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STORY CONTINUED ON PAGE 24
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Field of suits  Alex Spanos, the megamillionaire developer from Stockton who is paying ex–Clinton aide Mark Fabiani to prospect around the county for a taxpayer subsidy for a new Chargers stadium, is also lobbying hard for federal government largesse. According to disclosure statements on file with the U.S. Senate, on July 1 of last year, the A.G. Spanos Companies retained the services of the big-name Washington influence-peddling firm Patton Boggs to lobby Congress regarding House Resolution 3, the “Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users, High Priority Projects,” along with H.R. 3058, a Department of Transportation appropriations bill. The Spanos companies have laid out a total of $180,000 through the middle of this year, the latest period for which filings are available. … Meanwhile, Spanos is having a problem getting hold of land he wants to build on near Stockton. The GOP stalwart is seeking to create a 232-acre retail and residential development dubbed Spanos Park North on the outskirts of town, reports the Stockton Record. But a group of property owners doesn’t want to play ball. So Spanos has gone to court, claiming they reneged on an agreement reached with him three years ago to sell 315 acres of farmland in the middle of the project. In the suit, Alex’s son Dean accuses the farmers of trying to back out of the deal — reached before Spanos Park North was announced — because the price of the land has gone up significantly since details of the mixed-use development were made public. The landowners have filed a counter suit, arguing that replacement land offered by Spanos as part of the deal did not meet the terms of their original agreement.

Unhappy holidays  A few exiting editorial employees of Copley Newspapers are being allowed by management to say their good-byes in print. Union-Tribune “readers representative” Gina Lubrano bid her petite adieu last week, beginning with “It wouldn’t surprise me if you missed the article that is changing my life forever. On Nov. 2, The San Diego Union-Tribune ran a six-line announcement on Page 3 of the Business section saying that 67 employees who have been with the company 30 years or longer had been offered “voluntary retirement incentive packages.” That includes me,” Lubrano went on to laud her also departing support staff. “Over the last 10 years, many of you have been telephone pals with my assistant, Diana Mortenson, to whom I will be forever grateful for her patience, good humor and diligence on behalf of readers. She ended 40 years of employment as a Union-Tribune employee on Friday, too.” Another long-time employee, arts writer Preston Turegano, says his final column was spiked. Back at the Copley-owned Canton (OH) Repository, Rick Senften, who has written the paper’s “Mustard Seeds” column since 1980, wasn’t as politically correct as Lubrano in announcing the end of his career. “Now, it’s time to say goodbye, well before I’m ready,” he wrote. “The Repository is on the sales block, and I agreed to a buyout to help the company reduce the payroll. Copley Newspapers, the company for whom we’ve enjoyed working since 2000, wants to make sure the paper is attractive to potential buyers, and some positions must go for that to occur.” He added, “Yeah, it hurts a lot, all the more each day as the calendar counts down to Dec. 29, my last day.”

Then readers chimed in on the paper’s website. One attacked “the bumbling at Copley” for offering buyouts “as they attempt to put their financial house in order — a house that they ran-racked themselves, no matter what spin they [want] to put on it.” Proclaimed another, “I think we should all prepare to say ‘goodbye’ to the Repository. I don’t see anything good ahead for this newspaper. If you’re going to buy out employees who’ve worked there for 35 years or so, you can usually kiss the rest of them goodbye too. Everyone better get a computer, and learn to use it. This will really hurt those that need this paper the most; the poor, who don’t have pc’s, the elderly, who look forward everyday to reading their paper.”

But in the midst of all the Copley cutbacks, publisher David Copley continues to back his favorite charities, including Hollywood’s American Cinematheque. Copley Newspapers was listed as a top-tier “platinum sponsor” — along with Warner Bros., Budweiser, Acura, Lyn and Norman Lear, Vanity Fair, and Giorgio Armani — of the group’s October tribute to actor George Clooney.

Arnold’s digs  The Sacramento Bee reported last week that Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger and wife Maria Shriver took a tour of a new 15-story condo and hotel tower being built at 15th and I streets near the Capitol in Sacramento. Responding to rumors that the state’s First Couple was looking to buy, spokesman Darrell Ng said, “He does not own and has not bought property there. Other than that, we have no comment.” What the Bee didn’t mention, pointed out by Capitol Weekly, was that the building, a Marriott Residence Inn with a Randy Paragary bar and kitchen, is being financed by three Indian tribes, including East County’s Viejas Band of Mission Indians from San Bernardino and the Sovereign Oneida Nation of Wisconsin. — Matt Potter

Risky Mortgages Hurt Borrowers, Investors  By Don Bauder

“Ultimately, putting people in a home they cannot stay in is not a business we should be in.” Daniel H. Mudd, head of Fannie Mae, the big government-sponsored buyer of home mortgages, made this utterance recently at a Mortgage Bankers Association convention. Mudd shocked the attendees; the industry had been congratulating itself for making so many sub-prime loans, or high-interest mortgages, to people who cannot get credit from conventional sources. But lenders may have become too giddy in the real estate boom, suggested Mudd, whose name instantly became…er, uh, mud…among his peers.

The stock and bond markets are agreeing with Mudd, as a San Diego–based maker of sub-prime loans, Accredited Home Lenders Holding Company, has found out. Its stock has been more than cut in half this year, while the overall market has moved up sharply. Investors fear that a wave of mortgage delinquencies, defaults, and foreclosures among noncredit-worthy people may whack companies like Accredited, whose earnings have plunged of late. Fear justified. The Mortgage Bankers Association reported in mid-December that in the third quarter (July to September), the percentage of mortgage payments at least 30 days late jumped to 4.67 percent from 4.39 percent in the April to June period. But it was much worse for sub-prime borrowers. The delinquency rate was 12.56 percent in the third quarter, highest in more than three years. For sub-prime borrowers holding adjustable-rate mortgages, the rate was 13.22 percent, also a three-plus-year nadir. And the sub-prime foreclosure rate is climbing. Last week, the Center for Responsible Lending predicted that 20 percent of sub-prime loans made in the last two years will wind up in foreclosure; more than a million people nationwide will lose their homes.

According to the New York Times, only 2.4 percent of all mortgages were sub-prime in 2000; now it’s 13.4 percent, and more than half are adjustable-rate.

When housing was booming, everything was wonderful. Home prices were soaring. The sub-prime lenders dreamed up ever more creative loan terms for those with weak credit. The interest rates on the loans were scheduled to rise in a few years, but so what? If borrowers had trouble paying the higher rate, they could refinance the mortgage, using their quickly appreciating houses as collateral.

But now housing prices, particularly in formerly hot markets, are going south, continued on page 10

Contact Don Bauder
at 619-546-8529 or don bauder@mac.com
I Own It

By Joe Deegan

While delivering flyers in University Heights one day last spring, Mary Wendorf saw the tenants of an old home she admired moving out. They told her the house was to be torn down and a condo complex put in its place. For years Wendorf, a member of Uptown Planners community planning group, was friendly with the home’s prior owner. But the woman died recently, and her heirs sold the property to a prospective developer. The woman “would be rolling over in her grave,” Wendorf told me, “if she knew what was about to happen to her longtime home.”

Local residents knew nothing of the sale or plans for condominiums at 4374 Cleveland Avenue. Upon investigation, however, they discovered that Jennifer Poiset, wife of San Diego dentist Mitchell Poiset, had obtained a building permit from the San Diego Development Services Department to construct a fourplex in the Cleveland Avenue home. Before buying the property they did their due diligence. If they had discovered an overlay zone, they would never have purchased it.

Nevertheless, said Mary Wendorf, “these surprises are happening in San Diego neighborhood all the time. Almost overnight people will look out their windows and see another old home gone. They never even know what’s coming.”

But thanks to Wendorf’s discovery, residents interested in the Cleveland Avenue home were able to have their voices heard. They formed the University Heights Historical Committee and collected 159 signatures on a petition to save the house through historic designation. As Toni Atkins suggested, they took the petition to the Historical Resources Board in June, a step that prompted the City’s Development Services Department to order an expert historical review. For a report on the home, the department instructed Golba to hire a researcher from the historical consultants list the board puts on its website.

Golba, who has gone through the process often, hired attorney and historian Scott Moomjian to write the report on 4374 Cleveland, as well as on the house immediately behind it, which was to be demolished in the project too. Moomjian examined both houses and consulted San Diego County property records, which pinned down 4374 to a 1912 origin and 4376 to 1948.

To make its determinations, the Historical Resources Board uses six criteria involving such issues as whether renowned persons lived on the property or well-known historical events happened in connection with it. What became decisive in the case of 4374 Cleveland was Criterion C, which reads as follows: “[A building that mer- its historic designation embodies the distinctive characteristics of the style, type, period or method of construction or is a valuable example of the use of indigenous materials or craftsmanship]”.

Although the University Heights Historical Committee was attempting to save only the 1912 home, Moomjian acknowledged in his late-June report that both 4374 and 4376 Cleveland had been designated as Craftsman homes. But his report stated, among other things, that architecturally the homes’ “style is common and not considered unique.” In terms of their use, he argued, “Single-family residential use is common and is not considered unique.”

However, uniqueness is hardly a requirement for historical designation, or only one Craftsman home would have been designated. Part of Moomjian’s argument was that so many Craftsman homes have already been designated in San Diego that another is not needed. He went on to make a stronger case. In his report, Moomjian considered a number of alterations to both houses, including a protective stucco-like coating and brickwork on the 1912 house that were not used on original Craftsman. These, he felt, compromised the houses’ historical integrity. A major conclusion of his report was that the houses were “not historically or architecturally significant. In their current condition,” he wrote, “the buildings do not embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of Craftsman construction.” Therefore, they did not war-...
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Financial implications for homeowners and their financers are daunting. First, the mortgage that has these high-risk mortgages, often members of minority groups, pay interest rates about three percentage points higher than those who get conventional mortgages. Adjustable-rate mortgages present risks if interest rates rise. Many sub-prime loans have wrinkles such as balloon payments. As the statistics show, people with such loans are much more susceptible to delinquencies, defaults and foreclosures.

The economy is slowing. Inflationary pressures still exist; interest rates may rise more than they already have. Some metro areas such as San Diego are experiencing sharp declines in their previously overheated residential real estate markets. The bubble is bursting; as always, the wees folks will be left holding the ballons’s tattered remains.

But it’s not just the wee folks getting wallowed. The institutions that issue mortgages — prime or sub-prime — sell the loans, often to Fannie Mae or other large financial institutions. Those institutions in turn bundle up the mortgages into high-yielding, lower-rated bonds that are sold to mutual funds, pension funds, and the like. If defaults on the underlying mortgages pile up, those bonds will go down in value — something they have been doing this year.

Unfortunately, companies that generate and sell these mortgages are obligated to buy back those in which there is a default. That’s one reason that potential acquirers of sub-prime lending companies are wary: they might get stuck having to buy back loans. Tax preparer H&R Block wants to dump its sub-prime unit. Orange-based ACC Capital Holdings wants to sell its AmeriQuest operation.

There are worse signs. Agoura-based Omni Mortgage Solutions, partly owned by Wall Street’s Merril Lynch, closed its doors early this month. It was the 11th-largest sub-prime lender. Its lending volume during the first half of this year had been up 44 percent. But as loans went sour and it had to buy them back, it ran out of money. Texas-based Sebring Capital Partners also shut its doors recently, as did Washington State–based Merit Financial.

As such news swirls around the capital markets, Accredited feels the sting. The company was founded in San Diego in 1990 with the mission of providing loans to people who can’t qualify for standard mortgages because of high consumer debt, past credit difficulties, absence of income documentation, and similar woes. The company went public in February 2003, and in the three-year real estate boom, the stock soared from under $7 to over $60 early this year. But Accredited shares began losing altitude this year as loan originations fell and investors began shunning mortgage-backed bonds. In early November, the company revealed that third-quarter earnings per share were 83 cents, down from $1.87 a year earlier. Recently, the stock has been selling around $27.

In its filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission, Accredited has warned investors of the sub-prime lending risks. Higher delinquencies, defaults, and foreclosures “would reduce our ability to originate loans and increase our losses on loans,” it said in the statement accompanying its third-quar ter earnings. “Loans we originate during an economic slowdown may not be as valuable to us because potential purchasers of our loans might reduce the premiums they pay for the loans.” A big percentage of its loans have been made in two once-zooming, now-crumbling states: California, 16 percent, and Florida, 12 percent.

In its annual report to the securities agency last year, Accredited warned, “Existing borrowers with adjustable-rate mortgages or higher-risk loan products may incur higher monthly payments as interest rates increase, or experience higher delinquencies and default rates.”

But when the market is giddy, it ignores such caveats. It overheats to the upside. On the other hand, when the news turns gloomy, it often overshoots to the downside. Today, some analysts believe that the housing downturn is already ending. Those who believe that would be wise to invest in Accredited, which sells below its book value, or the worth of the company if it were liquidated immediately. Very few stocks sell below book value these days.

TV’s frenetic Jim Cramer, cofounder of TheStreet.com and one who enjoys being labeled the “Mad Man of Wall Street,” likes Accredited stock. Cramer believes that concerns about sub-prime lending are overblown and notes that Accredited is seeing an increase in mortgage applications. “They’ll have a tough time for many months,” says Cramer, but “they have a good [business] model.”

However, the view that the housing downturn is ending requires a large pair of rose-colored glasses. As an investment, Accredited scores lower than 76 percent of stocks that rating agency Standard & Poor’s follows. “I would be very cautious jumping into the sub-prime lenders until we see the extent of the shake-out,” says Bud Leedom, publisher of CaliforniaStocks.com.

“There is fear of what is in these underlying portfolios. A lot of investors feel that sub-prime lenders will be going out of business. The ticking-time bomb scenario is alive and well.”

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continued from page 10

Among other issues, Mann focused on Moomjian’s contention that Craftsmans were one-story houses and on this statement in his report: “The typical Craftsman residence usually includes a low-pitched gabled roof.” “In fact,” wrote Mann, “the higher pitched gabled roof was created to accommodate a second story. Two of the most famous California architects, Charles Sumner Greene and Henry Mather Greene, are recognized for inspiring America to build simple one-and-a-half story bungalows. Many of these one-and-a-half story bungalows designed by the Greene’s were published in magazines. Additionally many historically designated homes in Mission Hills have a similar higher pitched gabled and second story.” In fact, in a Report from Mr. Mann for a similar home located in Mission Hills dated June 10, 2005, he states [that it] possesses many distinctive characteristics of the Craftsman style including, but not limited to, its high-pitched, side gabled roof with eave overhang.”

Mann believes that Moomjian and several other experts listed on the Historical Resources Board’s website view their responsibility as proving what their clients want proved. She cited Moomjian’s occupation as an attorney to bolster her case.

I called Moomjian to ask him if he considers the historical-report-writing process to be adversarial in nature, like writing a brief defending a client in court. He replied that it is adversarial in cases of “involuntary site designation,” such as at the Cleveland Avenue house, where someone other than the owner wants the house designated. “That’s because clients don’t want other people telling them what they can and can’t do with their property,” he said.

However, Ron May, an archaeologist also on the Historical Resources Board’s consultant list, believes that when the Development Services Department asks for a report, it wants it to be objective. “The report should reflect the facts, not the house, not the client,” he told me. “But there are experts on the list who act as hired guns to serve only their clients’ desires. And the developers know who they are.”

It occurred to me that in asking the developer to hire the researcher rather than appointing one, the City may not want the reports to be objective. After contacting the City’s planning department to inquire, I received a call from Eric Symons of Mayor Sanders’s office of communications. He said I might submit my questions regarding the historical-designation process through his e-mail address. “When Development Services asks for a historical report on a property for the Historical Resources Board to consider,” I wrote at the end of November, “does it expect the report to be objective rather than adversarial? If objective, what precautions are taken to ensure the reports are objective?” As of this writing, Symons has not written back.

After the property owners’ and appellants’ reports came in, the planning department’s Kelly Saunders and Cathy Winterrord wrote the city staff recommendation meant to guide the Historical Resources Board. “Staff’s position,” they wrote, “is that the issues which speak to the historical integrity of the property, namely the heavily textured paint, the replacement of the brick piers, the addition of a concrete ramp in front, and the replacement of some wood windows, do impact and detract from the house and any potential significance to such an extent that the property is no longer eligible for designation.”

“Furthermore, despite the Mann report’s contention that the modifications are ‘minimal alterations’ which ‘can easily be changed to restore the home to its original appearance, the Board, as it is aware, may not condition designations to require restorations or modifications. All properties considered for designation must meet the criteria and be eligible for designation in their current condition.”

Finalla, echoing Moomjian, Saunders and Winterrord wrote: “It should also be noted that the Craftsman style is not a unique or rare style within the City of San Diego and there are hundreds of Craftsman properties which have been designated, including several which are very similar in design and massing which exhibit far better integrity.”

The decisive vote on 4374 Cleveland came in October and the Historical Resources Board members who voted did not concur with staff. The board had first scheduled the University Heights Committee’s appeal for its August meeting. But at meeting time, only 8 of 15 board members showed up. The University Heights organizers would have needed all 8 votes to prevail. Yet the quorum for an official meeting was also 8, so the board could not act like a meeting was taking place. “Dur-
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We welcome letters pertaining to the contents of the Reader. Phone them in at 619-235-3000, ext. 460; address them to Letters to the Editor, Box 85803, San Diego CA 92138-5803; fax them to 619-231-0489; or use our web page at SanDiegoReader.com/letters. Include your name, address, and telephone number. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

Take That, You Waverati
Jeannette De Wyze is to be commended for an excellent and accurate cover story ("90 Years of Curl," December 14) because she wisely chose to include local surf historians in her work, notably John Elwell. Of most significance is the inclusion of the late Bob Simmons, perhaps the most influential surfboard designer of all time.

After doing a Google search of the story's author, I found that De Wyze is not a typical surf-industry type, which explains the inclusion of Elwell's comments on the era and especially Simmons's. The mainstream surf media is a tightly serving an incredibly important piece of surfing history. After that point, according to Elwell, the Surfer's Journal essentially shunned him and his input as to the importance of Simmons's legacy. This is a shame, with a significant cost to preserving an incredibly important piece of surfing history.

There is a theory held by a few that is based on the information from Elwell about Simmons's life and his contribution to the shape of modern surfboards. The theory: Simmons was (and still is) the father of the modern surfboard. The evidence is there.

However, the publishers, advertisers, and editors of the mainstream surf media have falsely attributed Simmons's efforts to others, including Greg Noll and Joe Quigley. I believe, as I think Elwell would agree, that the media is aware of Simmons's important role. However, they have chosen to sweep Simmons under the rug. Thank you to De Wyze for including Elwell and his words about the era and, most importantly, Bob Simmons.

Scotty Beauman
Del Mar

It Never Changes
This is in regards to your story "It's Not a Race Thing…It's Style" (Cover Story, December 21). It is not so much offended me — the names and titles of different racist remarks — but it was the one, out of all of them, the "Honky" or derogatory term for a white person." It just told me that a white person wrote this, because all of these are derogatory terms, not just the "honky" one. So that right there was a racist remark, instead of saying all of them were derogatory. So I was very offended by that, and it just made me kind of laugh. But it also made me think, it never changes. It's still the same. I think you should recall the information you give to the overhang), as rainwater is still derogatory. If you're going to speak on race, please emphasize the purpose. Most of the interviews referenced how people stereotype them, but in the same story they stereotype others.

Natacha Ridley via e-mail

Kindling
I really enjoy the Reader for the information you give on San Diego restaurants and for keeping us up-to-date on the local music scene. However, reading anything that Don Bauder writes makes your publication perfect fire starter. If the Reader were to print on soft cotton, I would also be happy to use Don's articles as toilet paper.

His hatred for any sports team in San Diego is ridiculous. You should not have a writer who obviously has a personal vendetta against any industry.

By the way, we went to the last playoff game against the Jets a couple years back. We actually could not sit in our seats (which were under the overhang), as rainwater was pouring on our heads. The stadium was leaking so bad that we were able to stay dry standing in the rain rather than in our seats, Don Bauder should really do a little research before he writes an article on how Qualcomm is "an excellent facility" ("Will Owners Let Chargers Leave Bankrupt City?" "City Lights," December 14).

Greg Knight
via e-mail
Two thousand six will go down as the year Grandma went on strike for Christmas. Usually she’s all wound up planning festive meals, looking for new shiny things to hang on the tree, negotiating bulk discounts on underwear and socks for the elves. The rest of us sit around the place recovering from another year of smartening up while Grandma’s whizzing around the room with dust cloths and spray cans and tinsel and those ugly little Hummel figures. Man, if you don’t keep alert and pick your feet up off the floor when she comes through with the vacuum cleaner, she’ll just bash right into you. She’s relentless.

The first clue that something was wrong this year was when she didn’t unpack her Twelve Days of Christmas aprons. I remember as a little know-it-all staring to get really excited when Grandma had gotten down to the Five Golden Rings model. We knew there were presents just over the horizon. By Three Calling Birds, I would be having trouble sleeping. The partridge and the pear tree signaled that it was on. For years I believed that a stork brought babies, a partridge had something to do with Christmas presents.

But this year, at some point, we realized she hadn’t even taken out the mixing bowls for her mincemeat pie. Every year we refuse to eat anything called mincemeat pie, but that doesn’t stop her from making it. So Ma Alice took over pie duties this year, but since she didn’t have the recipe, we were screwed. Ma did go out and buy meat, and every day she minced it a little more, hoping it would transform itself into a pie, but no luck. Grandma wasn’t talking, so we were on our own.

At least the roof looks festive. Regular listeners already know that Pa Alice had decided to leave up the Santa and His Reindeer light display year round. Why take it down when he’s just going to have to put it up again next year? Typical Pa Alice thinking. He’s always vigilant for opportunities to conserve energy. “Living green,” he calls it. Grandma uses other colorful phrases.

Every year the elves volunteer to handle anything that needs decorating that is low enough for them to reach. That’s pretty much nothing, so they take off on their scooters and we don’t see them again until the egg nog’s ready on Christmas Eve. This year we got the egg part handled, but we never did find nog.

In spite of Grandma’s strike, we’ve managed to put together our traditional New Year’s gift to you Alicelanders, the year-end quiz, in which you realize how much wiser you are in December than you were last January. No, no, please don’t thank us. It’s our pleasure.

1. Because science long ago appropriated the name “meteorology” for the study of the weather, people who study meteorites are called “meteoricists” and the study of meteors “meteorics.” Therefore, Matthew Alice might be called a (A) facticist, (B) truthicist, (C) realiticist, (D) hotairicist.

2. Mom told you to wear clean underwear every day in case you’re in an accident. But we investigated the doo-doo of death question, and now Matthew Alice recommends that everyone wear: (A) Depends, (B) porcelain jockeys, (C) Charmin boxes, (D) a maxi-pad thongs, (E) nothing.

3. Our longest investigation this year had to do with unique vehicles you’ll see only on the streets of San Diego. These are: (A) Mars rovers, (B) the research elves on those little Shriners bikes, (C) Ma Alice’s home-built quarter-scale Oscar Meyer Weiner cars, (D) motorcycle-powered bumper cars from amusement parks around the world.

4. From the Matthew Alice Do-It-Yourself Law Files, we got plenty of handy, fee-free tips. Which of the following will get you arrested, and which is a clever idea? (A) Go right ahead and make a citizen’s arrest of anybody who is acting especially stupid, since acting like a jerk in a public place is a felony, and we all know the jerks of the world are just asking for it. (B) If you bump off your annoying neighbor in a rowboat 600 miles offshore, you’re pretty much in the clear, arrest-wise. (C) Make a citizen’s arrest of someone throwing his chewed-out gum on the sidewalk and the police will not laugh at you when they show up. If they show up. Well, actually, they won’t show up.

5. We had a fun question about animals at play. We found out that: (A) the Association for the Study of Play is an association for the study of the behavior in birds, reptiles, amphibians, and exotic mammals, they still aren’t sure how to define “play.”

6. The Ad Council is responsible for some of America’s most memorable slogans. Which one is not an Ad Council creation: (A) A mind is a terrible thing to waste, (B) Loose lips sink ships, (C) Friends don’t let friends drive drunk, (D) This is your brain on drugs, (E) WAAAAAazzzzuuuup!!

A searchable archive of past columns is available at SanDiegoReader.com

Got a question you need answered? Send an email to heymatt@cts.com or fax to 619-231-0489 or mail to Matthew Alice, c/o the Reader, Box 85803, San Diego, CA 92186.
2006 Sports Roundup

Close the drawer on 2006. On the yahoo side, we can mark up Jim Harbaugh and the University of San Diego Toreros football team. They went 11-1 and last. Harbaugh won two I-AA national championships in his three years as coach. Hate to see him go. What else? The Padres made the playoffs again. Somebody from the NL West had to go; it's the law. And the Chargers are on a beautiful run.

The Chargers also did pretty well on the crime front too. Linebacker Steve Foley was shot by an off-duty Coronado policeman. It's still to be determined whose crime that was. There's a DUI charge out there as well. Foley double-dipped in 2006, also collared in April for resisting arrest and drunken driving. Shaun Phillips, lineman, was arrested last April on suspicion of obstructing or resisting an officer in the performance of his duty.

(A note on the methodology: I'm counting arrests, not convictions. Everyone remembers arrests…that's what upsets the league and the money changers. Eight months later, when the charges are dropped, nobody cares. It's unfair; a lot these arrests are bullshit, are for the crime of being young, scary-big, black, and rich in public. Philadelphia linebacker Dhani Jones was arrested in Miami for failure to stop dancing. They're trying to keep their streets dance-free down in Miami. On the other hand, being rich is very close to having an automatic get-out-of-jail pass the first, second, and third time you're busted. Maybe it balances out. Maybe it doesn't.)

Cornerback Cletis Gordon arrested for DUI. Strong safety Terrence Kiel arrested on a truly loony felony drug charge of mailing 15 bottles of prescription cough syrup to cough-syrup addicts in Texas. John S. Fernandes, DEA special agent in charge of the San Diego Field Division, told the AP that codeine-based cough syrup mixed with soft drinks are the coming thing in Texas and that a pint bottle, called "lean," can cost $200 to $325. Kiel made $383,00 in 2005, but apparently that was shy of his needs. Looks like Kiel wanted some of that big, easy money that 15 bottles of "lean" would get him.

This, by the way, is how you can tell we're winning the War on Drugs. Here we are in San Diego. Evidently are smuggling drugs, every kind of drug you can think of, every hour of every day, through, over, and under the U.S.-Mexican border, a border located 15 miles south of city hall. In the midst of what alarmists might call "an ongoing drug invasion," it's comforting to know the DEA has the time and manpower to go after cough syrup. No worries for me!

Finally, defensive back Markus Curry, then on the Chargers practice squad, was arrested in October for domestic assault. That makes five players arrested, which is not bad. But, it's not great either.

For great we must turn to the Cincinnati Bengals and the crime-stoppers of Cincinnati, Ohio. This year, eight team members have been arrested, 15 percent of their 53-man roster, and the regular season has one more weekend to go. That's a very high bar indeed.

I know what you're thinking: "Cincinnati has impressive stats, but what about the quality of their arrests?"

Of course you'd go right to the nub of it. This is why fans hate the BCS college-football system. How are we to measure the numbers? Cincinnati puts up against the spectacular inventiveness of Joe Cullen, Detroit Lions defensive line coach and the crime-stoppers of Dearborn, Michigan?

On August 24, Cullen was driving his SUV around Dearborn and decided, like many Americans do, to turn into Wendy's. Coach Cullen spoke to the Wendy's talking menu and ordered one of their delicious value combos. No worries for me!

(A Wendy's wage-slave received his order and then, when Coach Cullen drove to the pickup window, in order to pay for and retrieve his order, said employee called the cops. The coach's crime, according to the police citation, was for "driving on a public street without any clothes on (NUDE)."

Here is a man living free in the privacy of his SUV, clinging no one but fast-food workers, yet that was enough to arrest him on indecent and obscene conduct charges. That was August 24. One week later, Cullen was arrested for DUI again in Dearborn, again after a citizen dropped a dime on him. But, here's the strangest part of this story: Cullen still has a job with the Lions.

Let us end with a vision of Marty Schottenheimer. He's driving a restored 1963 Corvette Stingray convertible. Azure blue. It's summer. The Stingray glides into one of San Diego's 119 McDonald's, say the one on Garnet Avenue in Pacific Beach...
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San Diego Reader

Skyline Church Night of Light
Snow Village and Outdoor Theatrical Nativity
La Mesa

Serial #/y

Sermon

content............................................★★★★/ delivery............................................★★★★/

Liturgy............................................★★★★

Music

congregational..........................n/a

choir............................................★★★★/

Snacks ............................................★★★★

Architecture.................................★★★★

Friendliness................................★★★★/

Poor to satisfactory..........................(none)

Good ................................................★★★★

Very good.........................................★★★★

Excellent.........................................★★★★

Extraordinary................................★★★★

He also gave a CD to the oldest attendee (85) and a DVD to the family with the most children (9), a showtime: an overture medley sung by a huge choir in robes and sandals. Bits filled "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel," "O Little Town of Bethlehem," and "What Child is This?" — the huge sound and grand harmonies giving way to a single male voice:"Mary did you know? That your baby boy? Would give sight to a blind man? Mary did you know? That your baby boy?" Would calm the storms with his hand?"

The innkeeper narrated the nativity story while the characters played out the scene under the stars: Mary and Joseph in the stable with their newborn son, the angel rising above the shepherds to proclaim the good news, the kings riding in on camels and paying homage. The choir veered between pops-concert excerpts from traditional carols (the soprano on "O Holy Night" fluctuating around the high notes like Mariah Carey) and modern, jazzy strains: "Oh, when they saw the star! They rejoiced with great joy..."

"Every story has a beginning," concluded the narrator: "This one has no end... So many great men have come and gone, but He lives on... It is no exaggeration to say that nothing has affected the life of man on this earth as much as that one solitary life..."

Pastor Garlow had the final word. "What is it about that story that is so compelling? The answer is that you were made in the image of God... Within you is a longing to be connected to the eternal, and you have some sense that this story is the answer to that quest within your heart... Don’t miss this opportunity... There may be a tug on your heart right now, and that tug has a name: the Holy Spirit of God, saying, “Now. Receive me now.” — Matthew Lickona

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Address: 11330 Campo Road, Highway 94 at Jamacha Road, La Mesa
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Senior pastor: Dr. Jim Garlow
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Staff: 14 pastors
Sunday school enrollment: about 1800, including small groups
Annual budget: $5 million
Weekly giving: $90,000
Singles program: yes; for one under 35, one for 55+
Dress: dressy-casual
Diversity: mostly Caucasian, a fair number of African-Americans, and some Hispanics
Sunday worship: 8:15 a.m., 9:30 a.m., 11 a.m.
Length of reviewed service: 45 minutes
Website: www.skylinechurch.org

The craft show was housed in the building at the top of the entrance steps, so that’s where I ended up first, my oldest son towing me along. He admired the $8 handmade, one-of-a-kind beansies while I tried to take in all the merchandise: birdhouses; tootsie and blan-kets; wood-handled pens; English black breakfast tea; knives and cutting boards; embroi-dered quilts (“As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord”); scented candles (white choco-late!); and all manner of Christmas-themed decorations, ornaments, plates, and cards.

Outside, we found the funnel-cake cart. While we waited, I lis-tened to the children’s choir: a dozen or so kids on risers, most of them dressed in white, singing in unison: “It's Christmas time of the year/ This is the time/ Of the year/ This is the time/ Of the year/ This is the time/ Of the year/ And we sing/ Side-steps and...” He’s the reason why we sing. “Side-steps and...” This is the time/ Of the year/ This is the time/ Of the year/ This is the time/ Of the year/ This is the time/ Of the year/ And we sing/ Side-steps and...” He’s the reason why we sing.

Dr. Jim Garlow and answer is that you were made in the image of God... Within you is a longing to be connected to the eternal, and you have some sense that this story is the answer to that quest within your heart... Don’t miss this opportunity... There may be a tug on your heart right now, and that tug has a name: the Holy Spirit of God, saying, “Now. Receive me now.” — Matthew Lickona

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San Diego Reader December 28, 2006

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My friend Christine fears her two children are growing up without enough family traditions. As she, another friend Celia, and I power-walked through the neighborhood, Christine lamented, "I need to start some family traditions. There's nothing special about our holidays and parties. For example, our Christmas gift giving, decorations, and dinner were completely generic. I felt so unimaginative. I want 2007 to be the year we start traditions in my family. And I might as well start with New Year's traditions." 

I suggested the New Year's Eve tradition I grew up with: running around the house banging pots and pans at the stroke of midnight. That didn't strike Christine's fancy. "My children turn into devils at the stroke of 10:00. I don't want to see what they look like at midnight," she offered. 

Even after I told her our neighbors would stay awake just to watch us run around making as much noise as possible, she still wasn't interested. It had been my father's tradition in his neighborhood of Yonkers, New York. "Supposedly, you are making noise to chase away the evil spirits," he said, "but we just did it to wake up the neighbors."

Nor was she keen on Celia's idea. "Where I grew up in Argentina, there were lots of fireworks and firecrackers that go on until five o'clock in the morning," she offered. "And they were very loud. And every year, there was an army of children that ended up with bad burns because their parents were letting them set off those firecrackers."

As our walk wound down, I offered to scrounge up a few other possibilities for Christine and make a round of calls to acquaintances. The traditions that I discovered came in many flavors.

A few were a bit superstitious. "My mom always makes ham and black-eyed peas on New Year's Day," offered Bernice. "When she was a young bride, her mother-in-law told her to eat black-eyed peas on New Year's Day for good luck. She hated the peas, but would dutifully cook up a batch and eat one or two. Then years later, when she was vacationing in Branson, Missouri, the restaurant served 'Ozark Caviar': black-eyed peas with red and green peppers, green onions, and cilantro covered with an oil and vinegar dressing. She enjoyed it, and from then on she has made her own, the Ozark style."

Bernice continued on with another story. "My mom's best friend Claudine cooks what she calls Copper Pennies: sliced carrots served in a sweet sauce. It's supposed to bring prosperity in the New Year. Frankly, the carrots were easier to swallow than the peas."

Bernice added one last thought. "My parents always drink sweet pink champagne called Cold Duck. As a kid, I had no idea what it was, but I was always struck by the name."

My mom said her parents used to drink sparkling burgundy on New Year's Eve, but they couldn't find any, so they started having Cold Duck instead.

A couple New Years traditions were spiritually bent.

My friend Carl's family says a Marian prayer at the stroke of midnight to dedicate the New Year to Mary. "It is beautiful," he says, "but a bit of a buzz kill. The bell strokes midnight, and it's 'On your knees for prayers,'" he joked.

My aunt shared an old Irish tradition. "It was considered lucky to be the first one to be blessed in the morning on New Year's Day," she stated. "The Irish would always greet people with a 'God bless you,' and to be the first one blessed that morning was considered an honor."

Hubbard Patrick's family eats cornbread and chili for New Year's Eve, and at the stroke of midnight, they break out singing the Hallelujah Chorus in four parts. It is not a surprise, considering they're all singers.

I discovered a few other foreign traditions to add to the list.

My niece Elizabeth, who now calls London home, says singing "Auld Lang Syne" is the tradition in England. "People will switch on the tellie to hear the Big Ben chime on the hour and then start singing," she offered.

Not surprisingly, the French have a tradition involving food. My friend Jessica, whose mother is from France, and her family eat 12 mini desserts on New Year's Eve. "The 12 desserts represent the 12 Days of Christmas," she explained. "If you finish the grapes, you are in for a year of good luck." The tradition started years ago when after a big grape harvest, grapes are the item for New Year's Eve. "The tradition is to quickly eat 12 grapes the 12 seconds before midnight as the bell in Puerta del Sol Square is tolling," she explained. "If you finish the grapes, you are in for a year of good luck. The tradition started years ago when after a big grape harvest, the king gave all the people grapes to eat on New Year's Eve."

And a couple New Year's Eve traditions were memory themed. "The New Year's Eve before the new millennium," friend Sarah said, "my father gathered his family around and gave an emotional toast to all of us. Then he showed us a slide show of our life, all the memorable moments. I am going to start a yearly tradition, each New Year's Eve, of having the family watch the past year's momentous occasions on our home videos."

My sister Cathy has a different memory tradition. "In my home, on New Year's Eve, my husband and I sit down with some tea and the family's calendar. And we read through the past year week by week, remembering all that happened through the year. It is joyful and sometimes also painful remembering the events, so we do not do this with the kids. And when we are finished, we pray for all the people involved in our year."

Columns archived at SanDiegoReader.com
Since I had several holiday parties to attend, I didn’t always bring my camera and recorder. I went to a few Hanukkah parties where I wished I’d had a note pad. At the first one, an Indian gentleman who is a teacher at UCSD told several interesting stories. I remember he told me about one of his colleagues at the party who met a woman through a dating service. She lived in L.A., and the colleague decided to get a job at UCLA to be near her.

At the other Hanukkah party I attended, everyone got high before I showed up. They couldn’t stop laughing as they spun the dreidel and then we were forced to play Bingo.

