerned that the cattle will tear down the stacks, goes out to drive them off. Laura follows.

Outdoors the sun-glitter hurt her eyes. She breathed a deep breath of the tingling cold and squinted her eyes to look around her. The sky was hugely blue and all the land was blowing white. The straight, strong wind did not lift the snow, but drove it scudding across the prairie.

The cattle were standing in sunshine and shadow by the haystacks — red and brown and spotted cattle and one thin black one. They stood perfectly still, every head bowed down to the ground. From the airy ski reeds and brown reeds all stretched down from bony-gaunt shoulders to monstrous, swollen white heads....

They did not seem like real cattle. They stood so terrible still. In the whole herd there was not the least movement. Only their breath sucking their hairy sides in between the rib bones and pushing them out again.... Their legs were braced out, stiff and still. And where their heads should be, swollen white lumps seemed fast to the ground under the blowing snow.

On Laura’s head the hair prickled up and a horror went down her backbone.... Pa went on slowly against the wind. He walked up to the herd. Not one of the cattle moved.
the wind, I couldn’t see any-thing but the road in front of me, but in the late afternoon, when I was coming home, the town looked bleak and des-olate to me. The pale, cold
light of the winter sunset did not beauty-—it was like the light of truth itself. When the smoky clouds hung low in the west and the red sun went down behind them, leaving a pink flush on the snowy roofs and the blue drifts, then the wind sprung up fresh, with a kind of bitter song, as if it said: “This is reality, whether you like it or not. All those frivolities of summer, the light and shadow, the living mask of green that trembled over everything, they were lies, and what was under-neath is this. The truth.”

For contemporary no-nonsense New England snow, nobody beats Russell Banks, whose Afflic-tion tells the story of Wade Whitehouse, a part-time police-officer, and this is what was under-lying over everything, they were lies, and what was under-neath is this. The truth.

Mark Helprin’s stories and nov-els’ surfaces glitter and shim-mer and shine with snow and ice. Perhaps no living writer, in English, does as well with plays of light over snow. In the pro-lougue to Winter’s Tale, he describes snow falling on New York City.

But the city is now obscured, as it often is, by the whitened mass in which it rests— rush-ing by us at unfathomable speed, craking like wind in the trees, on the earth, lighten-ing and unlight-ing, tum-bl ing over itself like the dream of an engine or cotton spilling from a bale. Though the blind-
ing white web of ceaseless sound flows past mercilessly, the curtain is breaking... it reveals amid the clouds a lake of air so smooth and clear as a mirror, the deep round eye of a white hurricane.

No Renaissance engine belching fire or hurling stone could keep pace with even one white cap of a New York winter, and winter there clapped as endlessly as a padd-leton wheel on one of the big white boats slipping across the lake in seasons gone by. Battalions of arctic clouds drifted down from the north to bomb the state with snow, to bleach it as white as young ivery, to mortar it with frost that would last from Septem-ber to May.

A New York City friend who tells me she bought Singapore: A Novel of the Bronx by Joe Bernardini because she could not resist a novel about the Bronx written by someone named Joe Bernardini, pointed out to me Bernardini’s snow scene as an example of nonromantized urban snow:

In all fairness to the Bronx, snow is greeted with great cheers of delight. The smiles and laughter of this other-wise grim borough are few and far between, and I’d be remiss in not mentioning them when they do occur. The snowball fights we used to have in the alley were the happiest moments of my youth. I was deadly with a snowball. Single-handed I’d roar loud and his cohorts from their hiding places and send them scrurrying into the building. Then, anticipating their taunts from the hallway windows, my snowballs would find the enemy as soon as their startled heads appeared. I recall throwing a snowball that landed wide of the mark. It struck the window of a recluse who was forever sit-ting with his nose fixed against the pane. He appeared to be staring straight at me, there was no way possible for him to overlook the snow-ball, and yet as the snowball approached and then struck his window he didn’t budge an inch. Frightened out of my wits, I ran all the way up to Bainbridge and returned hours later when it was dark.

The light from the street lamp illumined his window and I saw that a piece of card-board had been wedged against the opening and above the cardboard I was even able to make out the man’s forehead and a few wisps of hair. He was sitting there with his nose pressed against the window. Perhaps he was just staring straight at me, and in contrast to the few wisps of hair that would last from Septem-ber to May.

Snow has fallen, and every-thing is white... the fedora in my eyes a moment and think of the land outside, white under the mingled snow and moonlight on white trees, white fields — the heaps of snow by the roadside white — snow in the furrows. Snow passages in fiction and poetry are splendid oppor-tunities for writers to set up dar-ling pictorial contrasts. Peter Handke’s The Afternoon of a Writer offers this:

I switched off all the lights. Because of the snow and the reflection of the city in the clouds, it was light in all the rooms, a nocturnal light that made the objects in the rooms all the darker.

In another example of this use of snow for effects of visual con-trast there is in Kawabata’s novel a paragraph in which his emo-tionally frozen male character watches a geisha as she looks at herself in a mirror that reflects both her face and the snow out-side the window.

The white in the depths of the mirror was the snow, and floating in the middle of it were the woman’s bright red cilia.

I see him. His collar is turned up, his hat pushed down, his shoulders more hunched than usual, his whole body contorted by bitter wind. His face is drowned in shadow, but his figure is clearly deline-ated against the pearl glim-mer of the snow, the fedora smartly crissed in the middle, it’s outline-sharper and sharper as he walks towards my house. I quickly move from the wind-ow and wait. I think, he wouldn’t dare. But he does. Like a syncopated note dropped against the beat my buzzer rings. Once. Twice. A long interval, then a third time, I sit, frozen, lis-tening to the shrill, persistent pitch of the doorbell in the cold, absolute silence.

Reading Katherine Mansfield’s journal entry for December 28, 1914, with its expanding exter-

Reading (continued from page 77)

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An early scene in Baudelaire's *Affliction*, a deer hunt, is another passage in which snow’s whiteness and purity is used as a graphic contrast medium.

Shaps, pelts, balls made of aluminoidum lead, stelt, rip into the body of the deer, crash through bone, penetrate and smash organs, rend muscle and snow. Blood splashes into the air, across tree bark, stone, onto smooth white blankets of snow, where scarlet fads swiftly to pink. Black tongue lolls over blooded teeth, as if the mouth were a carnivore’s, huge brown eyes roll back, glassed over, opaque and dry; blood trickles from carbon-black nostrils, shit spits steaming into the snow, urine, entrails, blood, mucus spill from the animal’s body, as heavy-booted hunters rush across the frozen snow-covered ground to claim the kill.

Perhaps precisely because snow offers such a canvas on which to draw contrasts, mystery, suspense, thriller, and horror writers show a fondness for wintry settings. Offhand, these come to mind: Le Carre’s *The Spy Who Came in from the Cold*, Ngaio Marsh’s *Fire Lake*, and perhaps particularly vivid examples of the use of snow as a backdrop for violence. From the first pages, *Gorky Park* provides vivid examples of the use of snow, from the over-heavy branches. There was no snow falling, not a flake drifted down, not even from the over-heavy branches. There was a ceramic clarity to the scene.

In *The Snows of Kilimanjaro*, Hemingway’s Harry, a writer, is in Africa in “a pleasant camp under big trees against a hill, with good water.” He’d gotten a scratch on his leg. He forgot to put iodine on the scratch. The leg has become gangrenous. Laying on a canvas cot at the edge of the bush, Harry looks across “the heat shimmer of the plain.” He knows he’s going to die. “Now he would never write the things that he had saved to write until he knew enough to write them well.”

Snow was one of the things he’d saved to write, and Hemingway gives Harry a seven-paragraph riff that’s about the best snow anybody’s written. Paragraph three:

In Schruns, on Christmas day, the snow was so bright it hurt your eyes when you looked out from the weinstube and saw every one coming home from church. That was where they walked up the deep-smoothed urine-yellowed road along the river with the steep pine hills, skis heavy on the shoulder, and where they ran that great run down the glacier above the Madlener-haus, the snow as smooth to see as cake frosting, and as light as powder and he remembered the noiseless rush the speed made as you dropped down like a bird.

In Nelson Algren’s *Notes from a Sea Diary*, or, *Hemingway All the Way*, Algren inveighed against critics who described Hemingway’s writing as “baby talk.” So that after I read snow paragraphs from *Kilimanjaro*, I am always tempted to echo the outburst Algren directed against those critics: “Call that baby talk?”

When I ask people what in literature they remember for its snow scenes, Dickens’s *A Christmas Carol*, Carolus spoken of, and Barry Lopez’s *Arctic Dreams*, Peter Matthiesen’s *The Snow Leopard*, John Irving’s *A Prayer for Owen Meany*, O.E. Rolvaag’s *Giants in the Earth*, and always Jack London. Not a few readers are reminded of Conrad Aiken’s haunting story “Silent Snow, Secret Snow” in which the snow is imaginary, the vision of a young boy’s disturbed mind. But almost no one doesn’t mention the conclusion of “The Dead,” the final story in James Joyce’s *Dubliners*.

Yes, the newspapers were right: snow was general all over Ireland. It was falling on every part of the dark central plain, on the teesel hills, falling softly upon the Bog of Allen and, farther westward, softly falling into the dark mutinous Shannon waves. It was falling, too, upon every part of the lonely churchyard on the hill where Michael Furey lay buried. It lay thickly drifted on the crooked crosses and headstones, on the spears of the little gate, on the barren thorns. His soul swooned slowly as he heard the snow falling faintly through the universe and faintly falling, like the descent of their last end, upon all the living and all the dead.

— Judith Moore
No Headline Would Be Adequate
Chopin’s songs are stiff stuff.

O pera fanatics — but only they — know and love James McCourt’s ornately extravagant novel Mawrdew Czwogchwz. The eponymous heroine (her name is pronounced “Mardu Gorgeous”) is an Irish-Czech diva of superhuman talent and versatility. Her vocal range extends from C below middle C to A above high C (nearly four octaves), which makes her capable of singing anything written for the female operatic voice, from the lowest contralto to the highest coloratura soprano. Her repertoire encompasses Violetta, the Queen of the Night, Brünhilde, Dalila, Mistress Quickly… In Il Trovatore, she can sing both Leonora and Azucena; in Aida, both Aida and Amneris. Pressed to define her vocal type, she invents the word “oltrano.”

Writing in the early ’70s, McCourt cannot have known anything about Polish “contralto!” Eva Podleś, whose spectacular international career did not begin until a decade after that. He really was dreaming of an international career did not begin until a decade after that. He really was dreaming of an international career did not begin until a decade after that.

Podleś, who recently gave a thrilling recital requiring the most agile coloratura, which nevertheless is entirely at home in music commands not only the contralto repertoire, voice, sound like those of a baritone. She invents the word “czgowchwz.”

Quickly… In the highest coloratura soprano. Her versatility. Her vocal range in a role in the early 18th Century. AItalian mezzo’s voice was ordinarily (not always) would have sung such a role in the early 18th Century. A comparison with Marilyn Horne’s famous recorded performance is more apt. Horne and Podleś are more or less equal in the dazzling precision of these fioriture, but there is nothing in Podleś’s (gorgeous) or (should one say “czgowchwz”?) voice of the braying that was to become so prominent in Horne’s later career (especially in the chest).

Expressively, Podleś has it all over Horne, who is satisfied with a cold, external perfection, while Podleś actually suggests a passionate human being caught up in a tumultuous crisis.

The Rossini cantata was recorded by Cecilia Bartoli in 1991, when the young Italian mezzo’s voice was still fresh and she had not developed the unfortunate mannerisms and vocal flaws that have vitiated her singing in recent years (Bartoli will be appearing at the Civic Theatre later this season, under the auspices of the La Jolla Music Society, at which time we will be able to hear whether she has overcome her difficulties). Twelve years ago, her Joan was an utterly delectable performance, full of warmth and spirit, and vocally a pleasure to listen to. Podleś’s recent performance of the same work was similarly beautiful and similarly dramatic, although the Polish contralto’s voice, a much lusher and more ample instrument than Bartoli’s, tended to impart to the 16-year-old girl from Domrémé a rather obtrusive maturity. Never mind.

With singing of this quality, and with the emotions so true and affecting, no one in the audience could care whether Podleś sounded like Joan of Arc or Joan of Arc’s mother.

In fact, however, when the nature of a later work on the program demanded a contrast between a young girl and her mother, Podleś has difficulty in assuming two different personae and two different voices — and quite convincingly. After the intermission, she presented a selection of songs by her compatriot, Chopin, one of which is called Piosnka letwiska (“A Lithuanian Song”). It is a dialogue between a mother and her daughter.

The mother wants to know why the girl is returning home early in the morning, and the girl, in order to conceal her assignation with her lover, implausibly professes to have gone out to the well for water. Chopin’s songs are slight stuff — but very charming, and artfully written for both the voice and piano. Podleś made the most of this one, impersonating the severe mother and the 16-year-old daughter with such authenticity, in voice, gesture, and facial expression, that it was as if the audience were witness to two terrific singing actresses rather than just two voices.

They were also witness to some terrific piano playing by Ania Marchwiniska, an exquisitely lovely young woman (Artur Rubinstein wanted to know that no one could match Polish women for beauty) who also happened to be Podleś’s stepdaughter. In a recital by so imposing a singer, the accompanist tends to disappear from the audience’s consciousness. But in this case, the two artists were superbly matched in both their strength and their subtlety; and Marchwiniska made the listener acutely aware that it was Chopin, the incomparable author of waltzes and mazurkas, who had fashioned the keyboard component of these unpretentious and light-hearted songs.

Marchwiniska was equally wonderful in the Rachmaninov songs that followed, which at the same time invited Podleś to some of her grandest singing of the evening. The Chopin songs had all been tender and humorous comments on young love, but the Rachmaninov selection ranged much more widely; the themes were not only love (happy, or painfully nostalgic, or hopeless and bitter) but also the very arrival of Spring, the inevitable passing of everything in life, and the tragic anguish that Christ would feel if He were to see the shameful inhumanity of 19th-century Russia (“Kristen vaude!” — “What? What is risen!” — to a trenchant text by Dmitri Merežkovskii). Each of these songs, in Podleś’s performance, was uniquely gripping, as though the diverse human passions embodied in the poetry and the music were concentrated by a mighty lens into a blindingly radiant point.

Nor was this a matter of generalized affects. Podleś may have an enormous voice and an enormous charisma, but her
singing — particularly in the art-song section of her recital — gathered its immense cumulative force through the progressive addition of detail after detail, nuances of interpretation that exploited to the fullest the kaleidoscopic colors of that amazing instrument. In Onu, Lask poblani, koroha’ (“She is beautiful as noon”), the unrequited lover’s longing for his uncontouchable beloved is compared to the eternally silent shore. The song ends. To show once again that her stupendous natural tone of such vivid color; but low chest tone or a high head tone (“vliubleno”) the last syllable of “kak polden’, khorosha” began with heartbreaking ecstasy.

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Civic Organizer Carol Williams performs at Spectrolo Organ Pavil-

ion Sunday, December 28, at 2 p.m. Free: 619-702-8138. (BALBOA PARK) Viennese Famed New Year’s Concert is recruited in “Salute to Vienna.” Thursday, January 1, 2004. Cast of over 75 professional musicians, singers, dancers. Performers include Austrian soprano Elisabeth Lang, Viennese tenor Alois Haselbacher, members of Hungarian National Ballet, Strass Symphony of America led by Gerard Track. Events begin at 2:30 p.m. in Copley Symphony Hall, 750 B Street. Tickets range from $35 to $75, available by calling 619-235-0804 and through Ticketmaster (619-220-TIXS). (BALBOA PARK) "Four Hands Fantastique," pianists duetists Barbara and Gerhardt Substedt perform works of composers Riet, Debussy, Faure, and Ravel along with slides of paintings by Degas, Gauqguin, Monet, and Renoir in performances on Tuesday, January 13, 2004, at San Diego Museum of Art. These “Meet the Masters” lecture/concerts begin at 11 a.m. ($20 for nonmembers, or $38 with lunch) and 6 p.m. ($20 for nonmembers). Reservations: 619-696-1966. (BALBOA PARK) Violin Virtuoso Itzhak Perlman in concert, Tuesday, January 13, 2004, at California Center for the Arts, Escondido (340 North Escondido Boulevard). Perlman’s latest release is Classic Perlman: Rhapsody, with chamber and symphonic music, as well as film themes. Tickets: $60 to $75. 800-988-4253. (ESCONDIDO)

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THEATER LISTINGS

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An American Christmas
In Lamb’s Players’ tenth annual “interactive Christmas feast,” it’s 1963 at the Hotel del Coronado; the Marshalls open their doors and celebrate “the Southwest’s unique heritage” with a five-course gourmet meal.

Chalk It Up To Murder
In H.I.T. Productions’ dinner-theater mystery, a terrible fire just broke out of jail. Director Todd Salovey has assembled a top-flight cast. And thanks to Javier Velasco’s joyous choreography, the stage often whirls like a kaleidoscope. As the Fezziwig’s, Linda Libby and Paul James Kruse are so much fun the Rep could have a holiday spin-off, A Fezziwig Christmas. Shana Wride, Douglas Roberts, David Freuner, Jennifer Sheldon, Robert J. Townsend — all shine in multiple roles (so many that one can only imagine the split-second changes ofPerson’s splendiferous period costumes backstage — like a saucy table at Nordstrom). Another highlight: Steve Gunderson’s original music. Be it the lively “At the Fezziwig Ball” (belted for a grand slam by Linda Libby) or Tiny Tim’s (Bibi Valderama) “Lost Shepherd,” the songs not only enrich the show, they should become part of the Rep’s tradition.

Worth a try.
THE THEATRE IN OLD TOWN, 4140 TWAGGS STREET, OLD TOWN, THROUGH JANUARY 4; THURSDAY THROUGH SATURDAY AT 8:00 P.M. AND SUNDAY AT 3:00 P.M. 619-544-2849.

Crime Pays!
Mystery Café’s newest interactive mystery comedy takes place at the Sahara Hotel in Vegas, where “the family” runs more than shows. “A real mob scene!”

Dysfunctional Family
Mishfit Productions “puts the fun back into dysfunction” with four one-acts, including For Whom the Southern Bell Tolls, Christopher Durang’s parody of The Glass Menagerie.

Happy Ending
Community Actors Theatre presents Douglas Turner Ward’s comedy about African-American domestic workers distraught over their employers’ possible divorce.

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SAN DIEGO READER

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A Christmas Carol (Lyceum)

hilarious) — “was not part of our deal.” The show takes place outdoors, at the Lowell Davies Festival stage, on Anna Louizo’s majestic set for Much Ado About Nothing. But even though it has some sound and pacing problems, La Pastorela’s humor, sharp political satire, music, and infectious spirit are winners. One word to the wise: bring a blanket, “cause baby, it’s cold outside.” Worth a try.

Lowell Davies Festival Stage, Old Globe Theatre, Simon Edison Centre for the Performing Arts, Balboa Park, through December 28.
It made for a lively, often quite funny evening. And Gary Kramer is one talented comedian.

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The Sopranos’ Last Supper

A cross between improvisational comedy and Family Feud, making up a funny scene as you go along, is tough enough. Add competitive scene making, with the audience awarding points to the winning team. Purists might balk at the odiousness of comparisons used in this format, but San Diego Theatresports’ “game show” is a host. The 90-minute evening offers different bits. The show I caught had “Team Sports” — two pairs of players competed, taking suggestions from the audience; and “Gorilla Theatre” — five directors invented scenes, using the other four as actors. The winner got a banana, the loser a “forfeit” (other formats include “Micetro” and “Improv Survivors”). Some attempts went nowhere (1-room improv; tough); I did it in my, as hindsight reveals, callee youth). Others made amazing twists and turns. The group makes the hits more frequent than the misses. Their guru, Keith Johnstone, has written one of the few brilliant books (Improv) I’ve ever read about making theatre. And they put his pearls to good use. Their motto: “Remem- ber, when it’s not funny, it’s art.” Worth a try.

