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San Diego's Empty Quarter. See Page 74

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**Q:** Is the surgery painful or difficult?

"I had no pain during the procedure and no discomfort or pain afterward. Best of all, I can see without my glasses or contacts. It feels great!" – Greg Schwenk, San Diego, CA

**Q:** How soon after the process can I begin normal daily activities again?

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**Q:** How long does the process take?

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**Q:** Do the effects of LASIK wear off over time?

“I had the surgery done over 8 years ago and my sight is still a perfect 20/20.” – Sandra Macias, San Diego, CA

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Jerrys Kids
With the death of Jerry Ford last week, distant but colorful memories have come flooding back to many of San Diegos political elders. Ford's personal and political ties to America's Finest City were extensive. When Ford ran for election to the presidency to succeed himself in 1976, one of his most avid backers was then-San Diego mayor Pete Wilson, a self-styled GOP moderate who was so fired up that he went to New Hampshire during that February's Republican primary battle between Ford and Governor Ronald Reagan. With help from Ford's campaign, Wilson set up a "truth squad" that bashed Reagan's record in California and claimed that he had inflated his achievements as governor. When Reagan lost the primary, his backers blamed Wilson—who harbored future presidential ambitions of his own. Though Wilson was later elected to the U.S. Senate and subsequently became governor, he never managed to live down his interjective attacks on Reagan and remained loathed by many on the right.

Wilson's other tie to Ford was in the person of his longtime campaign consultant, George Gorton, onetime member of Richard Nixon's "kidnapping corps" of college students, organized by the Committee to Re-elect the President (CREEP) to covertly gather information about the campaign of Nixon's 1972 Democratic opponent George McGovern. After the Watergate scandal and a write-up by Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein in All the President's Men, Gorton wound up in political exile, living near the beach in Del Mar, where he scrapped together enough money to acquire the News-Press.

Jack Ford, the president's then-27-year-old son, who'd worked with Gorton on the Nixon campaign, joined the newspaper in 1978. Gorton announced that Ford had purchased a half-interest in the venture for an undisclosed sum. Ford had previously been associate publisher of Outside, the magazine founded by Rolling Stone publisher Jann Wenner. Gorton's girlfriend, San Diego mayor-to-be Susan Golding, became the paper's associate publisher, but their joint venture lasted barely two years. After it was sold in 1980, Gorton and Ford paid $300,000 for a building in the Gaslamp Quarter occupied by an X-rated bookstore, which remains to this day. Gorton moved on to manage the political careers of both Wilson and Golding. He also had a key role in Boris Yeltsin's 1995 campaign for president of Russia, though his latest candidate, Rancho Santa Fe denizen Steve Francis, seeking to become San Diego mayor, fell flat.

Ford, who had moved to Rancho Santa Fe, went on to such endeavors as establishing a chain of state lottery ticket kiosks owned with Democratic attorney and onetime Jerry Brown aide Byron Georgi and being executive director for the host committee of the 1996 GOP convention here. He was appointed to the Del Mar fair board by Governor George Deukmejian and reappointed by Pete Wilson when he became governor. Last July, Ford received mention in an Irish newspaper when he showed up for George's lavish wedding at Ashford Castle in Mayo.

Famous for hearty partying and a widely reported admission that he'd smoked marijuana, Ford shared his mother's problem with the bottle. In 1983, the presidential son was busted in Cardiff for drunk driving. But Ford's most notorious moment came on August 1, 1984, when he was arrested for petty theft after stealing a sign from the equestrian competition being held at Fairbanks Ranch Country Club during the L.A. Olympics. Ford said he wanted it for a souvenir; angry spectators called the cops on him, and he was led away in handcuffs. Three weeks later, an aide to City Attorney John Witt bashed Republican and Wilson ally, announced that the Olympics committee had decided it didn't want to press charges and therefore the crime had no "victim." In 1989, Ford married Julianne Felando, daughter of Angie Felando, head of San Diego's tuna fishing association.

Power trips California state senate president pro tem Don Perata has named San Diego Democrat Denise Ducheny chairwoman of the powerful Budget Committee. Senator Christine Kehoe, who has received thousands of dollars in campaign contributions from the cell phone industry, takes over as chair of the Energy, Utilities, and Communications Committee. . . The anticipated sale of the Journal Star in Peoria, Illinois, as part of David Copley's plan to pare the newspaper chain he inherited from his mother down to the Union-Tribune, might not be such a bad thing after all, opines Billy Dennis, a former reporter who now runs the Peoria Pundit blog, "I am worried for my friends and enemies at the Journal Star," Dennis writes, "I dont want to see my hometown paper eviscerated. But I also know that this newspaper has used its editorial pages to promote the private agenda of the people who run it." He adds, "Perhaps new ownership will bring with it new voices on the editorial board that aren't fighting battles against their favorite targets, but in really representing their readers, and don't seem hellbent on promoting their pet projects and spreading disinformation about politicians they don't like."