The next day, a friend brought me to her work Christmas party. Again, I left the camera at home and wished I hadn’t. The gift exchange was interesting. Several people brought wrapped bottles of booze. Other people brought gift cards. Everyone stole the gift cards, which was allowed at this gift exchange. I got a two-pound box of See’s candy, which I was able to trade for a set of James Bond books. After we traded, I discovered the guy had opened them — he said he didn’t know if they were DVDs or books. I told him I should’ve opened the See’s chocolates and bitten a few before I handed them over.

“I think Santa has been on Phen-Fen. He’s looking thin.”

As the gift stealing was wrapping up, a woman next to me asked if I liked my set of books. I said, “My dad will love them. I’m going to re-gift them.” As she asked me more questions, I realized that she was the last person who would be stealing a gift. She said, “I won’t feel guilty about stealing your gift, since it’s not even for you. And I love reading.” I had been duped. I would never have been that honest if I knew what she was up to. At the last minute, she decided to steal something else.

When we were on the back patio drinking wine, I realized she had something on her foot. “I just had my toe amputated the other day. When I was little, I got my foot caught in the spokes of my bike. They were able to save the toe, but it was badly damaged. They needed to cut it off now because of some complications.” She told us that she took off her bandages to gross out kids. Her boyfriend said, “I’ve got to take good care of her. She took care of me when I was going through my cancer treatments.”

The group looked at me, and it was silent. I said, “Yeah, well, I stubbed my toe on the coffee table this morning. It’s still throbbing.” They laughed, and she said, “I won’t have to worry about that anymore.” She asked the lady who does her nails why it wasn’t any cheaper, since she has one less toe to paint. Her boyfriend added, “Yeah, and it’s the biggest one. Instead of being 10 percent off, it should be about 18 percent off.”

The following day I went to a Christmas party where I did bring my camera. Susie in Del Mar had hosted a holiday party last year, and I missed it. This year, she asked everyone to bring a toy for the Toys for Tots program, and by the time I left the party, she had over 140 toys under the tree.
I showed up early because I had plans to meet friends later in the evening. The only people there were the guys in the band, 20 Miles South. One said, “We actually broke up. But we get together for gigs like this.”

I wanted to light a cigar but forgot my matches, and nobody in the band had a lighter.

One guy asked his buddy, “Is that your dad’s sweater?” When his buddy told him where it was from, the guy said, “Interesting. Where are the stains from?”

Someone standing nearby told me about a holiday party that they had on the previous week that had an ugly Christmas sweater theme. He said, “I couldn’t believe how many ugly Christmas sweaters are actually made.”

Susie, a petite Asian woman, was running around trying to get things organized. She came over, offered us drinks, and then ran back into the house.

One guy in the band had an unusual name, and we started talking about weird names. Someone said that his dad’s name is Terry Kerry, but he goes by Terrence. Another guy said he knew a woman named Robin who married a guy with the last name Hood.

There was Christmas music playing, and when “Santa Baby” came on, someone said, “I bet nobody here knows who sang this.” The first name that came to me was Katerina Witt. I corrected myself: “Oh, no, wait, I think she’s an ice skater. I meant to say Eartha Kitt.”

When someone asked who that was, nobody could remember the TV show she played a villain in.

A bus pulled up, and a large crowd got out to join the party. Someone had rented it to pick up a bunch of people who live in PB. A guy in a Santa Claus suit came out, and one of the band members said, “I think Santa has been on Phan-Fen. He’s looking thin.” Santa was popular with the crowd, and I had to laugh every time he adjusted his beard as he was talking to someone. (I had played Santa twice and found the itching to be the worst.)

There were fake reindeer around a tree, and two guys were trying to make them mate with each other. Just then, Susie’s mom arrived. She came down from Monterey. I wondered if she saw what the guy was doing with the reindeer.

One guy showed up in a white suit and red shirt. He came over and introduced himself to everyone and shook our hands. When he walked away, one guy said, “That was weird.” Another said, “It looked like he was wearing one of those Don Johnson suits from the 80s.”

I heard someone say, “Hey, Salsa Susie, when will you be dancing?” She said, “Probably around 9 o’clock.”

As the band started playing, it started to rain. There was a canopy on the back patio, but it was raining hard, and someone said to me, “Look at all the water that’s seeping over to the amplifiers. What will happen if one of those guitarists gets electrocuted?”

“I’ll have a great ending to my column.”

Crash your party? Call 619-235-3000 x421 and leave an invitation for Josh Board.

Columns archived at SanDiegoReader.com
Total Wreck

by Barbarëlla

It often happens that the real tragedies of life occur in such an inarticulate manner that they hurt us by their crude violence, their absolute incoherence, their absurd want of meaning, their entire lack of style.

— Oscar Wilde

David and I stared out over the ocean from the green pier on Catalina Island. Every few minutes, I’d point to a luminous orange Garibaldi fish and announce how amazed I was by the clarity of the turquoise water. We had six hours to kill before we would board the same ferry from Dana Point to fit between our return trip to Tokyo the weekend after Christmas. After two hours of intense relaxation, of inhaling the crisp sea air, and watching the small waves lap at the sand, I fished my phone from the bottom of my purse.

“Whatcha doin’?” David asked.

“Checkin’ my messages,” I answered. He approved — we’d already been on the undersea tour, already walked the span of the boardwalk several times, and I wanted to save the last chapter of my book for the long ferry ride — what else was there to do?

David watched as, with my phone to my ear, the smile faded from my lips and the furrows he called my “elevens” appeared between my brows. “Heather called,” I said, scrolling to her number and pressing “Dial.”

When I heard the first ring, I added, “My mom was in an accident, I’m calling to find out what’s— Hey,” I said into the phone when Heather answered, “What happened?”

Physically, I was still on a quaint little island with my favorite person. But every other part of me had been transported back to the real world the moment I heard my sister’s voice. Heather relayed the facts.

It was a typical weekday morning in December; the air was misty and cool. My mother had left her house in Chula Vista shortly after 7 a.m. for her daily commute to her office. They say most car accidents happen within a mile and a half of home. Mom had only made it as far as the fifth house from her own when the distracted driver of a huge truck plowed into her head on, forcing her luxury sedan into a parked car. Both airbags had deployed. As a tow truck hauled away my mother’s accordioned car, an ambulance hauled away my mother.

The other driver, a neighbor my mother had never met, pulled her vehicle to the side of the road, hopped out, and, with a nightgown, ran to her house up the street. Later, in shirt and pants, she returned to the scene, explaining that she had crapped herself. She defended her actions to the police by saying that she had “elevens” — Oscar Wilde’s infamous disease — and pressing “Dial.”

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“No broken bones, some potentially torn ligaments; with a collision like that, sounds like she lucked out,” I said to David after I’d given him the lowdown. “Heather’s gonna call if anything changes.” A cold front enveloped the island. David was silent, gauging me.

“Let’s go get coffee,” I suggested.

Visiting hours ended at 8 p.m. Heather had told me they would be discharging Mom at 11:30 the next morning, but when I called after noon they were still waiting for an orthopedist to meet with her. Knowing that she might be there for some time, I decided to stop by the hospital with flowers.

I held my breath as I walked down the hallway to my mother’s room. Hospitals gross me out. They’re filled with sickness emitters — people exhaling contagions and leaking fluids. I swear that I can actually smell illness.

Suppressing my fear that I will inadvertently inhale someone else’s disease, I force myself to continue breathing.
my fear that I will inadvertently inhale someone else’s disease, I force myself to continue breathing. I feel the same way on airplanes and buses.

Entering her room, I saw my mother splayed on the bed. “Jesus,” I said, “you look like shit.” Despite my childish honesty, or perhaps because of it, Mom smiled, happy to see me. A tray hovered over her lap, on which a half-eaten plate of broccoli and macaroni covered in a congealed yellow substance had grown cold.

Mom winced. “I hurt all over,” she complained. “I bet you do,” I said, noting that the tubes dangling off of the IV needles in both of her arms were no longer connected to anything.

I held Mom’s hand for a moment and then, kissing her on the cheek, I spotted the dried white crust surrounding both of her bloodshot eyes. “You have pinkeye!” I shrieked. Mom nodded. “Oh, my God, I touched you! Do you know how contagious that is? Shit.”

Heather was fast on my tail as I made for the Purell dispensers, two of them conveniently located on the wall opposite my mother’s bed. We pumped at them frantically, each pump yielding only the tiniest drop of antibacterial goop. I would make a horrible mother, I thought, rubbing my hands together with the desperation of a camper trying to get a fire going before nighttime. At the first sign of my child’s sniffle, I’d be donning rubber gloves and a surgical mask.

When I returned to her side, my hands safely tucked into my pockets, I saw that my mother’s face had morphed into a new expression of pain. It struck me that she may have misinterpreted our daughter’s fervent cleaning; that while we were trying to rid ourselves of potential bacteria, this wounded woman might have thought we were trying to wash our hands of something more. Like her.

“Yeah,” Heather agreed. “I wouldn’t want to give it to my boys.” Mom nodded and gave a half smile, half wince. She sucked air through her teeth and grimaced. “It hurts,” she moaned.

“Yeah, I bet it does,” I said. I stayed for an hour as Mom relayed her story, the fear and the pain of the accident, the stress and the hassle of the aftermath. When I’d made my way back down the hallway and finally out of the building, I inhaled deeply, cherishing the sick-free air as I might cherish a 30-year-old bottle of wine I had been saving for a special occasion. When I got home, I washed my hands again and again, until they were red. In the real world, distracted drivers and germs could kill you. As I dried my hands for the sixth or seventh time, it occurred to me that while David and I were away, I had not feared either.
These are motivational speakers, and more than 100 live in San Diego. Though they are based locally, most have peripatetic lives; they fly in and out constantly to address corporate audiences in America and around the world. They maintain websites, publish books (some, business best sellers), and offer programs; the last are notorious for their quasi-scientific design and ecstatic promise: Rancho Santa Fe’s Denis Waitley runs the Waitley Institute’s “Seeds of Greatness System”; Carlsbad’s Jim Cathcart oversees “The Grandma Factor — Lifetime Customer Loyalty.” Del Mar’s Tony Robbins, who has been the longest-running San Diego–based motivator, hosts TV spots that, according to his website, “have continuously aired on average every 30 minutes, 24 hours a day somewhere in North America” since 1989.

What do they speak on? Usually the message is the same: through motivation and inspiration one can achieve success in one’s personal and professional life. But the means of delivering that message are as different as the presenters. On his website, magician Khevin Barnes of Carlsbad promotes his keynote address as “empowering themes of imagination, creativity, and ‘astonishmentality’ [that] translate into success and productivity in the corporate world.” He’s joined onstage by Socrates, an animatronic bird who is Barnes’s “alter ego and sassy sidekick.” Former news anchor, exerciser (“Keep Fit With Phoebe”), and “community affairs expert” from Channel 10 Phoebe Chongchua has written If the Trash Stinks, Take It Out!: 14 Woriless Principles for Your Success. Part of her keynote pitch, taken from her website, reads, “Attracting success starts with taking the trash out before it rots.”
Whether you’re an executive, entrepreneur, employee or hardworking homemaker, veteran newscaster, Phoebe Chongchua takes you on an entertaining, informative and inspirational journey that will have you laughing, connecting with her and wanting to clean your own mental house.”

Onstage, many motivators prowl the boards with evangelical fervor, lacking only the Good Book cradled in hand. They like to circle-thrust their fists into the air and shout “Yee-hah,” but unlike Howard Dean the exclamation is never ruinous. They trademark their products and services, their logos and phrases. They saturate their infomercials with life-improvement testimonials. They are the go-to guys whose programs, complete with online surveys, video training manuals, and sales chops, companies in need of get-up-and-go energy get up and buy. They exude waves of lacquered affirmation (as do their minions) to anyone who’ll listen, not because it’s free advertising, but because it’s their nature. * * *

Easily the biggest newcomer in the galaxy of the mega-motivators is the 40-year-old Irish immigrant Brian Buffini. Buffini runs Buffini and Company, the largest business training and coaching company in America, whose 17,000 clients are predominantly real estate agents and brokers. Buffini’s office sits above the fabled flower fields in Carlsbad. The 80,000-square-foot building houses 270 workers on two floors. The place is quiet and orderly — with a full-service fitness room and yoga studio and health-oriented snack bar — but in some corners it’s abuzz with activity. On a tour, one can hear some of the 200 “Buffini-certified coaches” who phone their 85 clients with advice, sort of like business therapists. Buffini sells two products: himself as a motivation speaker and the services of his motivational coaches. The idea, Buffini says in a newsletter article, is to “instruct, direct, and encourage people to achieve at their highest level possible.”

Buffini came to San Diego in 1986 and began selling real estate for ReMax, the nation’s largest broker. Buffini hated the usual system of finding clients — cold-calling and knocking on doors — so he tried his own: he asked those with whom he’d already worked for referrals. Buffini began sending clients tokens of appreciation each month as well as personal notes. Or he made a home visit — a pop-by, as he calls it — bringing along a gift — an item of value, as he calls it — like a dish towel or a bag of nuts or a screwdriver with a note, “Don’t get screwed by another realtor. Oh, By the Way” (a phrase he’s trademarked), “I’m never too busy for your referrals.” One Buffini-coached agent, Angelina Feichko, hosts a “team pop-by” at Easter. According to Buffini’s “Coaching Guide,” published monthly in RISMedia’s Real Estate magazine, she and her four female employees dress in white and “show up at a client’s house in a minivan and jump out with our Easter bunny ears, delivering an Easter egg hunt directly to the client.” Buffini hoped that such active reminders to his clients would mean they’d remember to refer their friends and family to him.

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salesman. Next, Buffini decided to systemize his referral method and sell it to real estate agents. At first he sold the referral system as a program. Each month an agent pays for a gift package that contains items of value and Hallmark cards. Each month the agent delivers the gifts and cards, on which a personal note is inscribed, to the client. While gifts and notes may keep the agent in the client’s thoughts, Buffini soon discovered that this would not, of itself, boost an agent’s sales. Buffini needed a better sense of how the real estate agents he was helping were wired, perhaps to rewire them to be as positive and as dedicated as he was. So he and one of his brothers (all four have relocated to San Diego from Dublin and work at the company) developed the “heritage profile.” According to Buffini’s website, this “personality assessment” tool profiles an individual’s “natural gifts and abilities”; it’s used to “reveal how [agents] communicate, work, learn, and focus” and to target “the areas that can naturally trip you up.”

With the heritage profile as a guide, Buffini hired people to coach agents to become better people. Coaches do one-on-one sessions with agents twice monthly by phone. The cost is $5000 per year. Buffini eventually expanded the coaching system to focus on the five elements, as he calls them, of his clients’ lives: business, financial, spiritual, family, personal. Buffini’s coaches advise clients to set goals (lose 25 pounds, save $10,000, find more time for family activities or spiritual practices) and then hold them accountable to those goals via their phone sessions.

The Irishman’s rise to fame is richly dramatized in the promotional DVD, “Coaching the
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Good Life. It begins with rock music blaring and the Stars and Stripes waving, cuts to Buffini and family barbecuing at his Rancho Santa Fe home, after which he’s driving his Lexus, hitting the golf ball,boarding his private jet, and leading, with a soft-edged Irish brogue, power seminars like “Mastermind” and “Turning Point,” in which he stokes the fires of “personal growth.” Buffini is, as his company members say, “huge,” addressing packed halls twice monthly. In the video we hear the voice-over, “Brian Buffini may just be the happiest multi-millionaire in San Diego. In 15 years he’s made a fortune teaching people how to make a fortune.” At a rally, his throng cheers when he intones, “I believe a far-nfarmeducation can make you a living, but a self-education can make you a farman.” (I asked a Buffini employee about attending a “Turning Point” seminar in San Diego and was told the event was sold out and reporters were not allowed in. I asked about interviewing a Buffini coach, but none responded.) Buffini pushes his employees and his clients toward personal fortunes and company goals. In staff meetings, it’s not uncommon, said several employees, to hear him or one of his brothers rouse the cadre. “What are our core values?” To which 100 suppliant voices recite, “Excellence is our minimum standard. If it’s not excellent, don’t do it. Always take the high road. Exceed your expectations, and win!” Followed by the big cheer. Another element is prayer. Buffini met his wife Beverly at Bible study, and Christianity is the de facto faith of the enterprise, as Rich Brennan told me. Brennan is the director of corporate wellness. I asked the superpositive, superfit Brennan whether Buffini or people in the company were drawn to any particular research in motivational or organizational psychology. “Brian’s research is so vast and he’s such a book reader,” Brennan said, “that he’ll pull from all different styles of motivation. But the number-one motivator for Brian would be Jesus Christ. When you talk about referral, Jesus Christ was the number-one referral king of all time. He had 12 disciples, and He said, ‘Hey, go get Me some referrals.’ He’s the most famous person in all history, and He built His entire business off of referrals, the largest referral network ever created off of 12 people.” The people who work at Buffini and...
Company are called "servant leaders, yes, a Christian-based term," Brennan added. Byron Vardilos, the coaching business manager, who said he is also a Christian, told me that "the more people you can serve, the more you're gauged as a leader. It's like Jesus washing the disciples' feet—doing the mundane task of showing them how to serve each other." The company recognizes its servant leaders with monthly, quarterly, and yearly awards. Julieann Billings-Riordan, marketing communications manager, who agreed that the company has its Christian adherents, said that Buffini does not "discriminate against non-Christians." Bowed heads and group prayer do begin some meetings, a large flock of employees, many of whom are married to each other or are siblings, attend the same church.

In the lobby of the Carlsbad office, one of two statements painted in big letters high on the wall reads: "Our Mission: To Impact and Improve the Lives of People." On the DVD, we see this purpose apparently being put into practice as audience members file out of Buffini's presentations awakened and stunned. After his talks, Buffini says on the video that he will routinely hear someone say, "You've changed my life." "When I'm speaking onstage," he continues, "I'm able to relate to everybody. People will say, 'You were talking just to me.' And there were thousands of people in the room." It's probable that the people to whom he ministers motivation already believe that a sales guru can change their lives. This aptitude for change is key. Brennan drew a profile of the real-estate-agent personality whom Buffini is looking for and who is open to personal transformation: "They are free-spirited, relational, and people-oriented; not as introspective as others. They like the freedom to make their own schedules. They enjoy competition; they're good sports. They like to be part of a team," which sells houses and collects referrals.

Selling real estate is competitive and cyclical. Market ups and downs are common: currently, Southern California faces sluggish sales that will remain constant, some experts predict, until 2008. Too many will compete for a limited share of home sales. But the variable seasons of selling seem not to matter. Buffini gathers the survivalists: the competitive independence of the agent's work favors those who like living on the edge. Without a steady salary or company-paid benefits, Buffini and his coaches stir the real-estate-agent type to succeed. You would think that such enterprise or sorts would need no motivation. But they do. According to Brennan, as the market cools down, "This is the time when the true business professional rises to the top because he follows the same system whether the market is up or down. Buffini and..."
Company will do better over the next few years with the market low than when it's high."

Has Buffini found a way to motivate agents to be more productive? According to a study by the National Association of Realtors, members of the association who had 26 years of experience selling homes averaged $92,600 annual income. When Buffini’s Mike Lopez, director of coaching and events, tallied the score of their Buffini-coached agents, he found that those with 4 years’ experience selling homes averaged $172,691. Has Buffini found a way to motivate agents to be happier in their personal lives and wealthier in their profession? Perhaps. One thing is clear: an agent needs to be of the real-estate-selling ilk — one who balances taking advice and making sales, seeking spiritual ends and making money — before he or she rides Buffini’s system to the end of the rainbow.

In contrast to Buffini’s self-empowerment through coaching is the more sober motivational message of Bob Nelson, best-selling author, workshop presenter, and management consultant. Buffini and his team coach willing real estate agents; Nelson trains willing and unwilling managers. Any company, he says, can build a “culture of recognition.” A culture of recognition is a proactive attitude that managers use to recognize good work. Instituting “recognition” programs often costs little or nothing and brings immediate changes in a company’s productivity. Of Nelson’s 20 books about motivation and recognition, his most popular is 1001 Ways to Reward Employees, which has sold more than 1.5 million copies. Most of his books are “100 percent examples.” They feature a “Dummies”-style layout with graphs and tip boxes and sidebars and drawings of perky associates with lightbulbs radiating above their heads. No doubt you’ve seen a Bob Nelson book, with “1001” in the title, lying on your supervisor’s credenza.

In conversation, the 50-year-old exudes a kind of boastful benevolence; like Jimmy Carter, he’s an automatic smiler, crinkle lines etching the corners of his eyes. He acknowledges but hates it that the grumbling American worker “resonates around problems, mistakes, crises.” Nelson lapses into motivation-speak much of the time, but it’s never slickly sales-oriented like Tony Robbins. His austere Rancho Bernardo office, not far from his home, is more like a bare closet than a workspace: there’s a small storeroom for his books, a computer or two, and bare tables. He spends little time here; he’s on the road almost 100 days a year. In his office, there’s one on-site employee, while seven others sell and promote him via the Web from other locations. Nelson, wire-haired and goateed, sports a knit shirt with his (trademarked) insignia of a beaming, halo-wearing office worker. After establishing himself as a job counselor, Nelson moved to San Diego in 1985 and was hired by Ken Blanchard, coauthor of The One Minute Manager. Nelson helped craft the motivational “you-can-do-it” voice of The One Minute Manager (which has sold over 10 million copies and still sells 10,000 copies a month) as well as Blanchard’s syndicated newspaper...
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- Car Alarm includes all parts and labor
- $99

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- Starter Kill
- Shock Sensor
- With warning
- Flashing Parking Lights
- Panic feature
- $199

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- New technology car alarm pages you when your car is tampered with or when the alarm is triggered
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- Super bright clear drop down screens
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**Expert Window Tinting**
- Rear 3 windows most cars
- $99

**Apple iPod Solutions**
- Add Sound directly to your radio
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- Jvc, kenwood, pioneer, alpine
- gm, chrysler, nissan, ford, honda
- mercury, vw, toyota, nudi, acura
Nelson studied “reinforcement theory,” a dreary location that Nelson translates quickly as “the most common-sensical thing: you get what you reward.” As a graduate student, he spent three years creating and administering a study that would answer the question, “Why is it that so few managers recognize employees when they do good work?” He sorted managers who frequently recognized good work from those who didn’t. He found that two-thirds of managers who infrequently recognized good work believed people needed no motivation on the job. These managers didn’t subscribe to motivational logic. They believed money was enough to spur workers to produce. In addition, managers said they had no time to recognize workers; they felt unsupported, even unrecognized, by their own management.

Nelson’s research confirms that managers who make it a habit of praising their people — “reinforcing” work — often produce employees who appreciate good work. On the other hand, managers who don’t recognize good work — who don’t want to “single out” their most deserving staff, which might provoke jealousy and backstabbing. They said things like, “I’m not going to fawn over this college kid; this is already a good education, in college or at the office.

The top reason why managers recognize good work, Nelson found, is that enthusiasm for others’ accomplishments is central to their personality; to think well of friends, family, and employees and to encourage them are behavioral traits. From his study Nelson discovered a fundamental principle these positive-prone bosses were already using: “If you manage people, you’re in charge of the motivational environment in which they work.” Good managers — the most efficient, the most hands-on, the ones who are hired away by other companies — recognize good work at monthly and yearly intervals as well as every day. Good managers initiate rewards themselves with or without a budget or a program. And good managers are not dependent on being recognized by their superiors.

Armed with this knowledge, Nelson is called in to awaken the sleeping minions. The City of San Diego sought his aid in fixing a lack-luster “Employee of the Month” program. “I was
brought in in the late 1990s before the financial mess. I can’t remember the exact fee.” (Typically Nelson earns $12,500 to $15,000 per presentation, though his consulting fees vary.) At a meeting with city officials, when he asked what was wrong with the employee-of-the-month program, which covered 13,000 employees, “They said they didn’t know — that’s why they needed my input.” As part of his response, Nelson chided them: “If that’s your plan, I’d recommend prayer as a more effective approach.” I excused myself and sought feedback about the program from individuals in the same room. I introduced myself and asked if they used this program. The first person said, yes, he knew of it but would never use it since they had previously nominated several of their best people who were subsequently denied the honor by the central office. “I’ll never be humiliated like that again,” the person said. The second person said that she knew of the program but would never most people felt did not deserve it and thus wanted nothing to do with the program. This is what happens,” Nelson continued, “when you try to institutionalize employee motivation. The idea of trying to select one person a month to honor is out of touch with the times. We don’t need employees of the month as much as we need employees of the moment.” At Pizza Hut’s annual convention, Nelson heard the franchise owners carp that they couldn’t get good people anymore — it was a lousy job; the pay was minuscule; deliveries were growing more dangerous. Nelson stopped them, mid-grouse: “ ‘Wait a minute. How many people in this room once delivered pizzas in their own car?’ ” Nearly every hand went up. “ ‘How can you complain about something you once did willingly?’ I have to reframe their thinking. They have to see that this is a job that leads to management or owning a franchise.”

The IRS spent 18 months collecting data and interviewing managers to survey how well their organization was recognizing good work. They hired Nelson to study their findings and make recommendations. Nelson heard from the IRS that “it didn’t matter what they offered” to their managers, whether

**Good managers are not dependent on being recognized by their superiors.**

Do You Suffer from Excessive Shyness?

Have you experienced intense fear of being embarrassed or evaluated negatively by others in a variety of social and performance situations such as:

- Meeting new people?
- Talking in front of a group?
- Going to parties?
- Interacting with those you are attracted to?
- Dealing with authority figures?
- Eating or writing in front of others?

You may be eligible for a research study at UCSD Dept. of Psychiatry.

If you are 18 years of age or older and are interested in this research program, please call:

1-877-UCSD-SHY (1-877-827-3749)

or e-mail: veryshy@ucsd.edu

Smoking too much pot?

WE WANT TO HELP YOU STOP!

Researchers at the Scripps Research Institute are working to develop treatments to help you quit smoking marijuana. This 12-week program involves medication.

For more information and to see if you qualify, please call 858-784-7867 or visit www.pearsoncenter.org for more detailed information.

Suffering from Schizophrenia?

If you have been diagnosed with Schizophrenia and your current medication is not helping, you may qualify to participate in a research study being conducted at the Sharp Mesa Vista Clinical Research Center.

To participate, you must be willing to switch from your current therapy to an FDA-approved study drug.

Qualified participants may receive study-related evaluations, medical care, research medication and laboratory work — all at no cost.

All telephone calls and visits are confidential and safely conducted under the supervision of experienced physicians and research specialists.

To learn more, please call the Sharp Mesa Vista Clinical Research Center at (858) 694-8350.
We believe we can help.

Well-known pharmaceutical companies are conducting important research studies for a limited number of qualified participants.

Depression

steals more than your mood; it robs you of life’s pleasures.

Are you between the ages of 18 and 65 and finding life hard to tolerate? Has your energy and motivation to enjoy your life decreased? Do you find even simple pleasures empty?

California Clinical Trials has been assisting the pharmaceutical industry with finding medications for depression over the past 20 years. Every study conducted by California Clinical Trials is staffed by a team of skilled and experienced, caring physicians and medical professionals trained to place your comfort and well-being first.

If you participate, there is no cost to you...instead:

• You receive up to $500 for your participation.
• You receive no-cost study-related medication and medical care.
• No reports are made to employers, schools, or insurance companies.

Schizophrenia

can tear families apart.

Do you or a loved one have schizophrenia? Have they tried Haldol®, Prolixin®, Zyprexa®, or Risperdal®? Do they still feel hopeless, have side effects or continue to suffer from troubling thoughts or voices?

This loved one’s problem can break your heart. We are caring, experienced professionals funded by a well-known pharmaceutical company to conduct an inpatient and outpatient research study for qualified people with schizophrenia.

If your loved one participates, there is no cost...instead:

• They receive up to $2400 for participation.
• They receive no-cost research study-related medication and medical care.
• No reports are made to employers, schools, or insurance companies.

Anxiety

doesn’t just stress your mind.

We know it can...

• Decrease your immune response
• Decrease your physical and mental functioning
• Increase fats in the bloodstream
• Be mistaken for medical conditions
• Interfere with sleep

If you are between the ages of 18 and 64, you may qualify to take part in a research study of an investigational medication for Generalized Anxiety Disorder.

Every study conducted by California Clinical Trials is staffed by a team of skilled and experienced physicians and medical professionals trained to place your comfort and well-being first.

Qualified participants:

• Will receive up to $450 for time and travel.
• Receive no-cost study-related medication and study-related medical care.
• No reports are made to employers, schools, or insurance companies.

Insomnia

can affect the quality of your life and your partner’s.

Restless sleeper? Wake up tired? Chronic problems falling and/or staying asleep?

If your sleep is not normal you may qualify for a research study in our state-of-the-art sleep clinic and receive an investigational medication for poor sleep.

Every study conducted by California Clinical Trials is staffed by a team of skilled and experienced physicians and medical professionals trained to place your comfort and well-being first.

If you participate, there is no cost...instead:

• You may receive up to $1050 for your time and travel.
• You receive no-cost study-related medication and medical care.
• No reports are made to employers, schools, or insurance companies.
it was catered weekend training retreats or a seminar (with motivational speakers) that taught practical methods for enlivening their positive energy: “Some managers would do it, and some would not.” After Nelson pored over the survey results, he told them, “You’ve come to the right person: where you’re giving up is my starting point. I don’t think some people ‘will do it and some people will not.’ I know specifically why those people who do, do. I can show you why those people will not. ‘I know specifically why those people will not.’ After Nelson pored over the survey results, he told them, “You’ve come to the right person: where you’re giving up is my starting point. I don’t think some people ‘will do it and some people will not.’ I know specifically why those people who do, do. I can show you why those people will not. ‘I know specifically why those people will not.’

To activate the non-doers Nelson tells managers that (it’s nothing personal) they lack creative vision; he’s been asked to modify their behavior with 1001 fresh ideas. He instructs the managerial slackers, “I know you’re busy, so here’s what other busy managers do. Take a few moments at the end of the day and reflect on whose behavior or performance stood out, and jot them a note. Try to thank five people a day. Have a memory aid to do that. The president of Atlantic Consulting Group has a trick. He says, ‘I put five coins in one pocket, and every time I praised somebody I moved one coin to the other pocket. After I worked on that for a couple weeks, I didn’t need the coins anymore. I got the behavioral pattern down.’ It’s a technique. For some well-intentioned managers, if it clicks, they’ll do it every day;”

Another way to jumpstart non-engaged managers is to get them to think about employees differently. In three separate studies, by Bob Nelson, Ken Kovach, and Lawrence Lindahl, managers and employees ranked ten workplace incentives — both manager and worker were asked to respond to what the “employees wanted from their jobs.” The managers consistently identified the top three factors as “good wages,” “job security,” and “promotion and/or growth opportunities” — each with a financial cost.

These were not even close to what the workers really want. The result is that when managers see what their employees value, the managers are more likely to participate in retraining themselves. Then there’s the managerial group Nelson calls the lurkers — those who want to see what their employees want and what their workers really want. The result is that when managers see what their employees value, the managers are more likely to participate in retraining themselves.

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**Do you have trouble sleeping?**

Are you:
- 18 years of age or older?
- History of insomnia for at least 4 weeks?
- Having difficulty staying asleep?
- In good general health?
- Sleeping less than 6.5 hours at least 4 nights per week?

Synergy Clinical Research is looking for volunteers for a medical research study of an investigational medication for insomnia.

Qualified participants may receive investigational medication, study-related physical exams and compensation for time and travel.

If interested, please call: **1-888-619-7272**

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**Worry Too Much?**

If you worry excessively, can’t relax; have persistent anxiety, tension, nervousness; have difficulty sleeping, concentrating, worrying about how you’ll deal with each day; or upset stomach and muscle tension, you may have Generalized Anxiety Disorder.

You may qualify for a no-charge medical research study to test an investigational medication for the treatment of anxiety. All inquiries are confidential and no insurance is requested. Study-related evaluations, blood test, study-related pills and exams are at no cost and you will be compensated for visit, travel and expenses.

For information or appointment, call the study coordinator, James Goldberg, Ph.D., at: **619-327-0155**

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**Depression Research Study**

If you have been previously diagnosed and treated for depression and in recent months you are experiencing a recurrence of similar or increased symptoms, you may be eligible to participate in a clinical research study.

Those symptoms may include feeling sad or empty, feeling worthless or guilty, decreased interest in activities you once enjoyed, difficulty concentrating, weight loss, difficulty sleeping or lack of energy.

Call: **1-888-619-7272**

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**Alzheimer’s Clinical Research Trial**

- Do you have a family member diagnosed with Alzheimer’s Disease?
- Have they become more confused?
- Do they require closer supervision?
- Does their condition seem to be getting worse?

If so, then your loved one may qualify for a clinical research trial. All study-related visits, investigational medication and study-related care will be provided at no cost to qualified study participants or caregivers. If you are a caregiver of someone at least 50 years of age who has been diagnosed with Alzheimer’s Disease, then you may want to find out about this study.

For more information, call: **1-888-619-7272**

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**BIPOLAR DISORDER**

**Mania**
- Racing thoughts
- Increased activity
- Decreased sleep
- Increased spending

**Depression**
- Sadness
- Lack energy
- Difficulty concentrating
- Feel restless or irritable

If you are experiencing some of these, you may be eligible for a research study.

Some qualifications are:
- Aged 18-65 years
- Non substance/alcohol dependent
- Using reliable contraceptive
- Not pregnant or lactating
- Non diabetic

For more information, please call: **1-888-619-7272**
The things we do to ourselves are the most important source of our stress.

Nelson has studied the Q12, and he agrees that there are lots of jobs, in customer service and retail, in warehouses and on assembly lines, that are uninspiring, repetitive, pay next to nothing, and go nowhere: no wonder seven in ten are not engaged. In fact, most low-skilled and low-paid workers find little intrinsic value in their labor. With such unrewarding jobs, how can we expect employees to perform better? How does a person in tech support, who talks with frustrated customers and is supposed to finish the call in four minutes, transition to the next caller with grace? How does a janitor who’s paid the minimum wage to clean toilets and has no opportunity to advance make an effort to go beyond what he’s required to do? How does a bank teller who must tabulate dozens of checks or transactions per hour, a process in which clerical errors often occur, have the incentive to check her work?

Managers who recognize good work are especially critical when the work is not interesting or challenging. Somewhat contradictorily, Nelson believes that themselves, most will be non-engaged or actively disengaged, which can mean sloppiness through the job or sabotaging it. Workers whose wages and the nature of their work are not going to change may self-motivate, Nelson said, but only when they feel that their managers are their “coaches, colleagues, counselors, and even cheerleaders.”

Time and again, Nelson has seen workers stop caring “because they don’t see anyone else care.” Managers should meet them “at their energy level — the place where they started the job. Employees have that initially; they want to be part of something larger than themselves. If you meet them at their first energy, you maintain it or build on it. If the organization doesn’t meet them, over time that energy will drop off. They’ll be disappointed and lose motivation. But it doesn’t happen overnight.”

In addition to recognition, Nelson believes that management, particularly executives, must respond with structural changes. Older workers or those who’ve been with a company a long time say they want managers to give them more flexibility, more challenge, more team orientation, and more personal responsibility. All factors that are more critical to staying with an employer than pay raises. One company that has responded is TRW, the credit-reporting business. At the Carmel Mountain office, TRW adopted the 9/80 plan: eight 9-hour days and one 8-hour day (totaling 80) so that the worker gets every other Friday off. Nelson said that in a national survey, twice monthly three-day weekends ranked higher with employees than better health-care coverage.

“When the headhunters call the employees at TRW, they laugh and hang up: ‘I’m not going anywhere.’”

In the end, work,
love, and the boss are joined at the hip. “If you’ve got a good boss,” Nelson iterated, “then you’ve got a good job.” A good boss who approves of a worker’s efforts and values his or her contributions may make coming to work more than tolerable. Once an employee is recognized daily, not just every other Friday, a sluggish store-room or a glum counter may start to sing, a transformation Nelson has documented at least 1001 times.

In a conference room at the La Jolla Marriott, 200 employees, “business line leaders” of a local bank (which requested anonymity), have gathered to eat, network, inform themselves about the bank’s latest products and services, compete for raffle prizes, and celebrate each other. It’s the second annual “Development Network” event, an early-December quasi-

Christmas party and testimonial, from 5:30 to 8:00. Women and men relax in their business attire; a daring few wear Santa hats, others suck on candy canes. A call to order, take your seats: it’s the formal part of the program. When the sharing gets rolling, the repetition in every impromptu speech doesn’t seem to matter: “market-share leaders” are introduced with an apocryphal golf story or a quick bio (“Lucy’s been with us just two years”). They hustle onto the

Quitting smoking is one of the most important things you will ever do.

- You are likely to live longer and better.
- Quitting will lower your chance of having a heart attack, stroke, or cancer.
- The people you live with, especially your children, will be healthier.
- You will have extra money to spend on things other than cigarettes.

Affiliated Research Institute is conducting a 26-week clinical trial on an investigational medication that may help participants quit smoking and maintain smoking cessation. To qualify for this research study, you must be at least 18 years old and smoke, on average, 10 cigarettes per day for at least the last 2 months. If you qualify for this study, all research medication and study-related care will be provided at no cost to you. You will receive brief smoking cessation counseling to help you succeed in your efforts to stop smoking. In addition, compensation will be provided for travel reimbursement.