San Diego Theatresports, 1531 Tyler Avenue, Hillcrest, Fridays at 8:00 P.M. 619-465-7469.

Striking 12

New York-based Groovelily calls itself a “rock band.” But there’s something odd about their perfor-
mance. Rock bands are usually dour and distant, as much attitude as music. When GrooveLily plays, the trio smiles. Striking Twelve, their full holiday musical, wears one out. It’s New Year’s Eve day. A guy suffers from “seasonal affective disorder” (a.k.a. SAD). Can he escape his depression? Given the plot, there’s no problem (problems exist to be made and overcome; even the little Match Girl gets a few yucks). The polished, classically trained group — Gene Lewin on drums, Valerie Vagoda on electric violin, Brendan Milburn on keyboards — have talent. But their slick story and lyrics are obviously calculated to entice dear readers. I must report that the night I saw the show, the audience gave it a standing ovation. Striking Twelve’s light, nontraditional holiday fare, performed with a smile — and determined to prove that silver linings also come with clouds. CASSIDY CENTER STAGE, 35 MON EDISON AVENUE FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS, BALBOA PARK, THROUGH DECEMBER 30; TUESDAY THROUGH FRIDAY AT 8:00 P.M. SATURDAY AND SUNDAY AT 7:00 P.M. MATINEE SATURDAY AT 2:00 P.M. AND SUNDAY AT 2:00 P.M. 619-239-2255.

Triple Espress: A Highly Caffeinated Comedy

Hugh Butternutt’s done his lounge act at the Tripple Express Coffeehouse 20 years to the day. While patrons sip a house blend — “Grape,” “Scandinavian Blizzard,” or “Mokoko Coca Mocha” — Hugh plays ’70s tunes on the piano. He and his companions, here to celebrate Hugh’s anniversary, get stuck in the 70s. The trio used to be Maxwell, Butternut, and Bean, a comedy group that never went far. They’re “losers,” they admit, but not “ordinary” ones. And, hey, their reunion could help them face searing issues from their medicated pasts. A formulaic story line? Straight from Forever Plaid. There’s also the Forever Plaid problem: the three comedians are far too talented to play inert characters. One’s a whist at the piano. Another’s a first-rate mime, and the third a crackjack magician. The trio is so talented, when the plot has them complain of difficulties to overcome, you wish they’d quit trumping up the pseudo-drama and get on with this highly entertaining, Lightweight show. (Note: the original cast members have been replaced.) Worth a try.

HORNTON GRAND THEATRE, 444 FOURTH AVENUE, GASLAMP QUARTER, OPEN ENDED Run Through January 6, 2004. TUESDAY AT 7:30 P.M. FRIDAY AT 8:00 P.M. SATURDAY AT 5:00 AND 8:00 P.M. SUNDAY AT 7:00 AND 7:00 P.M. 619-234-5983.

The Welk Musical Christmas

The Welk Resort Theatre presents Mary Lou Metzger and Cheryl Baxter’s “Thanks for the Memories” show, celebrating the centennial birthdays of Welk and Bob Hope. WELK RESORT THEATRE, 3950 FOREVER LILY DRIVE, ESCONDIDO, THROUGH JANUARY 5, TUESDAY, THURSDAY, AND SATURDAY AT 8:00 P.M. MEDITIVE TUESDAY THROUGH THURSDAY, AND SATURDAY AT 1:45 P.M. 760-740-8011.

Will You Believe

Continuing its “Year of the San Diego Woman in Theater,” 6th IP Penn hosts an evening of monologues by female playwrights that “charts the humor of young women.” Leigh Scarlett directed. 6TH IN PEN, 3704 SIXTH AVENUE, HILLREST, THURSDAY, DECEMBER 30; FRIDAY AND SATURDAY AT 8:00 P.M. SUNDAY AT 7:00 P.M. 619-488-0620.

THEATER DIRECTORY

December 24, 2003

San Diego Reader December 24, 2003 85
radio show, being hired as the local talent buyer for the Belly Up Tavern in Solana Beach.

“Every club is looking for good deals on radio advertisements,” said King. “Loudspeaker runs Sundays from 8–10 p.m. in Solana Beach. It is pre-empted by the shows Believers, which airs at 8:30 p.m. and a talk show that airs from 9:30 p.m. to midnight.”

King said the show is a good fit for the Belly Up Tavern because it provides free radio exposure to the shows he books. “He is really tuned into the local music scene,” said Goldberg. “Because of his show, he knows what’s going on in San Diego.”

Guerra was previously not shy about flexing his cross-promotional muscle. He would play three-song sets of blocks of his current client, Agent 51, since joining Loudspeaker. He does play singles from the band occasionally though. Guerra did not respond to a request for comment.

Anya Marina, host of FM-94/9’s local show (8–10 p.m. Sunday) is also a singer/songwriter/guitarist, but she has never played her own music on her show. — Ken Leighton

Encinitas-based Redsand, a clothing company co-founded by musician Jim Austin with Robert Longenecker and Steve Timmons in 1985, has just been sold to the Perry Ellis sportswear company.

Redsand (“Our niche is dressier casual wear,” said Austin) distributes around the world and has 20 local offices.

Austin said he can’t give out figures regarding the sale. “That all has to be hush-hush.”

Perry Ellis, which is based in New York and Miami and has satellite offices in L.A., Irvine, and Oregon, will sell $650 million in apparel and accessories this year.

Austin said talks with Perry Ellis were ongoing for about a year. “We were going to be partners, then at the last minute they changed their mind and wanted to buy us outright.”

Austin said the sale was slowed due to negotiations over Redsand’s in-house record label RedRoom Recordings. Last week RedRoom released its last album under Austin. The 12-song compilation Happy Holidays from Your Good Pals at Redsand includes all new Christmas songs written and performed by local artists like Reeve Oliver, the Truckee Brothers, Hedley, Operatic, and Anya Marina.

RedRoom turned heads in the surfwear industry this year by releasing one CD a month by San Diego artists like Bad Credit and Hulv. RedRoom paid for recording, artwork, manufacturing, and distribution of the free CDs.

Each band was given 50 copies, and the rest of the 2000-plus run was distributed for free to media and others in the surfwear industry.

“They were adamant about wanting RedRoom,” said Austin. “The sale of RedRoom had to be negotiated separately.”

“One of things I like about Redsand is its lifestyle positioning and its ties to music,” said John Sabo, Perry Ellis’s senior vice president, who oversees the Redsand/RedRoom acquisition. “RedRoom did a lot to help promote up-and-coming San Diego bands. Now we want to do it on a national level.”

Austin said the Christmas compilation is the first RedRoom release that will be sold. It is $5 and available through e-mail (dev@redsand.com).

Meanwhile, Sabo said Redsand will still be looking for unsigned bands. He said RedRoom will not be “all tied up with pop-punk…. We want cutting-edge bands that are not part of one particular genre.” RedRoom will be based in Irvine. For more info, go to www.redsand.com or call 877-4REDSAN.

Austin said he and his partners have not selected the name for their silk-screening business, which will remain at Coast Highway in Encinitas (without the Redsand shingle). Except for three key Redsand employees, who will relocate to Irvine,
Featuring:
• $2 Off Burger Sliders, Jalapeno Poppers, Quesadillas & Queso Dip
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For more info please call 619-235-6100 or www.martiniranchsd.com
Austen said the rest of his employees will stay in Encinitas.

— Ken Leighton

"She told me how one of the guys in the band didn't have the 'right look' when he joined, so she had to take him out on a shopping spree." Bassist Todd Griffitts said his first meeting with Double Clutch manager Cindy Surprenant reminded him of how another band was assembled. "I compared them to 'N Sync," Griffitts met with Surprenant when she was looking to hire a road crew. "She was telling me she put up all the money, that she sold her house to fund the band. I said, 'You have to be kidding me.' "

Cindy Surprenant says she owned the name Double Clutch and that each member of the band has signed a contract with her, yet she bristles at the 'N Sync comparison.

"I don't see myself as ('N Sync founder) Lou Pearlman…. This was Drew's dream. This is what Drew wanted to do." Originally from Sacramento, Surprenant has been in San Diego for two and a half years. She said this is her first foray in the music business.

Griffitts, who now plays in the band Cellar Door, found her management style to be oppressive.

"She was telling her boys how to do interviews. That they are not supposed to bring up relations with girlfriends because fans are supposed to be attracted to them." Surprenant responds, "Look, I would be doing what any management company or label would do with any band…. Bands can say one wrong thing, and it could hurt their career."

"She asked me how I felt about cussing," says Griffitts. "She told me she wants to have the band have a hard image and to cuss onstage…. I went away saying this is just a joke…. I heard their music. It is all right, but there are several bands in San Diego who have a recording that is 20 times better. Why put all this money into a new band when there are so many better bands that are already established…? Music takes time. It just can't be bought overnight."

Double Clutch appears at 7 p.m. January 3 at Soma with Pensive, Undershade, Mormon in the Middle, Edesin, and Legends Die. All ages, $7 admission.

— Ken Leighton

"I just had a rugby team in England ask me if they could put my website name on their jerseys." Jaime Muehlhausen of Vista would just as soon let his website, www.menwholooklikekennyrogers.com, go away.

"I put up a notice that said right now we're not accepting new photos. Even with that, I still get two to five photos a day. It's the website that just won't go away."

Muehlhausen launched it three years ago to spoof middle-aged men who cultivate Rogers's well-groomed country square look. The site features over 1000 photos sent in from around the world.

He says the website nets him $60 or $70 a month from the sale of $14 T-shirts. The T-shirts ask, "Have you seen Kenny?" next to eight photos of Rogers's lookalikes. Muehlhausen said he does not have to share profits with the country star, "I have a licensing agreement with Kenny himself. He thinks it's hilarious…. At his shows, if he spots somebody in the audience who looks like him, he will invite the guy onstage and then he'll mention the website."

Last month the site got another boost. "CMT [Country Music Television] started airing a show on the top 40 trends in country music. Number 38 was Kenny Rogers's hair. One of the guys interviewed said, 'If you haven't seen the website…you should treat yourself.' "

Muehlhausen, who works as a brand manager for Tony Hawk Inc. in Laguna Beach, says he would sell the site "if you see the ones for Iron Maiden, and then he'll mention the website…you should treat yourself." — Ken Leighton

"Man, those are some fine-looking chicks," the long-haired guy in torn jeans says outside Cane's Friday, December 12. "Some hot-looking — "

"Don't say it, Joey," a woman smoking a cigarette says.

It’s another tribute band night at 'Canes — Atomic Punks doing Van Halen and AC/DSHE, an all-female AC/DC act.

"Any chick onstage is hot," some guy who must be Joey's friend says. "No matter what the music is."

"But these," Joey says and laughs and shakes his head and hair. "You're a pig," says the woman with a cig. "What?"

"You know what."

My friend, who has joined me here at 'Canes, says, "What's with the all-female tribute bands lately? Any of you see the ones for Iron Maiden?"

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Maiden and Black Sabbath?” “What is it with tribute bands in general?” asks the woman with the smoke. “Doesn’t anyone have talent anymore? Doesn’t anyone play their own music anymore? Why be a mirror of famous rock stars?” “It’s like Baudrillard,” my friend says, and everyone looks at him strangely. “You know,” he mutters, “postmodernism and all that.” “The mirror is Borges,” I mutter, looking at him strangely. “You know,” he mutters, “famous rock stars?” “Doesn’t anyone have talent anymore? Why be a mirror of famous rock stars?”

Kramer’s Rule bassist Alex Ferguson says being in a band and having an education has its advantages. Three of the four members of Kramer’s Rule have SDSU engineering degrees. All four have serious day jobs — two are civil engineers, one is an electrical engineer, and one is a nurse. “We can buy our equipment, pay for studio time, and pay for our CDs. The downside is we can’t just...

Scene — which produced Mars Volta, At the Drive-In, and Sparta — is more supportive. “San Diego is a very tough scene. It’s very cliquey. If you’re not part of the indier-than-thou crowd, it’s hard to break in.” Kramer’s Rule (www.kramerrule.com) appears 9 p.m., January 3 at Honeybee Hive downtown with Flood of Fury and Siva (from El Paso). No cover charge. Must be 21.

Cookie “Chainsaw” Randolph and Dave Rickards, KGB morning show personalities, have added a new cog in their 13th annual “Best Of” CD, Puppets Are Clogging My Brain — a nine-minute DVD with such characters as Lee “Hacksaw” Hamilton, “Happy Hare” Martin, money man George Chamberlin, and KGHO sports stu s Craig Elstin and Ben Higgins. There was one bit we dropped starring Abromowitz…. We had him sitting naked at his computer,” says Rickards. Proceeds benefit the D-S-C charities, which include the 12 Days of Christmas, a program that gives money to needy San Diegans whose stories are usually submitted either by themselves or friends. One recent recipient was a Navy man who was about to be deployed. He had just been given custody of his ten-year-old daughter and didn’t feel he could leave. The Navy granted him an honorable discharge, but the release left him without an income. He was forced to start selling personal belongings, including his bed. “One of our sponsors, Sleep Train, donated a new bed,” says Rickards. Puppets Are Clogging My Brain is on sale at all Good Guys stores for $14.99 through January.

Within days after Simon and Garfunkel played Cox Arena November 15 (their first time in San Diego in 20 years), CD recordings of the show were already available on eBay. One seller offered a two-CD version of the show. Six bidders logged ten bids until the auction closed at $53. Another bidder tried to start a bidding war with the winner of the auction with a $100 bid. The seller was forced to stop the auction and relist.

The first band to break out of the San Diego scene was Lucy’s Fur Coat, and they all went to college. Kramer’s Rule bassist Alex Ferguson says being in a band and having an education has its advantages. Three of the four members of Kramer’s Rule have SDSU engineering degrees. All four have serious day jobs — two are civil engineers, one is an electrical engineer, and one is a nurse. “We can buy our equipment, pay for studio time, and pay for our CDs. The downside is we can’t just...

The highly educated Kramer’s Rule cut out and tour for 45 days and live off of Top Ramen.” The band’s second CD, From the Fall, will be released on their own Stereo Press Records. Ferguson notes that his El Paso hometown music...
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**WEDNESDAY**
Steve Poltz (IN) and the Rugburns (2035) Belly Up Tavern, Wednesday, December 31, 9 p.m., 143 South Cedros Avenue, Solana Beach. 619-220-8497 or 858-481-8410.

“SOMA New Year’s Eve” featuring Taking Back Sunday, Me First & the Gimme Gimmes, Yellowcard, Sugar Cumberland (247), Strong Out, Rufus (441), Rise Against, Aversions Sevenfold, Noise Ratchet (248), Early Times, Offset, Undemined (272), Buckfast Superbee (149), and more; San Diego Sports Arena, Wednesday, December 31, 7 p.m., 3500 Sports Arena Boulevard, San Diego. 619-224-4171 or 619-220-8497.

“New Year’s Host” with Guided by Voices (249) and Year of the Rabbit; 40th & Year of the Rabbit, Wednesday, December 31, 345 B Street, downtown. 619-231-4433 or 619-220-8497.

The Dragons (145) and Sin S77: The Casbah, Wednesday, December 31, 8:30 p.m., 2501 Kettner Boulevard, midtown. 619-220-8497 or 619-232-4355.

BY DAVE GOOD

The documentary Standing in the Shadows of Motown spots a group of musicians who operated for much of their careers under a shroud of secrecy. Unofficially known as the Funk Brothers, for decades they propelled Motown with talent of a magnitude we’d not likely see again in this lifetime. The Funk Brothers are said to have played behind more hit records than the Beatles, Stones, the Beach Boys, and Elvis combined. Hyp? Maybe. But then, some might call Motown a sweatshop and president Berry Gordy an unfilching boss man. Depending on which side of the microphone you lined up on, Motown’s studios were either “Hollywood” or “The Snake Pit.”

Their bio says the Funk Brothers were on call seven days a week and expected to churn out hit songs with regularity for around ten bucks per tune per man. They were a world-class studio band made up of dozens of sophisticated jazz players (who came and went over the years) and could play any mood. For Diana Ross, they laid back and let the lofty beauty of her voice carry. For the Temp- tations, they turned from brawn to ballads on a dime. And for Marvin Gaye, the Funk Brothers built storms of tension and punctuated them with horns that sounded like heat lighting. They were Berry Gordy’s secret weapons. He knew what he had in them. No other label had their sound, and he kept them tied to his studio, denied their existence, and hired a separate band to tour. The anonymous influence of the Funk Brothers reached far beyond Stax (with Booker T & his studio band), Tamla, and the British Invasion. There is probably no horn player working today who has not used phrasings and voicings that came to life on a Motown record.

Performing with Joan Osborne and Darius Rucker.

FUNK BROTHERS, Belly Up Tavern, Saturday, December 27, 8 p.m., 143 South Cedros Avenue, Solana Beach. 619-220-8497 or 858-481-8410.

Bath Hart (422) Grand Cabaret, Saturday, December 27, 8 p.m., Pala Casino Resort, 5 miles east of I-15 on Hwy 76, Pala. 760-734-4355 or 619-220-8497.

**EXTENSION 4000**

**THIS WEEK’S CONCERTS**

**SATURDAY**
The Funk Brothers with Joan Osborne and Darius Rucker: Belly Up Tavern, Saturday, December 27, 8 p.m., 143 South Cedros Avenue, Solana Beach. 619-220-8497 or 858-481-8410.

**EXTENSION 4001**

**UPCOMING CONCERTS**

**JANUARY**
Reverend Horton Heat (248) and Split Lip Rayfield: Belly Up Tavern, Thursday, January 3, 8 p.m., 143 South Cedros Avenue, Solana Beach. 619-220-8497 or 858-481-8410.

The Psychdelic Furs: Belly Up Tavern, Thursday, January 3, 9:15 p.m., 143 South Cedros Avenue, Solana Beach. 619-220-8497 or 858-481-8410.

Macy Gray (WJF) Vieja Casino DreamCatcher Show Room, Saturday, January 5, 5000 Willow Road, Alpine. 619-445-3400 or 619-220-8497.

“Dave Matthews & Friends” with Trey Anastasio, Brad Blade, Tony Hall, Ray Paczkowski, Tim Reynolds, Emmylou Harris, and Spyboy: Ces Arena, Wednesday, January 14, 7 p.m., SDSU campus, College Area. 619-220-8497 or 859-0429.

The Temptations: Sycuan Casino Showcase Theatre, Wednesday, January 14, 8 p.m., Sycuan Casino Way, El Dehesa. 619-445-6002, ext 1139.

Eric Johnson (449) and Tony Furtado: 4th & B, Wednesday, January 14, 345 B Street, downtown. 619-231-4433 or 619-220-8497.


Gaelic Storm: California Center for the Arts, Saturday, January 17, 340 N. Escondido Boulevard, Escondido. 800-988-4253 or 619-220-8497.

Peter Case (643) Normal Heights United Methodist Church, Saturday, January 17, 7:30 p.m., 4650 Mansfield Street, Normal Heights. 619-303-4176.

Maceo Parker (673): Belly Up Tavern, Thursday, January 22, 8 p.m., 143 South Cedros Avenue, Solana Beach. 619-220-8497 or 858-481-8410.

**Fifth Anniversary (183) Rock Around the Clock with Bill Haley’s Original Comets and Wanda Jackson (773): East County Performing Arts Center, Sunday, January 18, 210 East Main Street, El Cajon. 619-440-2277.

Jordan Knight and Jai-Da: Belly Up Tavern, Wednesday, January 21, 8 p.m., 143 South Cedros Avenue, Solana Beach. 619-220-8497 or 858-481-8410.

Jay Farrar and Canary (145): Belly Up Tavern, Wednesday, January 21, 8 p.m., 143 South Cedros Avenue, Solana Beach. 619-220-8497 or 858-481-8410.