Matt Potter
The Reader offers $25 for news tips published in this column. Call our voice mail at 619-235-3000, ext. 440, or fax your tip to 619-231-0889.

CITY LIGHTS

Hide the Pea, Bury the Head
By Don Bauder
Sell the family jewels cheap and then go into the tank. That's Mayor Jerry Sanders secret long-term plan, say more and more observers of city hall. His strategy is, first, to sell or lease San Diego's valuable land to his developer buddies, who are also his major contributors. Then do the inevitable take the City into bankruptcy.

Sanders and the Union-Tribune say a tax increase and bankruptcy are off the table. But that's a fairy tale and an admission that there is no Plaza B, C, or D. The City recently issued a five-year plan, which is called "City of San Diego Five-Year Financial Outlook." The name really should be "We're Broke, Help!"

The document says that between 2008 and 2012, the City's annual pension-healthcare contribution is projected to grow from $200 million to $218 million. Total deferred maintenance and capital-improvement projects come to $800 million to $900 million, not including Water and Wastewater needs, which are the most critical. The combined pension and healthcare deficits are close to $3 billion, and there are no reserves for the latter.

The mayor says he can come up with almost $400 million in savings over five years through such plans as the outsourcing of voters okeyed in the last election. But even the general-fund deficit for the five-year period is a cumulative $800 million.

And the mayor and the U-T would have you believe that neither a tax increase nor bankruptcy is under consideration. "Puuh-keze," the mayor will sell off assets to his select group of business interests that backed him," says activist Norma Damashke. "We will see major sales and transfers of property, but it will still not be sufficient, and we will hear, 'We have tried everything; we have no choice.'"

Bankruptcy will follow. What might be sold? Smaller properties will go. Then will come golf courses and airport sites such as Montgomery and Brown fields, she says. She knows "some of these can't be turned over without going through hoops," Federal money has poured into the airports, complicating any transfers. Some property sales might have to go to voters. Sometimes, these problems can be averted by dumping continued on page 10

CITY LIGHTS

Neal Obermeyer
Scott B. Ehrlich, professor at California Western School of Law, wrote an article in spring of 2005 saying the City had to go bankrupt because there was no money to cover unmet needs, including deferred maintenance and capital projects, "Everything has gotten worse," says Ehrlich now. "We're just in terrible shape financially."

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

San Diego Reader, January 4, 2007
Lockup 101

By Joe Deegan

The first thing that came to my mind,” remembers Tom Miller, “was to arm myself with a screwdriver. The Rodney King riots were taking place in Los Angeles, and the tension in the yard was incredible. Everybody seemed ready for a fight.”

Miller, 52, is telling me about his 1992 stint at a prison firefighting camp near Boulevard in East County. He went to the camp as part of an 18-month incarceration for selling illegal drugs. A job assignment in the tool shop gave Miller easy access to the weapon he suddenly counted on to protect him. He did not have to use the screwdriver that day, but other prisoners were now on notice.

I ask Miller whether inmates back then ever wanted weapons from the shop for them. “All the time,” he says, “and my answer was always, ‘No.’ It was the same answer I gave to guys who offered me booze or drugs.”

While on bail before entering prison, Miller joined a 12-step recovery program where he met an ex-con he credits with teaching him how to act in prison. “I was very scared of going to jail,” says Miller. He is grateful that the man, who became his first recovery-group sponsor, also spoke to his mom, who wondered what would befall him in jail.

“The guy told her, ‘I can’t say your son will or won’t get hurt in jail, but one thing is certain, that if he keeps drinking and using, that’s going to be a problem in there.’ And the talk gave her a lot of comfort,” says Miller.

Miller kept up his recovery program in prison and continued it after getting out. He obtained an associate of arts degree in substance-abuse counseling from San Diego City College. At the same time, he worked with a therapist, first as a client and later as a trainee. “The man became my mentor,” says Miller, who for the past 12 years has been counseling people either going to prison or getting out — and their families.