For more information about this smoking cessation research study, please call: (619) 308-0441 or visit us online at: www.ari-inc.com

**Bipolar Disorder/Manic Depression Research Study**

We are currently seeking volunteers for a clinical research study of an investigational medication for the treatment of bipolar illness (Manic Depression). To qualify for this study you must be at least 18 years old and currently experiencing a “manic” or “mixed” (depression and manic symptoms at the same time) episode of your illness. All study medication and study-related medical care are offered at no cost to those who qualify.

To learn more about this research study or to schedule an appointment with our staff, call us today: (619) 688-6565

See our website: www.ari-inc.com

**Are you hiding out because of ACNE?**

If you are 12 years of age or older and have acne, you may be able to participate in a clinical research study testing an investigational gel medication.

- You may qualify to participate in an 11-week outpatient clinical study.
- You will have extra money to spend on things other than cigarettes.
- The people you live with, especially your children, will be healthier.
- You are likely to live longer and better.
- Quitting will lower your chance of having a heart attack, stroke, or cancer.
- The people you live with, especially your children, will be healthier.
- You will have extra money to spend on things other than cigarettes.

Are you hiding out because of ACNE?

Qualified participants will receive at no cost:

- Skin evaluations
- An investigational gel medication for 12 weeks
- Reimbursement for time and travel

Come out of your shell and stop hiding…

To learn more about this research study or to schedule an appointment with our staff, call us today: (619) 688-6565

See our website: www.ari-inc.com

**Anxiety Study**

Signs and symptoms:

- Experiencing persistent worry?
- Feeling restless, irritable, or tense?
- Having difficulty sleeping?
- Having difficulty concentrating?

If you or someone you know is experiencing any of these symptoms, you may be suffering from Anxiety.

Affiliated Research Institute is conducting a research study for people with Anxiety. If you qualify, you may be eligible to participate in a study testing the effectiveness of an investigational drug for the treatment of Anxiety at no cost to you.

If you would like additional information regarding this study or to schedule an appointment with our staff, call us today: (619) 688-6565

See our website: www.ari-inc.com

**Currently taking ZYPREXA...**

for the treatment of Schizophrenia Disorder and are overweight?

You may qualify to participate in an 11-week outpatient clinical study.

Qualified study participants will receive study drug and all study-related procedures at no cost. You will also receive up to $600 for your time and travel.

For more information about this study, please contact: (619) 688-6565

or visit us online at: www'affiliatedresearch.com

**Too Shy?**

Trouble with dating? Parties? Public speaking?
Starting conversations? Speaking to authority figures?
Always worried about what other people think of you?

Confidential help is available. You may be eligible to
Receive Free Treatment

with computerized therapy as part of a research program.
Call: 619-229-3740 or e-mail: SDSU CUTA@hotmail.com
http://nasc.psy.sdsu.edu

CENTER FOR UNDERSTANDING AND TREATING ANXIETY

6386 Alvarado Court, Suite 301, San Diego
Step on the scale lately? Interested in participating in a weight loss study?

Consider a clinical trial at Profil. Profil Institute for Clinical Research is one of the world's leading centers for clinical research in metabolic disorders and is currently conducting a study for obesity.

This research trial may use investigational medications combined with counseling for weight loss. All participants will receive healthy lifestyle LEARN counseling.

You may qualify for this trial if you:

• Are age 18-65 and overweight or obese, but do not have other significant health problems
• Are not using other weight loss medications or weight loss programs
• Are willing to actively participate in the LEARN program with the guidance of lifestyle counselors and doctors

Qualified participants will receive all study medications as well as study-related medical care at no cost. You may be compensated for your time and no overnight stays are required.

Call today for more info: 866-308-PICR (7427)

Profil
Profil Institute for Clinical Research

If you qualify to participate, you may be compensated up to $1,475 for your time and travel.

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My Heart in San Francisco, karaoke. What if I can get out of his general thanks is that the woman who helped him finish his quarterly reports on time, and she did so with such regularity that he was able "to climb the corporate ladder" and is now much higher in the institution than he ever thought he would be, which has surprised him and which he now realizes he owes to her.

In the middle of all this "giving back," when it seems everyone is pretty equal — at least, for the evening — when it seems the group can’t gel-as-one anymore, the program transitions to “Now it’s time for our speaker.” She’s intro-

duced as an “award-winning speaker whose audiences have fun learning to stay positive.” She’s spoken in 47 states, Canada, England, Mexico, Asia, and Iceland.
Clients include Hewlett-Packard, Nokia, Kaiser Permanente, and WD-40. "Tonight, she's going to address 'How to Get More Done with Less Stress.'" Sarita Maybin. Maybin steps onto the dais to a rousing welcome. She's a vivacious African-American woman whose "Good evening," followed by a pause for their response, works perfectly. They're primed for more positive energy, and she doesn’t disappoint. She asks the crowd to complete the phrase: "If you can’t say something nice" (a line she says she heard all the time from her mother), and the audience bellows in return, "then don’t say anything at all." One shared so-true moment and she's got them. She asks for a show of hands, "How many of you watched the Charlie Brown Christmas special the other night?" A third of the hands go up. "So you know the voice of the teacher in that, the whomp-whomp." Giggles all around. "How you gonna deal with her, the one who's always saying no, who's making your life stressful? Whomp-whomp." Before she can talk about how to deal with those nabobs of negativity, she needs to identify "our clients, our coworkers — or people at home — who cause us stress, who cause us angst, who push our buttons." She riff on the idea: "We take a vacation to get away from these people and go halfway around the world, and there they are again." A tour guide leader, a flight attendant, the critical parent, the voice that says no, the attitude that says you can’t. These people exist, and we have to deal with them. But the main thing that causes us stress, she says in a curious twist, is our own personality traits. The things we do to ourselves are the most important source of our stress. Really? Yes, really. And we are the people only we can do something about. How does our character contribute to our stress? There are five types of stress-inducing personality: the perfectionist; the one who tries to fix or control others; the one who lacks priorities; the overanalyzer; and the people-pleaser. She asks the audience to turn to a neighbor, "to confess which one of these you are." This activity gets the room pulsing. Maybin comes off the dais and prowls the audience, cavedropping and joking; back onstage, she says that she heard one or two reveal they’re all five types. "That's okay to check more than one. I have to include myself in several." Before she defines the stress-manifesting qualities of each trait, she asks people to stand up and identify themselves. "Will the perfectionists please rise?" This is "so you can make a 'note to self': I always thought Troy was a perfectionist." It's important to know

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- Study medication and examinations
- Reimbursement for time and travel

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A combination medication may help lower blood sugar levels.

If you’re making healthier choices but your blood sugar numbers aren’t coming down, maybe it’s time to consider combination therapy. A clinical research study is evaluating an investigational medication containing two previously approved medications combined into one tablet compared to an FDA-approved drug used to treat type 2 diabetes.

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- At least 18 years of age
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about your colleagues and how their little buttons cause you stress. So the stress issues both from us and from others.

Maybin, dressed in a navy blue pants suit, glides assuredly across the stage, sometimes adding a swoop, a pause, and a fetching smile to snap home a point. The 48-year-old jokes, laughs at herself, points at people — “ends up in a garage.” "How uninspiring is that," she calls back.

After taking degrees in psychology and counseling, Maybin served at several back East colleges as a director of freshman activities. She loved giving tours and talking to hundreds of new, bewildered students. That career path brought her to UCSD and a job as acting dean of students at Fifth College in the early 1990s. An epiphany in 1993 — “it was during the Rodney King uprising, and they wanted us to do riot control on the lawns, when I knew this job was not working for me anymore” — led her to begin a career as a public speaker. One half of her loves academics (she writes books: the newest, If You Can’t Say Anything Nice, What Do You Say?), the other half, performing (she recently debuted with her salsa dancing class). During her academic years, she volunteered to speak whenever she could. Unlike the “normal” person, who’s terrified of such exposure, Maybin says, “I felt the itch to do it more and more.” Yes, most dislike speaking, “but I thrived on it.”
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Corporations typically call Maybin when change in the company — layoffs and restructuring — is dragging people down. "For me the real challenge is going in when there's drama, negativity, change — and have them walk out, after my speech, feeling like they have a few tools to empower themselves to move past the negativity," Part of her motivational strategy is to inquire of those who invite her (75 percent of her business is word-of-mouth) for specific direction. An example: one boss, who kept telling his workers not to use ALL CAPS when writing e-mails, said to Maybin, "I've been telling them and telling them, but they don't listen. Can you work that into your presentation?" She did, in her discussion of the pitfalls of nonoral communication. The practice ended, she later learned.

As a speaker, Maybin's main hurdle is, "How can I segue from what they're doing to where I need to be in my presentation? How can I connect with them where they are at?" Normally, people show up, having been "dragged to a mandatory training, with this look" — pinched, sour — "saying to themselves, 'What's she got to say?' and I've got to win them over right away. I think it's harder to go from giddy, as with a bank's recognition program, "to real than it is from negative," as with layoffs, "to real. If they're expecting just another speaker and I can be funny or engaging, then they start leaning forward."

Toward the end of her 30-minute talk to the bank crowd, Maybin reminds them that "You know, one little pep talk, one little workshop, one little motivational speech doesn't mean that you can change anyone." Even yourself. That's a much bigger project. The slump in the room is not exactly audible, but it's there. Maybin tells me later that she said this because, although she can inspire people, she doesn't want to mislead them. "I would really like to know what happens tomorrow, when they have to go back to that same boss or boring job," She thinks that despite the recognition programs, where most network and make promises, workers revert to the same old, same old the next day. Since change is unlikely, she says she tries to give them practical advice to deal with entrenched ways of thinking and speaking.

The most efficient way to change the work-place, she believes, is to change its everyday language, to say things nicely but firmly, with direction and emphasis — and the fewest times possible. For example, how to say no, nicely: "Thank you for thinking of me, but I choose not to." "I'm sure you'll do a terrific job on that project, but I don't have the time to help you." Be clear, be real, don't equivocate, don't promise what you can't do. She does lots of role-playing in her all-day workshops to model new behaviors. When she includes her "top-ten communication phrases," she'll hear from her clients, say a month later, they called her, asking for her advice.

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After the event, that those phrases are posted on a person’s door or above her computer. If employees can practice what she offers in the workplace immediately, through her lens, then she believes her message will stick. “Instead of us trying to push our ideas down their throats, the power is in the processing,” that is, by the employees who participate with it during and after the motivational session.

After Maybin’s performance and after the prizes are gone, she’s standing with well-wishers who, because she’s been forthcoming about her life, confide in her about theirs. Later, I note that there’s something about her celebrity, her openness, that draws people to her. She agrees. “One of the best-kept secrets about being a good speaker is you have to be a good listener. I try not to just talk at them, but relate to what they’re saying, pulling in their comments as I go. That way I make it more real.” She says she gives the impression that she cares “because I do care. It may seem that I’m feeding off the energy of the group, and it may seem that it’s all about me and that I love all the attention. But it’s not about me; it’s really about the audience.”

Maybe all a motivator can do is be “fully present in the moment” — the positive energy, the disarming humor, and the schmaltzy phrases at company-sponsored lovefests are like any pleasure, purely temporary. “That’s right,” Maybin says. “We plant the seeds for them to contemplate or reexamine what they’re doing. But they’ll take that information and use it in their own good time. People change, all the time. It’s only when individuals get good and ready to change that they do. I also think people change but only because they feel a need to, not because of something that’s done to them.” As for the millions in dead-end jobs, Maybin, whose most grueling set of workshops was with the United States Postal Service, says, “They have to remember it’s just a job; it’s not their life. I always speak as a recovering workaholic — at one point, all I had was my job. So I try to impart to people who are stuck, ‘You can’t change your boss, you can’t change your duties, you can’t change the company, but you sure can make choices about what you do around that and outside of that.’”

For those who stay and share enthusiasm with Maybin afterwards, they seem to be saying that it’s events like this that make working for this bank worthwhile.

— Thomas Larson

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When Elvis Came to San Diego

Hey Jess, me and you
We’ll swallow the light on the stairs
I’ll fix up my hair, we’ll sleep unaware
Hey Jesse, it’s lonely, come home.

— Janis Ian

Tuesday, August 16, 1977, Escondido, California
“The King is dead.”

Danny and I are in a men’s store in Escondido, a store I used to browse when I first loved Elvis and Danny’s father. Don’t step on my blue suede shoes. We have found a pair of thongs big enough for him.

“Elvis Aaron Presley, the Tennessee truck driver whose hip-grinder performance style helped launch the sexual revolution as he became America’s greatest king of rock ‘n’ roll, died Tuesday afternoon of a heart ailment. He was 42.”

Everyone is stopped in their flip-flops.

“His mother, Gladys, died exactly 19 years ago today. She was also 42.”

“That’s suicide, that’s a broken heart,” I mumble.

“That’s All Right, Mama,” his first recorded song.

“I think of her nearly every single day,” he said.

“His twin brother, Jesse Garon, dead in the birth he survived…”

Danny and I drive up the mountain to Ramona in hot summer rain.

“His hips twisted, his body shook, he had a way of looking at you sideways with his chin pulled in,” August; it never rains in Southern California!

“Oh, Mom, it’s awesome out there!” Danny tells me surfer stories. “Whatcha doin’, Danny?” I asked him on the phone. Catchin’ a little wave, Shootin’ a little hoop, Watchin’ a little tube.” How much healthier surfing seems than football, even basketball.

“Just hours before Elvis was reported dead there was a rare hurricane in San Diego. Hurricane Doreen.”

Slick-haired, sneering-lipped, slinky-hipped hurricane, I’m all shook up. I’m 14, waiting for Ramon. A man with the weirdest name sings on the radio, “Heartbreak Hotel,” where the bellhop’s tears flow and the desk clerk’s dressed in black. I see a fat, balding old man, but hear in the haunting protest of his voice that Heartbreak Hotel is where I will room, too, and all of us in this late and terrible time, only the lonely beauty to assuage us. I say aloud, like a prayer, “I love you, Elvis.”

“Why didn’t they name it Hurricane Elvis?” Danny muses as we slosh around the hill, windshield wipers keeping time. He’s so tan, so handsome, his blond Afro bleached neon white from the ocean. Wait until the recruiters see him now. Last spring they were saying he’s the all-around biggest and strongest 16-year-old they’ve ever met.

“They name hurricanes for women,” I snort. Danny knows that rap on sexism.

“Police Chief A.E. Hansen threatened Presley with jail if he ever returned to San Diego and ‘gyrated’ as he did in his 1956 performance.”

Danny and I drive up the mountain to Ramona in hot summer rain. “His hips twisted, his body shook, he had a way of looking at you sideways with his chin pulled in,” August; it never rains in Southern California!

“Hey Jess, me and you
We’ll swallow the light on the stairs
I’ll fix up my hair, we’ll sleep unaware
Hey Jesse, it’s lonely, come home.

— Janis Ian

Tuesday, August 16, 1977, Escondido, California

Your son’s going to be the great white hope,” Ray laid on me again, after picking up Danny at his paternal grandparents’ in Pacific Beach, where he’s been surfing. My brother-in-law doesn’t give a hoot about my disgust. Danny’s his nephew-in-law, and these are the facts if I want to help him in this crucial phase of life. Told me again that if he doesn’t grow any more, 6’5” is tall enough to make it into pro basketball. “Every team, for the fans’ sake, has to have at least one white guy.

“Palomar — where his father played — would be his best bet. Two years of strong play at a good JC…” Palomar, where my brother-in-law teaches. My alma mater too. “Andy Gilmore at Palomar has concern for his players, he’s not into the meat market.”

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"We rioted!" I laugh. "The only time I was part of a mass hysteria, I’ve always been so grateful. Made me understand something I wouldn’t have otherwise."

So I tell my boy — older than I was then — about it. I still have my ticket: One show, Wednesday Only, June 6, 1956, 7:30 p.m. In Person Elvis Presley, RCA Victor Artist, The Nation’s Only Atomic-Powered Singer — 2500 seats only $1.50, San Diego ARENA, 8th and Harbor.

Daddy and Sam the Bank Robber, both from Tennessee, like Elvis, took us, a carload of girls, plus Clarke, my little brother. The others didn’t know who he was. I hardly knew myself, except that I loved him on the radio, and I knew rock ’n roll was important. I’d been arguing about this with Jesse Barns and others who said, just like the adults, it’s trash, not music.

Now I’d gotten this trip together. Descending into Poway from Ramona in Sam’s new Chevy station wagon, a siver of moon setting over the hills, "Blue Moon" came on the car radio. We broke out, "I saw you standing alone..." Funny. "Moonglow" was number one on the charts that week. But "Heartbreak Hotel" was creeping up.

I’d never been to a concert before. I hardly knew what to expect.

"So many girls," my father gasped at the Arena. They dropped us off. "We’ll be waiting right here when you come out."

We walked into the biggest crowd: 2500 seats, but 5000 are jammed in. Ours are a million miles from the stage, up in the rafters, the Arena like an enormous gospel tent. These boring groups keep coming on first, the Flaim Sextet, the square comics. A low hissing, keening, booing, something is growing, then this other thing, the drumming stomping of 10,000 feet to the chant: WE-WANT-ELVIS! WE WANT ELVIS! "Ladies and Gentlemen, the nation’s only atomic-powered singer!"

Twenty-one-year-old Elvis Aaron Presley is standing behind the mike with his legs spread, his head cocked. Not a fat and balding flophouse old man. He hits his guitar, and cellblock number nine, a riot’s going off!

I hear someone screaming. I’m a shy person, but I realize it’s me! “Look at what he’s doing with his legs!” I can’t believe my eyes, what he’s doing with his hips. Neither can anyone else. I’m trying to tell Sylvia, “Look at what he’s doing with his hips!” so afraid she can’t see it, so shocking, so forbidden it is. I scream, “LOOK AT HIS HIPS! LOOK AT HIS THIGHS!” pounding into her left side, which is pounding into my right side in the rhythm of the stomping, but my words are drowned out by thousands of others screaming about his hips his legs his face his hair his clothes his song. I am desperate to tell her, but she can’t hear me, she’s screaming so loud her face is exploding, trying to tell me some-
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thing, the most important thing we've been dying for, for all of eternity.

Solid noise is building, and this enormous wave moves toward the stage, a sea of tortured girl-faces, blinding tears, trying to get to him, girls tumbling into the aisles, crawling over people, the jumping stomping feet. He's doing splits, kneedrops, crawls to the edge of the stage, leaps back from the clutching hands. Then, he…burp. At that, Barbara Evans, who later will be crowned Miss Ramona by Raquel Welch, in the same beauty contest where I will come in last, takes off, dropping down the packed bleacher rows. “I have to,” she mouths up to us, her blue waterpool eyes drowning all protest. “Don’t forget me, you guys, but…I have to…”

She disappears into the 10,000. “I have to touch him, I have to touch…’ the lonely boy on the distant stage strumming his blond guitar, writhing his pelvis just for us…GIRLS! We scream ourselves right out of time, Love, what we were born for, here at last.

Though out there in the night the sirens are already coming for him. Then it’s all over, we are delivered back to Hell, and Elvis is gone. The stage is deserted. It’s just us, torn and kissed and watered with our own tears.

Outside the Arena, Daddy and Sam grab us as we emerge with the mob. My 12-year-old brother Clarke standing there with his mouth open. A battalion of police with billy clubs, red whirring lights, sirens screaming. Thousands of sobbing girls.

“This Elvis Presley came out,” my father is sputtering. “I saw him! They were throwing their underpants at him. The police threw him in the back of a paddy wagon.” To this day, my father still testifies his shock at what he saw in girls that night, enabling her to win the contest. * * *

That summer the war on juvenile delinquency and rock ‘n’ roll escalated. The churches, the courts, the cops went nuts: Nigger music! Fire and brimstone! The media jumped in, selling
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papers. The scapegoat: Elvis Presley.

In early September he’s on The Ed Sullivan Show. I’m pressed close to our set, waiting. I love the United States of America. I believe we have Democracy. Eighteen months ago, Elvis Presley was driving a truck in Memphis for $35 a week. Now he’s earned more than $50,000. Daddy sits behind me on the couch, sullen. The camera is kept above his waist. I’m praying to Jesus: “Show his hips. Show his waist. I’m praying to Jesus: the camera is kept above his waist. I’m screaming, all girls. I’m screaming again, so angry I could die. Only below my breath; I’m praying to the United States of America. I believe we have Democracy. Eighteen months ago, Elvis Presley leaves this realm, I am privileged to see it and to take part of, if we chose.

Three months after The Ed Sullivan Show, the police chief banned him from ever returning to San Diego. “If he puts on the same kind of show here that he did last June, I’ll arrest him for disorderly conduct.”

Now, on the day Elvis Presley leaves this realm, I am hauling up a stormy Clevenger Canyon with my son and dog Moonlight, the road I learned to drive on — miraculously did not die on, or kill anyone else on in the effort to get home by my father’s curfew.

“Hard to imagine,” Danny sighs. “That Elvis Presley could cause... havoc.” The gold hairs on his brown wrists glisten. When they say “biggest” they are talking about his bones, which he gets from my side. His height is from his father, whose bones are long and slender. You’d think width and length would come from the same gene.

“Yeah,” I say. How to explain the rapidity of Elvis’s destruction? Senior year, I was interviewed for the high school paper, Who is your favorite singer? Two years before I was scandalous for loving him; now I was laughed at.

“It started with his first movie, Love Me Tender. They killed him with shame. He had no notion of being obscene; he was doing what came naturally, what his Mama applauded. He thought he was doing the right thing, like the blacks in his neighborhood, the folks in his Holy Roller Church, what happens to the boy and girl in America?” I sneer over the wheel into the rain. “Teenagers are just crazy. It’s hormones or something.”

“They’ll say Elvis and his mother were lovers as they probably say it of us, because in this sick world, sex is the only valid relationship between a man and a woman, and because they are jealous and confused, betrayed, so sickly sexualized.”

A bolt of lightning dives down the other side.

“Bullshit!” I crack too.

“You can’t put off facing contradictions, you have to grow up, become really crazy, evil, right in the face of their so-called love, their Bible papers. The scapegoat: Elvis Presley.”
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How clear this is when you’re a kid, the adults’ sick hypocrisy: their footsteps you’re supposed to follow in. You resist, rebel for as long as you can.

“It was no different then than now, Danny. The teenage crime rate pretty much stays the same, but it’s always hyped as growing worse by each new generation of parents, who have to deny what they once knew. Adulthood in America is the mass psychosis.”

We’re still trying to climb Clevenger Canyon, named for the Indian killer in the novel Ramona. The wind is

unbelievable.

“I raised Elvis to be good and kind,” the radio is quoting his mother. “He came back from boot camp with the whole plumb United States in his pocket.”

“You watch,” I say, “before we get home, they’ll say he was a Mama’s Boy.”

Finally, we hit the top, start coming down into the Santa Maria Valley. The sky is streaked in clouds and colors and lines so fantastic it looks like a painted movie set. “They make a big deal about his music being black, but more than that it’s from his mother’s point of view. Elvis was his mother’s golden child, the grapefruit-size heart he’d been around all his life. He’d been around all the black mamas, and sons and daughters. The connection — he was so young when he hit, still so connected to his mother. In high school he was weird — he wore mascara — didn’t split from her the way boys are supposed to — white boys, at least. He’d been around all those black mamas, and sons like him. The connection enabled him to form the image of the schoolboy, the one who looks like a painted movie star and carries the flog marks he was a scarred man, literally — carried the flog marks on his back. Elvis would say to mystified reporters, ‘Lay off him, you don’t know what he’s been through.’

“They were primitive in their isolation in Tupelo, Mississippi. This was before TV, but there was the radio and music and the church. His mama’s brothers were preachers. Holy Rollers — he hated that term — they were members of the Assembly of God church. They moved a lot, lived on the edge of vital black neighborhoods. The family of three were close in their one-room shacks. Then when he was in high school, they moved to downtown Memphis.

“Elvis was so young when he hit, still so connected to his mother. After all, Jesus denied his mother. The Church, the Army, the Capitalists, the RCA rock ‘n’ roll contract, and prescribed drugs made sure he died — that is, became a man.”

My son still seems to be listening.

“They killed Gladys and Elvis as they do all mothers and sons. Jesus, Jesse, Elvis —

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there are reasons we’re hooked on Elvis. He’s the Son, the male with heart, murdered by his father on the Cross.”

Finally, eyes rolling, Danny gives me his exasperated look.

“That’s the reason you were not raised a Christian. Jesus studied the ancient Goddess religions, tried to deliver the message of Love. More people have been murdered in his name — the Church is evil in its teachings of superiority. It destroyed the mother/son core of the Goddess religions by laying over it the one of the Son dead on the cross — dead to his body, his heart, his mother, his boyhood, his people, the earth, all of nature — to become the Father in heaven. The crucifixion is symbolic of what every son must undergo to attain adulthood in the patriarchy, the martyred death every mother has to release her son to.

“And, because, Danny, we are forbidden to figure out this stuff, because what I am saying to you could get me killed, that’s why that preposterous image, a naked bleeding dead young man nailed to a cross, maintains its omnious power in the world. It’s at the heart of our tragedy, the martyred son, why we have slaughtered so orgastically and why we are doomed for destruction.”

A rolling boom! thunder across the valley in prophetic agreement. I jump slightly and Danny whistles through his teeth.

I make the turn through the deluge. Ramon’s house, onto Olive. Talk about the murdered boy. Even then, I preferred fatherless men, so much more in touch with their hearts. Up the hill, past the shed for his cow where we loved, my boy is still listening.

“By the time of the funeral, someone will dare to say Elvis and his mother were lovers. But it’s fathers who molest the daughters.”

I apologize for the generalization, but having said it, am struck by the revelation.

“God raped Mary! Talk about nonconsensual sex! The father visits himself upon her, she hasn’t the foggiest, the boy born of his dominance must die of his dominance. That’s the patriarchy: He created him, not the woman. By rape, by his almighty power. God, our raping unknowable almighty Father who art in Heaven, that’s the male role model — not that poor foolish boy Jesus!”

I don’t really know how much my son knows of the story.

Myrrh’s father rapes her while her mother is at the annual Goddess rituals. Pregnant, she flees, he catches her, prepares to kill her, but she turns into the Myrrh tree, and as she ossifies, she births her son from her side. Jesus dies on the Myrtle tree with the three Marys at his feet. Wrapped in a hundred pounds of myrrh, he rises first to Mary Magdalene.

“They molest their daughters to cut themselves from their mothers. They rape their daughters for the same reason they want to destroy their sons, to claim them over the mother’s bond that they’ve lost. The daughter is sexually furthest from the now-hated, taboo mother. They’re jealous, crazed, because they have a confusing memory, which is really heartbreaking for the loss of their mother, which is the loss of themselves. So they dream of being back inside her.”

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told me of this sexual memory, of heartbeat mixed with the hormonal rush of puberty; their poems lead back to it. In this culture, there’s only one way to interpret this: they want to fuck their mothers. So they learn not only to deny their longing, they accuse the mother and son of their own perverted desire, and they turn it into straight-out conquest sex, the only allowable relationship with the female, and rape the daughters and sisters to prove they are men. A psychological reversal, a cultural-spiritual dyslexia. Their whole life revolves around this tragedy everyone in this supposedly enlightened culture is blind to.

“Don’t be cruel to a heart that’s true.”

We both laugh. Guess this is our facts-of-life conversation.

“They’ll say Elvis and his mother were lovers as they probably say it of us, because in this sick world, sex is the only valid relationship between a man and a woman, and because they are jealous and confused, betrayed, so sickly sexualized. They will tell you—you have to get away from your mother.”

“The only thing wrong with you, Doubiago,” my son quotes the words of a coach at basketball camp, “you were raised by a hippie mother. He said I got to get my mean together.”

“Talk about castration!” I blow back. The tires are going to blow too from the sharp crunching seed pods. “Talk about Catch-22? Your one true ally is the big taboo, right? This is what happened to your father, Danny. The shame, the humiliation of not wanting to cut from his mother.”

He’s staring stiffly ahead. Lightning flashes across his face, which looks like mine now. Sometimes he looks like his father. What is he supposed to do with these facts of life?

“She capitulates because she wants her son, your father, to be happy. To be a man. To be successful. To be loved in the world. She teaches him to eat, to poop, to walk, to talk, to read. She helps him out into the cruel world. But also, and here’s the schizophrenia of it, she’s been taught that a strong mother and a weak father is dangerous for her son, will make him a homosexual, a weirdo. No one sees that this combination was the source of Elvis Presley’s greatness—not to mention the historical Jesus, with Joseph as his father—and why the world responded so greatly. So she remains subservient to the weak man. She’s trying to be feminine, to be Christian.”

I’m trying hard not to rant, not to turn him off. “The mother-son relationship is the great taboo. The son must learn to hate his mother. This is Judeo-Christianity, capitalism, patriarchy. Nothing would work as it does if the mother and the son weren’t killed.”

“My mother once told me,” he sings, finally letting me know he’s had enough. “My papa too.”

“Okay.”

But barreling down Olive like a river to my parents’ house I grow up in, was most unhappy in, though they wanted to be good parents, Elvis singing, “I don’t care if the sun don’t shine”—Oh, that he died on the day she died, that suicide—I’m seeing the alchemy of mother and son. Jesus coming across the sand from the East, where he’s studied with the Goddess religion. In the original societies, the mother/son relationship is the core, not the masculine imbalance of the father/son core of the patriarchy.

“The Cherokee—did you know Elvis was part Cherokee, like us? They did not allow fathers to discipline their sons. A Cherokee child was never hit. One would lose one’s self-dignity. Soon the whole tribe would. Guidance came from the mother and her brothers. It was understood that male rule becomes dominance. The male ego not in balance with the female becomes hatred—of children and the female, of others, of nature—hated is the only way to maintain dominance. So the masculine role model must come through the other side, just as the son came through her body. Your mother’s brothers—that’d be Clarke for you. Just as you would be the role model for your sister’s Shawn’s sons.”

Oh! Goddess. That chalice of male essence, held holy down through the mother’s family. The structure of family gets turned around when the mother’s power is not despised and destroyed. Why don’t we study these things? How were children raised in those war-free, sensuous-loving, ancient matrilineal societies? What were the roles of male and female? How would Goddess worship—as opposed to God worship, with its decree of female subservience—and revered mother/son, brother/sister relationships affect the lover relationship? The father relationship? The sister and daughter relationship? The individual psyche?
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**CHE? The structure of society?**

We’re headed right into the turkey farm at the foot of Giant’s Grave.

“There are lots of fucked-up mothers, Danny.”

The turkeys are bunched up under the long sheds. I barely make the turn, hearing in Hurricane Doreen’s pounding one of my mother’s oldest aphorisms: “When a woman goes bad, she’s more evil than a man.”

“Women are products, just like the men, victims of patriarchy. What I’m talking about is not so much physiological, you got penis-I-got-vagina, but psychological. Everyone gets twisted.”

As I make the next 90-degree turn, he’s singing, “That’s all right, Mamma, any way with me…”

The radio carries it on.

“When he graduated from high school, he went to a record store to make a disc to give to his mother, ‘My Happiness.’”

“God, I never thought to wonder what happened to him that night in custody of the San Diego Police.”

“As far as anyone knows, the last time he ever sang was this morning at 7:00 a.m., just before he went to bed. Elvis was a night person. He played the piano, and the last song he did was ‘Blue Eyes Crying in the Rain.’ He used to say that when he died it would rain all over the country, and he was right, it is raining, folks, even in the desert, even in Las Vegas!”

Or what happened to him in boot camp, custody of the U.S. Army, Jesus at the hands of the Romans. **...**

Danny greets us as we pull up the hill, the rain threatening to undermine his new asphalt drive. This hill I waited for Ramon to climb. That pepper tree. To come through my window.

“More letters,” Daddy hands them to Danny as we climb out of Roses. “For Dan the Man…Dan the Recruiter.”

Jim Stanley again, head football coach at Oklahoma State University; Rich Brooks, head football coach at the University of Oregon; Terry Shea, from Utah State University; letters from football coaches at UCLA, UNLV, ASU. One basketball coach, Stan Morrison, at University of the Pacific. Daddy reads to Danny in front of a 30-foot saguaro cactus. The same thick wrists and fingers, but my son towers over my father’s six feet.

“It was a distinct pleasure to have an opportunity to meet you at the Squaw Valley Basketball Camp. I am most impressed with you both as an athlete and as a young man… Over the upcoming year, you may rest assured that you will hear a great deal more from us… I hope you realize you really are a basketball player, not a football player… Please forward my regards to Coach Mastin. I sincerely trust that one day you will find a way to thank him for his enthusiasm and help…”

Why do these guys make me see the Colonel chewing his cigar? I want you, I need you, I love you.

Inside, in front of the TV, the 13-year-olds, my
daughter Shawn and Clarke’s daughter Chelli, are miming, “You ain’t nothin’ but a hound dog!” They crack up laughing, falling on the floor. "Ugh, Elvis Presley! So fat, so boring, so...’60s.”

“Hoping to avoid controversy, Steve Allen dressed Elvis in a tuxedo and had him sing to a dog.”

I start to tell them, then give up. Sit down and watch the television behind their wonderfully wiggly bodies.

“Although he complied, Elvis was furious. Less than 24 hours later, he walked into RCA’s New York studios to record ‘Hound Dog,’ pouring his true feelings into the music, a shocking burst of noise, defying every uptight arbiter of good taste. Incredible ringing music! There are places on ‘Baby, Let’s Play House’ and ‘Mystery Train’ where Elvis, unable to restrain himself in the presence of Scotty Moore’s soaring, thundering guitar, shouts right out loud and laughs with the sheer exhilaration of it.”

See the genius of Elvis Presley, his shocking boy strength. Elvis was a good old boy, that’s why he’s so loved. He never became a man, only more passive, introverted, controlled, rich, fat, drugged, victimized, and martyred. Could fuck only 15-year-olds. Never the authoritarian, the Colonel, the coaches, never God — no one really loves those guys — but like Jesus, Elvis stayed the son.

Nine years on the run from 33, he’s dead on the cross. Father’s orders.

“He was accused of fornicating with a dog onstage in Hollywood… The next night every movie star in the business was in the front row.”

The muchachas are in paroxysms. Me too. I could cry. I’m in kindergarten. Music’s not allowed in our house. Daddy complains when Mama hums at the kitchen sink. She explains that his mama was a Southern Baptist. Singing is a sin except in church. Even though Grandpa, the Devil of Duketown, never missed the Grand Ole Opry on the radio. Daddy’s not used to a woman singing, but someday I will have a piano, she’s working on it. Then Karen Pohlman gets an electric pedal slide steel guitar for her sixth birthday. After she has her lessons, she sets up on the sidewalk out front of

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her house and gives me mine.
In her cowboy boots, in my red ones, beneath her hat, beneath mine, she holds the heavy metal bar in her hand, plucks and presses the fingers on the other one to the strings, slides my hand down. Oh!...the...sound...exactly...that sound...dear Jesus I was born to. Cliffor.

The radio, the sound, the guitar, the summer. The beat of Ramoni’s body against mine. All the lonesome years later, I danced as I vacummed down this, my mother’s long living room, the echo of old lobby of my father’s heart-break hotel.

Oh, Elvis, I’ve been mourning your death since high school.

Nightmares all night. Trying to clean my ears with Q-tips. “Are you lonesome tonight?” Dreams of running from the landlord, hiding in a boarding house on a bad street. Stabbing my love in the groin, rushing him to the hospital. What happens to the boy in America?

Awake. Afraid. Coyotes screeching across the scorchd hills. Until he comes through the window from the pepper tree and lies beside me, the thoroughache of my body for his hands, his smell, the sound of rock ‘n roll. The deep guttural piano beat. A million zillion feet. The music that’s been beaten out. These crazy explosions. What you hear. The scrape of the tree against the house, Santa Ana. The holl of the universe’s blood rocking through the body. I’m seven. He comes to me. Eight. When I’m most afraid. Nine. Nightly. Ten. My Personal Savior. Eleven. The Living Flesh. Twelve. Always he stands there beside my bed. Takes me in his arms, the smell of living flesh, the sound of light. He moves me over and across the world, into the hearts of the enemy, Hitler, the Russians, the Koreans. The feel of his flesh upon me, love thy enemy. Thirteen. Turn on the light.

Wednesday, August 17, 1977, Ramona, California Flags at half-mast in Memphis; 80,000 view his body in front of Graceland, “Even Elvis, it seems, would have been surprised by the public outpouring.”

“The storm is over. “There will be peace in the valley.” Danny and Daddy gone deep-sea fishing. Shawn and Chelli gone school-shopping with Mama, Open The San Diego Union.

The Statue of Liberty Look-Alike Link

“200 Elvis Presley imitators have arrived at the base of the Statue of Liberty in New York Harbor. Comparison of the close-up of Miss Liberty, left, with a photograph of Presley, right, will reveal why the performance is a fitting tribute.”

Wow! The face of Liberty looks more like Elvis than Elvis does himself!

“The face buried deep in the white satin lining of the coffin, its configuration, and particularly the dark shadowing around the eyes, makes Elvis in death resemble his mother Gladys.”

Your mother begged you to love Pat Boone instead of Elvis Presley.

Now you’re 36. When Marilyn was 36, she killed herself. Or was murdered. America’s great white hopes. Your son will be. Pull from the shelf Look Homeward Angel. “The earth was spenny for him like a big woman.” Mama’s father’s favorite book, your redhead Cherokee-Irish grandpa. Dead at 36. Thomas Wolfe was 67.” “My advice, Dan? Grow two more inches.” What happens to the boy? Gladys Love birthed two, Jesse Garon and Elvis Aron. He was always so lonely, he’s my brother, he’s not heavy, carried Jesse with him into this Vale of Sorrow, oh Mama.