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Hair by Douglas 619-985-4238Photo by Martin Mann
NEW YEARS EVE 2003

DECEMBER 31ST, 2003 8PM - 4 AM
DOWNTOWN’S ONLY REAL AFTER HOURS PARTY

WITH DJ'S
THOMAS MICHAEL
ONEZERO
PAULI KIPLING
AND MORE

INCLUDED PARTY FAVORS
CHAMPAGNE TOAST AT MIDNIGHT
CIRCUS ACTS WITH DAIHI DEVAS

$25 TICKETS ON SALE AT:
WWW.LSNIGHTCLUB.COM
$35 AT DOOR

Polkadot Saturdays
dotpresents.com

Saturday Dec. 27th
DRC and Jon Bishop

Saturday Jan. 3rd
The Tripod DJ’s
& Jon Bishop

Saturday Jan. 10th
Kimberly S. &
Thomas Michael’s
Birthday party

203 FIFTH AVE. IN THE GASLAMP
SAN DIEGO, CA 92101
P: 619.858.2100
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SAN DIEGO’S LARGEST OUTDOOR
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**Upcoming Concerts**

“Big Night San Diego” with Cracker (466), the Gin Blossoms (404), Agent 51, and more info. Adam Webb: Call for info. www.baja.com

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**Help Us Celebrate**

**Irish New Year’s Eve**

**Live Irish Music from 9 PM-2 AM**

**Irish Step Dancing**

**Champagne • Party Favors**

**Dinner Packages from $50 per person**

Includes 4-course dinner, cover, party favors & champagne.

Call for reservations!

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**San Diego**

**Reader**

**Concerts**

**Upcoming**


**The Mamas & the Papas**: Performing Arts Center, Wednesday, February 18, 3500 Sports Arena Boulevard, San Diego. 619-224-4171 or 619-220-8497.

**Bette Midler**: Performing Arts Center, Monday, February 22, 7:30 p.m., 4650 Mansfield Street, Normal Heights. 619-303-4543 or 619-220-8497.

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**March**

**Britney Spears**: San Diego Sports Arena, Tuesday, March 2, 7:30 p.m., 3500 Sports Arena Boulevard, San Diego. 619-224-4171 or 619-220-8497.

**Big Head Todd & the Monsters**: Normal Heights United Methodist Church, Sunday, February 29, 7:30 p.m., 4650 Mandeville Street, Normal Heights. 619-303-4716.

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**April**

**Boney James**: Pechanga Resort & Casino, 45000 Pechanga Parkway, Temecula. 888-732-4264.

**Cheap Trick**: Sycuan Casino Showcase Theatre, Thursday, April 22, 5469 Casino Way, Dehesa. 619-445-6002, x1189.

---

**We cordially invite you to join us for our New Year’s Eve Black & White Masquerade Ball on Wednesday, December 31st, 2003**

**Mansfield Auditorium, University of San Diego**

**Chef’s Dinner includes:**

- A Four Course Dinner &
- A bottle of Bollinger Gift Baccarat Champagne per couple.
- $59.00 per person before 5:00 p.m.
- $69.00 per person after 5:00 p.m.
- $80.00 without dinner.

**Call for Reservations!**

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**4th Street Irish Pub & Grill**

**Born Irish**

554 4th Avenue • Gaslamp
www.dublinsoireirispub.com

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**Leashy**: Mandeville Auditorium, Wednesday, February 4, UCSD campus, La Jolla. 858-534-8497 or 619-220-8497.

**February**

Josh Groban: Copley Symphony Hall, Monday, February 2, 1245 Seventh Avenue, downtown. 619-235-0804 or 619-220-8497.

B.B. King: 9247 4th & B, Tuesday, February 5, 345 B Street, downtown. 619-231-4343 or 619-220-8497.

The Preservation Hall Jazz Band: 9247 East County Performing Arts Center, Tuesday, February 3, 7:30 p.m., 210 East Main Street, El Cajon. 619-440-2277.

**The B-Side Players** (469): ’Canes Bar and Grill, Saturday, January 31, 8 p.m., 3305 Ocean Front Walk, Mission Beach. 858-488-1780 or 619-220-8497.

**April**

**Paul McCartney**

Copley Symphony Hall, Thursday, April 23, 7:30 p.m., 3500 Sports Arena Boulevard, San Diego. 619-224-4171 or 619-220-8497.

**Cheap Trick**

Pechanga Theater, Sunday, April 25, Pechanga Resort & Casino, 45000 Pechanga Parkway, Temecula. 888-732-4264.

**Olivia Newton-John**: East County Performing Arts Center, Friday, February 13, 210 East Main Street, El Cajon. 619-440-2277.

**Bobby Darin**

Copley Symphony Hall, Saturday, February 14, 341 B Street, downtown. 619-231-4343 or 619-220-8497.

**The Temptations**: Pechanga Theater, Saturday, February 15, Pechanga Resort & Casino, 45000 Pechanga Parkway, Temecula. 888-732-4264.

**Olivia Newton-John**: East County Performing Arts Center, Friday, February 16, 210 East Main Street, El Cajon. 619-440-2277.


**Linkin Park**

Hobbaestank (440), and Story of the Year: Cox Arena, Thursday, February 19, SDSU campus, College Area. 619-220-8497 or 619-394-0429.


**George Jones**: East County Performing Arts Center, Friday, February 13, 1425 Seventh Avenue, downtown. 619-235-0804 or 619-220-8497.

**Ralph Stanley & the Lonesome River Band** (794): East County Performing Arts Center, Friday, February 13, 1425 Seventh Avenue, downtown. 619-235-0804 or 619-220-8497.

**Sting**: 431 East County Performing Arts Center, Friday, February 20, 7:30 p.m., 4650 Mansfield Street, Normal Heights. 619-303-4766.

**The Kennedys**: 1425 Seventh Avenue, downtown. 619-231-4343 or 619-220-8497.


**Celine Dion**: Performing Arts Center, Wednesday, February 18, 3500 Sports Arena Boulevard, San Diego. 619-224-4171 or 619-220-8497.

**The Temptations**: Pechanga Theater, Saturday, February 15, Pechanga Resort & Casino, 45000 Pechanga Parkway, Temecula. 888-732-4264.

**Olivia Newton-John**: East County Performing Arts Center, Friday, February 16, 210 East Main Street, El Cajon. 619-440-2277.


**Big Head Todd & the Monsters**: Normal Heights United Methodist Church, Sunday, February 29, 7:30 p.m., 4650 Mandeville Street, Normal Heights. 619-303-4766.

**April**

**Paul McCartney**

Copley Symphony Hall, Thursday, April 23, 7:30 p.m., 3500 Sports Arena Boulevard, San Diego. 619-224-4171 or 619-220-8497.

**Cheap Trick**

Sycuan Casino Showcase Theatre, Thursday, April 22, 5469 Casino Way, Dehesa. 619-445-6002, x1189.
New Year’s Eve Bash

with

B-SIDE PLAYERS

RICHARD CHEESE

AIRE LOUNGE AGAINST THE MACHINE

Complimentary party favors and champagne toast

Call Canes today for reserved seating & optional 4-course gourmet dinner packages

Presale tickets available at Canes and Ticketmaster

Ages 21+

Oceanfront Gourmet Dinner

First Course
JUMBO SHRIMP COCKTAIL
CRABMEAT STUFFED MUSHROOMS

Second Course (choose one)
CAESAR SALAD
SEAFOOD CHOWDER

Third Course (choose one)
HERB CRUSTED SALMON
served with lemon cream sauce, garlic mashed potatoes and sautéed vegetables

PRIME RIB
choice cut, au jus, horseradish cream sauce, garlic mashed potatoes and sautéed vegetables

CHICKEN
marinated and grilled served with wild mushroom buerre blanc sauce, long grain rice and sautéed vegetables

PASTA PRIMAVERA
alfredo cream sauce and assorted vegetables served over fettuccini noodles with a side of garlic bread

Fourth course
NEW YORK CHEESECAKE
with raspberry purée or plain

Beverages
spilt of champagne, coffee, tea or soft drink

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3105 Oceanfront Walk
Mission Beach
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DJ DEVOY SPINNING HOUSE AND BREAKBEATS
DJ D-SKWIZ SPINNING HIP-HOP

$4 KETEL ONE & KETEL ONE CITROEN

VIEW FIREWORKS FROM OUR HEATED BALCONY
NO COVER BEFORE 9PM/$4 OVERNIGHT PARKING

Moondoggies
2004 YEAR OF THE DOG

Happy Hour until 9pm
$1 cover until 10pm - after 10pm $10 cover
Hip Hop with DJ Enigma • Drink Specials all night

2003-2004

Moondoggies

NEW YEARS EVE PARTY

Moondoggies

NEW YEARS EVE PARTY

2004 YEAR OF THE DOG

Happy Hour until 9pm
$1 cover until 10pm - after 10pm $10 cover
Hip Hop with DJ Enigma • Drink Specials all night

FREE PARKING

3105 Oceanfront Walk
Mission Beach
Free Parking
canesbarandgrill.com

858.488.9690

San Diego Reader November 24, 2003 97
Dear Reader Soundboard,

Press the 4-digit extension above the category that interests you (for example, 4002 for alternative rock).

At the next prompt, press the 4-digit code that is next to the performer you wish to hear. (Performers without codes currently do not have recordings.)

---

## Extension 4002

### Alternative
- The Album Leaf: The Casbah
- Antipop: The Album Leaf
- The Bad Apples: Against the Machine
- The Career Soldiers: Defiance
- Antipop: The Albums
- Antipop: The White Stripes
- The Career Soldiers: Defiance
- The Detroit Cobras: The Kensington Club

### Rock
- The Abuse: Soma
- The Barrence: Soma
- The Blasters: Soma
- The Detroit Cobras: The Kensington Club
- The Quakes: Soma
- The Sights: Soma

## Extension 4003

### Rock
- The Abuse: Soma
- The Barrence: Soma
- The Blasters: Soma
- The Detroit Cobras: The Kensington Club
- The Quakes: Soma
- The Sights: Soma

---

### Shenanigan's Irish Sports Pub

**Sunday NFL Ticket**

60" Big Screen & 8 27" TVs to watch all your Sunday NFL games!

- Monday Night Football • Daily Happy Hour
- $2.75 Guinness pints
- $3.75 Irish Car Bombs during the game!
- $2 Domestic Pints on Chargers Touchdowns!*

*Must order between touchdown and extra point.

**Cocktails & 10 Drafts to Choose From:**
- Guinness, Bass, Molson, Harp, Magners Cider
- Karl Strauss, Widmer Hefeweizen, Coors Light, Bud & Bud Light

**7030 University Ave. • La Mesa, 619-668-1256**

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**DETOUR CROBAS**

**The Casbah, Tuesday, December 30, 8:30 p.m. 619-232-4355 or 619-220-8497. $12.**
**December 24, 2003**

**San Diego Reader**

**Resolve to Evolve in 2004**

**EXTENSION 4006**

**REGGAE / Ska**

Malik: Winstons
NZ Rough: Hennemey’s Tavern (PB)
Maie Priest: Kelly’s Pub and Grill
The Tribe of Kings: Martin’s Ranch (Gadampus)
Vegetation: Winstons

**EXTENSION 4007**

**Country**

The California Rangers: McCabe’s Beach Club
Choo Choo: Don’s Cocktails Lounge
Coyote Moon: Renegade Inn
Emerald River: Magnolia Mound’s
The Three Stooges: Princess Pub & Grill

**EXTENSION 4008**

**Acoustic / Folk**

The Biddy Bums: Lotal’s Coffeehouse
Steve Brener: Blarney Stone Pub
Christy Bruno: Kelly’s Pub
Joe Byrnes: Blarney Stone Pub
The Celtic Ensemble: Twigg Tea and Coffee Company
Annie Dru: Twigg Tea and Coffee Company
Evans: Kelly’s Pub
John Foltz: Miracles Cafe
4-Way Street: McP’s Irish Pub and Grill
Jenn Grinels: Blarney Stone Pub
The Hatchet Brothers: The Odd Joe, The Cashbah
The Inside: Twigg Tea and Coffee Company
Jennifer Lindsay: Kelly’s Pub
Mesa Blue: McP’s Irish Pub and Grill
Jim Moore: McP’s Irish Pub and Grill
Steve Polc: BLT Up Town
Tommy Price: Hennemey’s Tavern (Carlsbad)
Ron’s Garage: Dick’s Last Resort
Saba: (822) Twigg Tea and Coffee Company
Lisa Sanders: (822) Kelly’s Pub
3 Simple Words: Hennemey’s Tavern (PB)

**EXTENSION 4009**

**Blues / Soul**

Big City Shamans: McP’s Irish Pub and Grill
Big Daddy & The Moneyshakers: The Gordon Biersch Brewery
Blue Four: (822) Kelly’s Pub
The Blues Brokers: Patrick’s II, The Kraken
Tommy Budd & Wooden City: Island Sports & Spirits
Charles Burton: The Kraken
Tomcat Courtney & The Blues Dusters: (822) Shoester Bar and Grill, Robin’s Roadhouse, Bayou Bar & Grill
Fuzzy & The Bluesmen: (822) Croce’s Top Hat Bar and Grill
Robin Henkel: (822) Twigg Tea and Coffee Company
Red Lane: Patrick’s II
Kymberlee Maxine: Elario’s Bistro & Sky Lounge
The Nude Blues: Bahia Belle Cruise
Smokin’ Gun: O’Connell’s Pub and Nightclub
The Soul Revue: Jimmy Love’s
The Swinging Kings: Patrick’s II

**EXTENSION 4010**

**Everything Else**

Burnett Anderson: Cafe LaMaze
J.D. Bouchard: (822) Princess Pub & Grill
Sammy Dale Canonizado: Cafe LaMaze
Sandy Chappell: Cafe LaMaze
Julie de la Huerta: The Westgate Hotel
Vicki Brieta: Edelweiss Restaurant
Kjell Holmen: (994) Edelweiss Restaurant
Gordon Kohl: (822) Edelweiss Restaurant
Barry Leitch: La Valencia Hotel
Fran Loskota: The Westgate Hotel
Kippy Lee Scott: Hotel del Coronado

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**MEXICAN GRILL**

**619-233-2838**

OPEN LATE 3 am
756 5th Ave

BREAKFAST, LUNCH & LATE NIGHTS

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**DJ EVENTS**


**Fusion Young Adult Laser Dance Club: Fridays and Saturdays, DJ Dede D spins hip-hop and R&B. DJ battles feature underground hip-hop and R&B hip-hop dance-offs on the patio. Sunday, December 21, winter break kickoff. December 25, Christmas all-night party. Wednesday, December 31, New Year's Eve celebration. 619-233-6754. High school and college students admitted. 775 Metcalf Street, Escondido. 760-741-9391.**

**Galileo 101: Fridays, DJ AIA spins washful house, hip-hop, and R&B with weekly guest spinners. Saturdays, Aqueo Saturday featuring DJs from around the globe. 100 Harcourt Drive, Suite 101, downtown. 619-702-7101.**

**Heaven: Sundays, DJs Infinity, Golden Boy Mike, Garret S., and more spin house, progressive, and trance. 9 p.m. to 2 a.m. and up. Club Montage, 2028 Hancock Street, midtown. 619-294-9590.**

**Local Only: Tuesdays, Thurs., 76th, and dance music. 9 p.m. to 2 a.m. The Local, 1065 Fourth Avenue, downtown. 619-231-4447.**

**Muckley: Thursdays, DJs Bryan P., Muckley, and Adam Z spin '80s, '90s, and new romantic. Shooters, 3813 30th Street, San Diego. 619-296-6789.**


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The sound of a alternative/indie-rock duo the Displaced is minimalistic. It’s a darker, more hazard-past sound, yet saturated with experimentation. Guitars drifting in and out mark each track, as the pounding bass lines keep things from veering off course. The skittish vocals, especially on the part of Jen Jansen, carry both sensations of desire and disillusion.

**Formed in Brooklyn, New York, in the summer of 2001, the Displaced relocated to San Diego, where they found inspiration for their second album. The concept of their sound is to explore “what it means to be moved, changed, or otherwise displaced in life,” and the two do a good job of capturing that angst with a stripped-down production. “Salt and Alcohol” warns, “Your evil eye watches my bluff / you’ve already made it / but you’re starting to hate it / sink it down / with salt and alcohol.” Layered vocal harmonies prove to be the most attractive aspect of the pair’s sound. With edgy noise and male/female vocal textures that are ever so slightly tinged with poppy nuances, each song is almost an exact replica of the next. All tracks start out softly and rise from there until the group hits a groove and gets stuck in it for the song’s duration. It might be the artistic outlet the two have chosen, but switching things up might add a certain depth.**

(To hear a sample from Tango with the Man, call 619-233-9797, wait for the prompt, then punch in ext. 4104.)

To get your local CD reviewed, please mail it to: Jennifer Ball, Hometown Cds, San Diego Reader, P.O. Box 85803, San Diego, CA 92109-5803.
**Friday Lunch Special**
$5 DONATION.
Lunch and domestic beer or well drink!

421 GRAND AVE., IN THE CARLSBAD VILLAGE
(760) 434-1173 • HOURS: 6 AM TO 2 AM

**The Love Rangers**

**The New Breed Band**
Sunday, Monday and Tuesday • 9 pm
Karaoke with David

HAPPY HOUR – 6 AM-6 PM EVERY DAY!
$2.00 WELLS & DOMESTIC BEERS
FREE FOOD 5-7 PM M-F

Friday Lunch Special 55 donation.
Lunch and domestic beer or well drink!

**The Filling Station**

9522 Miramar Rd. • (858) 578-0757
Northeast corner of Miramar Rd. and Black Mtn. Rd.

Dancing • Pool • Darts
Karaoke • Food • Fun • DJ
2004 Golden Tee Golf
Free Buffet after 4 pm

Entertainment 7 Nights a Week • Call for latest line-up

**New Year’s Eve 2003**
Delicious Buffet • Live Music • Dancing
Party Favors • Champagne Toast at Midnight
$10 Cover • Military FREE w/ID

Monday Night Football!
$5 Domestic Pitchers
Big-Screen TV
Free Raffle for Team T-Shirts

Saturday Night Retro Dance Party!
Every Saturday DJ Levi spins all your
‘80s & ‘90s Favorites

Wednesday • 9 pm
Kamikaze Karaoke
with LEVI
$2.50 Kamikazes

Thursday is
Customer Appreciation Night
$5 Domestic Pitchers • $1.50 Pints
Free Pool 7 pm-close

**BIG NIGHT**
6.75"
13”
Black plus one
NightSpotting

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 Kearny Mesa
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sandiego.com

Nebraska plate for $3.50. But Light $5.5. and Guinness Dark (2 oz.) $4.50, bottles include Budweiser, Coors Light, Miller Lite, MGD, and O’Doul’s, all for 55; some bottles are Pacifico, Quilmes, Corona, Heineken, and Amstel Light, all for 55; they have 14 Argentinean wines, as well as 4 Californian and 4 Chilean wines.

FOOD — dinners average $19.50 (a lot of chicken dishes around $14-19); menu states their beef is “100% organic Argus Beef, free of hormones, steroids, and pesticides”; they also have “free-range puffy quail”

ACCESS — between the I-805 and I-15 (5 miles west of I-805 and 1.5 miles from the stadium); large parking lot

DRESS — casual, although many are dressed up because they are coming from work; one guy was wearing shorts and a Hawaiian shirt.

DANCE FLOOR — none (but I’m told they will sometimes do the tango or tango lessons, and tables will be moved to make room)

FIRE EXITS — four: the main entrance, on the two sides, and one from kitchen.

BATHROOMS — men’s have one animal stall and one stall, women’s had two stalls (one with a locking latch) and one whole wall that was a mirror; a big ledge had flowers, both had sinks with old-fashioned hardware, liquid soap, paper towels, and were clean and graffiti-free.

CAPACITY — 125

SPECIAL AREAS — three tables in front of the stage (surronded by trees that afford privacy from cars in the parking lot)

FURNISHINGS — walls are peachy/orange and have a lot of pictures of Argentina; bull horns, animal skins, and spoons on walls; the walls facing Aero Drive are all windows and have swag curtains over them; they also have a couple of wrough iron lanterns on posts.

DECOR LEVEL — 8

When my friend told me she loved this place, I didn’t know what to expect. She said, “They play Brazilian music.” The only thing that came to mind was “The Girl from Ipanema.”

The food was great, but I laughed when the steak my date got was this round, tiny thing. She said it was delicious.

Only one older couple seemed to appreciate the music, which came from a harpist. The wife said, “We come here once a month and love it. I’m still waiting for my husband to take me to Argentina though.” — Joeli Board
Squid Joe's
North County's Best Barbecue

Official Raiders Headquarters

850 Tamarack Ave.
Carlsbad
(1-5 & Tamarack)

760.729.4996

January 16:
BATTLE OF THE BANDS
1ST ROUND

AWALL
TALL MIDGET
DIRT BIKE
TIM RALDO

Thursday 12/25
Closed

Merry Christmas!

Friday 12/26
Homey's
Christmas Party

Saturday 12/27
NFL Football
Karma Pro Presents

Top 40 – Hip-Hop & 80s Disco
$2 U-Call-Its
9-10:30 pm

Sunday 12/28
NFL Football
Direct TV Package – All Games
Open at 3 am
Serving Breakfast

Every Tuesday
Project DJs
Hip-Hop and Dance Hall
$2 Drink Specials

Upcoming Events:
Wednesday 12/31
New Year's Eve Party!
Dance all night
$10 cover

January:
Bredrin Daddys

Huge dance floor!
www.squidjoes.com

NEW YEARS EVE PARTY
with DJ Ghost!
See you down at the Joe's!
Elario’s Bistro & Sky Lounge (atop the Hotel La Jolla), 7955 La Jolla Shores Drive, La Jolla. 858-459-0541. Music is blues/jazz unless otherwise noted. Friday, Jack Pollack, piano and vocals. Saturday, 8 pm to 11 pm, Rick Ross, jazz piano, saxophone, and vocals. Tuesday, Steve McVicker, jazz.

Hard Rock Cafe (La Jolla), 909 Prospect Street, La Jolla. 858-456-7625. Saturday, Na Califa’s Reveillon, Brazilian music.

Hennessey’s Tavern (PB), 4650 Mission Boulevard, Pacific Beach. 858-483-8847. Friday, Jiggawatt, rock. Saturday, NZ Rough, reggae. Tuesday, open mike. Wednesday, 3 Simple Words, acoustic.

Il Forno Mediterranean Bistro, 909 Prospect Street (next to the Hard Rock Cafe), La Jolla. 858-459-5010. The Room: Call club for information.

La Valencia Hotel, 1132 Prospect Street, La Jolla. 858-454-0771. Thursday, Sunday and Sunday, 6 p.m. to 10 p.m., Barry Levich, piano variety. Friday and Saturday, 7:30 p.m. to 11:30 p.m., Leviticus, pop, jazz.

Moondoggies, 832 Garnet Avenue, Pacific Beach. 858-483-6550. Friday, Rule of Thumb, blues.

Pacific Beach Bar & Grill, 860 Garnet Avenue, Pacific Beach. 858-272-7278. Call club for information.

Pasquale on Prospect, 1250 Prospect Street, La Jolla. 858-509-8900. Friday, 9 p.m., the Barry Allen Cohen Trio, jazz.

Shooters Bar and Grill, Radisson Hotel, 3299 Holiday Court, La Jolla. 858-453-5500. Friday, 7 p.m. to 11 p.m., Tomcat Courtney & the Blues Dusters, blues.

Tiki House, 1152 Garnet Avenue, Pacific Beach. 858-273-9734. Friday, 145st, rock. Saturday, the Bartones, rock. Sunday, Chris Kelly’s open acoustic night.

Winstons, 1921 Bacon Street, Ocean Beach. 619-222-6822. Friday, Main, reggae en español. Saturday, Agua Dulce, Latin groove. Sunday, 4 p.m. to 7 p.m., Brain Bucket, 8 p.m., Jerry Joseph & the Jack Mormons and Dexter Grove, rock. Monday, Electric Waste Band, classic rock. Tuesday, the Great Mradure Band, rock on...
RESTAURANT & TAPAS BAR
Live Entertainment in the Tapas Bar starting at 7 PM
PICASSO SEATING before 6 PM  MIRÓ SEATING at 7 PM
4-course Dinner  5-course Dinner
$49 per guest  $89 per guest
DALÍ SEATING at 9 PM
5-course dinner, midnight celebration with party favors, champagne toast, and access to Club Sevilla after midnight for guests 21 and older.
$129 per guest

FLAMENCO DINNER SHOW EXTRAVAGANZA
6 PM Seating  4-course Dinner & Flamenco Show
$69 per guest
8 PM Seating  5-course Dinner, Flamenco Show, dance party with DJ Joe Guerrero & midnight celebration with champagne toast and party favors.
$149 per guest
Call for reservations and information. Tax & gratuity not included.

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Reunion

January 16, 2004

New Year's Eve Party

Enjoy Music & Dancing

Dinner à la carte 9 pm to 2 am

$15 Cover Charge

Featuring:

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Space is limited!

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THURSDAY, DECEMBER 25

CC JAMES BAND

SMOKIN’ GUN

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NECTARINE

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Featuring
CALVIN ROMANCE and QUIET STORM
(Classic Top 40 Dance Music and Disco)
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Featuring
RISING STAR
(San Diego’s Hottest Disco Show Band)
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MICHAEL PATRICK HOGAN
Playing all your requests from Duke Ellington to Mariah Carey
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To purchase advance tickets, call now: (619) 224-3577
Limited number available. Guestroom packages include 1 night accommodations, breakfast buffet for two and late checkout at 2 pm on Thursday, January 1.
Based on double occupancy.
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San Diego Reader  December 14,  2003  97
NEW YEAR’S EVE PARTY
(Albertsons shopping plaza at Navajo & Lake Murray)
POOL TABLES • DART BOARDS • HOT SPOT & LOTTO • ATM & CREDIT CARDS
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Includes deli buffet, midnight champagne toast & party favors
San Diego Reader December 24, 2003
**San Diego Reader**

**December 24, 2003**

**109**

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**SKINS & FINS HEADQUARTERS**

9 am Sun. 12/28

Latin Grooves

**MAIZ**

**Agua Dulce and DJ B-IRIE**

**Latin Grooves**

9 am Mon. 12/29

**Electric Waste Band**

**Israel Maldonado Band**

Mon. 12/30

New Year’s Eve Reggae Bash with **VEGITATION**

Hangover helper

20 MILES SOUTH

---

**Upcoming**

Fri. 1/2

THE TOASTERS • WARSAW

1921 bacon street • 619-222-6822 • ocean beach

9 am Mon. 12/29

**Jim Kelly’s Brain Bucket**

TODAY: Special Event
JERRY JOSEPH & The Jack Mormons & special guest DEXTER GROVE

Sat. 12/27

**Verb**

with DJ Coastal Eddie & DJ Freddie Fresh

**Verb**

Sun. 12/28

9 am BARS & BILLS FAN CLUBS GATHER

**Verb**

Mon. 12/29

**COWBEL MONDAYS**

OPEN MIC NIGHT

**Verb**

Tues. 12/30

“KARAOKE NIGHT” BAND at 9 pm

Hosted by BUNDEL MELOONS STAFF

Pre-sound • Great music selection

Professional Drinking • Amateur Singing

9 pm-cloose

**Verb**

Wed. 12/31

FREE CHAMPAGNE TOAST

**Verb**

Sun. 1/1

**Verb**

**Verb**

21 and over please

Tickets on-sale NOW for under $20.00

4th & B Box Office & All Ticketmaster locations

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**Pacific Beach Bar & Grill**

Join us for an unforgettable night of fun down at the beach, with special guest DJ’s, two dance floors, party favors, 5 massive balloon drops & a midnight toast! So come ring in the New Year at SD’s Best Party!

**Live Entertainment**

$1.00 Champagne

Happy Hour

4pm -til 8pm

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Open Christmas Day
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$2 Drinks!

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We’re 2004 Bound December 31

**New Year’s Eve**

Two dinner and cocktail seatings
7:00 PM $35 per person
9:30 PM $69 per person

(includes a bottle of champagne per couple, party hats and accessories)

**Special Shows Countdown Sensual, Unique & Dark Dress to express**

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**The 1st Annual FM 94/9 New Year’s Hoot**

Beer, Tequila, Rock-n-Roll...

Guided By Voices,
Year of the Rabbit,
Phantom Planet

and

Tomorrows Son

...Leave the formal wear at home

December 31, 2003

4th & B
Online Club Coupons!

The following nightclubs have valuable coupons in the Music Section of the Reader's website.

- $2 for 1 cover
- $2 off Club VIP
- $5 off cover
- $2 off pitcher of beer
- Free cover with dinner
- $2 for 1 entree
- $2 off admission
- $2 off pitcher of beer
- $1 off club admission

**DOWNTOWN**


The Bayou Bar & Grill, 329 Market Street, downtown. 619-696-4747. All music is jazz. Friday, 3 p.m.; Lady Dottie & the Sliders, Saturday, 5 p.m.; and Sunday, 3:30 p.m., Fred Heath & the Slidewinders.

Tuesday, Tomcat Courtney & the Blues Dusters.

Blamey Stone Pub, 100 Fifth Avenue, downtown. 619-233-4519. Friday through Sunday, and Wednesday, Steve Brown, acoustic.


**Lower-Class Brats**, Cheap Sex, The Veils, and Career Soldiers. Saturday, 1206, Iowa, Pontois, Fourpoints, and Exit 21. Wednesday, New Year’s Eve, Taking Back Sunday, Mt. First & the Gimme Gimmes, Yellowsnake, Strong Out, Sugarcult, Rise Against, Bolts, Avenue Sevenfold, Early Times, Offbeat, Underminded, The Transit War, Jett, Bushjacket Superbe, Spill Toronto, Brave Oliver, and Bad Credit.

Tio Leo’s Lounge, 500 Napa Street (at Morena Boulevard), Bay Park. 619-542-1462. Friday, Powerhead, rock; Saturday, Blazer, rockishly; Monday swing, tango. Tuesday, sydcore blues.

Triggs Tea and Coffee Company, 690 Park Boulevard, University Heights. 619-296-0616. Music is acoustic/folk. Wednesday, open mike. Friday, 8:30 p.m., Saba, Gregory Page, Annie Dru, and Robin Herold. Saturday, the Inside & Anna Troy. Sunday, 4 p.m. to 6 p.m., the Celtic Ensemble.

**Nixen, and Fonis Monday, The Album Leaf, and Via Satellite Tuesday, Detroit Cobras Wednesday, New Year’s Eve, The Dragons, Furious IV, and Jon Sex 77.**

Croce’s Jazz Bar, 802 Fifth Avenue, downtown. 619-233-4355. All music is jazz unless otherwise noted. Thursday, the David Forteana Jazz Quartet; Friday, Yavaz; Saturday, Primo; Sunday, the Archanes. Monday, Dave Scott Tuesday, the Skip Meyers Quartet Wednesday, the Jorge Camberos Quintet.

Croce’s Top Hat Bar and Grille, 802 Fifth Avenue, downtown. 619-233-4355. Friday, Fuzzy & the Bluesmen, blues; Saturday, BTO, rock.

Dakota Grill and Spirits, 901 Fifth Avenue, downtown. 619-234-3554. Friday, Saturday, and Wednesday, 5:30 p.m. to 10:30 p.m., Peter Robben/Perunman, pop/top 40.

Dick’s Last Resort, 345 Fourth Avenue, downtown. 619-231-9100. Friday and Saturday, Private Domain, rock and roll. Sunday, Here’s Oliver, rock. Tuesday, the New Breed Band, pop, jazz. Ron’s Garage, acoustic.

Dizzy’s, 344 Seventh Avenue, downtown. 858-279-7497. Saturday, 8:30 p.m., the Gilbert Castellanos Quintet, Latin jazz.

**Sith Otr., 400 Fifth Avenue, downtown. 619-236-1848. Saturday, the Duo Pumps.**

Jimmy Love’s, 472 Fifth Avenue (corner of Fifth and G), downtown. 619-395-9123. Friday and Saturday, 9:45 p.m., live pop/dance music. Sunday, 6:30 p.m. to 11 p.m., The Superfreaks, pop rock. Monday, 6:30 p.m. to 11 p.m., Reggie Smith & Proud for Time, jazz. Tuesday, 6:30 p.m. to 11 p.m. Mystique, jazz, funk, R&B. Wednesday, 6:30 p.m. to 11:30 p.m., the Soul Revue, Top 40.
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Celebrate New Year’s Eve con Salsa 2003

- Doors Open at 8 pm
- Dance in the New Year to the Sounds of Los Angeles’s Premier Orchestra

ORQUESTA SALSUMBA

& DJ DAVID “Cha Cha” Garcia

Salsa Survival Dance Class with Valerie & David
- New Year’s Eve Countdown Celebration – 2 Large TVS
- Champagne Toast and Party Favors
- Light Midnight Buffet

No Need to Drive!

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$179 includes two party passes, room accommodations & parking.
Call (858) 597-6314 for reservations.

Information & tickets:
“Party Only” Package
$45 in advance / $55 day of event

No Reserved Seating
TICKETS NONREFUNDABLE

Celebrate New Year’s Eve at the Catamaran Resort Hotel

Featuring high-energy entertainment and music selections.

Electrifying stage show of Top 40s and Alternative dance hits from the 80s, 90s, and present.

ONLY $25 AT THE CATAMARAN RESORT HOTEL
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CASH BAR. MUST BE OVER 21 YEARS OF AGE WITH VALID ID TO ATTEND.

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Enjoy an evening in style at the Baleen Restaurant on the bay with cocktails, a lavish menu and sounds of live jazz with Shep Meyer and his band from 8:30 pm to 12:30 am. Dinner will be served from 5 to 11 pm. Reservations are highly recommended by calling (858) 490-6363.

Rock the evening away at the Barefoot Bar & Grill until 2 am. Serving 3$ Molson drafts and your favorite cocktails. Dance to the tunes of Bandiego, offering the best live classic rock hits from the ‘70s and ‘80s from 8 pm to 1 am. (21 years and over with a valid ID required after 9 pm.)

Complimentary party favors and champagne toast at midnight!

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Resort & Spa
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A Room in Paradise –
Make reservations today in a Lanai Garden room for $199 plus tax, single/double occupancy.

Call reservations today at (888) 274-4630 paradisepoint.com
In the past year or so, I’ve eaten at a lot of places (as you’re well aware). One thing I’ve noticed is that San Diego seems to be finally en route to becoming a food destination. Here are some of the leaders of the revolution. While this isn’t a standard “Best of...” list, these are my best bets of the year — a reprise of restaurants that did it right and dishes that piqued my palate.

One noticeable trend is toward local, free-range, and organic ingredients. It’s not just that these foodstuffs are better for you — they also taste noticeably better. Many of our upper-crust restaurants had been cooking local/organic well before it was a trend, but among the new, more moderately priced restaurants that embrace the fresh-and-natural ethos are Meritage, Nectark, Region, Savory, and (in Baja) Manzanilla. You can even see the difference in retail markets. Trader Joe’s, for instance, is carrying gently raised Aussie lamb chops, all at relatively mild prices. And for Thanksgiving, I picked up a fresh (never frozen) free-range turkey from Henry’s Marketplace — miles better than the supermarket freebie gobblers.

Don’t look to me for the more typical Oscars-style series of set categories climaxing with “Best Restaurant.” The best restaurants and most talented chefs have their own distinctive culinary personalities. When you throw them into competition, you’re just comparing apples and oranges, but piling on the plums, kumquats, pomegranates, and papayas. No way I can choose just one — let a thousand flowers bloom, and you’ll find the dish you like best.

Seasons greetings and best wishes to you all.

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DEFINITIVE RENDITIONS OF CALIFORNIA CLASSICS:
Toutland Amandine at 150 Grand
(150 Grand Street, Escondido,
760-738-6066); Deep-Fried Soft-
Shell Crab at Gulf Coast Grill
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619-295-2244); Chicken-Fried Steak
at Centre City Cafe (1680 S.
Escondido Boulevard, Escondido,
619-489-6011); and Mustard-
vegetable. Browned butter sauce,

DESSERTS OF THE YEAR:
Crème Brûlée Napoleon at Vivace
(Four Seasons Aviara Resort, Aviara
Parkway and Four Seasons Drive,
Carlsbad, 760-603-3773); Bavarese at
Rosanna’s (806 South Coast
Highway 101, Encinitas, 760-
942-0738); and Grilled Pineapple
at California Cuisine (1027
University Avenue, Hillcrest, 619-543-
0790). Eric Estrella is Vivace’s star
pasta chef. In his clever re-invention of crème brûlée he cuts the custard into small squares, layered horizontally; each piece has one crackly edge to provide the typical brûlée crunch. Saffron-marinated straw-
berries and basil sauce add complex, sophisticated notes.

MOST AFFECTING CHEF:
Bernard Guillais at the Marine
Room (2000 Spindrift Road, La
Jolla, 858-493-7222), General
and manicam, Guillais is every-
where, and whenever he cooks, you’re in for delightful shocks. For instance, a special of Tasmanian
steak tartare meat was served with the crusty crunch of minced almonds and fennel pollen, touched with exotic lemon myzit-
ter ole, arriving with a roasted
Green Zebra heirloom tomato, fingerling potatoes, a fling of

BEST NEW ETHNIC RESTAURANT:
Hacienda de Vega (2608 South
Escondido Blvd., Escondido,
760-738-9805); and Mustard-
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Gassing Away

Now I’ve got three plates in front of me. “No shame, dude?” says Hank.

“M y idea of the perfect Christmas?” says Hank. “Get the heck out of Dodge. Hightail it for the desert. Find me a bit of peace and quiet.”

Half of me wants to agree with him. The other half yearns for all that warm and fuzzy stuff. Family, cakes, presents, hot punch, the laughter of children, the warmth of the fireplace, the floor, and a wall full of posters of Greek towns and ports. The buffet stretches along the far side. I mean, yes, it’s your standard Greek thing. But what gives it a bit of an exotic feel is the classical music mixed with Greek tunes and the languages you hear buzzing around the tables. Group of elderly ladies sits gassing away in what sounds like Russian. I hear Spanish from another table. Plus two women sound as though they could be from Ethiopia.

The waiter says eat now, pay later. Cool. We order iced tea ($1.50, with refills) and head for the buffet. Oh, man. Seems like two dozen different chatting dishes filled with everything from gyros meat to spanakopita (Greek spinach pie) to mousaka (eggplant, potatoes, ground beef topped with a thick bechamel sauce) to dolmades (grape leaves wrapped around beef and rice), plus salad and a separate dessert table. I start off with soup. The choice is limited (lentil, avgolemono (lemon-y, rice soup)). I go for farce. There’s nothing fake about it. It’s great with the lemony sauce inside. It makes me wish I’d had this in Greece.

Then I sit forward. “Hey. So Santa Claus? It’s all office party stuff, right?”

“Then forget downtown. It’s all office party stuff. We order the entire bill or catering order for 15% off. Limited time only. Must present coupon.

“Without his wheels I would have been practically at the door. You’re paying, right?”

“Hank raises his eyebrows. “Appetizer dish,” says Hank. “Get the heck out of here.”

“Then I’m back at the food table. Fresh plate of hummus, and those olives. Sounds delish. “On Christmas Day,” she says, “I wish I’d have had this in Greece.”

“Then it says “Authentic Greek cuisine.” I say. Oh, yes. That hummus, and those olives. Real. Tasty. I scoop it up all with pita bread; then I’m back at the food table. Fresh plate number two (“It’s the law,” Hank keeps reminding me). This time I land in a big of green pepper stuffed with rice and meat, yellow rice, mousaka, a faledale cake, and for nice slicing green color, some tabbouleh, the parsley-and-cucumber salad.