“He dissolved into a
I lost 240 lbs!

If you are overweight by 100 pounds or more, isn’t it time to take control of your life and your health? At Alvarado Hospital Medical Center’s Weight Loss Program your health and well-being is our biggest priority. Our experienced bariatric surgeons have performed thousands of weight loss surgeries. In fact, the first reported laparoscopic gastric bypass surgery was performed here at Alvarado Hospital. At our free seminars you can personally meet one of our highly skilled bariatric surgeons, who will discuss the risks and benefits of laparoscopic weight loss surgery. Our dedicated and compassionate staff understands your situation. Why wait? You only have your life to gain.

“‘When I was 240 pounds heavier I couldn’t even walk up stairs without getting short of breath. Now I’m running, crewing, and playing golf. I just wish I could play as good as I look!’”

— Kelly Valencia, RN (Nurse)
presentation of his myth, and so did his music, his voice prostituted to a huge orchestra. Where once it reverberated in his throat, gradually it sank down into his chest…smoother, still gradually it sank down into reverberated in his throat, “I’ll have a blue, blue Christmas without you.”

Daddy and Sam watched us, before busting in. “Did he come, Sharon? Did he come inside you?” Forbidden to ever see my Love again.

Midnight, Sunrise Highway, Spiritual Point
Big Mama Thornton is singing the “Elvis Presley National Anthem,” the original “Hound Dog,” thumping and screeching into the deep star night future. Moonlight is pissing on every shrub, deep star night future. Moonlight is pissing on every shrub, deep star night future. Moonlight is pissing on every shrub, deep star night future.

“Don’t know how I’m gonna make it,” he cried when she died, grief like no other. “What happens to the boy? Each year that passes before busting through Perseus, try—

And he didn’t.

What happens to the boy? Each year that passes from his birth is a year further from her. “They said you were high class, but that was just a lie.” That jet overhead, Vandenburg, Edwards, China Lake…

Throw a rock, the ball through the hoop, for the baby boys hunted through time and the land, the broken Libra moon sinking all the way back to Las Vegas, the whole plumb United States meat market in his pocket.

“I saw you standing alone. Without a dream in your heart.”

Just a fat balding flop-house old man.

Guess I’ll sleep here, my prayer — ooh, remember that great song? — as we pass through Perseus, trying to kill the many-headed goddess. Be here when the sun comes up on the desert floor, the boulders and arroyos of Cuyamaca leading the revolt against the mission. Here where they have their Easter sunrise service, here where they raise the cross before the sun. But look now, see, the body’s not in the tomb. He’s coming out to meet you.

Oh, Jesse, between the moon and the stars, for God’s sake, let your brother through that door.

— Sharon Doubiago

**Stop Smoking in One Hour with Hypnosis**

All you nicotine junkies who really want to quit but can’t summon up the wherewithal to do it might be interested to know there are a couple of specialists who guarantee they can help even the most hardened smokers to give ‘em up — in just one hour!

Kirk and Rebecca Zacharda of Premier Hypnotherapy use a hypnosis technique that turns cigarette “addicts” into non-smokers in sixty minutes. The system they use has proven to have a 95% success rate. And, they offer a Lifetime Guarantee — which means that if you ever start smoking again, all you have to do is give them a call and they will get you in for a back-up session at no extra charge.

Kirk and Rebecca are recognized by the American Board of Hypnotherapy, as certified master practitioners of smoking cessation.

“The unique, precise, breakthrough technique that we use combines hypnosis with a new science known as Neuro-Linguistic Psychology,” explain Kirk and Rebecca. “This takes the power of hypnosis to a new level in helping people take back control of their lives without cigarettes. They say, ‘Because smoking is a habit, it is controlled by the unconscious mind.’ And, since hypnosis and NLP work directly with the unconscious, this is the only method that makes sense.”

Kirk and Rebecca emphasize that in order to achieve success, the client has to really want to overcome the cigarette habit. They clarify, “Hypnosis can’t make a person do something that they don’t want to do; buy, it’s fantastic at making them do what they DO want to do.” “If a client truly wants to give up the nicotine habit then they will be successful with this program.”

You can contact Premier Hypnotherapy at 800-883-5784.
**Local Events**

**New Year’s Day Activities**

- **Ice Skates, Go-Karts, Boat Rides, Fresh Air**
  - Coco Gaiter, concierge for the Manchester Grand Hyatt. For those who prefer a guided experience, Gaiter recommends the Old Town Trolley Tour. "I learned a lot about Old Town and how San Diego originated," she says. "When Stingaree (a new restaurant and club downtown) first came out I was, like, ‘That’s a really cool name,’ but now I know there’s actually a story behind it. Before San Diego was a major city, there was a red-light district, an area for gambling and prostitution they called the Stingaree.”
  - Michael Anderson, concierge for Estancia La Jolla Hotel & Spa, says January 1 is a good day to golf. "Torrey Pines is open 365 days a year," says Anderson. "But on New Year’s Day it should be unusually quiet, and there should be available parking, which never happens.”
  - If all of the tee times are taken, Anderson suggests heading to downtown La Jolla for some window shopping and a meal at the Asian restaurant Roppongi. "Dining in downtown La Jolla is always busy," says Anderson. "It’s a great day to set goals with your family. Get everyone a new calendar and set five goals for this year. Have lunch, enjoy the outdoors, walk on the beach, take the beauty in, and appreciate a new year and a fresh start.”
  - "Go out on a sailboat or a bigger harbor excursion boat," says Alfonso Villa, concierge for the Marriott Hotel & Marina. "You’d have most of the boat to yourself. It’s also a great time to charter a boat and have a little private party on the bay.”
  - "Last year I went to lunch with a friend at [Trattoria] La Strada and walked to Seaport Village and looked at the view,” says Gagliardi. "It’s a good day to relax at home. Get everyone a new calendar and set five goals for this year. Have lunch, enjoy the outdoors, walk on the beach, take the beauty in, and appreciate a new year and a fresh start.”

**Additional Information**

- **Ice skating** at the Hotel Del Coronado $13.50 for children aged 4 to 12. For those who prefer a guided experience, Gaiter recommends the Old Town Trolley Tour. "I learned a lot about Old Town and how San Diego originated," she says. "When Stingaree (a new restaurant and club downtown) first came out I was, like, ‘That’s a really cool name,’ but now I know there’s actually a story behind it. Before San Diego was a major city, there was a red-light district, an area for gambling and prostitution they called the Stingaree.”
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**Ice skaters at Hotel Del Coronado**

**Harbor Excursions**

- **Del Mar Holiday of Lights:** 858-755-7171 or www.holidayoflights.com
- **Miramar Speed Circuit:** 858-586-7500 or www.miramarspeedcircuit.com
- **Torrey Pines Golf Course:** 877-581-7500 or www.torreypinesgolfcourse.com
- **Oceanfront Ice Skating at Hotel Del:** 619-435-6611 or www.hoteldel.com/holidays
- **Old Town Trolley Tours:** 619-298-8687 or www.trolleytours.com

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- **Torrey Pines Golf Course:** 877-581-7500 or www.torreypinesgolfcourse.com
- **Oceanfront Ice Skating at Hotel Del:** 619-435-6611 or www.hoteldel.com/holidays
- **Old Town Trolley Tours:** 619-298-8687 or www.trolleytours.com
**OUTDOORS**

**Gray Whale Migration** off San Diego County’s coast peaks in January. The best view spots from land are high points close to the surf. Aside from the whale-watching overlook at Cabrillo National Monument, try Sunset Cliffs, the vest-pocket parks and dead-end streets from Pacific Beach to Scripps Park in La Jolla, various ocean overlooks on the trail system at Torrey Pines State Reserve, the cliffs opposite Carmel Valley Road south of Del Mar, overlooks opposite Lomas Santa Fe Drive in Solana Beach, and various cusp-shaped viewpoints and beach-access stairways in Encinitas and Leucadia. Scan the ocean a few hundred yards to a couple of miles out using high-powered binoculars. Best times for viewing are about 9 a.m.—noon.

**Basic Birding** program by Tom Troy, Saturday, December 30, 8:30 a.m., at Buena Vista lagoon lancing. Emphasis on using binoculars, spotting scopes, field guides, local resources. Free. Directions: 760-439-2473. (ENCINITAS)

**FILM**

*The Last 6K of 2006,* 6K family run, Sunday, December 31, 9 a.m., starts and finishes at Unidad CREA, Zona Río, (619) 542-1305. (TAMALPA)

*Rival,* tribute to Agustín Lara by Hernán del Riego, Sara Castro, and Felipe Nájera, with music by Unidad CREA, Zona Río. 011-52-9-9556-8200. $9 a.m., starts and finishes at Unidad CREA, Zona Río. 011-52-9-9556-8200. (ENCINITAS)

**DANCE**

Out of many dance opportunities in San Diego County’s coast peaks in January. The best view spots from land are high points close to the surf. Aside from the whale-watching overlook at Cabrillo National Monument, try Sunset Cliffs, the vest-pocket parks and dead-end streets from Pacific Beach to Scripps Park in La Jolla, various ocean overlooks on the trail system at Torrey Pines State Reserve, the cliffs opposite Carmel Valley Road south of Del Mar, overlooks opposite Lomas Santa Fe Drive in Solana Beach, and various cusp-shaped viewpoints and beach-access stairways in Encinitas and Leucadia. Scan the ocean a few hundred yards to a couple of miles out using high-powered binoculars. Best times for viewing are about 9 a.m.—noon.

**Basic Birding** program by Tom Troy, Saturday, December 30, 8:30 a.m., at Buena Vista lagoon lancing. Emphasis on using binoculars, spotting scopes, field guides, local resources. Free. Directions: 760-439-2473. (ENCINITAS)

**FILM**

*The Last 6K of 2006,* 6K family run, Sunday, December 31, 9 a.m., starts and finishes at Unidad CREA, Zona Río, (619) 542-1305. (TAMALPA)

*Rival,* tribute to Agustín Lara by Hernán del Riego, Sara Castro, and Felipe Nájera, with music by Unidad CREA, Zona Río. 011-52-9-9556-8200. $9 a.m., starts and finishes at Unidad CREA, Zona Río. 011-52-9-9556-8200. (ENCINITAS)
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**ROAM-ORAMA**


With a little hypebole added, you might think of the upper San Diego River area as being San Diego County’s “Little Yosemite.” A number of waterfalls 100 or so feet high exist either on the main San Diego River, or along its tributaries. None are much to look at most of the year, but all revive in a dramatic way after periods of heavy rainfall. Cedar Creek Falls and Mission Trails Falls come to mind immediately — two new named cascades Devils Jumpoff is also worth a look this season, assuming we get a good dose of precipitation.

The rim of the Devils Jumpoff cliff lies on private land with no access. The bottom of the cliff can be reached over national forest territory, but a diff- 
ficult canyon-bottom hike would be required to reach it. Despite those impediments, a distant view of the Jumpoff is possible if you’re willing to drive out to San Diego County Estates and walk for just two miles along Cleveland National Forest’s “West Side Road.”

Use either Eastwood Canyon Road out of the Lakeside or San Vicente Road South of Ramona to drive into the rural housing development of San Diego County Estates. Continue east on San Vicente Road and Ramona Oaks Road to reach the farthest east point within the development, right on the boundary of Cleveland National Forest.

Park on the street and walk up the “driveway” that curls north and uphill along the easternmost houses. After 0.1 mile you pass a gate that keeps vehicles out. After another 0.3 mile, pavement ends. Continue walking on the unpaved West Side Road. The next houses here and for as far as the eye can see were scorched during the early phases of the Cedar fire. Now, more than three years later, the charred vegetation is growing back, and a fraction of the scattered oak trees — Engelmann oaks and coast live oaks — are showing signs of survival.

After 2.0 miles of gradual ascent, totaling 800 feet of elevation gain, you reach a makeshift barrier. This is where the national forest land ends and unposted private property lies ahead. By this time, you may have already heard the distant roar of cascading water.

From the road’s end, hike east or northeast about 200 yards, dodging low-growing shrubbery, to a crest where Dye Canyon awakens, and the Jumpoff ies in clear sight about half a mile away. There, a bub- by mixture of water bounces down more than 100 feet of the nearly sheer face of the cliff. Binoculars will surely enhance the view.

This article contains information about a publicly owned recreation or wilderness area. Trails and path- ways are not always marked. Conditions can change rapidly. Hikers should be properly equipped and have safety and navigational skills. The Reader and Jerry Schad assume no respon- sibility for any adverse experience.

**WEST SIDE ROAD**

Hike the West Side Road near Ramona to view the Devils Jumpoff.

Distance from downtown San Diego: 50 miles
Length: 4 miles round trip
Difficulty: Moderate

**Bumble Bee Seafoods Holiday Bowl 5K Run**
- **Steps off at 9:30 a.m. on Thursday, December 28, 2006**, at North Harbor Drive and Ash Street, proceeding along waterfront. Race-day regis- tration: 8 a.m. 858-268-1250.

**The 2006 Pacific Life Holiday Bowl**
- **California Golden Bears and Texas A&M Aggies is Thursday, December 28, 5 p.m. in Qualcomm Stadium. Tickets:** 858-283-5808, available through Ticketmaster: 619-283-3088.

**Highland Valley Super Express, Serra Club bicyclists take step on grade at a brisk pace for ride on Saturday, December 30.**
- **The 59-er (or 75-er if Highway 52 is closed to cyclists) begins at 8 a.m. from McDonald’s parking lot (10599 Tierrasanta Boulevard). Bring money for snacks 858-722-9992 (TIERASANTA).**

**Whale Watching by Kayak**
- **At La Jolla Ecological Preserve hosted by Hike Bike Kayak San Diego 92266 Avenida de la Playa on Saturday, December 30, 9 a.m. and 12 noon; $60 for singles, $30 for doubles. Fee includes guided tour, equipment, and snacks. Required reservations:** 858-531-9510 (LA Jolla).**

**Cabrillo Monument Bike Tour**
- **Begin at Allen Kayaks (819 Fer- nando Place) and covers Cabrillo, downtown, and beach areas. Sat- urday, December 30, 9-3 a.m. Ages 10 and up $15 includes bike rental plus $6 for park entrance fee. 858-488-3999.**

**Vow to Exercise when retired judge administers “oath to prac- tice good health and exercise in 2007” at New Year’s Resolution 3-Mile Run or Walk at noon, Sunday, December 31, at Sunridge Park (952.624.3687). Free. 619-271-6600.**

**Last Ride of 2006 with Knuckerkickers, Sunday, December 31.**
- **The 40-mile ride com- mences at 9 a.m. from parking lot at Lake Shore Drive and Main Avenue. Bring money for lunch at Cafe 67. 619-235-2890. SANDiego CHARGERS host Ari- zona Cardinals on Sunday, Decem- ber 31, 1:15 p.m. in Qualcomm Stadium. Game broadcast on Fox listen on radio station KIOZ, Rock 105.3. Tickets start at $54, available through Ticketmaster 619-220-8000.**

**Witness the Gray Whale Migration during outings hosted by Birch Aquarium and San Diego Harbor Excursions daily through April 1.**

**A “Paper Theatre Festival” by** staff of Arts Libraries at UCSD is underway. In the Victorian era, families purchased theater posten, cut and paste together scale-model replicas; scripts were included, so families could mount their own productions. An exhibit in January in exhibit cases of UCSD’s Geisel Li- brary (lower level, west wing). For: 858-534-2086 (LA Jolla).
Holiday of Lights at Del Mar Fairgrounds is display of seasonal festive lights, with holiday-themed displays and more than 400 displays on view through Monday, January 1. Visitors view lit creations from their vehicles, driving along 1.5-mile route through fairgrounds, around racetrack. Hours: 5:30–10 p.m. Sundays–Thursdays, 5:30 to 11 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays. Admission: $13 per vehicle (up to five people), $18 per vehicle with six or more people. 858-793-5555.

Skating by the Sea, outdoor ice-skating rink overlooking Pacific Ocean remains open for skating through December at Hotel del Coronado (1500 Orange Avenue). Three-hour skating sessions begin at 11 a.m., 2, and 6 p.m. daily ($20 general, $15 for kids). Skate rental: $5. 619-435-6611. (CORONADO)

Ring in 2007! Year-end bell-ringing Buddhist ritual purges 108 frailties and passions experienced during year, allowing for fresh new year. Program includes history of Friendship Bell, sutra chanting, incense offering; parading big wooden log against chanting, bonsho bell during ceremony on Sunday, December 31, at 11:30 p.m. Shelter Island Friendship Bell is located at 1402 Shelter Island Drive. Free. 760-944-9226. (DEL MAR)

San Diego Boat Show, over 500 boats and yachts, boating and sailing seminars, kids’ area, and live music, January 4-7 at San Diego Convention Center and Marriott Marina (111 West Harbor Drive). Hours: Thursdays and Sundays 10 a.m. – 5 p.m., Fridays 10 a.m. – 9 p.m., Saturdays 10 a.m. – 8 p.m. Free. 760-943-7685. (ESCONDIDO)

Penguin Plunge, a frosty dip in the ocean marks the beginning of the new year for many who participate in this annual event sponsored by Del Mar lifeguards, Del Mar Community Services Department, and Poseidon Restaurant. Take the plunge Monday, January 1, 11 a.m. in front of Poseidon (1670 Coast Boulevard). Free. 760-937-0896. Dress warmly. Free. (DEL MAR)

San Diego Comedy, at The Comedy Palace, Saturday, December 30 (SEE IN PERSON)

NOTICE OF UNCLAIMED PROPERTY

If you believe you may have unclaimed property in a state or federal treasury, contact the appropriate agency.

SALES TAX

The sales tax rate in San Diego County is currently 8.25%. This includes state, local, and county sales taxes.

DANCE for $30

Classes Still Open

Monday: Argentine Tango

Tuesday: Latin/Ballroom* • Nightclub 2-step • Hustle

Wednesday: Salsa* • West Coast Swing

Thursday: Lindy Hop* • West Coast Swing

Friday: Salsa* • West Coast Swing

Country-Western Two-Step*

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OUT & ABOUT

PENGUIN PLUNGE
in Del Mar, Monday, January 1
(SEE SPECIAL)

MUSEUMS
Chinese Historical Society and Museum, collection of colorful paintings by farmers from Shan-dong Province depicting their daily life of farming, fishing, festivities continues through December. See artifacts from San Diego’s Chinese and Chinese-American history, culture, and art. Current museum artifacts include a 1920s warlord’s bed, exhibits on Chinese foottbinding 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 404 Third Avenue (at J Street). 619-338-9888.

Antique Gas and Steam Engine Museum, the museum locates, collects, documents, and preserves historical gas-, steam-, and horse-powered equipment related to agriculture and the general development of America. The collection is made up of equipment used in lumbering, mining, oil drilling, and construction industries. Blacksmith and wheellwright shop, country kitchen and parlor, steam-operated saw mill, and 1/3-scale train. Find the museum at 2404 North Santa Fe Avenue. 760-941-1791. (NCRT)

Bonita Museum and Cultural Center, 14th annual “Teller Magi Festival,” boasting over 750 sets of Wise Men from more than 50 countries, closes Saturday, January 6. The museum highlights the history of the Sweetwater Valley from the mid-1800s, with historical photographs, artifacts, tools, and farming implements, the district’s 1953 fire engine, and bound

LOCAL EVENTS

Friday, noon to 8 p.m., Saturday 10 a.m. to 8 p.m., and Sunday 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. $10 adults, $5 kids 12–16, free for kids under 12. 858-274-9924.

Mission Hills Celebrates 99th Anniversary, with events on Saturday, January 20, at Francis Parker Elementary School (4301 Randolph Street). “Preserving Bungalows — Green Homes for the 21st Century” presented by “bungalow expert,” preservationist, designer, author Jane Powell at 12:30 p.m. She’ll provide insights into appreciating, preserving older homes. $20.

“Good Housekeeping” is the theme for 90-minute walking tour starting at 2:15 p.m. During tour, learn about historic paint colors, “sensitive additions and remodels,” more. $15. Attend both events for $30. Reservations: 619-497-1195. (MUSEUM HILL)

LOCAL EVENTS

FOR KIDS

Tots and Tales, interactive story time for preschoolers at San Diego Humane Society and SCPA involves crafts and animals, Thursday, December 28, 10:30 a.m. $2. Humane Society, 5500 Gaines Street. Reservations: 619-243-3432. (UNDA SYS)

“Jonah,” San Diego Branch Production’s original musical production’s theme for 90-minute walking tour will be performed at Sunshine Brooks Theatre (217 North Coast Highway), Saturday, December 30, at 8 p.m. and Sunday, December 31, at 2 p.m. $15 adults. $10 children. 858-775-4137. (OCEANVIEW)

FOR KIDS

Homes. $20.

12:30 p.m. She’ll provide insights into appreciating, preserving older homes. $20. “Good Housekeeping” is the theme for 90-minute walking tour starting at 2:15 p.m. During tour, learn about historic paint colors, “sensitive additions and remodels,” more. $15. Attend both events for $30. Reservations: 619-497-1195. (MUSEUM HILL)
Copies back to the 1930s of the Chula Vista Star News. Find the museum at 4355 Bonita Road; 619-267-5141. Campo Railroad Museum, showcasing more than 130 years of American railroad history and technology through static and operating exhibits, the museum includes cabooses, steam and diesel locomotives, track motorcars, 1880s “Jim Crow” segregated passenger cars.

Interpretive 1.5-hour train rides offered each weekend (11 a.m., 2:30 p.m.) over portion of the San Diego and Arizona Eastern Railway. Find the depot on Highway 94 at Forrest Gate Road. 619-465-7776. (CAMPO)

Chula Vista Heritage Museum the museum features glimpses of Chula Vista’s past; exhibits feature 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; 619-420-6916. (CHULA VISTA)

Creation Museum, a museum contrasting the evolution and creation world views is located at 10946 Woodside Avenue North. For more information, call 619-448-0980 x231. (SANTE)

Gemological Institute of America Museum, permanent exhibits include displays depicting science and art of gemstones and history, lore and cultural significance of jewelry. Find the GIA at 5345 Armada Drive. Required reservations 800-421-3343. (LA JOLLA)

George White and Anna Gunn Marston House, historic home sits on five acres of landscaped grounds with a formal English Romantic garden. Built for civic leader and department store 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. (HILLCREST)

Heritage Museum, an interpretive wall, replicas of the early post-Dream of America Museum, located at 360 Third Avenue. 619-298-3142. (HILLCREST)

The San Diego and Arizona Eastern Railway Museum is an interpretive wall, replicas of the early post-Dream of America Museum, located at 360 Third Avenue. 619-298-3142. (HILLCREST)

The Chula Vista Heritage Museum specializes in 10946 Woodside Avenue North. For more information, call 619-448-0980 x231. (SANTE)

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What's Open Now

A fascination examination. — Library Journal

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:
Larry Kahaner is an award-winning journalist and author of eight books, including Competitive Intelligence. His writings have appeared in Business Week, The Washington Post, International Herald Tribune, and the Christian Science Monitor.

A CONVERSATION WITH THE AUTHOR:
AK-47. It stands for Automatic and Kalashnikov (its inventor), then 47 for the year it was born. “You’ve actually fired the AK-47.”

“Of sure, many times,” says Larry Kahaner.

“How did you like it? It’s a funny weapon, because you feel as if it’s going to fall apart. But it doesn’t. It’s not as accurate as you think, or as you’d like, but it just never breaks down, and it’s very easy to use.”

“You don’t really need to study a manual to operate it or receive a lot of training.”

“No,” he says, “you don’t. Someone could show you how to use it in ten minutes. A child could operate it, and they do. In a good number of Middle-Eastern countries, kids at 12 receive an AK as their rite-of-passage present. The first American casualty in Afghanistan, Sgt. Nathan Chapman, was killed by a 14-year-old boy with an AK. There are whole armies of kids in Africa armed with the AK.”

“And it’s indestructible. You mention Colonel David Hackworth, the most decorated American soldier to come out of Korea. He and his men unearthed a buried AK-47 in Vietnam. He took it right out of the mud, kicked back the rusted bolt, and fired it off.”

“No, rebels and drug gangs in South America or Central America would bury them after a conflict, with the expectation that they could just dig them up and use them again when needed.”

“I was fascinated that the piece of genius in the AK-47 seems to be something that’s almost counterintuitive. Namely, that Mikhail Kalashnikov deliberately made the parts looser, with much greater tolerances. So the components aren’t seated that precisely and tightly. And that this is what made the weapon so sturdy and tolerant of abuse and dirt.”

“You, when you think about it, kind of makes sense. If you have water or dirt in an AK and put a round in, it will just push the mud and mess out. It doesn’t get stuck or jam easily, because the parts don’t mesh so tightly and don’t need to be so exactly aligned to work. In most weapons, it’s just the opposite. Brilliantly enough, it’s the same characteristic that allows the AK-47 to also fire the bullets of many opponents’ weapons. So the Vietcong, for instance, could use cap-

The only one of fourevery produced, and its designer... — Library Journal

The Washington Post, International

HISTORICAL PROGRESSION

WHAT THE CRITICS SAY:

J.A. Cooley Museum, an eclectic collection of items — including displays on phonographs, 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, “some classics and a concept car.” Find the museum at 4233 Park Boulevard, 619-296-3112. (UNITED HEIGHTS)

Leo Carrillo Ranch Historic Park, old adobe buildings were once vacation retreat and working ranch of actor Leo Carrillo. Tours through the museum, 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. (RENEWED)
tured ammunition in their weapons, where we couldn’t. “It’s that forking?” “Yeah. You could even use junky ammunition that’s been sitting around in the jungle for a year or two. It doesn’t have to be perfect; the AK will still fire it. You don’t find that in other rifles.” “How many Kalashnikov models are there?” “A lot. One hundred million rifles have been manufactured in 20 countries. In the Soviet Union, you had the AK-47, AK-74, the 100 series, and the AKM, which is the one you see most often on TV and in magazines. It’s got a wooden stock and fires a large caliber 7.62mm bullet. Aside from the Rumanian model you can purchase on the internet for $350 and have sent to your home, the price can get as low as $10 in some places in the world, elsewhere three or four cattle will buy one, or a kilo of cocaine sulfate. Or you might get an AK as part of a dowry. In Afghanistan you have people buying and selling the weapons, repairing them, making custom copies, transporting them. It’s like another economic system that revolves around the AK because it’s so ubiquitous. People think nothing of carrying it in the street; it’s part of the culture.” “Is it legal in Iraq to own a gun?” “In Iraq it is legal for a family to have a least one weapon in their home, and they always choose an AK.” “Were Russian children required to know how to tear down and reassemble an AK?” “It’s true, yes. They met there for the first time.” “Stoner arrived in his own plane.” “I didn’t realize they had actually met.” “Yes, in Washington. The Smithsonian ran a program tapping great inventors, and their curator Ed Ezell brought them both in. Kalashnikov and Stoner actually met.” “Where Kalashnikov makes his money now,” says Kahener, “is through his worldwide celebrity status. The Russian weapons car- tel flies him to big arms shows to sign autographs and promote sales. He has also lent his name to a vodka. It comes in a bottle shaped like his rifle.” “You’ve fired the M-16 as well. What did that feel like?” “If you’ve fired a .22 rifle at squirrels or targets, it’s not that much different. It’s a very smooth, very sleek weapon. It feels good in the hand. And it doesn’t have much of a recoil.” “Which would you opt for?” “I’m a very bad shot — not a professional soldier. I’m not going to be one to clean it, and I don’t know much about weapons, so I’d want something that’s not going to break down. I would opt for the AK. Also, the thinking back in the ’50s that led to the M-16 was that if you fire a smaller bullet at a higher velocity, you do more damage. As opposed to using a larger...”

(continued on page 76)
bullet, which will travel more slowly. Our soldiers in Iraq, for instance, carrying rifle models and do not understand theullet's sensitivity to dirt and dust. 

"They have two main complaints. Those are: that they have to keep their desperately stripped, inoperable rifles in a box, because they can't use them. And the other was they'll want to shoot through a fence wall the enemy may be hiding behind and they can't do that with an M-16-type weapon, whereas you can with an AK. So Americans sometimes feel themselves at a disadvantage." 

"We have certain types of bullets that can't be used, because of how they expand — hollow points or dum-dum. But I don't know. I get mixed messages about what's allowed and what's not allowed."
CALIFORNIA MUSIC

Salute to Vienna Concert is Saturday, December 30. Cast of over 75 professional musicians, singing and dancing, is led by Maestro Andrés de Kok. Hungarian soprano Olga St Lily and tenor Zrinko Soco will perform arias and duets from Strauss operas and Viennese operettas. Members of Vienna City Ballet will perform waltzes and polkas.

Events begin at 8 p.m. in Copley Symphony Hall (750 B Street). Tickets: $37–$75, available at 619-235-0804 and through Ticketmaster (619-220-TIXS).

Spreckels Organ Birthday Concert celebrates the 92nd birthday of the famed Spreckels organ with the famed Spreckels organ with the master (619-220-TIXS).

Tickets: $20, $25, $30, available at 858-350-0300. Also available online at SanDiegoReader.com or fax to 619-881-2401. You may also submit information online at SanDiegoReader.com by clicking on the events section.

How to send us your listings: Contributions must be received by 5 p.m. Friday the work prior to publication for consideration. Do not phone. Send a complete description of the event, including the date, time, cost, the precise address where it is to be held (including neighborhood), a contact phone number, and a phone number (including area code) for public information to READER CLASSICAL MUSIC, Box 85803, San Diego CA 92186. Or fax to 619-881-2401. You may also submit online at SanDiegoReader.com or fax to 619-881-2401. You may also submit information online at SanDiegoReader.com by clicking on the events section.

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Events that are underlined occur after January 4.

San Diego Museum of Contemporary Art, “Pre-Columbian Art of Mexico” featuring artists from Palenque and Tepantitla.

Saturday, January 25, 8 p.m., at 340 North Echandol Boulevard. $60–$75. 877-893-6200. (ECONOMIC)

Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego, La Jolla, “TRANSactions: Contemporary Latin American and Latino Art” closing on Sunday, May 15 with a closing reception. Prices: $10 general admission, free for members. Call for info and see pricing.

Hammer Museum presents a “New Year’s Eve at The Hammer” featuring the New Year’s Rush and the Los Angeles-based band, Blackbird.

Thursday, December 31, 8:30 p.m., at La Jolla Art Association Village Gallery (7592 Ivanhoe Avenue). Meet artists during reception on Saturday, December 30, 4 p.m. 888-459-1196. (LA JOLLA)

How to send us your listing: Contributions must be received by 5 p.m. Friday the work prior to publication for consideration. Do not phone. Send a complete description of the event, including the date, time, cost, the precise address where it is to be held (including neighborhood), a contact phone number, and a phone number (including area code) for public information to READER ART, ART, Box 85803, San Diego CA 92186. Or fax to 619-881-2401. You may also submit information online at SanDiegoReader.com or fax to 619-881-2401. You may also submit information online at SanDiegoReader.com by clicking on the events section.
Elephant 4 Sale?

The Reader offers $25 for news to get closer to see Tool, a past August, when biggest challenge may be next year’s Street Scene. Attendance has declined from 105,000 in 2004 to 70,000 in 2006. The Qualcomm Stadium parking lot has been the site of Street Scene. Bongiovanni says, for a whole lot more money.”

MAYER ON THE SLOW MEND

Because the attack was close to a major Carlsbad street (Tamarack), police and an ambulance were on the scene quickly. The perpetrators were never caught. Mayer, who was uninsured, spent eight days in the hospital. “They said I may have had internal bleeding, so they cut my stomach all the way open.” An eight-inch scar extends from Mayer’s groin to his sternum. That surgery led to “…100 stitches and 60 staples. It turned out to be unnecessary; they didn’t find anything wrong.”

Medical bills now add up to $65,000. Yet, four months after the attack, Mayer still has a patch of gauze taped at the bottom of his scar. “I have to clean and bandage myself every day. I still have a hole the size of a nickel. My stomach keeps coming undone.” He says the hole has reopened four times since the surgery; once it was caused by riding a bike. “The other times it was when I had sex.”

Mayer and acoustic partner Matt Sundensteld appear every Thursday at the Flying Bridge in Oceanside, every Sunday at Tom Giblin’s in Carlsbad, and every Tuesday at Mas Fina Cantina in Carlsbad.

— Ken Leighton

Tijuana-on-the-Schuykill

Confusion is nothing new concerning the hometown of Robert Lopez, a.k.a. El Vez. Before starting his Mexican-American “Elvis translator” persona in the late ‘80s, Lopez co-fronted West Coast punk pioneers the Zeros in the mid-’70s while all were San Diego County high schoolers. Yet, most reference sources list the South Bay teens — dubbed “the Mexican Ramones” — as an “early L.A. punk band.”

Lopez has added to the muddle with his “East L.A. is my hometown” stage banter that sets up “En El Barrio,” a Chicano-ized rewrite of Presley’s “In the Ghetto.” One doctored song, where Lopez as El Vez gets autographically real, however, was highlighted throughout his “Mex Mex-Mas” national tour that concluded at the Cashah on Saturday: “I’m dreaming of a ‘Brown Christmas’! Just like my ones in San Diego! Where cousins and familia are tight! And thank God our Christmas isn’t white…. “

That tune and others were rapturously received earlier this month in Philadelphia — which has its own “Home of El Vez” claim. Lopez and his Memphis Mariachis worked the World Café Live room while patrons munched on free guacamole and chips provided by a Mexican eater called El Vez (after the performer), which opened in 2003. “(Restaurant) Stephen Starr’s vision of Tijuana-on-the-Schuykill may just be his best concept yet,” reviewed the Philadelphia Inquirer in 2004, referencing the river that borders the Pennsylvania city west of the Delaware. “The big room is electric with color, energy, and kitsch.”

Starr, a former concert promoter, has had El Vez come play his restaurant and dance on the bar-top while people sipped pomegranate margaritas and scarfed mahimahi tacos amid the gilded lowider accoutrements. “We wanted to have some fun with El Vez,” says Starr of the restaurant. “We’ve tried to achieve a gritty East L.A. meets a Tijuana Taxi vibe.”

“I love Philadelphia because you make me feel at home, and because of the El Vez restaurant, it’s my home too,” cooed Lopez from the
143 South Cedros Ave.
Solana Beach

Belly Up

1/12</br>CHICAGO AFROBEAT PROJECT</br>Thu 12/28 • 8:00 PM

1/13</br>PIGEON JOHN • JAHI DJ DEMON</br>Sat 12/30 • 8:00 PM

1/26 & 1/27</br>NEW YEAR’S EVE</br>Sun 12/31 • 9:00 PM

1/27</br>STEVE POLTZ & THE RUGBURNS</br>Mon 1/1 • 8:00 PM

BARRINGTON LEVY</br>1/28</br>1/4 DIEGO ROOTS 1/5 S-FOUNDATION</br>Wed 1/3 • 8:00 PM

LONG BEACH SHORTBUS</br>BILLY WATSON</br>Sat 1/6 • 8:00 PM

DEAD MAN’S PARTY</br>THE UPSTARTS</br>MATT CURRERI</br>Sat 1/14 • 8:00 PM

RHETT MILLER</br>BLOWOUT</br>THE GREAT GUS BERNARD • DJ AESTHETIC</br>Wed 1/10 • 7:30 PM

BOOGIE NIGHTS PRESENTS</br>THE ULTIMATE ’80s GLAM ROCK EXPERIENCE!</br>Sat 1/20 • 8:00 PM

FM 94.3 PRESENTS</br>COLD WAR KIDS</br>PIERS FACCHINI & GUEST</br>Mon 1/22 • 9:00 PM

HOT BUTTERED RUM</br>7TH DAY BUSHERS</br>Wed 1/24 • 8:00 PM

THE ENGLISH BEAT</br>CADYFLY</br>Wed 1/25 • 8:00 PM

JOE WALSH</br>THE HACIENDA BROTHERS</br>W/GUEST</br>Wed 1/25 • 9:00 PM

JAKE SHIMABUKURO</br>THE BE GOOD</br>W/GUEST</br>Thu 2/1 • 9:00 PM

SISTER HAZEL</br>THE AIR PUSHERS</br>W/GUEST</br>Thu 2/1 • 9:00 PM

THE SWINGERS</br>THE K23 ORCHESTRA</br>Wed 2/7 • 9:00 PM

JESSE SYKES & THE SWEET HEREAFTER</br>THE WHITE BUFFALO</br>Sun 2/25 • 8:00 PM

JUST ADDED!</br>Benefit for the Grauer School</br>Featuring Joe Walsh</br>2/21</br>Poncho Sanchez 2/16</br>Valentine’s Day B & B</br>2/15</br>Bob Schneider Band</br>2/14</br>Dave Mason & John Mayall</br>2/13</br>The Aggrolites</br>2/12</br>New Mussooon</br>2/11</br>Lee Kotte & David Lindsey</br>2/10</br>Ozomatli – Two Nightst</br>2/9</br>Johnny Winter</br>2/8</br>Iris DeMent

SWINGIN’ HAPPY HOURS!</br>12/29</br>ATOMIC GROOVE • 1/5</br>BUICK WILSON BAND</br>1/12</br>THE MAR DELS • 1/19</br>BIG RIG DELUXE</br>1/5 B-FOUNDATION</br>SHORTBUS</br>SALSA SUNDAY: 1/7 & 1/12 @ 7:30 pm

FEATURED SHOW</br>Belly Up presents “Artists on the Edge.”
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Downed Tower I was at the La Jolla location of Tower Records on Tuesday, December 19, the day before the chain was set to shut down for good. About one quarter of the store was filled with merchandise while the remainder of the store was cluttered with display racks and fixtures (which were for sale at $55 each).