“I’m 18” says the woman at the next table. “Again?” Katya is her birthday. Okay, she’s flipping 18 and 18. She’s originally from the Ukraine. Her friends Olga, who migrated from Russia, Anna from the Ukraine, and Alisa, Armenians, are treating her to lunch. They always come here. “It feels European,” says Olga. “The food, that music.”

“Course, this isn’t quite your traditional white Christmas, Russian style. “Our Christmas is January 7”, Katya says. “On Christmas Eve we’d be celebrating Socolniki.” Looks like the word Socolniki comes from the food they’d eat, sochivo. “It’s wheat with seeds, raisins, honey, and nuts. Sounds delish.” “On Christmas Day,” she says, “it’d be goose if you’re lucky, or duck.”

Across the way, these two gals with big, dark faces, a white one, and a Russian one. “Then it says “All You Can Eat Buffet, $6.95.” I say. Oh, yes. That hummus, and those olives. Real. Tasty. I scoop it up all with pita bread; then I’m back at the food table. Fresh plate number two (“It’s the law,” Hank keeps reminding me). This time I land in a big of green pepper stuffed with rice and meat, yellow rice, mousaka, a faledale cake, and for nice slicing green color, some tabbouleh, the parsley-and-cucumber salad.

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Fat Times

“People knew his collection. That’s a very affluent area, and there are a lot of very sophisticated collectors there.”

It may be that you can often find Pamplemousse Grill chef Jeffrey Strauss in the restaurant’s private banquet room on a Sunday night, anchoring one end of a table stuffed with a dizzying array of cured meats, shrimp, crab claws, fresh-baked biscuits, cheeses, etc., joking with guests as he carves and serves up great slices of lamb. Then again, it may not.

It is, after all, not every Sunday that the Pamplemousse plays host to a pre-auction tasting for the Zachys Holiday Wine Auction, which would later be held at Manhattan’s Restaurant Daniel. In fact, no restaurant anywhere has ever played host to a Zachys pre-auction tasting. This was the first for the wine-retailing giant, now concluding a dominant first year since it took over its own auctions, which it had formerly held in association with Christie’s.

Not that pre-auction tastings are a new idea; they are a venerable tradition attached to London wine auctions, says Zachys auctioneer Ursula Hermacinski. “They were very serious in the early wine auctions, says Zachys auctioneer Ursula Hermacinski. “They were very serious in the early days. Before every auction, they would take samples to ascertain the quality of a certain consignment.”

But when the New York wine auction scene began to pick up in the mid-’90s, pre-auction tastings were less about ascertaining the quality and condition of the wine to be auctioned, says Hermacinski, “primarily because so many American consigners had ideal storage facilities. Their cells were not simply basements; they were super-insulated, temperature- and humidity-controlled wine cellars. As a result, a pre-auction tasting usually ended up being a cocktail party, a great opportunity for buyers to pay $35 and have a taste of all these incredible wines.”

Eventually the traditional pre-auction tastings were scrapped altogether, and the parties shifted to the auctions themselves. “When we were Zachys-Christie’s, we had the auctions at the sale room,” she explains. “In the early days of the New York wine auctions — our first was in April of 1995 — we had standing room only. In ’95, ’96, every auction was a mini-party. We’d have dinners beforehand. They were really wonderful, fat times — no one was looking at budget constraints in putting on those events.” But the bubble burst and the lean years set in. “Now you go to a Christie’s or Sotheby’s auction and they still sell $2 million worth of wine, but there are eight people in the room. That’s how the auctions are in London; there’s no sizzle on the steak at all.”

After the split with Christie’s, Zachys owner Don Zacharia “wasn’t going to accept that; his number one goal was to bring the excitement back, make it a party again. He said, ‘I want to relive the glory days.’”

One way to do that was to get the auction — and the party — out of the sale room and into a more festive milieu. “We could have gotten a room at a hotel or the Explorer’s Club on Park Avenue. But we thought of a restaurant. It’s not theater-style seating; you’re actually sitting at a table.” They approached chef Daniel Boulud, who agreed without hesitating. “We’ve got a coffee service going in the morning. At lunchtime, the restaurant offers a buffet, and almost everybody takes it, though we don’t stop selling. We offer a glass of champagne to everyone — that’s one of our trademarks. People can order wines off of Daniel’s list. They really relax. It goes from being the doldrums of a commercial wine auction to more of a charity wine auction feel.”

Adding luster to the festivities this year was the news that Rancho Santa Fe wine collector John McDonnell had decided to auction his 18,000-bottle collection through Zachys. The entire first day of this month’s holiday auction would be given over to clearing McDonnell’s cellar — 898 lots in all. Before the auction was held, Zacharia and company saw an opportunity to reach out to a new set of collectors who had previously proven auction-shy. Explains Hermacinski, “John McDonnell’s profile as a collector was significantly high in Rancho Santa Fe and the San Diego area. People knew his collection. That’s a very affluent area, and there are a lot of very sophisticated collectors there who have personal contacts at Zachys but who don’t buy at auction.”

The hook would be a modified pre-auction tasting held in Southern California and featuring wines from McDonnell’s cellar. “If you were doing a true pre-auction tasting, you would have had probably one bottle each of 30 different wines...
so that people could go through and get an idea of the cellar’s quality. That wasn’t really necessary here, so three bottles each of six sample vintages were chosen to showcase the collection’s range. McDonnell “was generous about the notion of giving up samples,” says Hermacinski, and the evening at the Pamplemousse showed it. As they feasted on chef Strauss’s spread, guests sipped their way through the six worthy wines, including ‘95 Château Haut Brion from Bordeaux, ’96 Vosne Romanée “Les Suchots” from Burgundy, and a ’60 Croft Vintage Port. And they got to hear the auction process explained by Ms. Hermacinski herself.

The greatest question when you wonder about buying wine at auction is: ‘How can you trust the wines when you don’t know the source?’” she began. “We’re here tonight to show you the source. Ask me; ask my colleague Christine Graham, who was there during the packing. And certainly ask Graham, who was there during me; ask my colleague Christine to show you the source. Ask she began. “We’re here tonight you don’t know the source?’ ”

It was fair warning, but Hermacinski probably wasn’t overly opposed to the notion of people getting “swept away.” “We’re selling 120 lots an hour. We start at 9:30 a.m. and we don’t stop until 3:30 or so.” Besides being necessary to get through nearly 900 lots, the speed helps build the excitement she needs to keep the bidding hot. “I’ve got 30 seconds to sell a lot, so it’s got to be priced in such a way that people want to come to the party. Retail, you can put a price on it and sit until someone comes in and buys it.” Once the bidder is in, it’s up to Hermacinski to get the price up, and time pressure can be a boon.

The Reader’s Guide to Restaurants are recommended listings written by our reviewers (Ed Bedford, Ambrose Martin, Shari McCallough, Max Nakah, Eleanor Walmer, Naomi Wise). Each issue contains only a fraction of nearly 600 reviews. A complete searchable list is available online at SanDiegoReader.com. Price estimates are based on the latest information available for a mid-range entrée. Inexpensive: under $10; moderate: $10 to $19; expensive: $20 to $24; very expensive: more than $25. Please call restaurants in advance for reservations.

NORTH COASTAL

Big Jim’s Old South Barbecue
190 North Coast Highway 101 (2 blocks north of Encinitas Boulevard), Encinitas. 760-633-1166. At this outstanding barbecue, you can “Put Some South in Yo Mouth!” The smoking-wood is mellow hickory, and each type of meat (sublime “pulled pork,” smoky skewered shrimp, huge pork ribs, chicken, steak) gets individualized treatment, including a tangy Alabama-style mustard sauce for pork and chicken. (Beef gets the more familiar tomatoey Texas-style sauce.) Side dishes are superb: Don’t miss the thick, smoky-sweet Brunswick stew (you’ll not find its like anywhere on this coast), exemplary hush puppies, corn muffins.
Diazcensez's 11625 Encinitas Blvd (off W. Bernardo Drive), Rancho Bernardo, 858-487-2776. This is a stand-in-line, order-at-the-counter, grab-a-table, listen for your-order-number kind of a place. If you're looking for something quiet and cozy, this isn't the place. The staff is friendly, the food is good, and the service is attentive. Moderate.

Diazcensez's

Cafe 101

321 North Coast Highway 101, Carlsbad, 760-433-7878. One of the friendliest eateries in a charming town. The daily-changing menu sports a lot of different items, from fresh seafood to Mexican cuisine. The service is friendly, and the food is good. Inexpensive.

The Encinitas Cafe

531 South Coast Highway, Encinitas, 760-634-3350. Chef-owner Susan Sbicca creates pristine California Cuisine here, highlighting fresh and organic ingredients. The menu is ever-changing, with egg dishes, biscuits, and gravy well-balanced for breakfast, sandwiches and salads for lunch, and American entries for dinner. Fast, excellent service. Open daily, three meals. Inexpensive. — E.W. (8/03)

Cafe Sevilla Carlsbad

320 Pio Pico (off Carlsbad Village Drive), Carlsbad, 760-730-7558. The atmosphere is cozy and pleasant. Dine upstairs for larger tables. Tapas and Spanish specialties of average competence. Music will warm your blood. Lunch Monday through Friday. Dinner nightly, to midnight Friday and Saturday. Moderate to slightly expensive.

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Kim's Restaurant

745 First Street, Carlsbad, 760-433-7878. Most of the Vietnamese cuisine here is well-prepared and flavorful. The service is friendly, and the atmosphere is pleasant. Inexpensive.

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"Meet me at the Yard House."

Cafe Zinc 132 South Cedros (at Loma Santa Fe), Solana Beach, 858-529-5436. The Rancho Santa Fe set likes to hang out here in the garden patio with their Porsches at the curb and their shih tzu under the table (dogs are welcome). Even for non-dogge people, the California pepper trees and garden sculptures make this indoor-outdoor eatery a really pleasant kick-back place (which gets its name from the zinc-top bar inside). The menu, a mixture of Italian and vegetarian, offers dishes like frittata with cucumber salsa and baked eggplant "pizzette" (personal-size pizza) with marinara, mozzarella, and Parmesan cheese. The vegetarian chili and the Zinc veggie burger (served on a La Brea bun) are tasty too. Open seven days, breakfast through late lunch. Inexpensive. — E.W.

Le Bambou 2684 Del Mar Heights Road, Del Mar, 858-259-8138. Nouvelle Vietnamese cuisine is prepared here that's fresh, light, delicate. But the portions are small and two people should order three entrees for a satisfactory meal. Soups are outstanding and the imperial rolls, lemon grass chicken, soft-shelled crab, vegetarian rolls, and charbroiled pork do well here. The wine list includes 40 items. Fast service and aesthetic surroundings. Lunch Tuesday to Friday; dinner Tuesday to Sunday; closed Monday. Inexpensive to moderate. — E.W.

Patrioli Italian Bistro 47 South Coast Highway 101, Solana Beach, 858-755-2525. Italian dishes from every section of Italy are prepared with loving care in time-honored tradition. Specialties are risotto, ravioli, leg of lamb, duck breast, fresh fish. Charmimg atmosphere with fireplace. Open daily. Moderate. — E.W.

LA JOLLA

808 Restaurant The Aventine, 8980 University Center Lane, University City/Golden Triangle, 858-552-1048. Chef-owner Jean-Marie Isoulon brings his Hawaiian-French fusion food from Kauai to The Aventine and it's a delight. The restaurant's ever-changing seasonal menu reads like a Frenchman's dream of happy tropics, and the decor looks the part — part gilt, part grass shack. The kitchen emphasizes superb fresh seafood, cooked up with tropical inspirations and rigorous Gallic technique. It's always an adventure. Try the lobster tempura, slow-roasted butterfish, or the scallop-crusted salmon when they're available. Full bar, heated patio. Dressy-casual; reservations strongly advised; reasonable valet parking. Dinner nightly. Expensive. — N.W. (7/03)

Azul La Jolla 1350 Prospect Street, La Jolla, 858-454-9816. The unobstructed ocean view and opulent interiors are glamorous. Cuisine is Mediterranean with California influence. Menus change daily. When available, try pan-seared scallops and the outstanding asparagus soup, not duplicated anywhere. Fresh fish and seafood. Moderate to expensive. — E.W. (7/99)

Fresh Seafood Restaurant 1044 Wall Street (at Herschel), La Jolla, 858-551-7275. The face is mainly fishy and the room is truly dainty, with lots to look at — the open kitchen, floor-to-ceiling sculptures, street-patio scene, or the decolléte of the date dresses being reined in enough to keep from scaring business-suited palates. Fish not your dish? Meats and poultry are of fine quality, too. Save room for the hazelnut mocha mouse cake, so sensual it should be X-rated. Good wine buys in Sauvignon Blancs and "interesting whites." Dinner reservations a must. Open daily, lunch and dinner. Moderate to expensive. — N.W. (7/03)

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RESTAURANT & TAPAS BAR
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PICASSO SEATING
Seating before 6:30 PM
MIRO SEATING
Starting at 8 PM
FLAMENCO DINNER SHOW EXTRAVAGANZA
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Tapañada 7612 Fay Avenue, La Jolla, 858-450-4571. Best seafood buffet in city, served Friday nights, 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. At least 21 items, most of them fresh seafood and fish plus New York-cut beef and chicken. Price is $28.95, $30.75 for children. Add $10 for 1-1/4 pound fresh Maine lobster steamed to order. Excellent value for the money. Friday night only. Expensive. — E.W. (6/99)

Zenzu 7660 Fay Avenue (at Kline Street), La Jolla, 858-454-8440. It was a natural for fisherman-restauranter Matt Rimel to open a sushi bar-fish house, featuring sparkling fresh catch, much of it from his own boats. Sashimi and the simpler sushi are better here than the big party rolls, which can be lankish. Don’t miss the sashimi of live local uni (sea urchin) served on its shell. Full bar, good sake list. Dinner nightly. Expensive to very expensive. — E.W. (7/98)

Torreyana Grill Hilton La Jolla Torrey Pines, 10991 Torrey Pines Road, La Jolla, 858-450-4571. Best seafood buffet in city, served Friday nights, 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. At least 21 items, most of them fresh seafood and fish plus New York-cut beef and chicken. Price is $28.95, $30.75 for children. Add $10 for 1-1/4 pound fresh Maine lobster steamed to order. Excellent value for the money. Friday night only. Expensive. — E.W. (6/99)

Nijiya Market 3860 Convoy Street, Kearny Mesa, 858-280-3821. If you’re not willing to sacrifice quality for convenience when eating fast food, try this Japanese market in Kearny Mesa. Nijiya Market offers prepared box lunches, or bento, that are pretty to look at, appealing, and a real bargain. I suggest, however, passing by Nijiya’s steam trays and heat lamps and going straight to the coolers, where you’ll find delicious chicken cutlets, fresh sushi, and chilled noodles, as well as dessert delicacies like sweet bread roll filled with sweet bean paste. Inexpensive. — M.N. (8/99)

Prego Hazard Center, 1370 Frazee Road (at Frazee Road), Mission Valley, 619-294-4700. In a stylish North Italian restaurant set in a come-as-you-are mall, a million-dollar renovation at the turn of the century has turned down the noise level to match the pleasing, easy-going North Italian cooking. Good starters include the antipasto platter, sparkling salads, and yeasty, fresh-baked mozzarella-garlic bread (actually a mini-pizza crust). Pastas (many featuring fresh seafood) are near-perfect, but most of can be risky. Entrées are mainly simple grilled or rotissed meats and fish, but the nightly specials are where chef Josh McInnis gets to strut his stuff. Service is warm and well-informed. Lunch weekdays, dinner nightly. Moderate (pastas) to expensive. — E.W. (6/99)

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M I S S I O N V A L L E Y & T H E M E S A S

Hideyoshi Japanese Restaurant 9340-B Clairemont Mesa Boulevard, Hazard Village, Kearny Mesa, 858-369-9935. A delightful restaurant tucked away at the far end of a small shopping center. Fine sushi bar, and unusual appetizers. A feast named “Taiko special,” for two or more, is worth ordering. Visually and gastronomically a treat. Lunch, Monday through Friday; dinner, Monday through Saturday, closed Sunday. Inexpensive to expensive. — E.W.

Korea House 4620 Convoy Street, Kearny Mesa, 858-560-0880. Korea House offers floor seating or a table if you want to barbecue your own food. The menu offers five “down-home” Korean food, such as traditional man-do (beef) dumplings, gyerang-budae, or raw crab, and yookhwe (sea urchin) served on its shell. Expensive. — E.W.

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THE BEACHES

Alfiero Sheraton Harbor Island, West Tower, 1980 Harbor Island Drive, Har- bor Island, 619-492-2778. Sophisti- cated, deluxe Italian/Mediterranean cuisine takes center stage in a hand- some, view-endowed dining room de- corated in a “Venetian Carnival” theme. In a menu that follows the seasons, San Francisco-born Chef Antonio Frisina proves he’s capable of brilliance. His thin-skinned zivoli stuffed with mar- nated hoisin short ribs shouldn’t be missed, and his goose foie gras on cita- lotta crevettes is drool worthy. Tradi- tional dishes take on new life, too: the house “antipasti” (of marinated veg- etables and top-quality Italian deli meats) is everything you’d hope for, while house-made pesto gochusai float off the plate. Some dishes are invari- ably less successful, but boredom will not be a problem — this is nothing like “hotel food.” The Italian/California menu is filled with lesser-known Italian reds. Three meals. Upper moderate to expensive. — N.V. (320)

Balen Paradise Point Resort, 1404 Vacation Road (off Ingram Street), Mission Bay, 858-490-8363. Take a quick trip to chic Miami at the local branch of Florida’s famed new resort restaurant. Whimsical tropical decor features a monkey motif (carved in the chandeliers, peeling from the paint- ings) and mambo play on the speak- ers. But the unlimited prices for chilled shellfish may make you wonder if you’re not just a bit up the range. Reservations rec- ommended. Very expensive. — N.W. (12/00)

Cucina Fresca 1851 Bacon Street, Ocean Beach, 858-224-9470. OK, it’s a cli- che, but “bring your appetite,” really

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Grilled Tomato Soup or Lobster Bisque on Crêpe

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Caesar Salad
Baby greens with apples, Gorgonzola cheese, pecan croutons or Hearts of romaine with our own classic Caesar dressing and Parmesan cheese

Entrée Course:
Surf and Turf
Maine lobster tail and petite filet mignon, tarragon butter, bernaise sauce.

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SAN DIEGO

Humphrey's by the Bay

Sargasso Sea of linguini capped by large terra cotta floor tile, and very traditional wood, banknote collections, varnished-wood upstairs eatery. Some of their nicest surprises are in the simple food: like a field greens salad, scrumptious with candied walnuts and cheese; or farfalle pasta with rock shrimp, goat cheese, roasted garlic, spinach, and cream, or a delectable smoked turkey-breast-pimentos sandwich. Also a good deal: premium BBQ prime rib served the bone on Mondays (other days as a sandwich). Freshly pressed apple cider!

Lao & Chinese Cuisine

Chicken crispy, home-style Lao cuisine. I highly recommend the larb, a spicy salad with bits of pork in a sauce that delivers a spicy, sour/salty bite. Macaroni and cheese is gooey and gummy, a mild counter to the mushy, soury-green. On Fridays, you can get South- ern-fried catfish or red snapper, plus biscuits. Inexpensive. — A.M. (2004)

Charley's Famous Hamburgers

619-224-3577. Most diners at this restaurant arrive — whoa! A sliced-open seafood platter, like a field greens salad, served with their PBS: Pancakes, Bacon and Scrambled Eggs. Or the breakfast sandwich — N.W. (7/03)

Kono's

858-483-1669. This inside-outside café is your prototypical California surfer bistro, this loud, lively, very local waterfront hangout. If they wanted culinary murder here if they wanted to. But this brassed-up and sumptuous-upstairs eatery produces interesting food, featuring seafood from sauced fish to grilled maha mahi to a substantial suit jacket. Yes.开放 time is all that's sure in the big draw is Humphrey's fabulous southern soul food. Try their gray-smeared-fried chicken served with collard greens, yellow peppers, red beans, rice, and white mixing over purée, or their homemade Creole gumbo, thick with crab, shrimp, ham, and chicken. Other fine fare includes the catfish sandwich and half-pound rib tips. Open daily, lunch and dinner, 3 p.m.-10 p.m. weekdays, 1 p.m. Friday and Saturday. Inexpensive. — E.R. (11/00)

Sapporo Japanese Restaurant

3499 Newport Avenue (by the pier), Ocean Beach, 619-222-4666. It's small, but Sapporo has big deals, particularly the lunch specials that usually give you a moo shu, salad, and a combo such as teriyaki chicken and California rolls and white rice — all presented like a piece of performance art. Other specials include yaki soba (stir-fried buckwheat, vegetables, and rice) and Ipponmiso noodle soup (adzuki noodle, callaloo, shrimps, vegetables, and rice). And the value-packed Chicken Bowl — a big plate of chicken, broccoli, brown rice, other vegetables, and a swamp of rice. Open seven days, lunch and dinner. Inexpensive. — E.R. (8/81)

Bar and Grill

5901 Santa Monica Avenue, Ocean Beach, 619-222-1101. That name, Qwiigs? E.B. (11/00)

—

December 24, 2003

Sargasso Sea of linguini capped by large terra cotta floor tile, and very traditional wood, banknote collections, terra cotta floor tile, and very traditional dishes. All the usual suspects are here, like chicken Parmigiana, chicken marsala, real florentine. But who cares? It's their old-fashioned size you'll love. Order, say, the "savoye and peppers" pasta. You'll be half-full from the delicious minestrone soup they toss in first. Then your pasta arrives — whoa! A Sargasso Sea of linguini capped by large terra cotta floor tile, and very traditional wood, banknote collections, terra cotta floor tile, and very traditional dishes. All the usual suspects are here, like chicken Parmigiana, chicken marsala, real florentine. But who cares? It's their old-fashioned size you'll love. Order, say, the "savoye and peppers" pasta. You'll be half-full from the delicious minestrone soup they toss in first. Then your pasta arrives — whoa! A
Hungarian-born sisters who run this Avenue, Lakeside, 619-390-7996.

The menu has two sides: the A-side features tender marinated ribs cut from a rack. There, too, is the Cowpoke Country Special, a buttermilk short stack with eggs and sausages or bacon. Open daily, breakfast through early dinner. Inexpensive. — E.B. (10/99)

Kountry Kitchen 821 Main Street, Ramona, 760-728-3200. Thank goodness the Kountry Kitchen’s still around. It’s a low, red, grapevine-covered one-story producing buns near the rodeo grounds. A dirt parking lot leads under the trees, and an old freezer door is the main entrance to the restaurant, which has decor straight out of Dodge City. The menu has two sides: the A-side features big steaks, while the B-side offers bar- gain-priced sandwiches like grilled barbecue beef or the Ponyburger, a flame-broiled quarter-pounder with steak fries, barbecue sauce, and fries. On Thursday nights, the sisters’ menu includes one of her special Hungarian dishes, depending on what the customers have asked for — so get on down there and vote. Open until 1 a.m. (with karaoke) on weekends. Inexpensive to moderate. — N.W. (7/98)

The Olde Homestead Fudge Factory The Center, 590 Palm Canyon Drive (north side of the street), Borrego Springs, 760-767-7782. La Casa Del Zorro’s most renowned and ambitious restauranteur, set in a deluxe resort five miles south of town. (Drive through the parking lots until you reach the fenced swimming pool; the restaurant’s small, dimly marked door is just to the left.) The California Cuisine menu offers elaborate seafood appetizers (out here in the desert!) and entries with fine, subtle sauces, fresh veggies from nearer the coast, and rather mild-flavored, expertly tender meats, evidently chosen to be gentle to the dentures of the duffers. Desserts are few and very sweet. Full bar, great (but pricey) wine list. Collared shirts and jackets required on men (they’ll lend you a jacket if needed); dress-casual wear on women. Open daily, continuously (in theory) from breakfast through dinner. Reserve for weekend evenings. Very expensive. — N.W. (4/00)

Patagonia, Berta’s lengthy menu reads like a culinary “pick hits” list of each country’s best foods, typically served with expertise and verve. Some outstanding dishes include sweet-savory Chilean pastel de cordero (a casserole of beef, chicken, and corn pudding) from Berta’s homeland, spicy ceviche and subtle ajo de arbol (citrus-flavored lamb stew) from Peru, earthy Guatemalan chalalán (chamorro-laden pork stew), aromatic beef curry from Trinidad, and a sensuous supaya (seafood in coconut sauce) from Brazil’s African-influenced Bahia coast. Vegetarians will find many meat-and-foo-themed dishes, lunch and dinner. Moderate. — N.W. (4/01)

Berta’s Latin American Restaurant 928 Twigg Street (at Congress, diagonal to Rockin’ Baja Lobsters), Old Town, 619-295-2340. Sampling the whole range of little-known cuisines from Guatemala down to Paraguay, Berta’s lengthy menu reads like a culinary “pick hits” list of each country’s best foods, typically served with expertise and verve. Some outstanding dishes include sweet-savory Chilean pastel de cordero (a casserole of beef, chicken, and corn pudding) from her homeland, spicy ceviche and subtle ajo de arbol (citrus-flavored lamb stew) from Peru, earthy Guatemalan chalalán (chamorro-laden pork stew), aromatic beef curry from Trinidad, and a sensuous supaya (seafood in coconut sauce) from Brazil’s African-influenced Bahia coast. Vegetarians will find many meat-and-foo-themed dishes, lunch and dinner. Moderate. — N.W. (4/01)

Brians’ American Eatery 1451 Washington Street (near Lincoln Avenue), Hillcrest, 619-296-8268. Note the apostrophe: Not one but two Brian’s recently took over what had been Toppy’s, a venerable coffeehouse/ eatery for 40 years. They’ve done a good job of cleaning it up without getting the filter coffeehouse character. It’s open all night on weekends, and late night is quite a scene. But for a lot of people, breakfast is the thing. The Brian’s 8-ounce charbroiled top sirloin steak with eggs and country potatoes is a great Saturday morning treat. Or the “Hey Bicky!”, an omelet with cheddar, avocado, green chilies, onions, and cheese. Or ask for their off-menu breakfast special — it’s always cheaper. Another good thing: You get a pitcher of iced lemon-water, and coffee comes...
CIDER-PORT BRAISED PORK SHANKS
BY CARLTON GREENAWALT

Executive Chef, 150 Grand, Escondido

When this dish arrives on the table people are shocked — “Oh, my God, this is gigantic.” It looks huge and you think you can’t get through it, but it’s the bone that is really big. People love it. The first night we served it at the restaurant we sold out. Everybody I talked to loved it, and most finished the whole thing.

This is a recipe that is fun to do at home if you can find the pork shanks. You will not find that much of meat in your normal grocery store. You can probably get them at a butcher shop. You might have better luck at a Mexican market. It’s called charrón. If you can’t locate them, the recipe can be adapted. You could use loin chops or tenderloin or picnic shoulder.

Juniper berries are difficult to find. They can be ordered online (Penzeys.com) or found at some higher-end grocery stores. If you can’t find them, they can be left out. They’re not absolutely essential for the dish.

Regarding crab apples, there are lots of little specialty apples available. You can probably find them at Whole Foods or Major Market. If you can’t find crab apples, any good baking apple will do, like a Fuji or a Lady Fuji.

This is what the chef likes to eat, and I like this dish prepared using vegan stock. Chicken stock, not beef, can be substituted. As a beverage, to match the apple flavor I would suggest a nice, full-bodied Merlot or a Cabernet. Something strong enough that can stand up to it.

HOW TO DO IT

Pork shanks: Heat oven to 350 degrees. Trim excess fat from pork shanks. Season well with black pepper and kosher salt. Heat oil in a large (12-quart) stockpot until smoking. Sear pork shanks in oil until well browned. Remove shanks from pot. Reserve. Add onion, carrot, celery, and garlic cloves to the pot. Cook about five minutes or until the onion is soft.

Begin by browning the shanks. Sear them until they are well browned and the fat is rendered. Return shanks to the pot. This is a good time for the shanks to begin standing up to it.

Regarding the paste, this is a mixture that can be strong enough that can stand up to the shanks. You can make a paste from the list of appetizers. Open week-ends.

The Parkhouse Eatery
4574 Park Boulevard, University Heights, 619-294-3861. Interesting Spanish tapas and entrées are serving Spanish tapas and entrées are available. You can probably find them in the area — in fact, these bites are larger than five minutes or until all liquid is absorbed.

Return shanks to the pot.

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whisking constantly. Stir in rosemary, cheese, and butter. Season to taste.

Crab apples: Remove cores from crab apples. Cut into chunks. Toss apples in melted butter, black pepper, and kosher salt. Place in 350-degree oven. Toast until soft, about 20 minutes.

Swiss chard: Remove stems from leaves of Swiss chard. Tear into small pieces, across. Heat oil in pan across. Place in 350-degree oven. Toast until soft, about 20 minutes.

The ocean view is free!
South Bay & Coronado

Azuero Point
Loses Coronado Bay Resort, 4007 Coronado Island Blvd (Silver Strand Boulevard), Coronado, 619-424-4477. The quietly luxurious dining room with a scene laid out to view a romantic and a bit de Luxe, far from swiftly. It’s not just for tourists, but a lovely evening’s gateway for L.A. The California-French cuisine emphasizes seasonal ingredients in slightly unexpected combinations, with special ingenuity in the appetizers. Along with the six-course “chef’s menu,” there’s a reasonably priced five-course vegetarian menu showcasing fresh herbs grown in the resort’s garden. A good wine list at reasonable markups is strong on half-bottles. Full bar. Reservations advisable for luau nights and Sunday champagne brunch. Casual. Family-friendly to the max. Breakfast and lunch buffets in- expensive; Sunday and dinner buffets moderately. A carte expensive.

Bistro D’Asia
1301 Orange Avenue (at 4th Street), Coronado, 619-437-6077. The relaxing restaurant attached to the handy perennial “Lizard Lounge” serves gently-diced dishes from all over East Asia. Among the standout dishes are delicate lemon shrimps, vegetarian “monk’s curry,” and tea from Monsoon Garden. Reserve for weekend lunches. Dinner daily. Moderate. — N.W. (12/01)

Bob’s on the Bay
570 Marina Park- way, Chula Vista Harbor, 619-572-2525. This is it. A 2$-1.25 a pound sticker with fresh fish, chicken Caesar salad with sourdough toast, or a fillet mignon steak with fish sticks. Night after another, catch the breakfast favorite: biscuits and gravy with eggs and sausage or gravy with eggs. Insen- sible. — E.B. (1/00)

Migue’s Cocina
1351 Orange Ave- nue, Coronado, 619-437-4237. Also 292 Shafter Island Drive, Shelter Is- land, 619-224-2401. Cashed inside the courtyard of a “Spanish Colonial” mini-mall. Migue’s breezy trellis patio draws a dense crowd of various age groups. The prime-time wait for a table may be worth it if you’re in a gringo-Mex mood, especially if you’re out in kids in tow. Although the cooking is blandly pleasant (even the guacamole is underseasoned), it’s surpris- ingly painstaking. Soups are built on tiny stocks, salads can be hit-or-miss, and seafood is treated so tenaciously that the numerous shellfish-stuffed tortilla concoctions (shrimp enchiladas, shad- ow bisquets) are positively luscious. Lunch and Dinner. Moderate. — N.W. (9/00)

Point-Point Joint
916 East Eighth Street, National City, 619-474-2866.
and choose, say, chicken barbecue on dozens of dishes with mysterious names. You’re in Little Manila here, heartland of San Diego’s Filipino community. So check out the photos and memorabilia of San Diego’s Filipino community. So check out the photos and memorabilia. You enter a sort of heaven: arches, huddled lighting, glassy curtains, almost a statue of the Virgin Mary. The breakfast special, called mole poblanos, includes two eggs, enchildas de mole, rice, beans, and a side of tortillas. The delicious mole, St. Lechuza’s own, contains raisins, avocados, plantains, almonds, peanuts, thyme, and cinnamon. Plus, you’re drinking Sr. Lechuga’s delicious ice cream, which is identical to the ice cream you’d find in these places. 

Enjoy the following dishes:

- Pork belly with mashed potato and onions - A classic combo of flavors that will satiate your hunger.
- Pan de Casa Mexican food - A hearty dish that will satisfy your cravings.
- Mole Poblano - A traditional Mexican sauce that will add a rich flavor to your meal.
- Enchildas de mole - A delicious dish that will give you a satisfying taste.
- Carne Asada - A beef dish that will give you a rich flavor.
- Chicken Adobo - A chicken dish that will give you a tangy flavor.
- Chorizo - A spicy sausage that will add a kick to your meal.
- Pollo al horno - A roasted chicken that will give you a savory taste.
- Grilled Fish - A seafood dish that will give you a fresh and light flavor.
- Tacos al Pastor - A meat dish that will give you a delicious taste.
- Quesadillas - A cheese dish that will give you a creamy flavor.

Enjoy your meal at Sr. Lechuga and make sure to try all the dishes available. Have a great time exploring the flavors of San Diego’s Filipino cuisine.
Final Shipment
One kind of marvel takes away from the other.

A n upturn under the Christmas tree:
Cold Mountain. Not the best Civil War film of the year, but there would be no justice, given only two to choose from, in calling it the worst. Top honors still go to Gods and Generals, the Spartan austerity of which, in memory, looks even better alongside the plushness of the production here, the crane-happy camera, the spendthrift special effects, the “painterly” washes of color and “dynamic” compositions, the visual poetry and bombast, the chiselled and sanded faces of the A-list romantic leads, Nicole Kidman (with her Orientalized eyes) and Jude Law (blue lagoons). Many customers will feel they are getting more for their money in this one, and no doubt they are getting more money for their money. They will also be getting, by way of the prize-winning novel by Charles Frazier, spools and spools of storyline, strung out to a slight sag: back and forth in time, from the Siege of Petersburg in 1864 and its immediate aftermath, to the antebellum quietude of the North Carolina hills; and then, after the convergence of the two time lines, back and forth in space only, from the eventful homeward trek of a wounded Confederate deserter, to the struggle of the womenfolk to keep the home fires burning. On both fronts, it’s the gentle sex who bear the heaviest burdens, particularly moral and philosophical ones: “[H]ad I my way, they’d take metal altogether out of this world, every gun, every blade.” No doubt, too, the film gains interest as a companion piece to director Anthony Minghella’s earlier English Patient, in once again promoting personal priority over general cause, and the lover over the fighter. The large cast has plenty of interest of its own. Renée Zellweger, as an Erskine Caldwell—or even Al Capp—poor white trashy Southerner (strike up the fiddle and banjo), runs rings around Kidman’s well-bred belle once she is let loose almost an hour into the film; and there are strong contributions from Eileen Atkins (a backwoods goatherd meticulously realized down to the dirt beneath her fingernails), Kathy Baker, James Gammon, Ray Winstone, Brendan Gleeson, Donald Sutherland, and Natalie Portman. But then again, the cast also has Philip Seymour Hoffman and Giovanni Ribisi in it.

The Triplets of Belleville. A genuine novelty. A French cartoon by Sylvain Chomet, a bande dessinée in motion, and without any serious challengers the finest animated feature of the year, putting to shame the assembly-line products of American animation factories. (And no, I haven’t forgotten Finding Nemo.) Even so, I can go only partway with it. The detachable introduction could perhaps be counted the finest animated short of the year, a retro Thirties black-and-white musical pastiche (complete with scratches on the emulsion for wear and tear), faux-Fleischer and semi-surrealist, spotlighting a big-buttock Josephine Baker in a bikini bottom of bananas and a big-headed Fred Astaire getting devoured by his own tap shoes. Then comes a simulated break in the film, and we realize we have been watching television — in a full-color animated world in a more up-to-date graphic style — in the home of a dumpling.
shaped grandma, her bicycle-enthusiast adopted child, and their dog Bruno. The first half-hour is unflaggingly glorious, attaining a perfect tension between the routine of their daily life and the marvellousness of their own eyes. Which is to say the marvellessness of it in the heightening, the distortion, the grotesquerie, the bizarreness of the visual detail: e.g., the stomach-dragging Bruno dutifully waddling his way up a twisting staircase, right on schedule to tend to his patients. Jeremy Sumpter brings Hook to indecipherable Freudian poses. (Is there not something vaguely vaginal about the CG crocodile whose belly the hatchling seems intent on entering?) The aggregate effect is to make the movie loses its moorings. All that heightening, that distortion, etc., piled one upon another, seems somehow less marvelous. One kind of magic vanishes away from the other. And the bullets-flying climactic car chase is tiresome. Still, the wit and imagination never relent (Bruno finds out of sight for the six years since he was last seen) — seventeen years — to have a fresh face as the film’s hero, Jason Isaacs. (He’s a touch reminiscent of Lon Chaney, Jr. — is as smart and sophisticated as advertised, but surely not cinematically. Even theatrically or literarily, the smartness and sophistication on the part of the director to an enslaved illustrator, much the same, come to that, as in Planet. And inasmuch as the director to an enslaved illustrator, much the same, come to that, as in Planet. And inasmuch as the

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Bad Santa — Sick and twisted (and goddam proud of it) Christmas comedy by Terry Zwigoff, whose Ghost World instantaneously takes on the appearance of a fluke. It was the characters, even more clearly now than before, who “made” Ghost World — them, and their literary or quasi-literary creator, the graphic novelist Daniel Clowes. And although the director maintains his allegiance to misfits and marginals, it’s the characters who unmake Bad Santa. One of them is more than enough: a gawking, casing, hasti-department-store Santa (Billy Bob Thornton) who puts up with the parade of grasping brats only so that he can crack the office safe on Christmas Eve, with the help of his dwarfish elf (Tony Cox), the brains of the operation. The wonder of it is that, whether setting himself in the Santa chair or stombling over the papier-mâché reindeer in an alcoholic fog, he can hold on to his job long enough to pull off the bigger job. A dose of half-apologetic pathos seeps into it in the form of a self-described “dipshit loser,” a bullied, runny-nosed fat boy (Brett Kelly) by the name of Thurman Merman, whose devotion to Saint Nick, “dipshit loser,” a bullied, runny-nosed fat boy (Brett Kelly) by the name of Thurman Merman, whose devotion to Saint Nick, is identified as Mike Myers, but if you were told that behind the cat suit, and behind the New Yawk accent, the camping, the burlesquing, was Nathan Lane, you’d be obliged to accept it without a murmur. Myers has occasion to do other accents as well, and the Scottish and Canadian are more recognizably him. The two-note falsetto laugh, on the other hand, might put you more in mind of Pee-wee Herman, helped along by the surrounding dollhouse townscape. Were it to put you in mind specifically of Pee-wee’s Big Adventure, you would then have a useful guideline to gauge what’s missing: originality, humanity, charm, modesty, innocence, things like that. With Alec Baldwin, Kelly Preston, Dakota Fanning, Spencer Breslin, and Sean Hayes. 2003.

The Cat in the Hat — Reviewed this issue. With Ewan McGregor, Albert Finney, Billy Crudup, Jessica Lange, and Helena Bonham Carter; directed by Tim Burton. • LA JOLLA VILLAGE: MIRA MESA 18; MISSION VALLEY 20; FROM 12/25

Brother Bear — Pagan pietism, from the Disney animation studio, to do with a Northwest Indian lad who, in his anxiety to become a man, kills a bear and gets magically transformed into a bear himself, to see how the other half lives: blissed out on nature (the moose practice yoga) and communality and oneness — unless you’re unlucky enough to be a salmon, who count only as calories. More than merely transformed, the Indian gets converted. (Gimmie that New Age religion.) The agenda rather throttles the creativity. Songs by Phil Collins. Directed by Aaron Blaise and Robert Walker. 2003.