Some people examined the remaining CDs and DVDs that could be had at 80 percent off their retail price (for example, many copies of ex-Mötley Crüe drummer Tommy Lee’s recent album, Tommyland: The Ride). Also left over were Riffy the Vampire Slayer action figures and posters and magazines.

After scouring the racks, I walked away with a copy of the Big Star tribute CD Small World ($3.40), a disc by a Guided by Voices–related project called the Takeovers ($3.60), an in-store-listening copy of the latest Golden Snog album ($3.40), and a copy of Bastardsong ($3.40) by Superconductor, a disbanded Canadian act that included musicians who would eventually form the New Pornographers. With tax, the four albums cost $14.87.

While checking out, I asked the clerk what would happen with the remaining discs; he said a buyer in Arizona would purchase them for 95 cents apiece. I told the clerk “good luck” because he would be losing his job five days before Christmas.

— Dryw Keltz

What’s Good for the Chickens... Bunky singer/guitarist Rafter Roberts releases his solo album Music for Total Chickens next month, and he’d like you to make a video for it.

“There are mp3 links to four songs on YouTube, and pretty much anything goes as far as visual content,” says Roberts. Video entries are uploaded to YouTube, where one of two $500 prizewinners will be chosen by site users. “Clips are being added as they’re uploaded,” says Roberts, “and every submission is valid, I think. A few of the videos have completely missed the points of the songs, but that’s to be expected.” He declines to elaborate for this column.

“I know I’m not alone amongst local musicians and readers that aren’t really into the ‘Blurt’ formula of ‘bad, trouble, disagreement,’ etc.…” Did you know I’m in a band that has a song called ‘Ride of the Ink-Stained Wessy’ about [“Blurt” contributor] Ken Leighton?”

— Jay Allen Sanford

Where’s the Party?

“[If it loses money, I’m prepared to do it again],” said Chris Wepsic in 2005 when he launched the first Festival Del Mar. Wepsic promised and bore primary financial responsibility for the two-day event at the Del Mar Fairgrounds. First-year headliners included Etta James, Taj Mahal, and Macy Gray. This year, Dr. John, Don Carlos, and George Thorogood were the big names.

After a two-year run, the festival has been put on hold. “We are hoping to bring it back in spring 2008,” says Wepsic, a Solana Beach dentist.

One promoter estimates Festival Del Mar lost between $100,000 and $125,000 this year. “The first year they did 8000 to 9000 [in paid attendance],” says the promoter. “[In 2006] it was more like 6000 to 7000.”

Wepsic admits attendance was off last year, “but we did better in sponsorships.” He wants to pull the event back to a weekend in the spring. This year it was held in September. “We had it the same weekend as the [free Mother’s Day] Fairgrounds was Mother’s Day weekend.” He says a 2008 date has yet to be nailed down.

After 30 years of existence, following reaction from businesses and citizens over huge crowds and rowdy behavior, the annual Pacific Beach Block Party did not return this year. Benjamin Nichols, executive director of Discover PB (an alliance of businesses), said he hoped that there would be “something low key” to replace the Block Party in May, but at present he is unaware of any plans.

Following Hank Williams III’s obscenity-laced appearance at the 27th annual Fiesta del Sol in June, Solana Beach City Council members said that the two-day event may not return. The City subsequently decided the Fiesta could continue if the bands were approved by the City and the sheriff’s department. The Solana Beach Chamber of Commerce, which sponsors the event, says band contracts would include a stipulation to withhold pay from bands that used obscenities. The Fiesta del Sol returns June 2 and 3.

— Ken Leighton

(Ken Leighton is the talent coordinator for Fiesta del Sol)

Contributors
William Crain, Dave Good, Larry Harmon, Michael Hemminger, Ken Leighton, Ryan Lorko, Derek Plank, Eric Rife, Jay Allen Sanford
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**THURSDAY, DECEMBER 28**
- Inner Circle presents
  - MALCHERS & OSIRIS SURF VIDEO PREMIERE
  - RED GUN RADAR • NIHILIST • BLINDSIDE

**FRIDAY, DECEMBER 29**
- Rockin' Johnny White presents
  - JEN KNIGHT • HARGO
  - ATLAS OF ID
  - FUZZ HUZZI

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 30**
- Inner Circle presents
  - MALCHERS & OSIRIS SURF VIDEO PREMIERE
  - RED GUN RADAR • NIHILIST • BLINDSIDE

**SATURDAY, JANUARY 6**
- DAZED & CONFUSED

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 7**
- THURSDAY, JANUARY 4
- AUDIBLE MAINFRAME
- ONE THEORY
- KAVENA • CROWLEY

**SATURDAY, JANUARY 6**
- WILD CHILD
- DAZED & CONFUSED

**THURSDAY, JANUARY 11**
- CALL DOWN FIRE
- KEMISTRY • FONO
- BEAUTIFUL TROUBLE

**FRIDAY, JANUARY 5**
- 40 OUNCES TO FREEDOM
  - (SUBLIME TRIBUTE)

**SATURDAY, JANUARY 6**
- PAINTED LOVE
  - (80’s Tribute)

**THURSDAY, JANUARY 11**
- CALL DOWN FIRE
  - KEMISTRY • FONO
  - BEAUTIFUL TROUBLE

**SATURDAY, JANUARY 13**
- 40 OUNCES TO FREEDOM
  - (SUBLIME TRIBUTE)
- GADFLY
- DIRTY HEADS

**THURSDAY, JANUARY 11**
- CALL DOWN FIRE
  - KEMISTRY • FONO
  - BEAUTIFUL TROUBLE

**FRIDAY, JANUARY 26**
- HIGH ROLLING LONERS
- MARRIED BY ELVIS

**SATURDAY, JANUARY 27**
- STRANGER

**FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 2**
- Diego Villas

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  - SATURDAY, JANUARY 6

- Wild Child
  - (Doors Tribute)
- DAZED & CONFUSED
  - (Led Zeppelin Tribute)

- Tainted Love
  - (80’s Tribute)

- 40 OUNCES TO FREEDOM
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- GADFLY
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I saw Tony Levin playing a Stick at the 1997 NAMM trade show in Anaheim, and I bought one that year,” says Tom Griesgraber. The 12-stringed Stick (popularized by Levin during stints with King Crimson and Peter Gabriel) is played by tapping the strings like piano keys, with bass strings tuned in ascending fifths and melody strings in descending fourths, providing a wide tonal range of sounds.

“It sounds something like electric guitar, electric bass, piano, and synths — all thrown into a blender,” says Griesgraber. “When I started, there was nobody teaching it, really, so I bought the only two books in existence for it. The Stick itself gets amazing reactions. I used to draw small crowds in Guitar Center just by playing a few notes to test amps for it, and I’ve sold CDs just by pulling it out of the case and not playing a note.

DESKTOP ISLAND DVDs?
1. Peter Gabriel, Secret World Live (“Probably his best stage setup ever and certainly one of his best bands.”)
2. King Crimson, Deja Vroom (“I have a VHS release from the same period which seems to have a better audio mix.”)
3. This Is Spinal Tap (“I was surprised to learn recently that some musician friends in Italy had never heard of it.”)
4. The Adventures of Indiana Jones (box set) (“I loaned this to a friend months ago — if you read this, Peter, I want it back.”)
5. Bruce Almighty (“I know I should probably pick something meatier for a desert island sojourn, but truth is I’ve watched this more than a lot of other movies.”)

WHAT’S IN YOUR MUSIC PLAYER?
1. Genesis, Three Sides Live (“Interesting period for them, plus it has great guitar work from Daryl Stuermer.”)
2. Peter Gabriel, Up (“Amazing production, but then he did spend ten years on it. I heard they tried so many things, they had over a hundred songs that got boiled down to this one album.”)
3. The California Guitar Trio, Ten Christmas Songs (“I’ve given copies to so many friends that I’m afraid to give it out anymore ‘cause I’m sure I’ll get regifted.”)
4. Phil Collins, Face Value (“This is how you know I’m being honest with this list. Despite the overt poppiness, Phil really is a great musician.”)

FAVORITE TV SHOWS?
1. 24 (“Jack is too cool — though serials are a pain in the hindquarters to keep up with when you’re on tour for a month at a time.”)
2. Star Trek (“I actually have the DVDs. I’m a geek; it’s a horrible fate.”)
3. That ’70s Show (“I’m actually a bit burned out on it, but I’ll include it because it’s just been so good for so long.”)
4. Lost (“I got sucked in.”)
5. The Simpsons (“I’m actually a bit burned out on it, but I’ll include it because it’s just been so good for so long.”)

WORST COVER SONGS?
1. “In Your Eyes,” Jeffrey Gaines (“Takes a classic Peter Gabriel tune and turns it into something that sounds like a bar band at a coffee shop. There should be laws.”)
2. “Landslide,” the Dixie Chicks (“Stevie Nicks and Lindsey Buckingham just have too strong personalities to replace.”)
3. “White Christmas,” Elton John (“He got a little too carried away with the vocal inflections on this one.”)

BEST KING CRIMSON LINEUP?
“I love this question. I’m gonna say the double trio: Robert Fripp, Adrian Belew, Tony Levin, Bill Bruford, Pat Mastelotto, and Trey Gunn. Just so many great musical personalities, and they’re all such good players that they make the over-the-top instrumentation actually work. It was actually the first lineup I saw on video, and it’s the one that pulled me into the band in general. Plus, they have two Stick players.”

IF YOU WERE A CHARACTER IN THE WIZARD OF OZ, YOU’D BE...
“…the wizard. I like hiding behind curtains and pushing lots of buttons.”

SOMETHING ABOUT YOU FEW WOULD KNOW OR GUESS?
“I can’t drive stick shift. Quite the issue while touring Europe.”

LISTS
JAY ALLEN SANFORD

Stuck on the Stick

“I used to draw small crowds in Guitar Center just by playing a few notes to test amps for it.”
SUNDAY


Steve Poltz & the Rugburns: Belly Up Tavern, Sunday, December 31, 143 South Cedros Avenue, Solana Beach. 858-481-8140.

TUESDAY

My Morning Jacket: House of Blues, Tuesday, January 2, 1055 Fifth Avenue, Gaslamp. 619-299-2583.

UPCOMING CONCERTS

JANUARY


Barrington Levy: Belly Up Tavern, Thursday, January 4, 143 South Cedros Avenue, Solana Beach. 858-481-8140.


Beres Hammond & Marcia Griffiths: House of Blues, Monday, January 8, 1055 Fifth Avenue, Gaslamp. 619-299-2583.


Acoustic Music San Diego: Showcase Theatre, Thursday, January 19, 5469 Sycuan Road, Santee. 858-481-8140.


SOMA: Friday, January 20, 1562 8th Street, San Diego. 619-224-4171.

Stanley Jordan: House of Blues, Saturday, January 21, 1055 Fifth Avenue, Gaslamp. 619-299-2583.


Mark Mulcahy: House of Blues, Sunday, January 22, 1055 Fifth Avenue, Gaslamp. 619-299-2583.

The Chieftains: House of Blues, Tuesday, January 24, 1055 Fifth Avenue, Gaslamp. 619-299-2583.

Tom Rush: Showcase Theatre, Thursday, January 25, 5469 Sycuan Road, Santee. 858-481-8140.

Muriel Anderson: Showcase Theatre, Thursday, January 25, 5469 Sycuan Road, Santee. 858-481-8140.

Tuesday, January 30, 1055 Fifth Avenue, Gaslamp. 619-299-2583.

Blues Traveler: House of Blues, Thursday, February 1, 4650 Manifold Street, Normal Heights. 619-303-8176.

Eliza Gilkyson: Acoustic Music San Diego, Thursday, February 1, 4650 Manifold Street, Normal Heights. 619-303-8176.

Jeffrey Osborne: Spreckels Theatre, Sunday, January 14, 121 Broadway, Downtown. 619-235-1000.


Reverend Horton Heat: Cann’s, Thursday, January 18, 1315 Ocean Front Walk, Mission Beach. 858-466-1780.


Dione Warwick: Sycuan Casino Showcase Theatre, Thursday, January 25, 5469 Sycuan Road, Santee. 858-610-3380.


The Chieftains: California Center for the Arts, Friday, January 26, 340 N. Escondido Boulevard, Escondido. 800-988-4255.


Pennywise: House of Blues, Saturday, January 27, 1055 Fifth Avenue, Gaslamp. 619-299-2583.


Donavon Frankenreiter: House of Blues, Friday, January 26, 1055 Fifth Avenue, Gaslamp. 619-299-2583.

The English Beat: Belly Up Tavern, Friday, February 2, 1055 Fifth Avenue, Gaslamp. 619-299-2583.

Maná: Cosby One Center, Saturday, February 3, 1055 Fifth Avenue, Gaslamp. 619-224-4171.

Air Supply: Sycuan Casino Showcase Theatre, Thursday, February 9, 1562 8th Street, San Diego. 619-224-4171.

Venice: Acoustic Music San Diego, Friday, February 9, 4650 Manifold Street, Normal Heights. 619-303-8176.

Maná: Cosby One Center, Saturday, February 10, 1055 Fifth Avenue, Gaslamp. 619-224-4171.


Todd Snider: Belly Up Tavern, Thursday, February 15, 143 South Cedros Avenue, Solana Beach. 858-481-8140.

Sound Tribe Sector Nine: House of Blues, Friday, February 16, 1055 Fifth Avenue, Gaslamp. 619-299-2583.

“Taste of Chaos” with the Used, 10 Seconds to Mars, Senses Fail, and more: Cosby One Center, Wednesday, February 21, 3550 Sports Arena Boulevard. 619-224-4171.

“Tribute to the Reggae Legends”: Cosby One Center,
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I was reminded of Steve Pottz while visiting a favorite nightspot near Ensenada. One of the bar’s regular entertainers was playing from a bottomless pit of ’70s white pop hits on his acoustic guitar. A tout surfer type asked if his buddy could take over. The musician obliged. Surfer’s Buddy launched into some bad Jack Johnson-ish covers. His friends egged him on. “I wasn’t really planning on playing tonight,” he half lied, his voice booming over the speakers. “I’ve had, like, five margaritas.”

This is exactly what Pottz does. He wanders onstage and disarms an audience with his sophisticated wiscracks andummy bearing. But whether that’s the real Steve Pottz or just an act is unknown to me. In his clever way, Pottz is morose and tithe in the same set, and perhaps that steady undercurrent is what main- tains interest. Eventually, his party-boy image gets tiresome, and his lyrics have been called ridiculous (murderous hitchhikers, boilers covered in sugar, an auto mechanic who feeds strophists to deers). What makes it work is that he is a consummate singer-songwriter. Obser evidence of that lies in heartbreak material like “Silver Liming” or “The Single Life.” It can go both directions in heartbreak material like “Silver Liming” or “The Single Life.” It can go both directions.

BY DAVE GOOD
1 a.m. Thursdays, Deep drum 'n' bass with DJs Walkahead, Probable Cause, and DJ Myker Mic; 10 p.m. to 2 a.m. 1409 C Street (corner of 14th Street, across from City College), downtown. 619-702-6501.

Inferno Young Adult Nightclub: Fridays and Saturdays. DJ Krey spins hip-hop, house, and reggae. 9 p.m. to 1:15 a.m.; high school sophomore and up. 775 Metcalfe Street, Escondido.

Jack's Lounge: Fridays, sexy dance music with DJ Mishka and weekly guest DJs. Saturdays, vocal house with DJ Sean Wilson. 786 Girard Avenue, La Jolla. 858-546-8111.


L'Enfer: Wednesdays, hip-hop, soul, and funk with DJs Buddha of the middle east and other male DJs. Thursdays, house and trance with DJ Darkman and Creep. 9 p.m. to 2 a.m. No cover. 4696 30th Street, North Park. 619-236-1616.

The Whistle Stop: Second Thursday of the month, Progjazz-Zone, indie, Brit pop, and soul. First and third Saturday of the month, Transport, Brit rock, indie, and electroclash with DJ Gabby Vega and guests. Second and fifth Saturday of the month, One Nation, new wave, hip-hop, and bootleg remixes with DJs Blackstone and Arias. Tuesdays. Friends Chill, downtempo, electronic, and ambient with DJs Wank Chops, Late, and guests. 9 p.m. to 2 a.m. and up. 2220 Fern Street (corner of 30th and Juniper), South Park. 619-284-0784.

If you wish to submit a listing, call 619-231-3080, ext. 401, 8 a.m. or 6 p.m. or by fax to 760-788-1309 or mail to Reader Music Scene, P.O. Box 85803, San Diego, CA 92138-0003. You may also submit information online at sandiegoreader.com by clicking on the music section.

Beaches

Bahia Resort Hotel, 998 West Mission Bay Drive, Mission Beach. 858-488-0551. Tangerine Lounge: Thursday, 8 p.m. to 11 p.m.; also, Friday and Saturday, 9 p.m. to 1 a.m., also, Friday and Saturday, from 9 p.m. to 11 p.m., also, Thursday, 7:30 p.m. to 9 p.m. John Carm, jazz/Latin/International/pop standards.

Bar Luciadlian, 1542 North Coast Highway 101, Leucadia. 760-753-2094. Fridays, the Hardon, rockabilly/blues.

Beaumont's, 8662 La Jolla Boulevard, La Jolla. 858-459-0474. Thursday, 6:30 p.m. to 9 p.m., Mark Fother, classic rock. Saturday, the Aftermath, Rolling Stones cover band. Sunday, 8 p.m. to 11 p.m., Mike Mentel, pop rock.

The Cabby Cafe, 376 North Highway 101, Encinitas. 760-632-8252. Thursday, Uplift reggae. Friday and Saturday, Triple-Shot Blues. Tuesday, 7:30 p.m. to 11 p.m., Ashmore Nimz and Jyper Wind, global jazz.

Canes, 3105 Ocean Front Walk, Mission Beach. 858-488-1780. Thursday, Red Gun Rader. Friday, the Stupping Zone. pop. Saturday, live music. Sunday, the Phantasiel and These Damn Robinsons, hip-hop/word/ink.

Ché Cafe, 1526 4th Avenue, La Jolla. 858-534-2111. Thursday, the Flood Covers the Earth, Carneside, the Secret Four Club, and the 480 Blues, rock.

Clay's, at the Hotel La Jolla, 7955 La Jolla Shores Drive, La Jolla. 858-459-0341. Friday, 8 p.m. to midnight. Latin jazz. Saturday and Wednesday, live jazz/rock.

San Diego Reader December 28, 2006

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The famous New Year's Eve ball descends from Times Square to San Diego for its own New Year's Eve celebration on big screens at all rooms.

NEW YEAR'S EVE WEEKEND WARM UP

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 29TH

EDDIE HALLIWELL

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 30TH

TIMO

www.EddieHalliwell.com :: MixMag DJ of the Year 2005

www.TimoArchitect.com

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NYE 2007
DECEMBER 31ST, 2006
NEW YEARS EXTRAVAGANZA!
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5 MASSIVE AREAS! • 8PM-4AM! • AFTERHOURS!
FULLY STOCKED, HOSTED BAR FROM 8PM-2AM!

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EARLY BIRD DISCOUNT PRESALE @ eventvibe.com

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BEACHES

Cody’s La Jolla, 6801 Girard Avenue, La Jolla. 858/459-0000. Thursday, 7 p.m. to 9 p.m., Ray Romell, light classical piano/show tunes. Friday and Wednesday, 7 p.m., Dick Krager, jazz guitar. Saturday, 7 p.m., Señor Steve, jazz piano. Sunday, 6 p.m. to 8 p.m., Joe Cardillo, acoustic/jazz music.

Dreamstreet, 2228 Bacon Street, Ocean Beach. 619-222-8131. Thursday, live hop-hop. Friday, DJ’s, Fly, Stone, Young Black, Far, Oposito, Gulliver, and Audrey Street. Saturday, the American Hibiscus and Discompany, alternates.

E Street Cafe, 128 E Street, Encinitas. 760-230-2058. Music is acoustic/folk unless otherwise noted. Thursday, 7 p.m. to 9 p.m., Matt Duane Griffin Friday, 8 p.m. to 10 p.m., Jack Knapp, 8 p.m. to 9:30 p.m., Frank Leong.

Hennessey’s Tavern (PB), 4610 Mission Boulevard, Pacific Beach. 858-483-9847. Friday, live music. Saturday, 8 p.m., reggae-hop-hop-old skool.


La Valencia Hotel, 1332 Prospect Street, La Jolla. 858-454-0710. Thursday, 6:30 p.m. to 10 p.m., Jerry Leech, jazz. Friday, Saturday, Sunday, and Wednesday, Dick Ross, jazz.

The Lodge at Torrey Pines, 33480 N. Torrey Pines Road, La Jolla. 619-453-4420. Lobby Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and Wednesday, 7 p.m. to 8 p.m., Dave Popula, solo jazz. Grill Friday and Saturday, 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m., Mike Nelson, solo jazz guitar.

Manhattan Restaurant, 7766 Fay Avenue, La Jolla. 858-454-0700. Friday and Saturday, the Joe Marilla Jazz Trio.

Pasquale on Prospect, 1250 Prospect Street, La Jolla. 858-456-0722. Thursday, Gil Baron, Mark Fulton, James East, and P’Tak Armenta, acoustic pop/rock/Latin/soul. Friday, 8 p.m. to 11 p.m., the Jazz 101 Band featuring Nick Ferri, John Gutting, Dave Scott, and the Cynthia Hammond. Saturday, 8:30 p.m. Mario Critrino and Latin Spree, Latin jazz.

Portugalia, 4839 Newport Avenue, Ocean Beach. 619-220-7678. Tuesday, 9 p.m., Troc de la Suvra, salas/Latin.

Riley’s, 2901 Nimtie Boulevard, Point Loma. 858-233-8519. Friday, Saturday, Sunday, and Wednesday, Steve Bower, acoustic.

Busalacchi’s Ristorante, 3633 Fifth Avenue, San Diego. 619-298-0119. Thursday, 7 p.m. to 10 p.m., the New Standard Jazz Trio, straight-ahead jazz. Sunday, 7 p.m. to 10 p.m., Cynthia Hammond, jazz.

The Casbah, 2454 Kettner Boulevard, midtown. 619-232-HELL. Music is rock/alternative unless otherwise noted. Thursday, the Golden Hill Knockers and Miss Golden. Friday, the Sweet and Tender Hooligans. Saturday, Dynamicata Wall, Yovee, and Swindov. Sunday, Can’t Fail Us, Johnny Cash tribute, Bartender’s Bible, rock, and the Dukes of Hooligan.

Croce’s Jazz Bar, 102 Fifth Avenue, downtown. 619-231-4343. All music is jazz unless otherwise noted. Thursday, David Patrone. Friday, Tender. Saturday, Primo Sunday, Ship Maynard and Tunes. Tuesday, the Ship Maynard Quartet. Wednesday, the Jorge Camberos Quartet.

Ensenada, 5554 Girard Avenue, downtown. 619-231-9100. Thursday, 6 p.m. to 10 p.m., the Big Provider, High Tide, Berger, and the Wages, reggae/funk/oriental/fish-hop-hop-hop-hop-rock/Latin.

Downtown

Blamey Stone Pub, 502 Fifth Avenue, downtown. 619-231-8319. Friday, Saturday, Sunday, and Wednesday, Steve Bower, acoustic.


710 Beach Club, 3299 Holiday Court, La Jolla. Justin James and the Sons of Beaches. Thursday, 9 p.m., Married by Elvis, 7 p.m., the American Hitmen, acoustic pop. Friday, 6 p.m. to 10 p.m., the Joe Marilla Jazz Trio. Saturday, 7 p.m. to 10 p.m., the Jorge Camberos Quartet.

Tower Two Beach Cafe, 5033 Santa Monica Avenue, Ocean Beach. 619-453-6061. Saturday and Sunday, 1 p.m. to 4 p.m., live acoustic/folk music.

Winstons, 1921 Bacon Street, Ocean Beach. 619-222-6822. Thursday, 8 p.m., Fusion Stop and Married by Erin, bluegrass/rockabilly. Friday, the Electric Wristband, classic rock. Saturday, 8 p.m., the Big Provider, High Tide, Berger, and the Wages, reggae/funk/oriental/fish-hop-hop-hop-hop-rock/Latin.

Lobby: Thursday, 11480 N. Torrey Pines Road, La Jolla. 858-454-0700. Friday and Saturday, the Joe Marilla Jazz Trio.

The Lodge at Torrey Pines, 33480 N. Torrey Pines Road, La Jolla. 858-454-0700. Friday, Saturday, Sunday, and Wednesday, Steve Bower, acoustic.

Dublin Square, 554 Fourth Avenue, Gaslamp. 619-239-9081. Saturday and Sunday, the Wholegum, Irish music.

new year’s eve 2007

Show and Dance Party.
5-course dinner, flamenco show,
dance party, midnight celebration with
champagne toast and party favors

$129* pp

call for reservations.
for more info, go to: cafesevilla.com

*Tax, beverage, and 17% gratuity not included. 21+

Sevilla
555 Fourth Avenue, Gaslamp
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San Diego Reader
December 28, 2006
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Save $5.00 on any Limo bus rental of 8 or more. Must be 21. Must be used in conjunction with other offers. No sales tax. Expires 1/1/98.

**Brick by Brick,** 1130 Business Avenue, Bay Park. 619-276-LIVE. Thursday, the Band of Good Man and Muscle, rock, Friday, the Apricot Prophets and Dub Co., jam band/hip-hop. Saturday, the Blue Shift, the Dirty Angels, the Big Dune, Hunters, and Junt Like Jesus.

**Etta’s Place,** 6179 University Avenue at College and University. 619-582-6730. Live rock/jazz.

**Funhouse,** 8980 Villa La Jolla Dr. / La Jolla / 858.450.9277 / www.rockbottom.com

**Hunters,** 5373 Adams Avenue, Normal Heights. 619-291-DINO. Monday to Thursday, Irish jam session.


**Pal Joey’s,** 6126 University Avenue, Bay Park. 619-291-8635. Friday and Saturday, live rock. Sunday, call club for information.

**The Gordon Biersch Brewery,** 5373 Mission Center Road, San Diego. 619-582-6730. Live rock/swing.

**The Kensington Club,** 6838 El Cajon Boulevard, San Diego. 619-297-1313. Thursday through Saturday, 9:30 p.m. to 2 a.m., the Eve Selis, acoustic rock.


**N2 Groove With Brad Adams & Zad**

**Ring in the New Year at Rock Bottom La Jolla**

We’re hosting an all-night New Year’s Eve bash with music, dancing, champagne toast and fantastic drink specials.

T-shirt or tuxedo, we don’t care, but you don’t want to miss this one!

Call us today to reserve a seat. 858-450-9277.

**Serious about our food. Crazy about our beer.**

**Aventuras East, Siempre Salsa & SalsaCA present**

**8th Annual New Year’s Eve con SALSA**

**Featuring the Clásico salsa sounds of**

**Ritmo y Son**

Breaks by New Yo Rican David Garcia & David Suave

**Hotel Room & Party Package for 2**

**$175 (advance)**

Pre-party brunch for 2, a hotel room and 2 entrances to our fabulous New Year’s party. (Limited hotel rooms available.)

The schedule is: brunch from 12-3 p.m. then check into your hotel room, relax and get ready for a wonderful night starting at 8 p.m.

**$55 (day of)**

Salsa Survival class and mixer with Valerie & David starting at 8:15 p.m. General dancing starts at 9 p.m.

Midnight celebration complete with hits, noisemakers, a complimentary champagne toast, MC Valerie and our New Year countdown including our big-screen TV ball drop. After a great night of celebrating, we complete our evening with a late-night Cuban buffet. No one goes home hungry!

**Party Only**

**$45 (advance) | $55 (day of)**

**Tickets available through:**

Valerie & David: 619-516-4466 | salsa@dbglobal.net


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Located within Habana a Taste of Cuba Restaurant

7777 University Ave., La Mesa | 619-713-2011
**San Diego**

**Second Wind**, 835 N Navajo Road, San Carlos. 619-465-1730. Friday and Saturday. Stone Wall, classic rock.

**Shack Rocks Shack**, 2010 El Cajon Boulevard (half block east of 7th Street), College Area. 619-463-2263. Friday and Saturday, live band.

**Sogno Di Vino**, 3350 Sports Arena Boulevard, alternative rock.

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**Tribute to the Music of Steely Dan**

Friday, December 29

**Two Shows:**

7:30 pm and 9:45 pm

Admission: $20 (either show)

Tickets now on sale through Humphrey's or www.rockola.com

More info on our 24-hour hotline: 858-467-1066

**Tutto Mare**, 4895 Executive Drive, La Jolla (Golden Triangle area). 858-597-1188. Wednesday, 6 p.m. to 9 p.m.; Jimmy Valle, and guests.

**Twigs Tea and Coffee Company**, 4650 Park Boulevard, University Heights. 619-296-9616. Music is acoustic/ folk unless otherwise noted. Thursday, 8 p.m., Quibi, Tom Fadden, the Forever Aries, and Erik James Poliner. Friday, Megan Connolly, Michael Robert Cook, Doug Chad, Chris Torres, and Ronita Youngsford. Saturday, Manisha Shahane, Kyle Fletcher, Steve Ybarra, and Erro Faller. Sunday, 4 p.m., the Gypsy Ensemble. Wednesday, open mike.

**Vesuvio Gourmet Restaurant**, 3623 5th Street, North Park. 619-282-7040. Thursday, 8 p.m. to 11 p.m., the Paul Ingram Trio. Friday and Saturday, 7 p.m. to 10 p.m., Peggy Lloyd, jazz.

**North County**

**The Alley**, 421 Grand Avenue, Carlsbad. 760-434-1173. Thursday, Friday, and Saturday. The Love Rangers, Top 40/pop.

**Belly Up Tavern**, 4365 Executive Drive, La Jolla. 858-756-1131. Thursday, Tuesday, and Sunday, 7:30 p.m., and guests.

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**Trio Leo’s**, 10787 Camino Ruiz, Miramar, 858-695-1462.

**Tito Leo’s Lounge**, 5805 Napa Street (at Morena Boulevard), Bay Park. 619-342-1462. Friday and Saturday. Live band. Tuesday, reggae blues. Wednesday, 7 p.m. The High Society Jazz Band.

**The Tower Bar**, 4705 University Avenue, University City. 619-248-1196. Saturday. Mr. Tico and the Flying Objects, rock.

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**Game Time Tavern**, 12735 Poway Road, Poway. 818-748-0151. Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. Live rock.

**Hannessen’s Tavern** (Carlsbad), 2777 Roosevelt Street, Carlsbad. 760-728-6951. Friday and Saturday. Live rock.

**The Hot Java Cafe**, 11738 Carmel Mountain Road, San Diego. 858-673-7111. Sunday, 8 p.m. to 1 a.m., Maybe Two, rock. Monday, 8 p.m. to 9 p.m., Rollyn Hooven, rockabilly. Saturday. 5 p.m. to 9 p.m., Mike Gardner, acoustic rock/folk.

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**California CDs**

**Album:** My Name Is Legion for We Are Many

**Artist:** Nik Angello

**Label:** Widow Peak Entertainement

**Where available/price:** Tower Records for $14.49. Online at iTunes ($9.99), Napster ($11.95), Yahoo Music ($10.57), MSN Music, Rhapsody Online, Sony Connect ($5.99), and Pandora.com ($3.90)

**Songs:**


**Band:** Nik Angello (vocals, keyboard), Main Flow (MC), Sarah Teraz (vocals), Jim Kahler (vocals), Emily Tessmer (vocals)

**Website:** www Widowpeak.com

This is the worst album (hip or otherwise) to which I’ve had the displeasure of listening. Angelo’s keyboard work on the backup music isn’t bad, but “not bad” is as good as this album gets. Nik hits all of the clichés. In a nearly decades-old trend, Nik calls out area codes and neighborhoods: 858, La Jolla, Gaslamp. Super. (Thanks for letting us know where you “roll,” Nik.) Oh, “The Nifty Dizzi” would have liked to let you know what his “army of girls” is doing. Really, Nik? How does one acquire an army of girls at the dewy age of 19?

When Nik isn’t boasting of his night-prowling skills, he’s stringing together childishly simple raps, rhyming “her” with “siren” and “cure” in a “cat sat on a mat” style. The laughable lyrics are not the worst part. The worst part is Nik’s voice. In a transparent attempt to mimic Eminem, Nik keeps his voice high-pitched but attempts Eminem’s gravely effect. His voice on some tracks comes in around Weird Al at its best. At its worst, Nik’s voice is reminiscent of Alvin, Simon, and Theodore.

---

**New Year’s Eve 2006 Three Great Parties**

Sunday, Dec. 31

Make your reservations now!

**“An Elegant Affair”**

Aubrey Fay

**“Dance the Night Away”**

The Detroit Underground

**“Roazzle Dazzle”**

Rising Star

**4 Way Street**

Tuesday, Jan. 2

8 pm • Rock

The Christian Scott Show

**The Backstage Music Club**

www.humphreysbythebay.com

**2241 Shelter Island Dr. • 619-224-3577**

Tickets for “Upcoming Shows” available at Ticketmaster and Humphrey’s. Reserved seating for “Upcoming Shows” available with dinner. All shows are 21 years and up.
South Bay/Coronado
Buon Giorno Restaurant, 4110 Bonita Road, Bonita. 619-475-2660. Tuesday, Saturday, alternative. Saturday, live rock.

McP's Irish Pub and Grill, 1546 101, Solana Beach. 858-755-9474. Thursday, Saturday, and Wednesday, 5 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Cafe LaMaze, 1441 Highland Avenue, National City. 619-474-3222. Friday and Saturday, 8 p.m. to 2:30 a.m., to 10 p.m., Cash Cabaret. Saturday, live rock.

Hotel del Coronado, 530 8th Street, Coronado. 619-435-3344. Friday, 5280. Thursday, 4-Way Street, classic rock.

Island Sports and Spirits, 1107 110th Street (Lomas Santa Fe and Highway 55), Carlsbad. 760-729-7234. Tuesday, Wednesday, open mike.

Cafe LaMaze, 1441 Highland Avenue, National City. 619-474-3222. Friday and Saturday, 8 p.m. to 2:30 a.m., to 10 p.m., Cash Cabaret. Saturday, live rock.

Bishop, rock. Friday, 5280. Thursday, 4-Way Street, classic rock.

Surf N'Saddle, 1010 1010, Solana Beach. 858-755-9474. Thursday, Saturday, and Wednesday, 5 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Buon Giorno Restaurant, 4110 Bonita Road, Bonita. 619-475-2660. Saturday, live rock.

McP's Irish Pub and Grill, 1546 101, Solana Beach. 858-755-9474. Thursday, Saturday, and Wednesday, 5 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Cafe LaMaze, 1441 Highland Avenue, National City. 619-474-3222. Friday and Saturday, 8 p.m. to 2:30 a.m., to 10 p.m., Cash Cabaret. Saturday, live rock.
**South Bay/Coronado**

(continued)

**East County**


Don’s Cocktail Lounge, 13321 Business Highway 52, El Cajon, 619-443-2676. Friday and Saturday, the Little Efert Band, classic rock.

Fannie’s Nightclub, 5145 Campo Road, Spring Valley, 619-698-2204. Friday, Fugit Over Tomorrow, the Trucks, Air Lagers, Drummed Solution, and Tim Ralke, punk rock. Saturday, One Thread and the Crash, rock. Sunday, Subsimer and Young Bullets, hip-hop.

Renegade Inn, 14353 Old Highway 80 (half mile east from Lake Jennings turnoff), Flynn Springs, 619-443-2444. Friday and Saturday, the Crooks, rockabilly.

Second Wind, 8528 Magnolia Avenue, Santee, 619-596-8350. Friday and Saturday, A Beautiful Noise, San Diego Sports Club.

Tommy’s Italian Restaurant, 13321 Business Highway 52, El Cajon, 619-448-8550. Live music.

**Coronado**

Dirk’s Niteclub, 4562 Mission Blvd., Coronado, 619-434-1500. Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, the Billies, soulful house music all night long, still going strong.

**San Diego Reader** December 28, 2006

**New Year’s Eve Hoedown**

**Wagon Wheel**, 1961 Magnolia Avenue, Santee, 619-446-8530. Live country music.

**Calendar**

**Clubs**

**South Bay/Coronado**

**East County**

**Calendar Bands**

**Alternative**

The Adopted Prophets: Brisk By Brisk.

The American Hitmen: Dreamstruct.

As Blood Runs Black: Soma.

Bartender’s Bible: The Crooks.


The Big Dime Hunters: Brick By Brick.

The Career Soldiers: The Jumping Turtle.

Carol Ann: Soma.

Comadre: Ché Café.

The Creepy Creeps: The Kensington.

The Crust: Fannie’s Nightclub.

Decompression: Dreamstruct.

Destroy the Runner: Soma.

The Dog + Pony Show: Soma.

Dreaded Solution: Fannie’s Nightclub.

The Dynamic Walls: The Crooks.

End of Eden: Soma.

First Class Fiction: 710 Beach Club.

The Flood Covers the Earth: Ché Café.

Fractured Halo: The Jumping Turtle.

A Global Threat: The Jumping Turtle.

Rob Grad: The Hot Jazz Café, Twiggs Tea and Coffee Company.

The Hand of Eris: The Jumping Turtle.

Haste the Day: Soma.

**Gaslamp’ s Original Underground Lounge**

**Thu Rhytime and Reason** — Selections, DJ Large, Tubs and DJ Pickle mix up the dance works with hip-hop and pop. Vote for weekly Creepy Creep and Queen. More info on www.myparams.com/Jahlil磉re public.


**Sun New Year’s Eve Deep Down in the Red C** Featuring DJs (J) Large, DJ Pickle and special guest MC Tarse. Spinning all your favorite party hits and quick jamz.

**Mexican Food until 3 am!**

**Rob Grad** — The Hot Jazz Café, Twiggs Tea and Coffee Company.

**Underground Lounge**

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**Mexican Food until 3 am!**

**Rob Grad** — The Hot Jazz Café, Twiggs Tea and Coffee Company.
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UNDER 3 MASSIVE BIG TOPS

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- Brick By Brick: Free WiFi, 2 for 1 admission
- CA Express VIP Card: Free card
- Club Montage: 2 for 1 cover
- Comedy Co-op: Free tickets
- In Cahoots: 2 for 1 cover
- Lucky 7 Match: $5 off speed dating
- Martini Ranch: Free appetizers
- Patricks II: Free appetizers
- Second Wind Navajo: No cover
- 710 Beach Club: 2 for 1 cover
- Tio Leo’s Lounge: $1 off club admission

For more information, visit [SanDiegoReader.com](http://www.SanDiegoReader.com) or check the Music Section of the Reader’s website.
New Year’s Eve

Tickets to include:

Venues of entertainment
On main stage: “JUNGLE BOOGIE”
With special guests “80s ENOUGH”
Live bands playing your favorites from the Disco and 80's

Downtown Lounge: “Club Crush”
Featuring Dennis Blaze
Hip-Hop DJ

Party Favors!

2 Balloon Drops at Midnight

Dinner
Serving Dinner from 4-8pm
by Reservation Only!!!
No Happy Hour!
½ off ticket price with dinner reservations
Kitchen will be serving from late night menu until 11pm

Ticket prices:
*Must have tickets in order to gain admission*
Pre-sale: $25 per person thru December 30th
(Limit 4 per order)
Pay by credit card or cash in person
Ticket must be picked up by 10pm on the 30th
Day of (Dec. 31st): $35 per person before 9pm

HAPPY 2007 FROM JOHNNY V

Your New Year’s Eve:
Tickets: $35 pre-sale, $40+ day of

Dinner Package:
$150/couple, includes admission + 4-course meal
[ appetizer + choice of filet mignon, lamb, duck, seafood entrée + bottle of wine + dessert ]
The first thing that I related that [group] to was a hip-hop artist named Kenn Starr. The tempo of the beat [is] not too fast; you can hear exactly what these people are trying to say. It sounded like there was some good improvisation going on, some spontaneity. I think that song particularly would go well with not so much doing an activity, but reflecting on things. I think that what hip-hop is: it's reflecting on what you've been through.

They've got a classic rock sound to them that sounds pretty cool. Maybe like Boston or Kansas or something…one of those old bands. It sounded really clean, like it was well-rehearsed. Usually local bands don't really sound very coordinated and clean. It's not a great song, but it wasn't bad. I'd have to say I'd listen to it driving around in my car.

---

**TO GET YOUR LOCAL CD PLEASE, MAIL TO:**
Music Editor, As I Hear It, San Diego Reader, P.O. Box 85803, San Diego, CA 92116-5803
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“HOLIDAY BOWL AFTER PARTY”

FRIDAY : DECEMBER : 29TH
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BIG DUDE’S BIRTHDAY PARTY!
DJ’S BIG DUDE & NICKY Z SPINNING
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DJS BROUGHT TO YOU BY KAYELLA ENT.

SATURDAY : DECEMBER : 30TH
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290.3 WILL BROADCAST LIVE @ DECO’S EVERY SATURDAY FROM 9PM-MIDNIGHT
PRE-NEW YEAR’S EVENT: FEATURING -
Billy Blast
DJ Slyed

SUNDAY : DECEMBER : 31ST
THE PLACE TO BE
New Years Eve
3 ROOMS OF MUSIC
HIP-HOP, OLD SKOOL & 80’S
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VIP TABLES | VIP BEDS | BOTTLE PACKAGES | PRE-SALE TICKETS
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San Diego Reader December 28, 2006

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San Diego Reader December 24, 2006
Fab Palace, No Clothes

Purity is the focus of all things pure. This is our belief and expression which I apply to the style of our cuisine and ambience. With this, we give you our new venture in the world of gastronomic pleasures.

— Chef William Bradley, on Addison's menu

We felt as if we were living the pre-credit scene of The Shining. My partner and I, in our shabby little car, drove higher and higher through wooded hills on a winding mountain road, seeking Addison restaurant before nightfall. But the approach road to Kubrick’s “Overlook” didn’t include several sets of speed bumps.

Situated at the Grand Del Mar, Addison is named for an early-20th-Century California architect, Addison Mizner. The restaurant, with its lobby and bar, stands alone a mile or so up-hill from the hotel at Doug Manchester’s new luxury resort. Its architecture is Mediterranean. While the interior decor harks back to Victorian splendor. Above the bar hangs a dark-red ornate fireplace, and below it are ornate fireplaces everywhere, including one in an outdoor nook, where you can wait for your friends, your chariot, or your prince to come.

The vast dining room has well-spaced tables to seat 90, with white linen cloths and captain’s chairs. A large staff of uniformed employees, as highly choreographed as the Rockettes, exercises a rather rigid style of formal service.

For example, you must wait in the bar until your entire party has arrived — no trickle-ins allowed. (For another instance, golf club members have a separate entrance, so they don’t have to mingle in the lobby with the hoity toity.) A hostess escorted us to the bar, where posse regular Cheryl was already waiting with a glass of Syrah. Cheryl told us that the Grand Del Mar is under consideration as a venue for the 2008 U.S. Open — not for the golf course (Torrey Pines has already won that bid), but for its facilities. (She’s on one of the subcommittees making similar decisions for the corporation where she works.) Meanwhile, we pored over a wine list the size of the Gutenberg Bible. A vast international wine list, mainly steep, with a few New Zealand and South African whites for slightly under $40. Corkage, $25. Full bar.

Cuisine and Beverages: Brief menu of rather austere California-Mediterranean cuisine, featuring organically grown local produce, free-range meats and poultry, and wild-caught seafood. 

Vast international wine list, mainly steep, with a few New Zealand and South African whites for slightly under $40. Corkage, $25. Full bar.

**Pick Hits:** Lamb with goat cheese tart; cod with white bean puree; any dessert.

**NEED TO KNOW:** Reservations essential without guest status, membership, or investment; request detailed route directions. Valet parking. Formal, attentive setting and service, jackets not required but typical (except for golf club members in designer casual-chic). Smallsides/against. Vegetarian meals available on request; specify when reserving.

Ratings reflect the reviewer’s reaction to food, ambience, and service, with price taken into consideration. Menu listings and prices are subject to change.

Go to SanDiegoReader.com to find hundreds of past reviews.

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Addison

Main Menu ★★★ (Good)

Desertes ★★★★★ (Excellent)


**HOURS:** Wednesday–Sunday, 5:30–10:00 p.m.

**PRICES:** “Pre-course” starters, $17–$20; main courses, $34–$80, desserts, $10. Six-course chef tasting, $90 ($160 and up with wine), eight-course prix-fixe tasting in order by consultation with chef.

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**Fab Palace, No Clothes**

San Diego Reader December 28, 2006

**Reviewer:** Naomi Wise

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Some with sand in them, afloat like mussels; they’re jet-pro-
gerange,” my partner offered. Sam asked once the waiter had brought a double header of sweetness. That’s Alaskan King Crab Legs. I liked it very much, as did my partner. Sam and Cheryl preferred the herb-crusted hunk of roast lamb, ribs cut off their bones just before serving — you could call it “off the rack.” The roast sat atop “pickled plums” — a tart purée (probably shemeshi, Japanese sour plum sauce) that seemed to come from a different universe than the meat. The star of the lamb array was a moist, melty round garnished with a leaf of vivid green sorrel sauce that complemented the cheese. The cod is a perfectly crusted rectangle of fish, like a classy ($35) version of fish ’n’ chips. The fish was excellent, as was the thick and toasty crust of tomtatillo (plural on the menu, of course), an earthy white bean puree, and achartreuse avocado purée. The cod lay atop an unidentified orange-colored sauce involving mild chiles, but where was the real-life correlate to the menu’s promise of “orange,” unless it referred to the sauce’s color? Oh, wait, could “orange” be a wee spot of citrus jam near the plate-rim? “Poulette” featured several moist and flavorful beef bread slices from the legendary blue-ribboned French species, poulet de Bresse, raised in Northern California on corn and milk (and spayed, which is what happened with the white hen, rather than a mere hen). It tasted the way chicken ought to taste. Finally, and elegantly, we were served a crab nut squash and a heaplet of sweet orange “sousvide” (here meaning caramelized onion three ways, rather than Julia Child’s creamy puddling of that name). No taste clashes, merely two foods with small variations — fine poultry, and a double header of sweetness. And a dish of John Does turn nothing like that fishy fish. It had the typical meaty texture of the species, but its flavor was checked by a few cumber-ciferous veggie bits in a lawn, tart sauce studded with capers and one lonely clam. My partner got the clam. It was a good clam.

The fishes came with white fish sauce (keep it simple at the last, the “gastronomic pleasures” the menu quote had promised). A sautéed cod, delicately flavored with fresh-grated nutmeg, was perfect — as light and trebly as a nymphet’s breast. An assemblage of bit-
tersweet chocolate mousse, milk chocolate ice cream, and tart passionfruit syrup was vivid and coherent. Yet Fisher’s panache couldn’t save a dish of halfhearted from earlier courses.

Although every dish in the meal had been made with super-
ior ingredients and was flawlessly executed, none of our quartet was able to warm up to or comprehend chef Bradley’s palate. The final question about any restaurant is: Would I go back? I’d originally planned on a second dinner to check out the last-
time menu. After our meal, the answer changed to “I wouldn’t go back if somebody paid me!” and so does everybody.

ABOUT THE CHEF
William Bradley is a local San Diego, a protege of famed chef James Boyce (who single-handedly trained Michael Steinher of the late Region, among others). “I started cooking as a necessity for skateboards,” he says. “At 16, my skateboard habit became expensive, so I went to work as a dishwasher at a small Italian restaurant in the Bonita area called Buon Giorno. Once I started cooking there, I started to have a passion for being able to express yourself on a plate through food. I worked there for a couple of years, then went over to the Lowe’s Coronado Bay and started working with my longtime mentor, Jimmie Boyce. I spent three and a half years with him at Azzurra Point. Then I went with Boyce to Scottsdale, Ari-
izona, and started with him at Mary Ellen’s at the Phoenixian as a sous-chef — altogether I worked about seven and a half years with him.

“Then we had to part ways. He went to the Montage [in Laguna Beach], and I stayed in Phoenix and opened up a restaurant at the Hyatt Re-
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appoint me — we experienced, at last, the “gastronomic ple-
asures” the menu quote had promised.

Alongside was puréed butter-
tato, was competently sautéed
to the unrelieved sea of white
cabbage. A miniature square of French
butter, as it’d been cut off their bones just be-
ning a double header of sweetness.

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San Diego Reader December 24, 2006 107

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**Eat Your Broccoli**

For a moment, I’m almost man enough to accept a couple of challenges from the lunch menu.

Well, this is a first.

Here I am, cutting my omelet with a knife. But you have to, ‘cause this little sucker is loaded with chicken breast and broccoli. No fork’s gonna bust through that.

Not that it’s tough. In fact, what a gunk fest! The hollandaise coating floods this half-moon of an omelet. And deep inside I discover an underlayer of cream cheese. Oh mama. That gives it the tang it needs, zaps it up from a six to a ten.

Actually, the cream cheese was why I agreed to eat broccoli in the first place. We never got on, broccoli and me, unless Mom was there, cracking the whip. And did I mention this omelet’s big? Has to be half a dozen eggs. In fact, with a couple of English muffins, a rock-pile of home fries, plus a whole jug of coffee, it’s one with a couple of English muffins, a rock-pile of omelet’s big? Has to be half a dozen eggs. In fact, there, cracking the whip. And did I mention this never got on, broccoli and me, unless Mom was why I agreed to eat broccoli in the first place. We a six to a ten.

The building has two doors. Right one leads to the Carriage House, which is, like, a bar. Left one leads into Honey’s, a large, buttery cream-and-purple room with booths, tables, hanging pots of ivy, and zigzags of glass blocks jiggling out from the walls as room dividers. In the middle, a horseshoe counter with tall chairs for lone wolves.

I croak out a request for coffee, and presto, up comes this guy with an urn. He fills my cup — and leaves the urn with me. Great. I see it costs $2.25, but for that, you get the urn and beyond. “All you can drink,” the menu says.

Then this older guy with his hair in a ponytail comes by. “Want the morning paper?” he says. It’s his. He gives it to me. Gee. Some places just have this feeling.

The menu is huge. Two big plastic pages of breakfasts alone. Joyce, a lady in the next booth, is ordering an egg scramble. Spinach, onion, and cheese. “But cut the cheese, and give me bacon and mushroom instead,” she tells Cindy, the gal serving. Joyce says she’s paying $8.79.Hmm. Seems like the same price, even with the substitution.

But, Lordy, there’s so much to choose from. Two simple eggs with country potatoes and an English muffin are $4.99. Add bacon and it’s $6.99. With corned-beef hash it’s $7.99. With a top sirloin steak, you’re paying $12.99. Biscuits and gravy will set you back $8.99. “Honey’s Favorite,” with chicken breast, broccoli, onions, cream cheese, hollandaise sauce, $9.19; “Eggceptional” skillet with bacon, onion, two cheeses, two basted eggs. With fruit and muffin, they seem a bargain at $7.59. Oh, and a whole bunch of croissants (“Maria’s Favorite”) has scrambled eggs, diced sausage, and melted jack and cheddar cheeses for $8.79.

For a moment, I’m almost man enough to accept a couple of challenges from the lunch menu: the $9.69 “Stevenburger,” a half-pounder topped with, uh, peanut butter, bacon, and two cheeses (“Don’t be afraid” says the menu), and the “Baja Eater’s Special” (they’ll double the patty-power on any burger, and yes, that’s two half-pound patties) for $10.99. “Only the brave will succeed,” the menu says.

In the end, I can’t get that cream cheese hiding inside an omelet out of my mind. Yes, I’ll miss the sizzling skillet, but that just means I gotta come back. Carâ’d love this place.

Cindy says this used to be Brian’s, before they moved down to Hillcrest. The new owners took over early last year, and they haven’t skimped. “You’d never get this quantity back in the Big Apple,” says Joe, a guy who just flew in from New York. He’s chomping into a big wad of Denver omelet ($8.59). Maybe these people do have a claim to the “Biggest Breakfast” in town.

And hey, Mom! Look, I’ve eaten all my broccoli.
Gen X Grown Up

“When it’s your goal to educate folks about wine, entry-level will take you only so far.”

When I started writing this column back in 1999, one of my first subjects was the Wine Brats, an organization founded in 1994 for the promotion of wine to Gen-X. The slightly cutey name aside, the Brats were a smart outfit. The founders — Jeff Bundschu, Jon Sebastiani, and Mike Sangiacomo — all hailed from wine-industry families with their names on the label; if not quite boutique, the wineries were small enough to carry a little cachet in the tradition department. The group came off as less of a marketing effort and more of a mission on behalf of a public that didn’t know what it was missing.

The kids wrote their own book: The Wine Brats’ Guide to Living with Wine. They partnered with Wine X magazine, which shared their goal of selling wine to college grads who were burned out on beer. The Brats organized Wine Raves, taking wine tasting as far from the “sit-down, sip, spit, and speculate” format as they possibly could.

They sought to make wine fun, to rid it of its musty-fusty reputation. In some important ways, they succeeded. Rich Ikemeier, current head of San Diego Uncorked — a group devoted to carrying on the Brats’ work — was a Wine Brats man for years: first in Atlanta, then here in San Diego. “Five years ago,” he recalls, “we were kind of the only group around that was independently offering wine tastings,” without connection to any particular restaurant or winery. “Now, there are a lot more of those groups. A lot of wine bars and wine retailers are offering tastings on a weekly basis. Go to localwinesevents.com, and you’ll see a lot going on. It wasn’t really like that five years ago.” The Brats’ efforts probably account for some of that proliferation. Wine culture, says Ikemeier, “is a lot more casual than it was not that long ago. There are certainly not the barriers that there were.” (Progressive, flavor-based wine lists and wine shops did their part, of course, along with animal-based wine labels and a host of other factors, but the Brats’ 45,000 members in 33 chapters spread across 18 states surely helped out.)

Five years ago, Ikemeier was still relatively new in town, and he was watching the local chapter of the Brats shut down. “The president was having her second child. No one on the board decided to step up.” It was probably for the best. Social whirlwind Annie Dierickx took the helm of a new board, with Ikemeier as her number two. The group moved out of the suburbs and into the city, sold itself well, and grew, and thrived.

But it didn’t last. It might be that the Brats were, to some extent, a victim of their own success. Once the kids were sold on wine, what was to keep them from simply going their own way as ordinary consumers? And it didn’t help that, according to a 2004 article in the San Francisco Chronicle, even the management thought the events “had become monotonous.” Corporate sponsorship dropped off, and the wines — always donated — couldn’t always hold the interest of an increasingly sophisticated membership. The founders left the board in 2002, and in 2003, the group’s longtime executive director left, too.

There were lots of plans for restructuring, but Ikemeier says they didn’t really pan out. “They had a couple of events in a couple of major cities, but they couldn’t get back to what they had before. Before, we were structured to operate independently.” Under the new system, headquarters called the shots (and controlled the money). “They didn’t get local support. So subsequently, most everybody that ran the chapters in the other cities reformed independently under different names. About a half dozen took the ’Uncorked’ name, but we’re not tied to one another.”

The goal is the same: “There is still a need for people — basically, younger people — who are interested in wine and trying to learn more about it.” But as that last phrase suggests, the format has shifted a bit toward the traditional; the Wine Rave may never return. “We did have some of those types of events, but these are more people who are interested in really learning about wine, as opposed to just replacing beer as a beverage.” (These days, San Diego Uncorked is hosting monthly gatherings: either walk-about tastings, (These days, San Diego Uncorked is hosting monthly gatherings: either walk-about tastings, opposed to just replacing beer as a beverage.)

The industry upon which San Diego Uncorked relies has shifted as well. “There has been a lot of change, a lot of consolidation in the wine industry. Constellation is now a huge wine company. Ravenswood used to be independent; they’re part of Constellation now. We were aligned with Mondavi; they’re part of Constellation now.”

And when corporate management takes over, you get a new set of decision makers when it comes to donated wine. “It all depends on the brand” and where corporate thinks that brand ought to be marketed. “For example, the Little Penguin brand, the Alice White brand, they’re interested in sponsoring some of our events. They’re more than happy to donate several cases of five-dollar, six-dollar wine.” But, notes Ikemeier, “Those are very entry-level-type wines.”

On the one hand, it makes some degree of sense to introduce new wine drinkers to the pleasures of the grape via “entry-level” wines. On the other, when it’s your goal to educate folks about wine, entry-level will take you only so far — and will command only so much attention. “I don’t know if we’re going to have a Little Penguin event every other month. I don’t think that would be amazing who is no longer independent. Ravenswood used to be independent; they’re part of Constellation now. And when corporate management takes over, you get a new set of decision makers when it comes to donated wine. “It all depends on the brand” and where corporate thinks that brand ought to be marketed. “For example, the Little Penguin brand, the Alice White brand, they’re interested in sponsoring some of our events. They’re more than happy to donate several cases of five-dollar, six-dollar wine.” But, notes Ikemeier, “Those are very entry-level-type wines.”

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 emerson Reviews. A complete searchable list contains only a fraction of over 500 thousands. — N.W. (4/02)
Pacifica Del Mar Del Mar Plaza, 11900 Del Mar (at 156th Street), Del Mar, 858-792-1830. The chic crowd is drawn here by Pacifica’s quite pleasant kick-back place (which gets its name from the beagle figurine inside). The menu, a mixture of Italian and vegetarian, offers dishes like goat cheese gnocchi with cumin sauce, and baked eggyplant “pizzatae” (per- sonal-size pizza) with marjoram, mozzare- la, and Pampas chile. The veget- erian chili and the Zingy veggie burger are served on a La Brea bun too tasty too. Open daily, 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. Inexpensive. — N.W. (9/02)
El O’ero 964 South Coast Highway 101, Encinitas, 760-733-9050. You’ll feel like you’re in an intimate party eating a leisurely dinner in this small, noisy, pretty dining room. Chef Mon- gomery also owns the neighboring, home- style renditions of South American cuisines, including house-made beverages. Be sure to try the beans’ fritter, a tendency of Spanish tapa sausages too — as the perfect, moist corned beef and other dishes. Live music: Thursday through Saturday, 9 p.m. to midnight. A large, attracts- ing patio next to the parking lot of- fers some afternoon sunsets. Open daily, lunch until late. Inexpensive. — N.W. (10/02)
Tony’s Jacal 621 Valley Avenue (be- tween Genevieve Street and Juanita Avenue), 858-532-7234. The restaurant is a victim of its particular strip-mall restaurant has been per- haps the perfect, moist corned beef and other dishes. Live music: Thursday through Saturday, 9 p.m. to midnight. A large, attracts- ing patio next to the parking lot of- fers some afternoon sunsets. Open daily, lunch until late. Inexpensive. — N.W. (10/02)
an intense little marlin taco (squeeze ties, and are well treated. Also considerermen’s terms) are the house special-
er. Open daily; continuous service for
6947 Linda Vista Road, 858-268-8406). Boulevard, #A, 858-578-1468 (also at
A popular breakfast
well-done brisket, flank, tendon, and
biance. Dinner nightly; Sunday brunch.
route to the restaurant. Tie-and-jacket
goers). If disabled, specify when you
Take Bernardo Oaks Drive (a long
tions are just adequate. To find it:
the Rancho Valencia Resort is one of
pensive.
black dates, seaweed, and lotus seeds
to moderate (seafood).

California Reader. Thanks to the
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pensive.
Boots to cover the endless rows of hotplate for you. You’ll need hiking makes a flavorful alternative (but be-
der and moist, and beef brisket carries they’re tasty enough. Pork ribs are ten-
emerge from it aren’t the smokiest, but mechanism is a Texas-style pit smoker with metal “saddles” (more comfort-
and-white Western pictures on the Drive (near movieplex), Clairemont, S
SAN RESTAURANTS

Restaurant Coupons and Menus

Pacific Beach, Mission Beach & Ocean Beach

Atoll at the Catamaran Hotel
Broken Volk $2 off breakfast or lunch
Canes Free wing basket
Chateaux Orleans 50% off
Costa Brava Free lapa for lunch
French Gourmet Free dessert
Great Moon Buffet 10% off total bill
Gringo’s $2 off Sunday Brunch
Limoniz Rastizados 20% off chicken or ribs
Pacific Bar & Grill 2 for 1 entrée
Pacific Rotisserie Free entrée
Sam’s by the Sea
Saskia’s Free sushi or 25% off bill
TJ Oyster Bar 2 for 1 tacos/tostadas
Tower Two Beach Cafe 1/2-price appetizers

La Jolla

Aurora Trattoria 2 for 1 dinner
Cafe Milano Free Comedy Store tickets
Cendio
Clay’s La Jolla
Cinza Sushi $10 dinner for $25.95
Harry’s Coffee Shop 20% off
La Jolla Brew House Free lunch or dinner entrée
Marrakesh 50% off lunch
Regents Pizzeria Free large salad
The Shores 20% off dinner
Su Casa 20% off entire check
Vida Gourmet

South Bay & Coronado

Batter Up! 50% off Batter Up! basket
Lai Thai 50% off entrée
Mariscos La Costa Azul Free combo plate

Uptown & North Park

A La Francaise
Awash Ethiopian 1/2-price entrée
B Fried Rice
Baby Back Jack’s $2 off
Hob Nob Hill $2 off entrée
House of India Free dinner
India Prince Free dinner*
Lips 50% off cocktail
RanchoFree $2 off entrée
Ruford’s $2 off entrée
San Filippo’s Pizza & salad $15.45

Midway Old Town & Mission Valley

The Amigo Spot 15% off bill
Bali Thai Free entrée
Bennigan’s $3 off lunch or dinner
Chilean $2 off lunch or dinner
Forever Fondeur 2 for 1 entrée
Fuji Japanese Steakhouse 10% off
Lot 81 Free appetizer
Old Town Mexican Park 50% off
Papaya $2 off $20
Pizza Bella Free wine dinner
Shanghai Chinese $1 off Mongolian BBQ
Tio Leo’s Dinner’s combo plates $9.99 each
Todai 10% off lunch or dinner

East County & State College

Alpine Inn Sunday prime rib $18.95
Aroma Thai Free entrée
Cereal Port $2 off energy drink
Fix Me A Plate Cafe 15% off any entrée
Greek Town Buffet $20 off dinner buffet
Habana Cuban Free appetizer or dessert
Happy Lucky Star Bar $2 off lunch
Hailey’s Pizza Lunch Special $4.95

The Beach Club 50% off entrée
Big Jim’s Old Town Bar-B-Q 50% off entrée
The Blvd Free Happy Hour appetizer
Del Mar Vendevue 20% off
Greek Village Free sangakini
Jamar’s 10% off island sampler
Ki’s Restaurant Free appetizer or dessert
Mikko Japanese 50% off sushi
Noodles & Company Pho Lucky 10% off entire check
Wild Note Cafe

BRAZIL BY THE BEACH

Brazil by the Beach and Sports Bar 3775 Hancock Street, La Mesa Portal, 619-692-1410. It’s not by the bay, but the food is definitely by-
the book Brazilian. You know because the first things you see are guaraní, the Amazonian energy drink, and at, the Amazonian palm berry energy ball. If
you’re not strapped for cash, go for the popular feijoada stew, black beans
cooked slowly with “six types of pork and two kinds of beef,” offered Saturday and
Sunday. If you don’t have the dough, have what most of Brazil eats every-
day: the “PPL” (pure fruta “ready plate”). It’s beef, chicken, or fish with rice and
Brazilian beans and end with the cheesiest dessert, the wicked Brigadeiro.
Open seven days, closes at 8 p.m. Mon-
day and Tuesday. Inexpensive. — E.B. (9/04)
The French Gourmet 960 Caucasian Street, Pacific Beach, 619-488-1725. In the mood for filet,
ratatouille, or caf’s liver in a buttery atmosphere? Make a reservation at The
French Gourmet and taste it. Start off with traditional escargot and then—
mushrooms. The onion soup is good, but hope that the soup du jour is a gingered
cream of carrot. Entrées include lamb loin, veal, veal tenderloin, beef tender-
loin with several preparation choices for chicken or filet mignon. The pun-
monial bitcoin is gently enhanced with a champagne beurre blanc sauce and topped
with cream fraîche and braised leeks. Desserts abound, with an imported
French cheese plate topping the list — along with profiteroles, meringues, etc.,
all freshly prepared in-house. Bakery and bread are available Tuesday and Sun-
day or Monday. Moderate to expensive. — E.B. (9/04)
Gringo’s 4147 Mission Boulevard (at Garnet Avenue), Pacific Beach, 619-487-2777. With better cooking than
you’d guess from its name, this ambu-
tions spin-off of the local Moondoggies
chain serves the sort of Mexican cuisine
you’d guess from its name, this ambi-
People look either disgustingly healthy,
disturbingly fat, or just plain stupid. But the food tastes pretty good. And they
sell it by the pound so you can mix and
match. Of course, you have to learn new
words, like tempeh (soy cured meat
which can be made to taste like anything). And dishes have a sensible name: East Coast
food — garlic eggplant with beet root and
onions, tempeh loaf, sweet squash, millet, spinach, kale, shepherd’s pie,

ABOUT OUR RESTAURANT CREDITS

Restaurant Coordinators

SandiegoReader.com
La Fachada (20 25th Street (near 4529 Mission Bay Drive (at 25th Street), Logan Heights, 619-282-4120. To find this tiny restaurant, go through city lights, and aim more or less for the Buena Vista Park. At least twenty breads and pastries are available to take out or eat on the go. Open seven days a week, Monday through Friday, 6:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Inexpensive. — N.W. (11/00)

Sushi Otu 4239 Mission Bay Drive (at Bunker Hill Street), Pacific Beach, 310-298-3700. What becomes a legend at Otu bar is its offer of exceptional quality, perfect tart-sweet rice, tight wraps, and delicious soups. Try these don't come easy. First, find the place. Driving south from Balboa, look left, and you'll see the mini-mall with the 7-11 sign (opposite Rubio's). At the stop sign, look to sweep on your neighbors’ choices, and consider for a wrap or roll. Great sushi roll deal of a bacon cheeseburger with onions and a side of sushi. The prices may be high. This makes a tight sandwich for a picnic, or try the giant lunch deal of a bacon cheeseburger with a side of sushi. More for the average American, this offers sirloin, and Lauds dishes. In the morning, ask for a menu, and feel safe. Stick with the sushi bar, and try this rolls menu. Ask for a menu for sushi rolls, the standard Chilly-Killer Baked. Later in the day, you may try pan-fried noodles with broccoli and beef or shrimp and garnish. “Let Us Bring Tha South to Vuelva a la Vida, says it all: “Let Us Bring Tha South to

Dulzura Cafe 1065 Highway 94 at El Cajon Boulevard, 619-476-5870. This is Memphis-style soul food, mild to spicy, barbecue sauces, head and ribs, red snapper, and hot links or chicken. The Omelette Factory 855 La Jolla Avenue, City Heights, 619-238-6608. Hot cupcakes, with ground meat, parsley, onions, and pita bread. The Omelette Factory is open seven days a week, Monday through Friday, 6:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Inexpensive. — N.W. (11/00)

Café is the real thing, serving big, hot, meat to meat lovers. Good Chinese food. This is a dessert destination — pause to order! With purchase of two entrées. Not valid on holidays or other offers, coupons or specials. Expires 1/11/07.

Every Wednesday Night 50% Off Bottled Wines

New Year's Eve Cajun Feast $34.95
5-Course Dinner 4-10 pm
Live Music 6-10 pm
Reserve Now!

$10 Off Dinner With purchase of two entrées. Not valid on the Blue Plate Special, to-go orders, holidays or other specials. Limit one coupon per party. With this ad, expires 1/11/07.

Now think vintage American food. Hefi anytime breakfasts include two eggs, hash browns, biscuits, and coffee or eggs with chicken-fried steak or bulgogi veggie omelet. Their sour- dough cheeseburger with fries or potato salad is a big, deli on of a kind. Folks habitually talk about this chili in low, resonant voices. For dinner, this hot steak or pork chop is good enough to make city folks swoon. Three meals daily. Inexpensive. — E.B. (10/05)

UPTOWN & OLD TOWN

Adams Avenue Grill 2201 Adams Avenue, University Heights, 619-298-8440. The frequently chang- ing menu tries to embrace something new in style para- style, and can’t quite get its arms around any of them. The dishes are often ambitious; a few sour, but many drier due to wines in consumption, orexec, or badly. Much-hum- bing list needs selections with enough sweetness to stand up to items feta- ring Asian spice — where are the Ries- lings? Still, the place seems full of hap- piness and friendliness, yellow and orange walls, plenty of amis about the bus. Soup receives limited attention, and sometimes up to their billings. As to treats, the generous, marvelous lavender-infused crème brûlée makes this a dessert destination — pause to take a spoonful before slipping into bed — a whole or your own: up to four meats, veggies, and goat meat. Start with a Surfside, a very Michoacan dish is a pretty good Western omelet to snoop on your neighbors’ soup, a head of savory red fish soup dunking with giant crab legs, clams, chunks of white fish, shrimp, the pink and purple suckers of octopus, and vegetables. It is also called Vuelve tu Locura “Return to life.” A hot ticket, their cocktail list and a menu that everyone in the neighborhood seems to have is a real thing, serving big, hot, meat to meat lovers. Good Chinese food. This is a dessert destination — pause to order! With purchase of two entrées. Not valid on holidays or other offers, coupons or specials. Expires 1/11/07.

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then stay and sing your heart out at our special New Year’s Eve dinner at our huge stage. Inexpensive.

**NEW YEAR’S EVE DINNER**

619-350-6500. Across the street from City College, you’ll encounter a splash of Hillcrest culture —N. W. (12/02)

**Candelas**

416 Third Avenue, Gaslamp, 619-702-4455. Don’t look for tacos here — chef Eduardo Barra specializes in authentic Mexican fare and French techniques. In a charming Spanish Setting, you can enjoy the best of authentic Mexican seafood, including a sign of dishes and traditional stuffed Mexican cuisine. The place is like a kid-friendly steakhouse, and the wine list is impressive. Inexpensive.

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Vietnamese Beef Noodle Soup

$1 Off Spring Rolls or Egg Rolls*

Cannot be used with 10% off entire check offer.

10% Off Entire Check* (10% minimum purchase.)

*Limit one per table. Valid at this location only. Expires 1/11/07.

Free Thai Entrée

Get second entrée of equal or lesser value free when you buy one entrée and two drinks. Must present coupon. Expires 1/11/07.

Lunch Specials from $5.95

Served with soup, salad, spring roll, wontons and rice!

Imperial Beach: 757 Seacoast Dr. • 619-429-6565
San Diego: 4660 El Cajon Blvd. • 619-564-6270

2-for-1 Italian Dinner Entree

Place same customer only. Entire entree of equal or lesser value is free. Expires 1/11/07.

Lunch Special 7th

Pasta, pizza or panini with salad & soda.

Sevilla

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S P A N I S H C U I S I N E  •  T A P A S B A R  •  S A L S A L E S S O N S  •  N I G H T C L U B
Cioppino Live! 315-1/2 3rd Avenue, Costa Mesa, 619-274-5754. Filipinos often mix imaginative twists. A perfect place to eat the desserts offer some old favorites — E.B. (10/00)

Manzanilla River 122 (off Loppe Matai), Ensenada, Baja Mexico, 646-175-797. As this art-dilled, very "Euro" bistro, a gift of, classily treated chef-owners is pioneering "new Mexican cuisine," creating sumptuous combinations of superb local products and traditional Mexican flavors. Fresh-caught seafood, local-grown vegetables and mesquite-smoked from the wood-burning grill are feasted upon in the palace-like ambiance, a splendid place for pig's blood. But the pride of this place is the place is the deserts, from the shooter's choice of "escamoles," green (mexican) corn-comb(combo) to the asopos (multicolored lace cake) and fried chicken adobo. Open daily, breakfast through early dinner.

Halea — a hole in the wall, with a green golf course, is longer than most, with numerous multiple arms in Puerto Nuevo and Rosarito — E.B. (9/01)

Bonus: the owner's charming menu in-cludes hearty drinks, and staff are bilingual. Reservations welcome to BYO. Bar choices include Manzanilla (usually tilapia) in deli-sour), are especially good, as is the house coconut-chicken soup can wash away all the enzymes will die. Enzymes? They're never heat food above 112 degrees or the juices will die. Diet for you. What's amazing is digestion for you. What's amazing is — E.B. (9/01)

Never heat food above 112 degrees or the juices will die. Diet for you. What's amazing is digestion for you. What's amazing is — E.B. (9/01)

Cilantro Live! 1355-40th Street (at Rock; National City, 619-479-6748; also at 8955-F Mira Mesa Boulevard #E10, National City, 619-858-2740. At this art-dilled, very "Euro" bistro, a gift of, classily treated chef-owners is pioneering "new Mexican cuisine," creating sumptuous combinations of superb local products and traditional Mexican flavors. Fresh-caught seafood, local-grown vegetables and mesquite-smoked from the wood-burning grill are feasted upon in the palace-like ambiance, a splendid place for pig's blood. But the pride of this place is the place is the deserts, from the shooter's choice of "escamoles," green (mexican) corn-comb(combo) to the asopos (multicolored lace cake) and fried chicken adobo. Open daily, breakfast through early dinner.

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*Plus sales tax.
THEATER LISTINGS

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

An American Christmas
Lamb’s Players presents an “interactive feast and celebration,” set 100 years ago, at the Hotel del Coronado’s Grand Ballroom.

HOTEL DEL CORONADO, 1500 ORANGE AVENUE, THROUGH DECEMBER 30; NIGHTLY AT 6:30 P.M. 619-437-0600.