Cheap by the Dozen — Domestic comedy with Steve Martin, Bonnie Hunt, Hilary Duff, Tom Welling, and Piper Perabo, directed by Shawn Levy. • CARMEL MOUNTAIN; DEL MAR HIGHLANDS 8; ENCINITAS 8; FASHION VALLEY 18; GROSSMONT CENTER; HAZARD CENTER 7; HAZARD CENTER 24; HILLCREST CINEMAS; HORTON PLAZA 14; LA COSTA 6; LA JOLLA 12; MISSION MARKETPLACE 13; MISSION VALLEY 20; OCEANСIDE 18; PALM PROMENADE 24; PARKWAY PLAZA 18; RANCHO DEL REY 10; VISTA VILLAGE; FROM 12/25

Cold Mountain — Reviewed this issue. With Nicole Kidman, Jude Law, and Renée Zellweger; AN EXTRAORDINARY STORY OF REDEMPTION, STRENGTH AND HOPE FROM DIRECTOR ALEJANDRO GONZÀLEZ INÁRRITU; STARTS FRIDAY

The Barbarian Invasions — Reviewed this issue. With Rémy Girard, Stéphanie Rousseau, Marie-Josée Croze, and Dorothée Rousseau, directed by Alejandro González Iñárritu; • LA JOLLA 12; MISSION MARKETPLACE 13; MISSION VALLEY 20; OCEANСIDE 18; PALM PROMENADE 24; PARKWAY PLAZA 18; RANCHO DEL REY 10; TOWN SQUARE 14; VISTA VILLAGE; FROM 12/25

Big Fish — Reviewed this issue. With Ewan McGregor, Albert Finney, Billy Crudup, Jessica Lange, and Helena Bonham Carter; directed by Tim Burton. • LA JOLLA VILLAGE: MIRA MESA 18; MISSION VALLEY 20; FROM 12/25

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SAN DIEGO READER 2003
Die, Momme, Die — One type of queen portrays another type of queen: Charles Busch, who adapted his own stage play, dolls himself up in drag to impersonate a faded Hollywood diva, in this salute to — or spoof of — the women’s pictures of old. (The diva’s husband, for contrast, is a Stanley Kramerish producer of problem pictures.) This might sound like a legitimate outlet for a camp sensibility, but the movie offers us little in the way of illusion. Busch looks like what he is, a middle-aged man in a wig and pancake makeup, and the flatness of the writing and directing (Mark Bucker) summons up none of the gloss and gleam of the treasured antiques. With Natasha Louise, Philip Baker Hall, Jason Priestley. 2003. ● (HILLOREST CINEMA, THROUGH 12/25)

EM — Will Ferrell as a human raised by elves, leaving the womb of Santa’s Workshop in full adulthood to track down his biological father, a bottom-line publisher of Kiddie Lit. (“He’s on the naughty list!”) Directed by Jon Favreau, the film wants to play both sides of the street — to be a True-Spirit-of-Christmas sermon and at the same time be hip, cool, sardonic, and smartypants — and it ends up outstaying its welcome. We do, however, get some nicely worked-out details, a better than average bumph-in-Manhattan montage, and a couple of well-played secondary characters: a barred and unwhimsical toy-department manager at Gimbel’s (the hefty Faizon Love) and a self-important top-selling author of children’s books (the pint-sized Peter Dinklage, of The Station Agent). With James Caan, Zooey Deschanel, Mary Steenburgen, Bob Newhart, Edward Asner. 2003. ● (PASADENA 18; GLASSMANN 15; GROSSMONT TRILOGY: LA JOLLA 12; MIRA MESA 18; MISSION MARKETPLACE 1.5; MISSION VALLEY 20; OCEANSIDE 16; PALM PROMENADE 24; PARKWAY PLAZA 18; RANCHO DEL REY 10; TOWN SQUARE 14; VISTA VILLAGE; VOGUE)

Eyes without a Face — Georges Franju’s macabre masterpiece, originally released in the U.S. with English dubbing under the title The Horror Chamber of Dr. Faustus, an elegant, graceful,stats, almost casemetric variation on the mad-scientist theme. A megalomaniac plastic surgeon (the stocky, stolid Pierre Brasseur), responsible for his daughter’s facial disfigurement, is...
determined to repair the damage, and toward that end dispatches his faithful assistant (Alida Valli, in symbolic dog-collar necklace) to cease the streets and pick up compatible skin donors — a classic discreet screen lesbian. The naiveté of the vision — the replacement face is peeled off its owner in one piece and fitted onto the recipient like a rubber mask — only puts it in closer touch with the worlds of dreams and fairy tales. Unsurpassed black-and-white photography by the eminent Eugen Schaffner, infusing perfectly natural and mundane settings with elegance.

Expressionistic elements, haunting musical interludes, and a brief period of post-surgical optimism), relying largely on the expressive devices of virtue. Scob's is a beautiful acting job from Scob as standard-bearer of innocence and birds; abused animals; the angelic Edith Piaf小区; an actual film noir mystery.

The naiveté of the vision — a hand. The blonde, if she is in any sense "real," can only be a ghost, and the psychologist and her colleagues do not believe in ghosts. But then: who fogged up the glass in her cell and finger-wrote the words "NOT ALONE" in the frost? And who carved that same message into her forearm in the shower room? (As unpreventable a woman-in-prison shower scene, incidentally, as you could ever wish to see, despite the participation in it of Halle Berry and Penelope Cruz.) The mounting sense of dread in the movie has little to do with the perceived unlikelihood of a satisfactory wrap-up. ("I wouldn't look for a satisfactory wrap-up."

Gothika — A whodunit, rather than who's doing it, to do with a beautiful prison decorator's eye for pattern and texture; abused animals; the angelic Edith Piaf小区; an actual film noir mystery.

Mathieu Kassovitz's — interest in lucidation, and indeed the predictable climax falls far short of satisfactory, being both over-obvious as far as it goes and inexcusable to go any farther. The appearances of the ghost, however, greatly calm a grind-it-out plot in which the ghost proves to be all but gratuitous. Savor her for herself.

Honey — No, not a dramatization of the Bobby Goldsboro tune. Rather, the big-screen coming-out party for TV's Dark Angel, Jessica Ab — oops, Jessica Alba — as a nightclub bartender, record-store clerk, and hip-hop instructor who dreams of making it in music videos. First-time director Bille Woodruff, who has already made it in music videos, has not really raised his sights. Mehki Pfifer, Lil' Romeo, Joy Bryant, David Moscow, Missy Elliott. 2003. (FASHION VALLEY 18; FLOWER HILL 4; GASLAMP 15; GROSSMONT TROLLEY; MIRA MESA 18; MISSION MARKETPLACE 13; MISSION VALLEY 20; OCEANSIDE 16; PALM PROMENADE 24; PARKWAY PLAZA 18; Poway 10; RANCHO DEL REY 16; TOWN SQUARE 14; VISTA VILLAGE)

House of Sand and Fog — Reviewed this issue. With Jennifer Connelly, Ben Kingsley, and Ron Eldard; directed by Vadim Perelman. (OCEANSIDE 16; PALM PROMENADE 24; PARKWAY PLAZA 18; RANCHO DEL REY 16)

In America — The immigrant experience in Manhattan, more precisely the Sheridan Family experience, as revised and related by Irish filmmaker Jim Sheridan (My Left Foot, In the Name of the Father, etc.). Never a dull moment, it would seem; or anyway never a relaxed, a calm, a common, a mundane, a prosaic one; instead a gaudy parade of overheated vignettes such as would make
late-period Fellini look like a strict neorealist. (E.g., the family’s first look at the lights of Times Square, to the nudging accompaniment of the Loren’ Spoonful’s “Do You Believe in Magic,” is an effect of camera acrobatics than of carefully aimed shots.) The real-life sisters Sarah and Emma Bolger are delightful as the little girls of the family (“Don’t ‘little girl’ me!’ I’ve been carrying this family on my back for over a year!”). But Paddy Considine, the Jim figure, seems several storeys over the top as the unemployed head of the family, an aspiring stage actor. His diagnosis “problem” is that he shut down emotionally — he remains a bit of a dilettante (“honor” — he remains a bit of a dilettante “— he remains a bit of a dilettante); the real-life sisters Sarah and Emma Bolger are delightful as the little girls of the family (“Don’t ‘little girl’ me!’ I’ve been carrying this family on my back for over a year!”). But Paddy Considine, the Jim figure, seems several storeys over the top as the unemployed head of the family, an aspiring stage actor. His diagnosis “problem” is that he shut down emotionally — he remains a bit of a dilettante (“honor” — he remains a bit of a dilettante). But the decisive battle is even more interminable than the one in Part Two, and mostly triumphantly beautiful through computer-generated imagery. Elijah Wood, Ian McKellen, Viggo Mortensen, Orlando Bloom, Liv Tyler, Cat Blanchett. 2003.

House of Sand and Fog

The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King — Peter Jackson grinds out the final 200 minutes. “Things are now in motion,” admits Gandalf, “‘that cannot be undone.’ From this promontory, you can look back and see the immensity of the enterprise, indeed so immense — hours and years — that you can barely remember whence you have come, or why. One measure of the immensity, over and above the increasing confusion, is the increasing dependence on the expendable head shot, a time-saving mainstay of the made-for-TV quickie. Astoundingly enough, the filmmaker manages to crank up some excitement as the end approaches, or maybe it’s only some eager anticipation of relief. Whatever it is, it gets discharged over the last hour and a half or so, when the movie seems to be forever on the verge of ending; and the twenty minutes or so at the conclusion of the horsefights amount to sheer tortore. Even at that, there’s no time set aside to get back to Saruman for a reaction from the losers’ locker room. Or for that matter, no time for a pre-game pep talk or a halftime strategy adjustment; either. Christopher Lee is nowhere to be seen. Part Three certainly has its moments: the relay of the signal fire (“Hope is kindled!”) across the mountain peaks is really quite thrilling (“And Rohan will answer!”); and the giant spider Shelob is a skin-crawling special effect, though not more tingling, in another way, than Sam to the rescue. (With this, Sean Astin has his mostest screen role after Ruby.) But the decisive battle is even more interminable than the one in Part Two, and mostly triumphantly beautiful through computer-generated imagery. Elijah Wood, Ian McKellen, Viggo Mortensen, Orlando Bloom, Liv Tyler, Cat Blanchett. 2003.

The Last Samurai — Tom Cruise as “one of the most decorated warriors this nation has ever known,” circa 1876, a tormented Civil War vet and Indian fighter who is hired as a mercenary to train the troops of the Japanese emperor to combat a renegade samurai, and who is then taken captive by his new enemy, learns his strange ways, masters in a few lessons their martial arts, and joins them in their hopeless fight against the forces of progress. In short, a sort of Dances with Akius. This glossy, glitzy, glittering, vulgar, overhyped, pompous, and presumptuous epic, is, in addition to all that, intermittently stimulating. The cornerstone Japanese theme of trampled tradition in the onrush of Westernization is knowledgeably handled. And Ken Watanabe cuts a fine figure as the hidebound samurai. In the last analysis, though, the sprawling, transpacific, two-and-a-half-hour war story is all about Tom. Even as he gives himself up to his fascination with the enemy (who allow him to live only because of their fascination with him), it is the fascination itself, and not the objects of it, that rivets the viewer: never mind what’s so fascinating, let’s fix our sights on who’s so fascinated. (Cruise’s head shot looks about from the effort.) And despite his embrace of American imperialist, similar to the ancient culture, despite the stacking of knowledgeably handled. And Ken Watanabe cuts a fine figure as the hidebound samurai. In the last analysis, though, the sprawling, transpacific, two-and-a-half-hour war story is all about Tom. Even as he gives himself up to his fascination with the enemy (who allow him to live only because of their fascination with him), it is the fascination itself, and not the objects of it, that rivets the viewer: never mind what’s so fascinating, let’s fix our sights on who’s so fascinated. (Cruise’s head shot looks about from the effort.) And despite his embrace of American imperialist, similar to the ancient culture, despite the stacking of...

Lajolla Village

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21 Grams (R) Thu. (11:00) 1:35, 4:15, 7:00, 9:45; Fri.-Wed. (2:00) 7:30, Big Fish (PG-13)

Thu. (11:00) 1:45, 4:25, 7:10, 9:55, Fri.-Tue. (11:00) 3:50, 4:10, 7:10, 10:00; Wed. (11:00) 3:50, 4:10, 7:10, 10:00. Love Actually — A five-week countdown to Christmas Eve, plenty of time and the proper occasion to see how love makes the world go round, or anyway makes Jolly Old England go round. The writing and directing debut of Richard Curtis, writer only on Four Weddings and a Funeral (the film remains unfettered by such missteps as Hugh Grant, Emma Thompson, Alan Rickman, Colin Firth, Liam Neeson, Martin McCann, Celia Kiernight, Laura Linney, Bill Nighy, and, in a cameo as an exasperatingly punctilious store clerk, Rowan Atkinson. Grant stands out, not as a performer but as a figure of fantasy and even of fairy tale, an uninhibited, lightly-blush-Blue Prime Minister who makes an across-the-board impression (at any rate the script says she’s overwight), and who dances solo to a Pointer Sisters topper—when he thinks he’s alone (narratively he’s alone but for a prime, middle-aged secretary), and who stands up to the building powers —is a near-miracle (a personable, likeable, if not altogether sympathetic Billy Bob Thornton) at a televised press conference. There’s a fantasy then, a simplistic fantasy, but something is going on, a cool similarity of the unanswerable questions, or, perhaps, a challenge. If you’ve been juggling too many things this time. Or more to the point, dropping too many. The particular balls of a couple of porn actors (pun intended) tend to exclude the kiddies from this Christmas party. And the script says she’s overweight), an unstuffy, lighter-than-Blair Prime Minister (he

“EL CAHORRO” — A pair of enterprising crowned-crested cockatoos (pun intended) tend to exclude the kiddies from this Christmas party. And


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surface, to be as much about revenge as about romance: writer and director Nancy Meyers (What Women Want, a more telltale title than the all-purpose present one) opening up the whole older—man-younger-woman can of worms, giving the man a foolish heart attack to starters (before he can consummate relations with his current companion, Amanda Peet, Kraton’s daughter; consummation would have been altogether too worringly), giving the audience three separate shots of his limousine in a hospital dressing gown, giving the woman a tit-for-tat — or perhaps that ought to be tat-for-tat — younger suitor in the bargain (Nicholson’s cardiologist, Keena Reeves, fudging a bit himself as the aforementioned thirty-six-year-old), giving the man an earthy but thoughtful view (a dinner-table diatribe nearly as many tears as the woman’s. The sexual politicking and posturing do tend to get in the way of the comedy. But that said, let it also be said that this is at all levels a polished and professional piece of work, and pleasant enough to sit through for the starry-eyed or the brown-nosed. 2003.

(CAMEL MOUNTAIN; CHERS’ VISTA 10; CINERAMA 2; DEL MAR HIGHLANDS 8; ENCINITAS 8; FASHION VALLEY 18; GALAXY 6; GROSSMONT CENTER: HAZARD CENTER 7; HORTON PLAZA 14; LA COSTA 6; LA JOLLA 12; MIRA MESA 18; MISSION MARKETPLACE 13; MISSION VALLEY 20; OCENDEE 10; PALM PROMENADE 24; PARKWAY PLAZA 18; POMAY 10; RANCHO DEL REY 16; TOWN SQUARE 14; VISTA VILLAGE)

The Station Agent — The sure feature film to be built around a dwarf — a taciturn loner who moves into an abandoned train depot in a remote corner of New Jersey to get away from other people (“Hey, buddy, where’s Snow White?”), and who instead falls into a web of new relationships with an insatiably gregarious hot-dog vendor, a tormented female artist, an unmarried pregnant librarian, and a black schoolgirl. Modest, oftest, a bit stiff and clumsy, with a restrained and dignified central performance by Peter Falk, and a string of railroad knowledge. Patricia Clarkson, Bobby Cannavale, Michelle Williams, Raven Goodwin, written and directed by Tom McCarthy. 2003.

(right here)

Stuck on You — The inseparable Farrelly brothers, Peter and Bobby, do a comedy about joined-at-the-hip brothers, Greg Kinnear and Matt Damon (“We’re not Siamese”). The principal self-revelation to come out of this is something we already knew about them: their style, that if word may be used in the vicinity of the Farrellys, for disability jokes. Gross-out, for the moment, is out; real wit was never in; inanity rides roughshod: one of the pair, in the afterglow of his one-man performance as Truman Capote in community theater, drags the other one to Hollywood, where he lands the male lead in a television courtroom series called Honor and the Foible, opposite the temperamental Cher, as herself, who selects him for the job only in hopes of sucking the show. (Meryl Streep likewise appears as herself, in a slightly more than cameo role, to prove she’s as good a sport as her Stiflerless co-star.) If there are any laughs, or at least grins, they come from Seymour Cassel as a scatological talent agent with his mind in the Fifties. The best to be said about the basic material is that it raises suspicions that in more disciplined hands it might have been more satisfying. Gross-out, for the audience. Charlotte Gainsbourg, Melissa Leo, Clea DuVall. 2003.

(right here)

To Be and To Have — Slow, tranquil, mildly austere, richly detailed, and well-photographed documentary on a dedicated teacher, name of Georges Lopez, twenty years in a one-room schoolhouse in rural Auvergne, and now on the brink of retirement. You see real work being done, important work, imper turbably done. You see the surrounding countryside. You see the change of seasons. (There is one brief interview interlude outside the natural flow of life.) And you get to know several of the students, some better than others, ranging in age from three to eleven: little Jojo is a heart-stealer. You need patience, but in

Melcño Lopez you have an exemplary model. Directed by Nicolas Philibert. 2002.

(right here)

The Triplets of Belleville — Reviewed this. Written and directed by Sylvain Chomet.

(right here)

21 Grams — The first English-language feature from Mexican filmmaker Alejandro González Iñárritu brings together disparate characters by the same matchmaking method of his Amores Perros by car accident. Benicio Del Toro, a born-again ex-con, runs over the husband and two daughters of Naomi Watts, and the husband’s heart is transplanted anonymously into Sean Penn, a teacher of mathematics and probability, and therefore a deep appreciator of his good fortune, who tracks down and begins to court the widow without, so to speak, hearing his chest. (The widow’s reaction, when finally told, will echo that of the crap-detecting spectator: “How dare you!”) It takes a while for all of this to come clear, inasmuch as the information is doled out in nonsequential fragments that leave it to the audience to arrange in order: a participatory form of storytelling. You eventually get your bearings, and the jumps between lifetimes and time zones seem to diminish in distance, closing in toward a climax. Out of the jumble, a unifying point can be perceived: a shattered narrative for shattered lives, a kind of cinematic cubism which enables us to see the before and the after, side by side. To put every puzzle-piece into its proper place is not the principal task. Simply to observe that they belong to the same picture will suffice. The total experience might have been more satisfying if the picture per se were better to look at. Great pains have been taken to achieve a feeling of reality in the people and the places, yet the bloodless, bleached-out color and the shaky, earthquake camera are but fashionable affectations. Charlotte Gainsbourg, Melissa Leo, Clea DuVall. 2003.

(right here)


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I have a recurring nightmare. It comes every couple months, and a neighbor or something in the same kind of way, although the details vary. The theme is wanting to try to solve some- thing, an everyday problem from life and somehow being frustrated at every turn. The conditions are either impossible to overcome or I’m incompetent to do it. It might just be a simple household prob- lem — trying to clean up a mess and the mess keeps multiplying and every effort to seize it, I lose track or I lose the skill to do it. I think I’ve had these dreams for maybe 20 or more years. It’s always a relief to wake up and realize that it was a dream. The message is a universal one: that we’re all afraid that we don’t have the skills to cope and no matter what we’ve accomplished, there’s always that fear that we’re going to lose it.
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Catholic, great cook, 50, look 39, medical field. Enjoy simple to eclectic, romantic, full figured, but you’re athletic, woman.