How the Grinch Stole Christmas
Well, almost stole. The Green Meanie comes close but gets foiled in the end. The Old Globe’s Grinch, adapted from the Dr. Seuss book by Timothy Mason and directed by Jack O’Brien, is as crisp and playful as ever. Scenic designer John Lee Beatty’s mobile snowdrifts, Robert Morgan’s costumes (waddling Who’s shaped like bowling pins and pears in candy cane colors), Jay Goede’s Grinch, a green Sasquatch who really needs to take his meds (and who wants to have a “heart to heartless” talk with irrepressible Cindy Lou) — all combine in a swirling theatricality. Now in its ninth year, Grinch has become a local holiday institution. The night I saw it, at least half the audience was under 12, and many seeing live theater, quite possibly, for the first time. And what has become another praiseworthy Grinch tradition: at least 75 percent of the cast comes from San Diego.

Worth a try.

OLD GLOBE THEATRE, SIMON EDISON CENTRE FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS, BALBOA PARK, THROUGH DECEMBER 29; THURSDAY AND FRIDAY AT 7:30 P.M. 619-234-5623.

Joey and Maria’s Comedy Italian Wedding
Joey and Maria tie the knot in “not-so-ordinary interactive dinner theater.”

HOLIDAY INN ON THE BAY, 1355 NORTH HARBOR DRIVE, SAN DIEGO, OPEN-ENDED RUN. FOR DAYS AND TIMES CALL 800-944-5639.

Jonah
San Diego Branch Productions presents a musical version of the biblical story “of a man given a second chance.”

SUNSHINE BROOKS THEATRE, 217 NORTH COAST HIGHWAY, OCEANSIDE, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 30, AT 8:00 P.M. MATINEE SUNDAY, DECEMBER 31, AT 2:00 P.M. 760-529-9140.

Lamb’s Players Festival of Christmas
Kerry Meads set this year’s script, All I Want for Christmas, in San Diego’s Little Italy in 1949. The radio era’s nearing an end, and corporations like Woolworth are just beginning to “squash the little guy.” The story’s a mile lengthy, and don’t for one minute think that anyone by evening’s end will have a dream left unfulfilled. A hallmark of Lamb’s annual festival is its music. The period allows arrangers Cris O’Byron and Vanda Eggington to give standards (like “Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer”) inventive twists and rediscover forgotten songs. Throughout the Bops, a group trying to make it big, sing soft, four-part harmonies, stretching notes like pulled taffy (best of show: don’t ask how four men sipping coffee at Gold’s Fountain suddenly perform a choreographed routine that includes spinning on red stools; just enjoy their version of David Holt and Sammy Cahn’s “Christmas Blues”). Scratch the surface of any Christmas-related story and you’ll find a metamorphosis worthy of Ovid: Scrooge, the Grinch, All I Want has two. Doren Elias plays a nerd who repairs radios and a dashing mystery figure; David Cochran Heath is Joe, a middle-aged man who still lives with his mother. Love blooms, and Joe grows. Heath’s singing of “You’re All I Want for Christmas” marks his awakening and stops the show. Worth a try.

LAMB’S PLAYERS THEATRE, 1142 ORANGE AVENUE, CORONADO, THROUGH DECEMBER 30; THURSDAY AT 7:30 P.M. FRIDAY AND SATURDAY AT 8:00 P.M. MATINEE SATURDAY AT 4:00 P.M. 619-437-0600.
National Comedy Theatre
Improvisational comedy, making up funny stuff on the spot, is difficult enough. Years ago, however, Keith Johnstone thought it’d be more exciting if done competitively. He got the idea from pro wrestling (“where Terrible Turks mangled defrocked priests, while momma and daddy yelled insults and granmaw waved their handbags.”) National Comedy Theatre, an offshoot of Johnstone’s TheateRts (artistic director Gary Kramer says the two compare like “rugby and American football”), resembles an athletic event more than an improv. Teams wear uniforms and compete on ActrO’Turf. The night I caught the show, three San Diego comedians played a challenge match against players from the San Jose franchise. Using suggestions from the audience, they played “Emotional Sympathy,” “Weirdo,” “Blind Line,” and “Train Tag,” with judges awarding points to the best scenes. Klunkers and groaners got boost, quick wit rewarded (one of the most refreshing parts of the context: people acknowledged failure, abundantly, then forget it). It made for a lively, often quite funny, evening. And Gary Kramer is one talented comedian.

Worth a try.

AMUSEMENT THEATER, 3147 BEACH STREET, MISSION HILLS. OPEN ENDED RUN. FRIDAY AND SATURDAY AT 7:30 P.M. AND 9:45 P.M. 619-295-4399.

Readings of August Wilson’s Plays: Joe Turner’s Come and Gone
The San Diego Black Ensemble and Cygnet Theatre could do for the late August Wilson what “Grassroots Greek” did for ancient Greek drama in San Diego. The company presents a series of staged readings of one of the American theater’s rarely performed but most important playwrights. Twice winner of the Pulitzer Prize (for Fences in 1987 and The Piano Lesson in 1990), Wilson wrote a cycle of dramas that probe the African-American experience through the decades of the 20th Century (he concentrated, he said, on the “largest idea that confronted blacks in each decade”). The readings will also be staged at the Performance Annex in City Heights and other locations. The series will culminate in a week-long staged reading festival of all the plays at Cygnet in June 2007. Next offering: Floyd Gaffney directs Joe Turner’s Come and Gone. Worth a try.

CYGNET THEATRE, 6663 EL CAJON BOULEVARD BETWEEN 68TH AND 69TH, COLLEGE AREA. FRIDAYS AT 7:45 P.M. SATURDAYS AT 7:45 P.M. AND 9:45 P.M. 619-465-7469.

The Sopranos’ Last Supper
Dilliard Productions presents a reading with the notorious Barden family: “gambling, dinner, dancing, and good old mobster fun.”

Worth a try.

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WIN, PLACE, OR DIE...

My Cafe Dinner Theatre presents James Fassona and Patricia Harris-Smith’s interactive “race-track romp.” It’s opening weekend at Cuvier Downs, and the Thoroughbred Club will never be the same. Fassona directed IMPERIAL HOUSE RESTAURANT, 505 KALMA STREET, HILLCREST, OPENENDED RUNS; FRIDAY AND SATURDAY AT 8:00 P.M. 619-254-0000.

The Wonder Bread Years

Pat Harze’s solo “field trip back in time” sounds like yet another superificial romp through the ’60s and ’70s, glancing here and caring nothing for the sort of familiar icons with the nutritional content implied by its title. What sets the piece apart, along with Harze’s ability to interact with an audience (and with what it’s thinking, rather than what he wants it to think) is his knack for talking about the familiar in fresh ways (“Childhood was the time when you could fall asleep anywhere and wake up in your own bed”). He talks about traditional subjects — breakfast, going to bed”). He talks about traditional

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Bacon Theatre
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Borrego Springs Performing Art
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590 Pala Corner Dr., Borrego Springs (760) 797-4275 www.bspac.org

The Broadway Theatre
330 E. Broadway Blvd., San Diego (619) 544-1616 www.thebroadwaytheatre.com

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Jockeys Are Killing Me!
Win, Place, or Die…My DAY AT 3:00 P.M. AND 7:00 P.M. SATURDAY AT 5:00 AND 8:00 P.M. SUN-

KALMA STREET, HILLCREST, OPENENDED RUNS; FRIDAY AND SATURDAY AT 8:00 P.M. 619-254-0000.

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Final shovelful: *Curse of the Golden Flower*, more than just the best movie to reach our town for the holidays, is in some sense the only movie to do so. Zhang Yimou, in the first place, is a true moviemaker, and his dynamic visual style demonstrates exceptional weight, balance, timing, and agility. In short, exceptional command of the screen. Watching his shots fall into place is a little like watching the piece-by-piece construction of a palace. Or temple. Nothing humbler would quite do justice to a tale of courtly and amatory intrigue (Tang Dynasty, 10th Century) that aspires to Shakespearean, even Sophoclean, tragedy. Then, too, the director’s reunion with his one-time muse and leading lady, Gong Li, over ten years after their personal falling-out, post-*Shanghai Triad*, makes the movie into a real “event,” and the actress brings to it an inner fire to outglow even the molten-lava color scheme. I would not bother to dispute that the movie is somewhat talky and slow, but if I prefer it nevertheless to Zhang’s *Hero* and *House of Flying Daggers*, my reasons in large part would be precisely the long postponement of the gravity-defying martial arts. Defying, that is, of not only Newton’s sort of gravity but that of Shakespeare and Sophocles as well. Once the battles break out, they severely damage the sense of seriousness, although never the sense of style.

The Good Shepherd could be called, as one blurbist already has done, *The Godfather I* of CIA movies, but only if you are satisfied to retain all the pretentiousness of *The Godfather*, right down to the oppressive underillumination, and do without any of the enlivening pyrotechnics. (Despite those subtractions, the movie still comes to within ten minutes or so of *The Godfather*’s nearly three-hour duration.) Tremendously unentertaining, it slogs back and forth in time, beginning with, and regularly returning to, the Bay of Pigs fiasco and fallout, but retreating back as far as the protagonist’s college days as a Yale and an inductee into the Skull and Bones secret society in 1939 (and even, in a psychoanalytical flashback-within-a-flashback, as far as his boyhood and his father’s suicide in 1925), and then working its way forward toward 1961 in incremental jumps. Second-time director Robert De Niro, who also has a small sedentary role as the protagonist’s espionage mentor, may have convinced himself that the back-and-forth time shuttle (not to mention the Cuban connection) would transform this also into *The Godfather II* of CIA movies. But this, unlike that, is a single-generation narrative, and the continual interruptions in the storytelling serve little other purpose than to thwart any suspense. And since the block-of-wood Matt Damon hardly ages a day in twenty-plus years (nor does Angelina Jolie in the unaccustomed role of a neglected wife), our best hope to avoid confusion as to where we are on the timeline is to differentiate between his many eyeglass frames.

*Rocky Balboa*, the sixth installment in the Rocky series despite the absence of a Roman numeral to remind us, comes thirty years after the first one and sixteen after the fifth. It will stand as a serviceable definition of “retarded.” Written and directed by its now sixty-year-old star, Sylvester Stallone, it wants nothing but to turn back the hands of time. Oh, Stallone may, in observance of auld lang syne, put on a wicked delight, you’ll hang on every twist and turn. If you want to see explosive acting, just watch Jodi Dench and Cate Blanchett ignite. This is the bravest, riskiest role of Dench’s film career. It’s spellbinding to watch her blow the lid off. Jodi Dench and Cate Blanchett are utterly superb matching each other equally in the kind of movie acting that made me love movies in the first place.

*Win a Movie Pass for Two!* To enter, visit the Reader website and click on “contests.” Deadline to enter is Thursday, December 28, at 1:00 pm. Limit one entry per person. No purchase necessary. Must be 17 or older. Opens in San Diego January 5.
his sanctified screen wife into the cold hard ground (“woman cancer”), and thus restrict Talia Shire, still listed in the credits, to youthful flashbacks. But what man, after all, with washboard abs and with veins bulging in his shoulders and biceps, could abide to be saddled with an old bag his own age? He can always get an eyeliift, dip into the youth serum, to youthful flashbacks. But if wishful thinking wishes it, he can nonetheless a quarter-century’s worth that the moviegoers who are in rural Minnesota in the days after Black Christmas, an illegal-alien nanny advertised as Norwegian, makes for dramatic stress, that you’re watching a product of, say, the Guatemalan New Wave or the Undiscovered Belizean Cinemas. At the very least, the film should do nothing to fan the flames of Gibson’s supposed and substantiated anti-Semitism. And at the next least, the last-minute arrival on the scene of Christianity is not open — and politically incorrectly — applauded. That might be the film’s one and only instance of restraint. Rudy Youngblood, Dalia Hernandez, Jonathan Brewer, Morris Bird, 2006.

**Apocalypse** — Evidently Mel Gibson is it only for the barbarity. Scouring the globe, roasting the pages of history, he has alighted here on the illuminating example of the Mayan people, past their civilization’s peak, where a happy, peaceful, practical-joking tribe of jungle dwellers (sample joke: the prescription of a red hot balm as a topical fertility drug, so that the duped hubby must, in full view of the gullibing villagers, hop around buck naked and plunk his burning loins in a water trough — wait, it gets even better — and his wife must pour a pitcher of water down his gullet is cruelly set upon and rounded up by a storm troop of torturers, molesting, bone-in-the-nose killers in search of sacrificial offerings to their god Kukulkan. A paradise, in other words, no less than turn of the 13th-century Scotland in Braveheart or 1st-century Palestine in The Passion of the Christ, where Gibson may indulge his appetite for mayhem, persecution, torture, martyrdom. (The nine-tenths-naked natives enable him, further, to indulge his lesser appetite for homerotica.) The English subtitles and the no-name cast might almost lead you to believe, were it not for the telltale slickness and the Gibsonian slo-mo for dramatic stress, that you’re watching a product of, say, the Guatemalan New Wave or the Undiscovered Belizean Cinemas. At the very least, the film should do nothing to fan the flames of Gibson’s supposed and substantiated anti-Semitism. And at the next least, the last-minute arrival on the scene of Christianity is not openly — and politically incorrectly — applauded. That might be the film’s one and only instance of restraint. Rudy Youngblood, Dalia Hernandez, Jonathan Brewer, Morris Bird, 2006.

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Can, as an example, an Alabama minister’s wife — bluntly insured for her dearth of pulchritude — be safely assumed to be less human than our fearless guerrilla artiste, or be the latter’s sexton perhaps crossed over, there, from fiction into reality? Any diversion afforded by such thoughts is all to the good, because the general impression of the film, right down to the spotlights of its laughs, and regardless of whether staged or not, is amazingly similar to that of your average Will Ferrell comedy. In a way, over the top and high of the target. Directed by Larry Charles. 2006.

**CASINO ROYALE** — Taking the title from Ian Fleming’s first James Bond novel, the 007 franchise approaches the opportunity of a new James Bond as the opportunity of a new beginning. The new Bond, Daniel Craig, is not just another pretty face, in fact it’s a pretty crazy face (Crazy face, perhaps that should be), and it can pretty well express itself in the bargain. Granted, noises were made about a similar rollback toward reality when Timothy Dalton came on board; and even in the midst of the reign of Pierce Brosnan, noises were made about toughening up his act. These proved to be only noises. The new noises are more. The obligatory pre-credits sequence, in black-and-white and sprinkled with flashbacks, shuns spectacle in favor of blunt brutality; and the action to follow seems to be under no compulsion to “up” all previous action. While Judi Dench reprises the role of “M,” Bond himself has only just been promoted to double-0 status (a new beginning for Bond himself has only just been promoted to double-0 status (a new beginning for Bond himself has only just been promoted to double-0 status (a new beginning for Bond himself has only just been promoted to double-0 status (a new beginning for Bond) — and the one romantic relationship (with the enigmatic, dandy-eyelined Eva Green) attains an emotional weight beyond even the all-starting spottiness of its laughs, and regardless of whether staged or not, is amazingly similar to that of your average Will Ferrell comedy. In a way, over the top and high of the target. Directed by Larry Charles. 2006.
**The Best Spy Movie Ever**

A brilliant look at a CIA operative and the cloak-and-dagger life.

**NEWSWEEK**

“SPELLBINDING, MESMERIZING. It demands you watch it. like a spy: alert, paranoid, never knowing whom you can trust, or who will stab you in the back.” — David Ansen

**TIME**

“MATT DAMON IS TERRIFIC and so is everyone else in this intricate, understated but ultimately devastating account of how secrets...can become an illness, dangerous to those who wise them up.” — Richard Schickel

**NEW YORK POST**

“THE GODFATHER OF CIA MOVIES. A masterpiece. A tense epic of business and family.” — Roger Ebert

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Charlotte’s Web — Gary Winick’s rendition of the children’s book by E.B. White, starring Dakota Fanning, with Julia Roberts as the voice of the spider.

**CARMEL MOUNTAIN; CHULA VISTA 10; CORONADO 8; ENCINITAS 8; ENCINITAS 10; GASLAMP 15; GROSSMAMA 4; HAYWARD 6; HOUSTON 6; MONT CENTER; HORTON PLAZA 14; LA COSTA 6; LA JOLLA 12; MIRA MESA 18; MISSION VALLEY 20; OCEANSIDE 16; PALM PROMENADE 24; PARKWAY PLAZA 18; POPAY 10; RANCHO DEL REY 10; RANCHO SAN DIEGO 15; SAN MARCOS 18; TOWN SQUARE 14; VISTA VILLAGE

**AMC Fashion Valley 18
**

**The Departed** — Martin Scorsese’s career-changing turn to the overblown epic, a turn marked by Giorno, would seem to be a course difficult to reverse. Kundun … The Aviator…. And now even a trashy light diversion, adapted from an average-length Hong Kong action film, will get dragged out to two and a half hours — this despite the delivery of dialogue at the machine-gun tempo of a hopped-up auctioneer (or of Scorsese’s own casual conversation), and despite, too, the more semblance of speed imparted by the free-associative cutting and the incongruous checklist beat of the background music, whenever the filmmaker isn’t touting out his collection of rock-and-roll oldies. The convoluted plot veers on force as an upwardly mobile underworld guy in the Massachusetts State Police (Matt Damon, raising his eyebrows in an ostentatious show of innocence) and a downwardly mobile police spy inside the mob (Leonardo DiCaprio, giving himself away with his meat-cleaver worry line) both become involved, first as clients and then as suitors, with a Harper’s Bazaar idea of a psychotherapist (Vera Farmiga, she of the prow-like cheekbones, lilo-riff laps, blue-lagoon eve). Not even the take-ine-prisoners crescendo of gore toward the end, jolting though some of it is, can pull the movie back from the farcical brink. And Jack Nicholson, as showy a star as Scorsese is a director (when he’s in it for the money, anyway), plays the mob boss at a pitch barely below his Batman Joker. With Mark Wahlberg, Martin Sheen, Al Pacino, Ray Winstone. 2006.

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Dreamgirls — Broadway backstage musical — not, that is to say, backstage on Broadway but backstage in Motown — charting the breakthrough of R&B into the pop mainstream in the Sixties, more specifically the rise of a girl group called the Dreams (rhymes with Supremes), and attendant heartbreaks,-breakups, downfalls, and assorted other humiliations. True, a musical can get away with a banal storyline if the music is good, but these Broadway-ized soul tunes are as insipid as they are incessant. It seems it’s not easy to write another “Where Did Our Love Go?,” another “Come See Me,” another “My World Is Empty Without You,” another “You Can’t Hurry Love.” And the one familiar number, the one unforgettably unique, the big abandonment solo of former American Idol contestant Jennifer Hudson (big voice, big figure), screams out for earplugs if not a muzzle. Neither is it easy, evidently, to be another Aretha Franklin. Beyonce Knowles looks glamorous enough as the Diana Ross diva who metamorphoses into disco queen Plastic Summer (under the Syngarth’s guidance of the Berry Gordy stand-in, Jamie Foxx), and the period clothes and hairdos — something near a beehive on Jamie Foxx); and the period clothes and hairdos — something near a beehive on}
LA JOLLA 12; MIRA MESA 18; MISSION MARKET-SQUARE 14; SQUARE 14.5; SANDiego SQUARE 14; GASShAMP 15; LA JOLLA 12; MIRA MESA 18; MISSION VALLEY 20; PALM PROMENADE 24; PARK SQUIRE 28; SAN MARCOS 18B; TOWN SQUARE 14.

ERagon — A teenage boy, a telepathically talking dragon, a captivating princess, an evil king, a sorcerer, an oppressed populace, a rebel band, and a first-time director schooled in CGI (Stefan Fanielnger, who surely ought to have cut his teeth on a vampire film) altogether, a snigger when no. With Ed Speleers, Jeremy Irons, Sienna Guillory, John Malkovich, Robert Carlyle, Djimon Hounsou, and the voice of Rachel Weiss. 2006.

CARROLL MOUNTAIN: DUNLA VISTA 10; DEL MAR HIGHLANDS 2; ENCINITAS 8; ESCONDIDO 26; FASHION VALLEY 18; GROSSMINT CENTER: HORTON PLAZA 14; L A JOLLA 12; MIRA MESA 18; MISSION MARKET-PLACE 12; MISSION VALLEY 7; MISSION VALLEY 20; OCDEANIRE 18; PALM PRIMENADE 24; PARRAWAY PLAZA 18; POWAY 10; RANCHO DEL REY 10; RANCHO SAN DIEGO 15; SAN MARCOS 18B; TOWN SQUARE 14; VISTA VILLAGE 10.

For Your Consideration — Filmmaker Christopher Guest goes back to the target area of his very first film, The Big Picture — namely the movie biz, more narrowly the venerated branch of it that used to exist before he chained himself to a typewriter. And while we’re talking about freedom of expression, I’d like to suggest Freya y Chocolate (Strawberry and Chocolate) from Cuba where the filmmaker works within the country’s censorship constraints and still delivered a great film. PEDRO ALMODóVAR FOUR PACK: BAD EDUCATION, FLOWER OF MY SECRET, ALL ABOUT MY MOTHER, TALK TO HER (Spain) 2003, Columbia TriStar List price: $129.95 (four discs)

CHILDREN OF HEAVEN (Iran) 1997, Miramax List price: $19.99

WOMEN ON THE VERGE OF A NERVOUS BREAKDOWN (Spain) 1988, MGM List price: $27.99

HARD-BOILED (Hong Kong) 1992, Criterion Collection List price: $39.95

Children of Heaven (Iran)

“Children of Heaven!” says the narrator. “It is a story about freedom of expression, I’d like to suggest Freya y Chocolate and Flower of My Secret.”

THE FOUNTAIN — Loopy science fiction in orbit around the dream of life and love everlasting. It unfolds in three different time zones, that of the Spanish Inquisition, that of the present day, and some indeterminate future inside a floating bubble in outer space. These three spheres are tied together by the presence in each of them of Rachel Weisz and Hugh Jackman, as by turns, Queen Isabella and a conquistador named Tomás, commissioned by Her Majesty to find the Tree of Life in the land of the Mayas, and then their apparent reincarnations (or carbon copies or clones or something) in the form of a dying novelist named Lee, at work on a book titled The Fountain about Queen Isabella’s quest for the Tree of Life, and her faithful husband Tomás, a re-search scientist in quest of a cure, and then, later, a ghost of her former selves and an agonal husband Tomás, keeping himself alive artificially (on the hook of a Tree of Life, it would seem) while carrying on into eternity seeking a cure for his wife’s death, “a disease like any other.” The film is uncom-mon interconnected, even much of that inter-connection consists of closeups so close that the fates won’t fit on the screen, and much of the rest of it consists of our peering into the seemingly (a darkness that engulfs sci-ence labs, hospital corridors, operating rooms, reading lamps) simply to make out what’s in front of our eyes. Writer-director Darren Aronofksy, the Ph Bound, has worked things out elaborately in terms of visual and verbal motifs (the tree, the ring, the refrain of “Fountain,” and so on), but the spectator might be more compelled to sort it out if he were more compelled to look at it. This is a type of science fiction generally restricted to the printed page and basined from the screen, and it does not here establish much of a beachhead. With Ellen Burstyn. 2006.

October 26; November 2.

LEVA CHUNG Associate professor of ethnic studies and communication studies, US

What is not to love about Children of Heaven? It’s an ageless, timeless, beautiful movie centered on two amazing children and one lost pair of beat-up sneakers. Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown has a simple plot: call me. But with Pedro Almodóvar, there is nothing about life that is simple. A hilarious movie featuring a young and sexy Anton Balzarek and a cast of all top of their game. Before Infernal Affairs and The Departed there was Hard-Boiled with Chow Yun Fat as a cop and Tony Leung as a criminal that turns out to be an undercover officer. Two amazing Hong Kong actors with incredible power and fire together in this John Woo flick. Love the story, their chemistry, and, of course, the action. My cult fave.

CHILDREN OF HEAVEN (Iran)

List price: $19.99

WOMEN ON THE VERGE OF A NERVOUS BREAKDOWN (Spain)

List price: $27.99

HARD-BOILED (Hong Kong)

List price: $39.95

FRESA Y CHOCOLATE (Cuba)

List price: $19.99

October 26; November 2.

My husband and I never watched Six Feet Under while it was on the air, but fell in love with it watching it straight through on DVD (which allowed us to grow attached to the characters in ways we suspect we wouldn’t have if we’d watched it on a weekly basis). The development of characters, the smart commentary on life, and examination of death were top-rate.

Capturing the Friedmans examines a sexual abuse scandal on Long Island. It clearly integrates “real” footage (home movies) into an after-the-fact documentary. It’s also interesting because it doesn’t answer many questions for you.

To Be and To Have is simply a lovely French film about a schoolteacher in a one-room schoolhouse in rural France. The teacher — patient, caring, and firm — is what many of us wish we could be. In this, we imagine the kind of teacher we want influencing our children. It’s a touching film, quiet but powerful.

SEEN ON DVD

KIRSTIN C. MORAN, PHD Assistant professor of communication studies, US

Okay, I’m getting ready for a Spain and Latin America class, so here’s what I’m into right now:

From Mexico I recommend El Crimen del Padre Amaro. There are a lot of great movies from south of the border, but this one stands out because it was nearly banned within Mexico but Fox stood behind “freedom of expression.”

And while we’re talking about freedom of expression, I’d like to suggest Freya y Chocolate (Strawberry and Chocolate) from Cuba where the filmmaker works within the country’s censorship constraints and still delivered a great film.
**The History Boys** — Alan Bennett’s much-decorated theater piece comes to the screen with its original stage director and cast intact. Nicholas Hytner, that would be, and Richard Griffiths, Stephen Campbell Moore, Frances de la Tour, et al. A permanent record, as it were, further decorated, for the occasion, with extraneous bits of rockin’ musical accompaniment and jumpin’ cutting. The blue-s, y-k, aby palette, meantime, that curiously resonates Martin Scorsese’s imitation in The Aviator of the antiqua two-color process. It seems safe to assume that the color in the stage version was more life-like. As to the content: the foreignness of the British school system — an act of Oedipal candidates prepared by a trio of tutors — will be easy enough for American viewers to grasp, though the Yorkshire accents will present them with persistent difficulties. The two male teachers — the portly old quotation-dropping, education-made-fun one and the lean ers — the jaded palates of our moviegoers to grasp, though the trio of tutors — will be easy enough for American viewers to grasp, though the Italian accent, for two weeks at Christmastime, on the other hand, is too much for our moviegoers to grasp. The film, that is, is not for all tastes. But the scene is well-painted. The fatigued realism that competes with the realm of the real world. But then, Meyers does not seek to inhabit the real world. Underneath her superficial smooth talk, she’s really just a seductive snooty third-person-omniscient (i.e., know-it-all) narrator, undoubtedly tells us more than she herself should be imparted. With Jude Law, Jack Black, Rufus Sewell, Edward Burns. 2006. ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**Night at the Museum** — David Frankel, who, married to a damsels in distress, is the lead in his 2006 film about a trade-off with an ancient two-color process. It seems safe to assume that the color in the stage version was more life-like. As to the content: the foreignness of the British school system — an act of Oedipal candidates prepared by a trio of tutors — will be easy enough for American viewers to grasp, though the Yorkshire accents will present them with persistent difficulties. The two male teachers — the portly old quotation-dropping, education-made-fun one and the lean ers — the jaded palates of our moviegoers to grasp, though the trio of tutors — will be easy enough for American viewers to grasp, though the Italian accent, for two weeks at Christmastime, on the other hand, is too much for our moviegoers to grasp. The film, that is, is not for all tastes. But the scene is well-painted. The fatigued realism that competes with the realm of the real world. But then, Meyers does not seek to inhabit the real world. Underneath her superficial smooth talk, she’s really just a seductive snooty third-person-omniscient (i.e., know-it-all) narrator, undoubtedly tells us more than she herself should be imparted. With Jude Law, Jack Black, Rufus Sewell, Edward Burns. 2006. ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**The Good Shepherd** — A bravura-dally Christmas worship service, fully supernaturl in its vision (the voice of God, a lumi nous Messenger, an angel Holy Spirit), yet full of luxuriously tactile costumes, solid sets, atmospheric locales, and earthy Mediterranean faces. (The half-Maori Keisha Castle-Hughes, though harmo niouslyolve in complexion, seems a bit overwhelmed in the role of the Virgin. Understandably.) The film makes all the essential parts of the story without pulverizing them into mush: the three Magi on camels, Mary on a donkey and Joseph on foot, the sheep in the stable, the spotlighting star, the smell of orchestra and chorus in the epic mode of Mînos Reza. After the adolescent drug problems of Thiriens and the pace-setting skateboards of Lord of the Rings, this makes an odd project for di rector Catherine Hardwicke, who hereby resolves tempestuousness and embraces tradi tion. Although her focus quite reasonably is on the path of a prominent teen, the film maker has made no attempt to “reimagine” the character for a new age, simply to imag in her as she might have been, a treacher ous assignment carried out with unforeseen taste and compulsion. In short, see, all too intonaciously. See, for example, the flash cut fastidiously of innocuous brib-a-brac at the outset. Or see the overly choreographed scene at the public swimming pool when the sex offender’s arrival in snorkel and flippers gets everyone out of the water faster than if he were a Great White accompanied by the theme from Jaws. Or see the treatment of the night-club amateur football players, through distorting wide-angle lenses, as sneering bruisers suitable for an Adam Sandler comedy. In short, see, all too intonaciously, the director. With Jennifer Connelly, Jackie Earle Haley, and Robin Williams; directed by Shawn Levy. ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**The Nativity Story** — An oddly affective Christmas tale, set in Galilee and in the small city of Nazareth in the years just prior to Christ’s birth. The writer and director are two separate entities, with serious problems in communication. With Ben Stiller, Carla Gugino, Dick Van Dyke, Mickey Rooney, Ricky Gervais, and Robin Williams; directed by Shawn Levy. ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**The Painted Veil** — Somerset Maugham’s novel about the relationship of a young Englishman, Michael Cotton, and a socialite for Golden Age Hollywood — Tom Perrotta novel, complete with a smidgen of movie talk, she's really just a seductive snooty third-person-omniscient (i.e., know-it-all) narrator, undoubtedly tells us more than she herself should be imparted. With Jude Law, Jack Black, Rufus Sewell, Edward Burns. 2006. ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

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It will restore sufficient happiness to the union, not long before its tragic end, that the husband can stop plating down his hair and go flouncy. Directed by John Curran (We Don’t Live Here Anymore, also featuring Watts), this follows aft ever over two other screen treatments of the novel — the better known of which is one of the lesser Garbo vehicles — and, for all its location, shooting and its air of “independence,” it’s still stiff and stuffy. Much of that is intrinsic to the original author, and some of it’s imparted through the stage British accents of the stars, Willy Lachow Schedler, Troy Jonas, and Diana Rigby, 2006.

\[ \text{La Jolla Village, PM} 32/29 \]

The Pursuit of Happiness — The attainment of sappyness. A hand-to-mouth San Francisco salesman — of portable bone-density scanners, an unanswerable luxury item — lands an unsalaried competitive internship at De Witt, but not before his wife walks out on him and their five-year-old son ("Did Mom leave because of me?"). The star is the admirable Will Smith, but the director is Italian, Gabriele Muccino of The Last Kiss, which might inspire certain types of filmmakers to draw analogies to The Little Man Humiliation of De Sica and Company. The poignance, to be sure, is commendably unrelenting (pushing through to schmaltziness), but the only real gift is the grin of the digital image. And the emotional payoff — this isn’t post-war Italy, after all — comes in the form of a cash jackpot. Jaden Christopher, Thandie Newton, Brian Howe, James Karen, Dan Castellaneta, 2006.

\[ \text{Carmel Mountain, CHULA VISTA 10; IN} \]
Night at the Museum

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Américas Barceló
Diario San Diego
Un abogado defensor involucrado en el caso de Francisco Javier Arellano Félix, alias “El Tigrillo”, aseguró que el capo mexicano de la droga fue capturado dentro de aguas territoriales mexicanas. Eugenio Irdade manifestó que existe un vídeo donde se demuestra que el arresto del cabecilla del cartel de Tijuana y sus secuaces no fue en aguas internacionales; tal y como lo han manejado desde un principio las autoridades estadounidenses. De acuerdo al defensor de Manuel Arturo Villarreal Heredia, alias “El Nalón”, el video en cuestión muestra los momentos de la captura de El Tigrillo y sus secuaces.

“La grabación fue tomada cuando la Guardia Costera se aproximaba al barco donde iban Arellano Félix y mi cliente. En la cinta se escucha como uno de los civiles que participó en la captura dice que todavía estaban en territorio mexicano y que no debían proceder”, explicó Irdade.

Mueven el nido

Fuentes cambian a un seno de las Agujas del Amor, luego del desastre urbano que tuvieron en su 90 aniversario, el cual será recordado por su eliminación en semifinales frente a Guadalajara, y por su manzana de la acción en el Mundial de Shanghai Japón 2006. Guillermo Cañedo White, presidente del equipo, aconseja a sus futbolistas que se unan a su proyecto de cambio, en un deseo de que su equipo se encierren en la defensa, y que sean los defensores de “los killers”. El directivo pliega realizar más cambios radicales en el plantel y en primera instancia se habla que figuran como representantes del América, el delantero Cuauhtémoc Blanco. Se podría sumar un futbolista con destino a la Toluca, Arizaño, Delfín Díaz, quien a mediados del siguiente año cumple una década como “autobús”, dejaría su lugar en la defensa central para darle paso al paraguayo Paulo da Silva, jugador del Toluca, que está en un paso de cambiar de “tijerita”.

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Corre con todo

Marty Schottenheimer no pudo evitarlo. El entrenador de los Chargers de San Diego recibió a Jim Brown y a Gale Sayers, y conoce los méritos de Walter Payton, Barry Sanders y Emmitt Smith, pero de todas maneras aseguró directamente que no había ninguna duda sobre quién era el mejor. Más que cualquier estadístico, estas enormes palabras son la medida exacta para describir la grandza de La Dainian Tomlinson como corredor. El socarrador de los Chargers es tal bue- no que genera que Marty Schottenheimer muestran su admiración por el ju- gador que lleva seis temporadas como profesional dentro de la Liga Nacional de Futbol (NFL).

Tomlinson a sido clave para que San Diego haya conseguido su mejor marca de juegos ganados y perdidos en su historia y que el equipo sea considerado gran favorito para llegar al Super Tazón representando a la Conferencia Americana. El último partido de la temporada regular de los Chargers será este domingo 31 de diciembre en el estadio Qualcomm que será visitado por los Cardenales de Arizona. En este partido Tomlinson trata de anotar su touchdown 20 de la temporada para reforzar el récord de más anotaciones en un solo año. San Diego descansará la primera semana de los playoffs.

JORGE RAMOS para Diario San Diego

José Luis, llámémoslo así, no regresó a México para Navidad. Le hubiera encantado hacerlo, hace casi un año que no ve a su fa- milia. Pero, para él y para 12 millones de indocumenta- dos más, el riesgo es des- masiado alto.

El problema no es el viaje a México. No. El verdadero problema es regresar a Esta- dos Unidos luego de las fiestas. José Luis no se puede arriesgar a que lo detenga la Servicio Federal de Inmigración. Además, no tendría dinero para pagar a otro “pollero”.

En una plática reciente en el sur de la Florida, José Luis me contó cómo tuvo que pagarle 3 mil dólares a un traficante de indocumentados para que lo cruzara a Estados Unidos. Lo hizo por Laredo y con papeles falsos. Entró caminando. Tuvo suerte; otros son obligados a cruzar el desierto por Arizona o por las montañas de California.

Pero el cruce está caro. Ahora que se envían a 6 mil soldados de la Guardia Nacional de Estados Unidos a la frontera con México, un “coyote” o “pollar” le cobraría unos 800 dólares a un mexicano por el cruce. Ahora el precio casi se ha cuadruplicado. Cada vez más inmigrantes deciden pasar las “Cris- mas” en Estados Unidos para evitar, también, el alto riesgo de morir en la frontera. El “sordo”, como le dicen muchos, entre México y Estados Unidos está cada vez más vigilado.

El FBI divulgó los últimos documentos sobre las in- vestigaciones a John Len- non, entregándo los a un historiador universitario, quien liberó una disputa le- gal de 25 años para obtener los expedientes secretos. Las 10 cuartillas con- tienen nuevos detalles sobre los vínculos de Lennon con grupos izquierdistas y antibélicos en Londres a comienzos de la década de 1970, pero naïa indica que los funcionarios del go- bierno hayan considerado al ex estro de los Beatles una amenaza sería, dijo el historiador Joe Wiener. El FBI había argumen- tado sin éxito que un go- bierno extranjero, no iden- tificado, proporcionó en secreto la información, y que la divulgación de esos documentos podría llevar a represalias diplomáticas, policiales o económicas contra Estados Unidos. Los documentos recién divulgados incluyen un reporte de investigación, el cual señala que dos prominentes izquierdistas británicos se acercaron a Lennon con la esperanza de que financiaran una librería y biblioteca de contenidos de izquierda en Londres, pero añadens que el cantautor no les dio dinero. Otra página señala que no había pruebas feba- cientes de que Lennon hubiera aportado dinero con propósitos subversivos. Wiener solicitó inicial- mente los documentos en 1981, varios meses después de que decidió escribir un libro sobre Lennon, tras el asesinato del cantante.
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San Diego Reader December 28, 2006
OFF THE CUFF
by Josh Board
Have you ever experienced or witnessed racism in the workplace?

Niai Mayer
Architect firm
Pacific Beach

I’ve worked for the Los Angeles School District and the school district in Texas. Working here is only the third job I’ve ever had. In all that time of employment, I’ve never experienced racism. Oh, well, one time while working here, I heard someone say the n-word. I would say that’s racist. The person wasn’t fired. It wasn’t told to anyone. That’s about it.

Gerald Marino
Pentagon
San Carlos

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Dan Valdez
Technical milliner
Temecula
When I joined the Navy in 1973, Vietnam was still going on. I occasionally found some racist things, but it was all behind closed doors. My roommate would get drunk and go through the barracks yelling the n-word. In the 1970s, things seemed to get really politically correct. I think the chief of naval operations really dropped down. A few remarks had been made toward me being Mexican, but I didn’t come unglued. Near the end of my 20 years in, if you caught saying something racial, you were looking at big trouble. It wasn’t tolerated. All races were able to advance. I had a black commanding officer, and he was very fair, and you saw all races represented in the ranks.

Mike Tomaulo
Bus driver
Serra Mesa

I remember when I was working in a college freshmen minority outreach program... this program had a curriculum from which they wanted the teachers to teach. One was ignoring the program and teaching racist propaganda. Of course, they fired her. The next day, she was outside walking with a sign calling the program racist. After that, everybody was in the auditorium and questions were being fired at this professor. His life was working in a program designed to help minorities get into and stay in college. He was available day and night for his students and went above and beyond for everyone. I speak up, even though I was nervous and the administration grew dead silent. Basically, yeah, I have to assume racism exists in some places, but accusations of it also occur where it’s not present.

Wayne Daniels
Rapper/performer
Spring Valley

I’ve only had a couple jobs in my life. I worked for Albertson’s in Spring Valley and also Blockbuster. I worked at a warehouse over at Miramar. I haven’t experienced any racism on the job, or even witnessed any. Hopefully, I never do, and I’m happy I haven’t.
THE READER PUZZLE
by David Levinson Wilk

Across
1. Zip
2. Squealer seller on ‘The Simpsons’
3. Ernest J. Keebler, for one
4. Fluffy trio?
5. Vacationing
6. MIV halved
7. A Whooper
8. It’s connected to the Strait of Hormuz
9. Bug
10. West of Hollywood
11. Born as
12. 2003 Nick Lachey hit ‘Sweat’
13. Just best
14. Alternative to brief
15. Not get hang up on
16. Polite agreement
17. Socialist Broke
18. Dad’s bro
19. Chang or Eng
20. Fire truck tool
21. Oak to be
22. Probably...
23. Trelined thoroughly
24. Sock hop suffix
25. Amazement
26. “It’s the cola” brand
27. “Take”
28. Stain
29. Sugar suffix
30. This puzzle’s theme
31. ‘My dear man."
32. Government, since 1970
33. 661-9753.
35. “Whaddaya know!”
36. China’s Lord
37. “Gross!”
38. 1987 Kevin Costner movie
39. 15. MIV halved
40. 957-3153.
41. 169-788-9753.
42. Sandiegopalms@aol.com.
43. 619-742-0267.
44. #K-28, next to the Post Office.
45. 760-828-3950.
46. 760-753-1205.
47. 760-473-6972.
48. Treelined thoroughfare
49. Massage Therapist. 20 years experience.
50. Take a break
51. Vats
52. 11. 619-379-5992.
53. 17. 619-251-1558.
54. 169-788-9753.
55. 60. Anahim’s _____ a.k.a. the Women
56. 61. Tree yield
57. 62. “My dear man”
58. 63. Government org. since 1970
59. 64. “What difference______
60. 65. Tree yield

Solution to and winners of the Reader Puzzle for 12/21/06. There were 123 entrants. The winners are:

1. Cosmo Singleton, San Diego
2. Vera Holt, Lakeside
3. Kyle Davis, Vista
4. Christopher Bauer, Poway
5. Andreas Walther, San Diego

THE READER PUZZLE

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**Online:** SanDiegoReader.com

**LATE AD DEADLINE:** 5 pm Tuesday
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**Walk-in:** 1703 India St. (at Date St.), downtown

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☎ 70710
San Diego Reader
December 28, 2006
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by Jay Allen Sanford ©2006

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Last week’s place: [Place: Pala play the Pallone] Playing bocce in Little Italy’s Amici Park on Date and State. Players shoot a volo (flying ball) to knock the other team’s bowls away from the pallone, the jack at the other end of the sandpit court. “Anyone can join,” says player Umberto Falcone. “You don’t have to be Italian.” His group plays most Monday, Wednesday, and Friday afternoons. The park has been open since 1998. (Last week’s winners: Roger Young, Bradyn Thomas, Ried Weigel, Oscar Dominguez, Jasen Miller)

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AXANSON ALL-GRIP Taps, drumheads, drumsticks, drum keys, drum stay locks, snare stands, drum throne, drum lamp, drum pedal, guitar amps, bass amps, PA amps—anything is good! Everything is good! Guitar Trader, 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$hTide: 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ca$
## Free Classifieds!

### Roommate Services

- **Sneakers**
  - After rent-free months in exchange for household help, transportation, and companionship. Low rent required. Please e-mail photos to 858-262-4008.

- **Furniture**
  - IKEA, 3-bedroom, 2-bath townhouse. Click through for more details.

### Rentals

- **Homes**
  - 2 Place, 100% available. Personalized service. Call now.

- **Homes**
  - Beaver Best: 2 bedrooms, 1 bath. Close to UCSD. Call 858-488-2228.

### Services

- **Apartment**
  - gutter cleaning. 15 years experience. Lic#100809. 619-818-9726.

- **Carpet Cleaning**
  - Professional carpet cleaning. Quality work at reasonable prices. 619-256-0100.

## Services Directory

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- **HOME**
  - Bath and Kitchen Remodeling, 619-444-0001

## Bathrooms

- **Bathrooms**
  - Tubs Refinished, 619-466-1121

## Baths Reconditioned

- **Bathrooms**
  - Bath and Kitchen Remodeling, 619-444-0001

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- **Bee Removal**
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## Bath and Kitchen Design and Remodel

- **Bathrooms**
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## Bee Best Bee Removal

- **Bee Removal**
  - Bee Best Bee Removal, 619-236-0394

## Carpet Cleaning

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## Professional Cleaning

- **Professional Cleaning**
  - Professional Cleaning, 619-232-0001

## Professional Molding

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  - Professional Molding, 619-233-0001

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## Window Washing

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- **Window Replacement**
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## Window Cleaning

- **Window Cleaning**
  - Window Cleaning, 619-237-0001

## Handyman

- **Handyman**
  - Handyman, 619-238-0001
HILLCREST.


1/2 off first month! Ocean views. 4 bedroom, 3 bath new home, 1200 square feet. Pet OK. 4150 Twin Oaks. 858-683-9457.


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Elvis at the Sports Arena, April 26, 1973. A month earlier, his manager, Colonel Parker, sold to RCA the royalty rights of Elvis’s recording catalog: 700 songs for five million dollars. — by Robert Mirnachi


PACIFIC BEACH. $1400. 2 bedroom, 1 bath house. New paint, new hardware, floor plan, laundry, on-site parking. Close to all. $1500. 619-278-2117.

PACIFIC BEACH. $1550. Large 3 bedroom, 2 bath house on cul-de-sac. Yard, large back yard. $1700. 858-272-6163.

PACIFIC BEACH. $2500. 3 bedroom, 2 bath, 2-car garage, large kitchen/large covered patio. All new. 858-487-6163.

PACIFIC BEACH. $1550. 2 bedroom, 2 bath, fully furnished, close to bay but in a peaceful neighborhood. Close to shopping, walk distance to beach. $1500. 858-272-6163.

PACIFIC BEACH. $2500. 3 bedroom, 2 bath, ocean view. $2600. 858-487-6163.


PACIFIC BEACH. $2500. 3 bedroom, 2 bath cottage, carpet floors, parking included, refrigerator, fireplace, washer/dryer hookups. 6-month lease. $2500. 858-272-6163.

PACIFIC BEACH. $2400. 3 bedroom, 2 bath, living room, eating area, large kitchen. Close to beach. Washer/dryer included. 858-272-6163.

PACIFIC BEACH. $2200. 2 bedroom, 2 bath, 2-car garage, fireplace, large kitchen, laundry, dishwasher, washer/dryer. $2200. 858-487-6163.

PACIFIC BEACH. $2400. 3 bedroom, 2 bath, fireplace, large eat-in kitchen. Bay view, close to everything. $2500. 858-487-6163.

PACIFIC BEACH. $2300. 3 bedroom, 2 bath, large kitchen/living room, close to beach. Washer/dryer, central A/C. 858-487-6163.

PACIFIC BEACH. $2400. 3 bedroom, 2 bath, fireplace, large fully equipped kitchen, large living room. $2500. 858-487-6163.

PACIFIC BEACH. $2500. 3 bedroom, 2 bath, close to bay. Washer/dryer hookups. $2600. 858-487-6163.

PACIFIC BEACH. $2500. 3 bedroom, 2 bath, 2-car garage, large kitchen, larger back yard. $2600. 858-487-6163.

PACIFIC BEACH. $2500. 3 bedroom, 2 bath, large kitchen. $2500. 858-487-6163.

PACIFIC BEACH. $2500. 3 bedroom, 2 bath, 2-car garage, large kitchen/large covered patio. $2800. 858-487-6163.

PACIFIC BEACH. $2500. 3 bedroom, 2 bath, close to bay, large kitchen. Washer/dryer. $2600. 858-487-6163.

PACIFIC BEACH. $2500. 3 bedroom, 2 bath, 2-car garage, fireplace, living room, kitchen, eat-in kitchen. $3000. 858-487-6163.

PACIFIC BEACH. $2500. 3 bedroom, 2 bath, 2-car garage, fireplace, living room, kitchen, eat-in kitchen. $3000. 858-487-6163.

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January move-in special! $675 per month for 6 months!
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- Clubhouse
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- Gated community
- Courtyard
- On-site management
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- Near freeways

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- Laundry on every floor
- Parking available
- Most pets allowed
- Several downtown locations

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Please check our website for availability.

San Diego Reader
December 30, 2006

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Fantastic Downtown and City Views! Great Move-in Specials!

1 & 2 bedroom flats and 2 bedroom townhomes from $1105!

- Microwave
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- Oceanfront spacious renovated apartments
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- On-site laundry, gated entrance
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El Cajon

- $1,100. Large 2 bedroom, 2 bath apartment, downtown. Ideal parking. Century located, next shops, bus, library. No pets. 983 Victorian Avenue. Call 619-494-0657.


- $1,425. 2 bedroom, 1 bath. Back to school special. 2 bedroom, 1 bath, quiet 1st floor. New appliances, fireplace, 2 car garage. No pets. 525 25th Street, #A. 619-208-8676.


- $1,500. 2 bedroom, 1 bath. All utilities paid! Upgraded kitchen, bathroom. 1015 19th Street, San Diego, CA 92102. 619-291-2912.


- $1,550. 2 bedroom, 1 bath. Coin operated washer/dryer. 2930 C Street. 619-592-4306.

- $1,600. 2 bedroom, 1 bath. Beautifully renovated, ocean view. 1 block to shopping. Great location. 1428 Pacific Avenue. 619-572-2788.


- $1,650. 2 bedroom, 1 bath. New flat near Balboa Park. 1 block to shopping. Great amenities, in great location, clean and quiet. 3035 Arkansas Avenue. Move-in special! TPPM, 619-705-1707.

- $1,700. 2 bedroom, 1 bath. Shopping, dining, in great location, clean and quiet. 3035 Arkansas Avenue. Move-in special! TPPM, 619-705-1707.


- $1,700. 2 bedroom, 1 bath. Updated with stove, refrigerator, new paint and vinyl, on-site laundry, off-street parking. 1st of Oct 1st month's rent. 622 E Street. Washing. No pets. 619-484-3213.

- $1,700. 2 bedroom, 1 bath. Upper level with new flooring, function, new paint and vinyl, on-site laundry, off-street parking. 1st of Oct 1st month's rent. 622 E Street. Washing. No pets. 619-484-3213.


- $1,700. 2 bedroom, 1 bath. All utilities paid! Upgraded kitchen, bathroom. 1015 19th Street, San Diego, CA 92102. 619-291-2912.


- $1,700. 2 bedroom, 1 bath. Coin operated washer/dryer. 2930 C Street. 619-592-4306.

- $1,800. 3 bedroom, 2 bath. Laundry, AC, garage. 1500 sq. ft. 2030 44th Street. 619-456-2414.

- $1,800. 3 bedroom, 2 bath. Laundry, AC, garage. 1500 sq. ft. 2030 44th Street. 619-456-2414.


WINTER WONDERLAND AWAITS YOU! ’500 off 1st month’s rent on 1 bedrooms, immediate move-in only, OAC

Studies/Suites $345/week
$1299/month
• Free high-speed Internet
• Large pool and spa
• On-site laundry facilities
• Full kitchen
• Complimentary breakfast
• Near SDSU
• Free cable with HBO

LA MESA, 2 bedroom, bath, $1375+$475. Popular area, near all. Fenced patio. 3rd floor, 1/2 block to UCSD, pool. No pets. 619-499-9999.

MISSION HILLS, North of 1-8, near I-5, $1425/2 bedrooms, $1125/1 bedroom. All utilities included. 2 large, sunny, extra storage, central air conditioning, gas stove. 1/2 mile to National City, pool, enclosed patio. Pets accepted. $619-494-3029.

MISSION HILLS, Hillcrest, 2-3 levels, 3-3.5 bedrooms, 2 baths, $1650-$2500. Large, sunny, light, private, updated, huge storage, pool, spa, central air conditioning, gas fireplace, parking. Near all, near UCSD, pool, spa, enclosed patio. Pets allowed. $619-286-4051.

MISSION HILLS, Hillcrest, 2-3 levels, 3-3.5 bedrooms, 2 baths, $1650-$2500. Large, sunny, light, private, updated, huge storage, pool, spa, central air conditioning, gas fireplace, parking. Near all, near UCSD, pool, spa, enclosed patio. Pets allowed. $619-286-4051.

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MISSION HILLS, Hillcrest, 2-3 levels, 3-3.5 bedrooms, 2 baths, $1650-$2500. Large, sunny, light, private, updated, huge storage, pool, spa, central air conditioning, gas fireplace, parking. Near all, near UCSD, pool, spa, enclosed patio. Pets allowed. $619-286-4051.

MISSION HILLS, Hillcrest, 2-3 levels, 3-3.5 bedrooms, 2 baths, $1650-$2500. Large, sunny, light, private, updated, huge storage, pool, spa, central air conditioning, gas fireplace, parking. Near all, near UCSD, pool, spa, enclosed patio. Pets allowed. $619-286-4051.

MISSION HILLS, Hillcrest, 2-3 levels, 3-3.5 bedrooms, 2 baths, $1650-$2500. Large, sunny, light, private, updated, huge storage, pool, spa, central air conditioning, gas fireplace, parking. Near all, near UCSD, pool, spa, enclosed patio. Pets allowed. $619-286-4051.

MISSION HILLS, Hillcrest, 2-3 levels, 3-3.5 bedrooms, 2 baths, $1650-$2500. Large, sunny, light, private, updated, huge storage, pool, spa, central air conditioning, gas fireplace, parking. Near all, near UCSD, pool, spa, enclosed patio. Pets allowed. $619-286-4051.
NORTH PARK, 2 bedrooms, 1-1/2 bath, newly remodeled, 2nd-floor, off-street parking, 370 Sycamore Street. 619-356-0395.

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NORTH PARK, 2 bedrooms, 1 bath, 1000 square feet. $900, 1 bedroom, 1 bath. 619-235-1900.

NORTH PARK, 2 bedroom, 1 bath, 600 square feet. $750. $500 deposit. 1 bedroom, 1 bath. 619-298-8383.

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NORTH PARK, 1 bedroom, 730 square feet. $850. 1 bedroom, 1 bath, 600 square feet. $850. 1 bedroom, 1 bath. $825. 1 bedroom duplex. 619-234-5822.

NORTH PARK, 1 bedroom, 525 square feet. $550. 1 bedroom, 1 bath. $800. 1 bedroom, 1 bath with parking space. Large rooms. 3766 East Avenue #1. Please call Mr/Mrs Asset Management. 619-430-2770.

NORTH PARK, 1 bedroom, 586 square feet. $650. 2 bedrooms, 1 bath, 850 square feet. $850. 2 bedrooms, 1 bath, 1000 square feet. $900. 1 bedroom, 1 bath. 619-298-7724.

NORTH PARK, 1 bedroom, 550 square feet. $650. 2 bedroom, 1 bath. $775. 1 bedroom, 1 bath. $750. 1 bedroom, 1 bath. $725. 1 bedroom, 1 bath. 619-356-0395.

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NORTH PARK, 2 bedrooms, 1 bath, 700 square feet. $750. 2 bedrooms, 1 bath, 850 square feet. $850. 2 bedrooms, 1 bath, 900 square feet. $850. 2 bedrooms, 1 bath, 1000 square feet. $900. 1 bedroom, 1 bath. $500 deposit. 1 bedroom, 1 bath. 619-298-8383.

NORTH PARK, 1 bedroom, 525 square feet. $550. 1 bedroom, 1 bath. $850. 1 bedroom, 1 bath, 600 square feet. $850. 1 bedroom, 1 bath. $825. 1 bedroom duplex. 619-234-5822.

NORTH PARK, 1 bedroom, 600 square feet. $800. 2 bedrooms, 1 bath, 850 square feet. $900. 2 bedroom, 1 bath. $925. 2 bedroom, 1 bath. $995. 2 bedroom, 1 bath. 619-234-5822.

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PACIFIC BEACH, $1095 rent, 1 bedroom, 1 bath apartment with parking and laundry. Close to beach, walk to all. 1195 Diamond St. Call 858-299-8515.


**LEAD STORY**

Christian stand-up comedian Brad Stine says his musical Golddiggers renews a reaction to the “wussification” of the Promise Keepers movement and encourages spiritual men to “cowboy up” and “stand tall!” According to a December Los Angeles Times report, GodMen celebrates traditional male excesses, such as cursing, racism, and sexuality. According to the St. Aina associate, “For heaven’s sake, don’t ask the guys as Promise Keepers do) to take the hand of the guys next to them... Do not think “Jesus Monday worship.” Think Saturday afternoon tailgate.” Back to “Onward Christian Soldiers” rather than Jesus loves songs. And tell your wife the rules, Stine says. “Learn to work the toilet seat. It’s up, put it down.”

**Leading Economic Indicators**

An appeal court in Florida finally applied the O’s rule; it’s available now only in South Africa, but can be applied directly from wrapper to penis — for disciplining his 11-year-old son by tying his classroom incision. Alcorn State University professor of discipline for the kid’s own foot-stomping. A college State University professor, Frank G. O’Meara was investigated in October for having his students line up against the feet of a classroom incident, Alcorn State University professor Festus Ogbehe was sentenced in Jackson, Miss. in November to two years in prison for disciplining his 11-year-old son by tying his hands and then covering them with ants (which Ogbehe said was a traditional punishment in his native Nigeria).

**Bright Ideas**

— The University of Sonoma student, whose dad bought her a $2.4 million off-campus house and who wants his eight best friends to live (and party) with him, ran up against a Washington, D.C., city permitting more than 8.25 people to live in a dead hipposperm, and I’d rather do that than change diapers.

— Neighborhoods: (1) South African investor Willem van Rensburg has begun to market the Pronto condom, which he promised can be applied directly from wrapper to penis in three seconds (and, with practice, one second). It’s available now only in South Africa, but he has obtained a U.S. patent. (2) On display at the World Dairy Expo in Madison, Wis., in October was a $200,000, self-service milk market (introduced in Europe in 2005) in which the cow wanders in, and lasers and video cameras guide the rubber cups to her teats, with a computer directing actual milking.

**Family Values**

— Marnel Moore, 39, of Downers Grove, Ill., pleaded guilty in October to a plot in which she had her 14-year-old son plant marijuana and prescription drugs in the backpack of another boy to embarrass his boy’s mother, with whom Marnel Moore had been feuding for years. Moore’s son eventually confessed, and now Moore faces an enhanced penalty because she involved a 14-year-old in drug possession.

— New Age Punishments: Rosewood Elementary School (Rock Hill, S.C.) teacher Daniel Jones was investigated in October for having his students line up and stomp the feet of a classmate for the kid’s own foot-stomping. No criminal charges were filed. (3) A North Carolina high school student was given a year’s suspension for disciplining his 11-year-old son by tying his hands and then covering them with ants (which Ogbehe said was a traditional punishment in his native Nigeria).

**Recurring Themes**

— Still More Texas Justice: Death-row inmate Daniel Acker’s court-appointed lawyer, 26-year veteran Toby Wilkinson, filed a writ of habeas corpus for his client in 2003 that consisted largely of verbatim text from an earlier letter that Acker himself had written to the judges, including this passage: “I’m just out of carbon paper. As soon as I get some more typing supplies I have about 30 more errors I wanted [noted] in my appeal.” Wilkinson was paid $22,270 for “writing” the writ. However, in November 2006, the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals denied the writ, saying that it raised no issues not resolved in Acker’s 2001 trial.

— The Right to Go Through Life Never Being Offended

— (1) Last summer, a British passport office in Sheffield turned down the application for Hannah Edwars, 5, because she had submitted a photograph showing Hannah from the neck up as prescribed, but wearing a sunsuit that left her shoulders bare. The passport office said that Hannah’s exposure of her skin might be offensive to Britain’s small island country. That decision was later reversed, according to a report in London’s Daily Telegraph. (2) Also in Britain, a Robert Walters personnel employment agency notified its offices in October that the words “vibrant,” “dynamic,” “ambitious,” “energetic,” “experienced,” and 17 others must not be used in recruiting ads, lest the company risk lawsuits for age discrimination.

Send your Weird News to Chuck Shephard, San Diego Reader, P.O. Box 85803, San Diego, CA 92186 or to WeirdNewsTipsYahoo.com.

**Christmas Mania (continued)**

— In Mentor, Ohio, firefighters struggled to keep Christmas shoppers from consuming a “molejo: faces an enhanced penalty because she involved a 14-year-old in drug possession.”

**LeastCompetent Criminals**

— (1) The man who stole the safe from a Runza restaurant in Omaha, Neb., to fund a Christmas party (after owner Brian O’Neill’s) because churches are allowed to house up to 15 unrelated people.

— O’Neill’s dad supports the students, as judged from his testy response to a Washington Post inquiry: “Who says they aren’t a [real] religion?”

— Surgeon Michael Koenig of Cologne, Germany, who said he was cheated out of thousands of dollars of fees by a) solicited amateur videos for distribution to help dramatize the issue in industrialized nations, but one video drew the attention of a Wall Street Journal reporter in October. Three men were sitting around a table, eating beans and raucously discussing their gas-producing qualities, when the men suddenly turned serious. One looked into the camera and said, “Some folks don’t even have a bowl of beans to eat.” The videomaker said he was “a little disappointed” that his piece was rejected.

— The United Nations Millennium Campaign’s worldwide program to “stop up against and pay for their breast enlargements, said in October that he had no photos of the women but did have photos of their new chests, and he gave them to the public so that they would somehow help in finding the women.

— “I’m just about out of carbon paper. As soon as I get some more typing supplies I have about 30 more errors I wanted [noted] in my appeal.” Wilkinson was paid $22,270 for “writing” the writ. However, in November 2006, the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals denied the writ, saying that it raised no issues not resolved in Acker’s 2001 trial.
TEN CAMELS AND TWO FERRARIS

Although I was inclined to frantic groin grabbing, inarticulate moaning, and random curling into balls, the last day of the holiday was a good one by any standards. The itinerary had me trying a body-conditioning class at the poolside, followed by aqua-aerobics. I enjoyed both and resolved to make a better effort to shake my thang when I returned home. A tasty Russian gym goddess who took both classes with me declared that I was very agile and flexible. Confidence inspiring, of course, spoiled by the inevitable caveat “for a fat chick,” which she tacked on in a barely audible but charmingly accented whisper.

Later, I was booked into the beauty parlor where I was “pampered” — a shameless stretch of a definition if ever I heard one. I had my eyebrows threaded, an experience that I found “pampered” — a shameless stretch of a definition if ever I heard one. I had my eyebrows threaded, an experience that I found

which was so powerful it was our opinion that it would actually blow the bog seat open and hit the wall beyond if there was no bum there to bore into. We concluded that this bidet could cope with the very worst of the Egyptian ab-dabs (a.k.a., Montezuma’s revenge or the Sharm-el-Sheikh shits).

That night, the packing beckoned. We knew we would argue — we always argue. Especially since we had bought a pharaoh’s treasure trove of goodies and had left little space on the way here.

Our holiday had been lovely, though marred with sickness. My bladder didn’t enjoy it much, and my nose began to peel in a very unattractive way. In spite of my best efforts, I ate too much and burnt a Hallmark card border on the dark side of my breasts.

But the prospect of a return to an autumnal Scotland wasn’t so bad, as we had a cozy fire to light, rambles through fallen leaves to enjoy, bonfire night to look forward to, and Christmas to plan. A late-summer holiday is to be recommended, and Egypt is a fine place to take it.

I do wonder, however, if my facial hair will grow in even thicker — I may not need to buy a new winter coat this year.

http://gekkolick.livejournal.com
Current mood: ranty and shallow. (This is a shallow, pointless rant. If you read this and think I’m being shallow, ranty, and pointless, consider yourself warned. Something enlightening and intellectual might follow in a week or so, in case you don’t give up on me just yet.)

My sense of fashion has always operated outside of what other people deem in style or cool. I seem to either deviate so far off the path that I can’t be classified, or I just stick to the same jeans and T-shirts with an Amanda-style twist, like Princess Leia buns or a colorful scarf or huge silly sunglasses. My time in Buenos Aires and a subsequent (almost) week in San Francisco caused me to really look at the fashions around me and learn to appreciate the artistry, creativity, and individualism that went into the putting-together of people’s attire. I can’t say I like it when people buy expensive name brands and expect to impress. I’m inclined to find the thrift-store crazy ensemble more interesting to mentally dissect than a $50 T-shirt with some designer’s name on it. My brother actually had a physical reaction to Louis Vuitton bags. When he was on the EL and someone with a LV bag sat down by him, he had to move. They totally freak him out. It’s one of the things I love best about him.

Nevertheless, I have grown in a fashion sense. Maybe a little bit with my own choice of clothes and accessories, but more so in not judging others’ choices so much — trying to appreciate the statement rather than pick apart the person. I know we all like to think we’re nonjudgmental, but c’mon, let’s be honest. “People-watching” is a favorite pastime, and it could just as well be called “people-bashing” or “let’s make fun of everyone who walks by.” It’s not malicious, really. It’s just something we evil people do.

There are very clear exceptions to this rule of “all fashion choices of others are now of interest to me.” One of which is vehicles. Another is intentionally exposed, dirty, nude-colored bra straps. Yuck. My latest complaint is running rampant all over SDSU campus, and I am simply enamedrized with how very ugly the situation has become.

It’s “winter” now in San Diego, which means that the weather feels like a nice Indian summer in the Midwest. It’s a little cooler, and the days are shorter. It’s perfectly reasonable to walk around in a tank top or T-shirt while the sun is out, so long as you have a sweater to cover up with when the wind blows. It actually does get “cold” here (though nowhere near as cold as back home).

Anyway, it is the habit of some of the more...sensitive local ladies to take winter as a signal for a complete wardrobe makeover, including buying and wearing full-on winter coats, hats, and gloves. I get the excitement of a total wardrobe change, it just seems a bit on the extreme end here — the lows are in the high 50s, after all. I remember the days when I would take out my big trunk of pants and sweaters and get to wear clothes that had been hiding for months — create new color schemes, try new combos. Even more fun is when summer comes back into town, and the skirts and sandals and skin-baring sundresses find their way back into the closet.

Here, the latest “in” winter accessory are Uggs. For the uninitiated out there, Uggs are huge boots that look as though they are made of leather or suede and sometimes covered in real or very-real-looking faux fur. Now, don’t get me wrong, I like Uggs, at least the plain ones. I think in wintry, cold places such as, I don’t know, Wisconsin, these ginormous boots are stylish and even practical. But not here. Even though it gets cold, it never really gets cold. So be it. Hooray for fashion. Wear what you want when you want. My complaint is that these boots cost anywhere from $150 to $590, depending on the style you want. Most of the ones I’ve seen on campus are in the upper end of the price spectrum. (I did my research. I was curious — I looked for prices online.) And the lucky young ladies on campus whose parents or boyfriends bought them Uggs have so much taste as to pair them, consistently, with saggy pajama pants.

I kid you not. It is a regular sight on campus to see some little mini-monster strutting her stuff all just-rolled-out-of-bed style with her $400 Sauquatch feet completing her look impeccably. Now, I know this is shallow, and it doesn’t matter, and who knows, you probably think that dirty, saggy pajama pants look great with furry Uggs. Especially when paired with a stretched-out thong peeking over the top of those saggy pants and a dirty bra-strap hanging out on the left shoulder. What do I know? Maybe they look incredible and I’m the crazy one. But this is my blog, so I say what I want. I just have to change the lyrics of the song: “U-g-g-l-y, you ain’t got no alibi, you ugg-ly.”
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FREE Home Improvement $100. Use with coupon. Use with coupon.
AER LINGUS WAS MY NEW FAVORITE AIRLINE. Mostly because its name sounded like a romantic euphemism for something dirty. But, also because my flight from Dublin, Ireland, to Edinburgh, Scotland, cost me only 30 pounds sterling.

I’m not sure what that was in Euros, but it was about 66 bucks American when I was over there. Since I hadn’t figured out the exchange rates and was drunk most of the time, I had at least that much in loose change clinging to my carry-on luggage. I wondered how they could offer flights at such a bargain price, and in my paranoid traveler’s mind, I figured they must cut maintenance costs on their planes.

“We please your seats, we’ll be departing shortly,” a lilting Irish voice reiterated over the intercom. The Hyundai-sized seat groaned when I set my Cadillac ass in it. European plane seats are much smaller than American.

I’d traveled around Europe for a couple months, and I never got used to the smaller, flimsier construction of things — taxi cabs I sat crooked in because of the low roof; narrow doorframes I turned sideways to get through. In Hungary, I popped a tiny faucet — spigot, knobs, and all — out of a Lilliputian sink, trying to adjust the hot water.

Squeezed between the aluminum armrests on my Aer Lingus flight, I noticed the itty bitty TV in the back of the seat in front of me. The flight’s only an hour, and I checked the pamphlet of scheduled broadcasts and read the lineup of entertainment. Channel 1: The Simpsons. Channel 2: Absolutely Fabulous. Channel 3: The EastEnders.

“You Captain today is Maureen Kelly. She’s assisted by her co-pilot, Moira O’Hare.”

Then the Democrats announced that their leading candidates are a woman and a black guy. I’m not usually one for sports metaphors, but every athletic cliché I knew came spilling out of my head. What? No! Fumble! It’s not time to swing for the fences and try for a grand slam; it’s time to lay up, get it out of the sand, and back on the green!

WHAT I WILL AND WON’T WATCH THIS WEEK

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 28

THE VIEW
ABC 10:00 A.M.

If we’re Renee Zellweger and Donald Trump was Tom Cruise, I would trot across the living room, jump into his arms, and pepper him with kisses while saying, “You had me when you called Rosie O’Donnell fat and ugly. You had me when you called Rosie O’Donnell fat and ugly.”

ANDERSON COOPER 360
CNN 7:00 P.M.

After the elections in November, I thought, “There’s nothing that can stop us now!” We’re taking the White House in 2008! Then the Democrats announced their leading candidates are a woman and a black guy. I’m not usually one for sports metaphors, but every athletic cliché I knew came spilling out of my head right then. “What? No! Fumble! It’s not time to swing for the fences and try for a grand slam; it’s time to lay up, get it out of the sand, and back on the green!”

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 29

EVERYBODY LOVES RAYMOND
CW 7:30 P.M.

Someday I’m going to shoot Ray Romano in the ass with a BB gun. Not enough to hurt him, only enough to be a stinging inconvenience. Much like his career has been to me.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 30

BOB ESPONIA
XETV 8:30 A.M.

A quick online translation reveals that the literal translation of “Bob Esponja” is “Bob It Puffs Up.” Digging around the translation website again, I find that “but” translates to “extremo.” With that, I’ve found the motivational nickname for my rear-end that’s going to get me back in the gym on January 1. “Ollie! Extremo Esponja!” becomes “Ollie! But, It Puffs Up!”

WHY I WORE LIPSTICK TO MY MASTECTOMY
LIFETIME 7:00 P.M.

Probably the same reason I wore a diamond tennis bracelet to my vaectomy. Although, I guess I tell ya, sister, it wasn’t on my wrist.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 31

A GIRL LIKE ME: THE GWEN ARAUJO STORY
LIFETIME 7:00 P.M.

The Fantasia Barrino Story:
LIFE IS NOT A FAIRY TALE
LIFETIME 9:00 P.M.

I’m going to start a guy’s network, like the anti-Lifetime, so I can have a movie made about me that has a title like these two shows. Anthony Olivier’s The Story of One Fat, Tatooed, Drunkard Tackled to the Floor by a Deaf Hooker in a Bangkok Strip Club. (Based on actual events.)

MONDAY, JANUARY 1

HEROES
NBC 8:00 P.M. TO 11:00 P.M.

A Heroes marathon! Seriously, it’s the bus to Dorkville, and I just can’t get there fast enough.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 2

BOXING — 1975: Ali vs. Wepner
ESPN 7:30 P.M.

Wednesdays, January 3

SCRAPBOOKING
HNN 9:00 P.M.

In the coming revolution, when the power grid has fallen and global warming threatens to spread the next age of ice, your scrapbooks will come in handy as kindling. Keep scrapbooking your porlí middle-aged loves. Keep scrapbooking.

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**Pacific Rim Tints Aales/half sheets $69.95 + labor**

**PW Auto Service $25 off**

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“Hey, dog, you gotta move, homey. You’re scratchin’ yer head like you got lice or scabies or somethin’.”

By John Brizzolara

A few more revolutions of this ball of rock and all of us happy water molecule coincidences can introduce ethanol molecules into our organisms and party like it’s 1999, or if you prefer, boogey oogey oogey ‘til we just can’t boogie no mo’. I will be covering indoors.

That New Year’s Eve falls this year on a Sunday night, the Friday-night factor should be more pronounced than usual, charged with more than just a three-day weekend factor but in a particularly apocalyptic, biblical atmosphere, not only overseas but also, say, on the #2 bus.

A friend of mine, a local celebrity of sorts, Buddy Pastel, Jr., a drummer and son of an even more famous cult figure of a drummer, whose real name is Owen, is a kind of barometer of the Apocalypse, commenting here and there.

“IT’s a sign,” meaning a sign of the end. When Arnold became governor and I asked Buddy if it was a sign, he only said, “Please. It was so obvious. But I think he would agree with me that what passes for socially acceptable behavior in public is indeed a true sign that we are approaching those passages which receive in Revelation where we find “the great harlot,” and “the Word of God” is “clothed in a robe dipped in blood” and we “behold a white horse.”

A young man recently, while riding the #2 home forward in his seat and spoke to me. “Hey, dog,” was his salutation, “You gotta move, homey. You’re scratchin’ yer head like you got lice or scabies or somethin’? I don’t want ‘em on me.”

“WELL what is it?”

I told him, and his response was to ask if I were going to relocate my head parasites.

I did not know him, it was some sort of dermatitis, not because it was gross but because it was far from being gross enough. Actually, it’s a festering philipitic lesion. I don’t think it’s contagious unless you yourself have an open wound and I get some blood or pus on ya.”

“That’s sick, John.

“Thank you.”

“Jeze, what is it again?”

I told him. “All right,” he said and sat back smiling into his T-shirt that read: “Fuck milk. Got pot?”

I rode the rest of the way down 30th Street reading Jurgen, by James Branch Cabell. It was considered “offensive, lewd, lascivious, and indecent” when it first appeared a little less than 100 years ago, but I scanned pages in vain for evidence as to why. I wondered if it too, in its time, had been considered a sign of the Apocalypse.

On page 133 of the Dover edition, I did find the word “naked,” but the surrounding prose was so colorfully inscrutable it might have been written by the fast-famous mystic author of Revelation: “Now the hooded man and the two naked girls performed their share in the ceremonial, which part it is not essential to record.

None of the less,” Jurgen said. “Or cord that binds the circling of stars O cup which holds all time, all colour and all thought! O soul of space…’”

A few lines down I found what might have been a sign of an apocalypse: “Therefore by every plant which scatters its seed and by the moist warm garden which nourishes it, by the comminglement of bloomed with pleasure, by the joy that mimics anguish with sighs and shudderings, and by the contentment which mimics death — by all these do we invoke thee…’

I got off the #2 at University and thought about a cigarette. It was and is everywhere. Clearly Satanic. I don’t need a building to fall on my head, nor do I need to read on to find out Cabell is not talking about Satan at all. We’re just doomed. Period.

I am writing this sometime before the ball drops at Times Square (where, I am thinking, it would be a good place to revel with naked abandon until the end. No, no, cowering is the best bet). Say at the corner of Eighth and 42nd, anywhere. Clearly Satanic. I don’t need a building to fall on my head, nor do I need to read on to find out there is no such place as New Year’s Eve.

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