Beautiful Slim Brunette with kind, pleasant personality. Seeking my best friend and romantic partner. Love music, art, reading, walking, hiking, camping, gardening. I am 5'9", 140 lbs. South Bay. (12/31) 858.777.5555

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If you’re tired of Single Men with Singles on Single vacations and married friends telling you how great it is to be Single, make one Single phone call.

Somehow sitting on a balcony and watching a wonderful sunset is a lot more wonderful when you’re sharing it with a very special someone.

But how do you find that someone?

Simply call Debra Winkler Personal Search, the most successful match making service in California.

Successful because Debra and her associates only will match you with a person who’s truly compatible: someone with similar life goals who’s ready to commit to a relationship.

If you’ve made the decision not to be single any longer, make the decision to call us now and set up complimentary meeting that’s private and confidential.

Over 18 years of service allows us to offer a 90% success rate and 100% satisfaction guarantee. Call for details.

Catholic, great cook, 50, look 39, medical field. Enjoy simple to eclectic, romantic, full figured, but you’re athletic, woman.

Beautiful Slim Brunette with kind, pleasant personality. Seeking my best friend and romantic partner. Love music, art, reading, walking, hiking, camping, gardening. I am 5’9", 140 lbs. South Bay. (12/31) 858.777.5555

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Over 18 years of service allows us to offer a 90% success rate and 100% satisfaction guarantee. Call for details.
Soul mate. Sealing, skiing, dining, dancing, candlelight romance. (1/7) 

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San Diego
December 4, 2003

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Q. Como se llama? Llama frequent this street scene where country meets town midweek. Hostel porch- bunnies get the best view.

Describe this location, name the nearest cross-streets, and win a Reader's T-shirt. E-mail to NameThisPlace@SanDiegoReader.com; fax to 619-231-0498; or mail to Reader, Name This Place, Box 85680, San Diego, CA 92186—include your name, address, and shirt size. (Deadline, Tuesday, 9 a.m. In case of ties, lottery will determine top five winners.)

Last week's place: Trolley Auto Parts, 2966 Commercial Avenue, on the edge of Logan Heights. The 1968 black Rolls Royce hoisted high is one of two kept to be cannibalized for “Rolls Royce owners who can’t afford new parts,” according to one staff member. (Last week's winners: Paul M. Bowers, Carlos E. Casana, David Motta.)

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- Hardwood-Style Flooring
- Custom Berber Carpet
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- Full-Size Washer/Dryer
- Wood Burning Fireplace
- 4 Resort-Style Pools
- W/D & Sun Deck
- Italian-Style Courtyards
- Full-Time Activities Director

*In select residences

Studies from $1160
1 BR from $1200
2 BR from $1500
3 BR from $1995

Ask about our move-in specials

love where you live

Rental
### Coral Bay Canyon

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Price</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3309 Coral Way,</td>
<td>$1595</td>
<td>Beautifully updated. Must see before 12/13. New carpet, paint, and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Diego, CA 92117</td>
<td></td>
<td>fireplace; washer/dryer; microwave; sunny, bright; 2nd floor; no pets.</td>
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### Coral Bay Park

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### COASTAL LIVING

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<tr>
<td>703 South Santa</td>
<td>$443-4030</td>
<td>Live west of I-5 for as low as $1,165/month. Spacious one-, two- or three-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beach, CA 92107</td>
<td></td>
<td>bedroom apartments. For more information, contact: K &amp; R Properties.</td>
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### RENTALS

- **3057 Salk**: 1 bedroom, $1450; 2 bedrooms, $1775; 3 bedrooms, $2150; Move-in specials! Studios, 1, 2 bedrooms from $875. Barbecue, stove, dishwasher, fireplace, microwave, washer/dryer, patio, dishwasher, frost-free refrigerator. Garage with carport. Private fenced rear patio. Must see! Located in prestigious North Pacific Beach. Walking distance to all including the beach. For more information, contact 858-270-7983.

### Features available at Coral Bay Canyon and Coral Bay Park

- Olympic-size pool
- Spa
- Tennis courts
- Mission Bay and Canyon Views
- Recreation center
- Garage is available
- Laundry facilities

Call toll-free: **888-500-0471**

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### CLAIREMONT/ MISSION BAY

**$500 Off Move-In!**

---

### RENTALS

- **2122 1/2 Hornblend**: 2 bedrooms, $1600; 2 bedroom, $1700; 2 bedroom, $1800; 3 bedroom, $2100; 3 bedroom, $2200; 3 bedroom, $2300; Move-in specials! Studios, 1, 2 bedrooms from $875. Barbecue, stove, dishwasher, fireplace, microwave, washer/dryer, patio, dishwasher, frost-free refrigerator. Garage with carport. Private fenced rear patio. Must see! Located in prestigious North Pacific Beach. Walking distance to all including the beach. For more information, contact 858-270-7983.

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### CORAL BAY CANYON

**$500 Off Move-In!**

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### RENTALS

- **2122 1/2 Hornblend**: 2 bedrooms, $1600; 2 bedroom, $1700; 2 bedroom, $1800; 3 bedroom, $2100; 3 bedroom, $2200; 3 bedroom, $2300; Move-in specials! Studios, 1, 2 bedrooms from $875. Barbecue, stove, dishwasher, fireplace, microwave, washer/dryer, patio, dishwasher, frost-free refrigerator. Garage with carport. Private fenced rear patio. Must see! Located in prestigious North Pacific Beach. Walking distance to all including the beach. For more information, contact 858-270-7983.

PACIFIC BEACH.

$900. Spacious 1 bedroom with stove, refrigerator, dishwasher, electric garage, 4 blocks to beach. Street. Call 858-272-1310.

PACIFIC BEACH.

$1295. Large 2 bedroom, 2 bath townhouse. Off-street parking. Laundry, dishwasher, 2-car off-street parking. 3325 Delaplace Street. 858-489-9824.

PACIFIC BEACH.


PACIFIC BEACH.

$1495. 2 bedroom, 1 bath with stove, refrigerator, dishwasher, garage. 2314 Caminito Recordo. McKee, 619-846-0214.

PACIFIC BEACH.


PACIFIC BEACH.


PACIFIC BEACH.


PACIFIC BEACH.

$1310. Front view! 1 bed-room, 1 bath, no pets. 858-274-3796.

PACIFIC BEACH.


PACIFIC BEACH.

$1500, 2 bedroom, 1 bath. Near beach, large 1 bedroom, 1 bath, 2-car garage. 2844 Crown Point Drive. 858-489-9824.

PACIFIC BEACH.

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San Diego Union-December 24, 2003 177
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SHOWTIME = 9-12AM
DJ SEIZE = 12-2AM
DJ RAGS = 2-4AM
Blue Room: House
MARLINO = 9-12AM
AIREK = 12-2AM
FUNK INC. = 2-4AM

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HIP HOP / R&B / DANCEHALL / PROGRESSIVE / TRIBAL TECH / HARD HOUSE
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DECOS PRESENTS AN EVENING OF GREAT MUSIC, DANCING, & FOOD
WITH JEFF BARRINGER & JOHNNY JOHNSON

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 27TH
SATURDAY nitelife
EVENTVIBE PRESENTS A SEDUCTIVE COMBINATION OF PEOPLE, MUSIC, DANCE, & DINING. JOIN US FOR AN EVENING OF DANCE MUSIC INSPIRED BY THE CLUBS OF LOS ANGELES & SAN FRANCISCO
WITH RESIDENT DJ'S: SERGIO, G-ROY & JEFF BARRINGER
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SATURDAY, DECEMBER 27TH
"MYNT" Elegant lounge vibe
Dj's, Lounging, Dancing, Cocktails, and Bottle Service. Hosted by Greg, Tim, & Eventvibe

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THE ULTIMATE "BLACK OR WHITE" THEMED EVENT THIS NEW YEAR’S!
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real house music / real hip hop / real r&b / cbr / slaggers / dance urban / upbeat / intimate / super club

FEATURING SCOOTER – main room / Tri-pad Productions – vault
Resident Djs. Lucille Duplessis, Duane, Matt T Love, Joey Jimenez, Chris Ortiz
Mark Thrasher, Scott Martin, Jon Sauter, Kevin Brown, Freddie Fresh, & X-ray

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On most cars & light trucks. Plus $8.25 certificate for a maintenance checkup.

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LEAD STORY
— Municipal employee George Pavlovsky stalked through his shop in April, drunk, carrying a loaded sawed-off shotgun and looking for the two supervisors who had recently passed him up for promotion. As a result, he was fired by the city (Moncton, New Brunswick) and went to jail in November, but he said through his union (Canadian Union of Public Employees Local 51) that he wants his job back when he gets out, and the union has filed a wrongful-firing grievance on his behalf. Several of his colleagues are still on stress leave from witnessing the incident.

Latest Cutting-Edge Research
— Prof. Trevor Cox (University of Sanford in England) and fellow acoustics researchers concluded that, contrary to prevailing wisdom, a duck’s quack does have an echo (September). ... Biologist Nette Levermann (Copenhagen’s Zoological Museum), whose team monitored 100 walruses near Greenland, concluded that the animals use their right flippers more than their left (October). ... An aerodynamics expert at Britain’s Open University, aided by an Oxford engineering student who tested and machine-tested a beer coaster to produce the ideal model and conditions for winning at the British pub game of coaster-flip- ping (November).

Questionable Judgments
— According to the arresting officer, Devika Joseph Garnett, 20, was calm when he stopped her for speeding in Hampton, Va., in November. However, after accepting the ticket, she lit out after the officer and slammed her car into the back of his cruiser. She accelerated and crashed into his car three more times. After the officer avoided her fifth pass, Garnett spun around and headed straight for him. He managed to pin her car before it struck his.

— After Norm and Darlene Scott’s Montana farm burned in 1996, they collected $75,000 from Mountain West Farm Bureau insurance but weren’t satisfied and demanded more, finally getting another $52,500 in 1999. However, they wanted still more money and sued the company, claiming it was dealing with them in bad faith. In November 2003, a jury in Helena not only rejected the claim for more money but found that it was the Scotts who had started the fire (a finding that probably never would have been made had the Scotts quietly accepted the first $127,500). The statute of limitations prevents criminal charges against them, but the insurance company will sue to get its money back.

— Toni Lynn Lycan, 44, in a shouting war with a downstairs neighbor over his loud music, stomped up and down on the floor, eventually breaking both her legs about four inches below the knee (Vancouver, Wash., October). ... Deer-hunter Jeffrey Souza slipped while building his tree stand and, dangling by his feet, broke both ankles (Lakeville, Mass., November).

Ironies
— In September, Rouse Co., a developer and landlord of shopping malls, acknowledged that it had somehow forgotten to renew the lease on its own headquarters in Columbia, Md., a blunder that will probably more than double its rent, perhaps costing as much as $11 million.

— In October, imprisoned child molester Kevin Kuan, 14, scheduled for a routine court hearing, was temporarily placed in holding cell in Tampa, Fla., with 60 other prisoners, among them a 22-year-old man who recognized Kuan as the man who had molested him when he was 11. The man started punching Kuan and knocked out a tooth before he was restrained.

— Recently Arrested on Sex Charges. The vice chairman of a Louisville, Ky., anti-pornography group (for patronizing a prostitute, November); a retired New Jersey superior court judge whose job was to administer Megan’s Law for Camden County (for possession of child pornography, August); and a politically conservative Richmond, Texas, radio-show host who is regularly violating noise ordinances (for indirect exposure to a child, November).

Recurring Themes
— Once again in October, panic spread through some African cities about black-magic men who could, with a touch, make people shrink or disappear. In alleged incidents in Khartoum, Sudan, and Banjul, Gambia, these sorcerers would shake men’s hands and then extort money in exchange for removing the evil spirits they had just incited. As word spread and fears heightened, vigilantes would chase down the supposed sorcerers and beat them up or kill them. Academics who study this folklore refer to the communities’ hysteria as “genital retraction syndrome.”

Least Competent Criminals
— James Perry, with four DUI arrests in Florida, feared retribution if he tried to get a driver’s license in his new home state of Connecticut and so pretended to be Robert Kowalski (the name of his neighbor in Florida), but a routine computer check revealed “Robert Kowalski” to be a Michigan sex offender, unregistered in Connecticut (Clinton, Conn., September). ... Mr. Chance Copp, 15, who was on probation for arson and who feared retribution for maniacally smiting the urinal with a rock, submitted the urinal of a relative instead, only to find out later that that urinal tested positive for cocaine (Chillicothe, Ohio, November).

Animal Rights Blues
— Following complaints about stray chickens, the city of Bartow, Fla., repealed a 1922 ordi- nance that made it illegal to kill, capture or “annoy” birds (August). ... The tenth annual cockroach races (and “tractor”-pull) were held at the Indiana State Fair in August, with separate events for American roaches (on an oval track) and the stronger Madagascar hissing cockroaches (on a straightaway). ... Among the less publicized developments was that the Russian oil giant Yukos (whose chairman, Russia’s richest man, was arrested in October) was that a farm it owns in southern Alaska. Treadwell carried no weapons — even in exchange for removing the evil spirits they could, with a touch, make penises shrink or disappear. In alleged incidents in Khartoum, Sudan, and Banjul, Gambia, these sorcerers would shake men’s hands and then extort money in exchange for removing the evil spirits they had just incited. As word spread and fears heightened, vigilantes would chase down the suspected sorcerers and beat them up or kill them. Academics who study this folklore refer to the communities’ hysteria as “genital retraction syndrome.”

Alternate Universe
— About 40 percent of U.S. elementary schools have eliminated recess over the past 20 years so that schools could squeeze in more classroom time (according to a September story in the New Times of Broward-Palm Beach, Fla.). In addition to the problem of overcrowded rooms, Florida school psychologist Marvin Silverman referred to children’s “chemical need” for recess, pointing out that even psychiatric institutions provide “intermittent periods of recreation.” A complicating factor is that in some schools, playground equipment has been removed because of safety concerns and fear of lawsuits.

Dignified Death
— Prominent author and filmmaker Timothy Treadwell, much of whose work was devoted to his love of brown bears and a campaign to make people more tolerant of them, was killed and partially eaten by bears in October near Kalfia Bay, in southern Alaska. Treadwell carried no weapons in the wild and, according to friends, was unmoved by brown bears’ ferocity. He told one friend, “I would be honored to end up in bear scat.”

In the Past Month...
— “Thousands” rioted in Sierra Leone when a prominent pair of Nigerian dwarf comedians didn’t show up for a performance and promot- ers tried to substitute two local dwarfs (Freetown, Sierra Leone). ... A brother and sister who had thrown away a winners’ check for $10.5 million within Illi- nois Lottery recovered it, only because their garbage had remained unculled due to a nine- day sanitation workers’ strike (Chicago). ... Dog-Plus K-9 Water went on sale in Australia (for about $2.10) in flavors like “bacon and beef” because, said the inventor, “dogs get bored with plain water.”

Send your Weird News to Chuck Shepherd, San Diego Reader, P.O. Box 85883, San Diego, CA 92186 or to newsweird@aol.com.
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Bill Meyer and his Vagabond Healy

Five years ago Bill and Nancy Meyer sold their home in Wilmington, near L.A., and moved to Mexico. Bill had to do something with his Austin Healy, so he left it with his son in Torrance. When his son put an addition on his house, Bill suggested to his daughter Mary and her husband Joe that they could hide it in the back yard of their La Mesa house. But this past August, Joe and Mary had a room addition built. Now it’s parked in the street. Bill has run out of car sitters.

He doesn’t want to give it up. It’s not just an old car. It’s a 1960 Austin Healy 3000.

“It was a California car,” Bill says, “but I bought it in Minnesota, from a college student. He went to the University of Minnesota. He was driving it across the mountains and he lost his gas cap, so he crammed a cotton rag in place of the cap, and it sucked into the gas tank and broke down into little hairlike fibers. From Colorado all the way to Minnesota he had to stop every 40 miles and clean out his electric carburetor. By the time he got there, he was awfully tired of the car. He was trying to sell it coughing and choking. I got a good price. It only had about 30,000 miles on it.”

When Joe and Mary evicted the Healy from their yard, Bill tried to move it to Mexico. But the Mexican authorities objected. “They wouldn’t let us bring it across because it didn’t have license plates on it. They want a licensed vehicle with registration papers. Our DMV will license it, but not until I get insurance on it, which seems strange because it’s not on the road, it’s on a trailer.

“But I learned that our DMV only demands insurance on a vehicle on the day it’s being licensed. Next time we come up from Mexico, I’ll buy a week’s tourist insurance on the Healy, go down to the DMV and get it legal, and trailer it across the border. Then I’ll finish the restoration. It’s all there; it runs. My son tore all the sheet metal off it and it sand-blasted. There’s not a huge investment left to get it running. The engine’s a straight six; it’s 2850 cubic centimeters. I’ve never had the guts to take it over 90, but at 90 there was a lot left over.

“Once it’s restored, I’ll drive it around for a while and contemplate selling it. The market goes up and down. I missed the last bubble. In the late ’80s, the Brits were buying them back, when their economy was good. Healys are like Porsches in that most of them were sold in Southern California.”

Some people restore old cars as investments, others look upon the effort as a hobby. Bill gives a simpler reason.

“It’s mostly inertia. The car generally hasn’t been in my hand. I haven’t had my hands on the wheel for at least 20 years, and my wife casts a fairly jaundiced eye on this whole adventure. So if I hadn’t been able to store it with relatives, it probably would’ve been gone long ago.”
DRESSER/ARMOIRE, 5-piece dark oak, tall, clean design. $150 new, sell for $295. 619-225-8428.

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I truly love the place in which I live.

This Friday (the one I’m writing about on a following Wednesday) I decided to take a night off. It is an indicator of just how agreeable my job is that not only did I not notice I had taken off, but once I realized it, I could not allow it. It was only a matter of a few days and I was back playing catch-up on what I should do — involved meeting my girlfriend. (Do you see me frowning little arcs in the air with two fingers of each hand?) She had just returned from two weeks in Paris and London. I wanted to hear all about it and was overdue for a visit that did not involve food, ball, belching, and the passing of gas conversational par with the roommates. The restaurant was to be of her choosing. Bless her, the considerate thing suggested the Old Spaghetti Factory. She knows my labors are for love and not lucre. But still, she was coming from Paris. I reminded myself that she was also coming from England, and cuisine-wise, of course, almost anything is an improvement.

Friday night in the Gaslamp District is a multi-arc parking proposition that invites comparison, somehow, with the working of a Rubik’s Cube. Still, stomach-rumbling aside, it was a warm (even close) evening with tendrils of wayward fog ditching the faux gaslamps. Bicycle nicknaws plied their way through pedestrians and crawling traffic featuring an unusual number of musinouses this night (homecoming dances, possibly?), and the air was rich — no, redolent, I say — with garlic and other spices, perfumes, carbon monoxide, and even insect.

After ages of surfing the gauzy gauze, that is, a perky undertasting attempt to charge us $10 for maybe an hour (more than $2 a meatball, I quickly calculated), we decided on another restaurant we both had previously enjoyed: Sanfilippo’s on Fifth Avenue near Hillcrest. After laughing over the gauzy gauze the perfect depth (it is to remember), we decided to go one block and the bookstores up the street between Robinson and University. On that block alone there are three excellent ones. Possibly after a good browse we would be ready for sweets.

As we cruised for poetry and prose, I realized that on some less than fully conscious level I was feeling a little defensive about taking this long-time intimate friend out on an evening in the town such a provincial city by comparison to her recent visits overseas. It was a little odd and a little disappointing to realize that there is absolutely no sense for this sense of apology and hasn’t been, really, for decades. Disappointing in the sense that I have more of a capacity for snobbery than I like to think.

I was back playing catch-up on what I wanted to do as opposed to what I should do — involved meeting my girlfriend. I was back playing catch-up on what I should do — involved meeting my girlfriend. I truly love the place in which I live.
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