In the meantime, a company called DrPrison.com appeared in San Diego. Its purpose was to prepare people to survive prison stays, to avoid being killed, beaten, raped, or robbed. It was founded two years ago by management consultant Steve Scholl, who had spent most of his career troubleshooting for large construction project-management companies.

How, you ask, does a management consultant end up counseling soon-to-be inmates in the art of surviving prison? “What piqued my interest,” Scholl tells me, “was a series of conversations I had with an old friend who just finished 15 years of doing time. I talked with him at length about his experiences in prison. It fascinated me. And even though I had no prospect of going to prison, imagining what it’s like scared the heck out of me. My feelings were probably like a lot of peoples’, especially people who are drawn to television shows like Prison Break and documentaries that show various aspects of prison life. And if the number of these shows is any indication, there are many folks out there who have a fascination with what goes on in prison.”

As his friend explained the tactics he used for coping with prison life, Scholl had a moment of recognition. Many of the tactics were the same ones he was used to sharing in management consulting. On the basis of these recommendations, Scholl wrote a 30-page manual on how to deal with prison life. And his friend worked as his partner in getting DrPrison off the ground.

I remark to Scholl that comparing business and prison tactics seems entirely fitting. He gives me a polite nod and then acknowledges that Martha Stewart paid for services much like the kind his company offers before she went to prison. We agree that if Jeffrey Skilling, in his business life, had made use of DrPrison’s insights, he might not now need them for life behind bars.

The original DrPrison partners eventually went their own ways. But this summer Scholl met Tom Miller. On the basis of Miller’s 12 years of prisoner counseling and Scholl’s experience with 22 clients so far, the two have decided to expand DrPrison. To date, the company has worked only with people heading for prison. Now it intends to continue helping prisoners while they are incarcerated and when they get out, including arranging anger management and parenting classes and assisting with parole requirements. And it is offering services to prisoners’ families. To customize service, it will outsource consultations according to gender, race, and other factors. Miller and Scholl are currently spreading the word about DrPrison through bail bondsmen, defense attorneys, and therapists.

There is an objection to DrPrison that some people are sure to make. I run it by a small donut-shop coffee group one morning. Why should anyone, I ask, want to make prisoners’ lives easier? Aren’t they being jailed to suffer for their crimes?

A woman observes someone arrested him for failing to show up in court to face a misdemeanor charge. “Somehow they accidentally put me on the fourth floor at county jail, which is where they process all the felony people. I was only there a short time, but one day I accidentally threw this great big guy’s lunch away. He saw what I did and started giving me hell about it. I apologized and, since I still had my own lunch, I gave it to him. And that settled things down. But those felony guys are a different sort. They’ve got nothing to lose, and they don’t care what they do to you, especially if someone shows weakness. They’ll punk somebody and then start talking around to their friends,” says Mathis.

In other words, although prisons and jails do house hard-core sociopaths, far less dangerous people pass through too. Tom Miller tells me that the first seven days on the inside are the most dangerous because the jailers haven’t yet segregated inmates according to their crimes. “Fairly mild-mannered people will be thrown together with murderers, who later will be separated from the others,” he says. And he argues that helping all prisoners is justified. “If any of them learn how to take care of themselves in prison,” he says, “they are bettering themselves. Once people get a taste for improving their lives, they want more of it.” And that’s why Miller and Scholl believe that what they teach will help their clients not only in prison but beyond.

So I ask, “What do you teach?”

They have a seven-step program, they say, which they consider a trade secret for business reasons. But, in summary, it’s something like this. In prison you constantly face inescapable situations, serious or trivial, that other inmates force upon you. For instance, someone might steal your shoes and you end up walk-
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Bury the head
continued from page 7
the property through a long lease rather than an outright sale. The Torrey Pines golf courses will probably go that route. “Even if [City Attorney Mike] Aguirre prevailed” in his attempt to roll back fat benefits (a prospect made more difficult by a recent superior court judge’s decision), “we are still so far behind that bankruptcy is in the works,” says Damashke. “The five-year plan is nonsense. So far he [Sanders] is getting away with it. Until something happens — say, a police or fire emergency that the City can’t respond to — the public won’t take notice,” Sanders hopes such a crisis won’t take place before the 2008 election, in which he intends to make charter changes that strengthen the mayor’s office and weaken the city council, says Damashke.

“It is irresponsible of the mayor to issue a paper projecting such staggering deficits and then say we aren’t considering any tax increases or bankruptcy,” says Jim Mills, former president pro tern of the California Senate. He agrees with Damashke that “They are putting off bankruptcy while they take care of some of their friends. They shouldn’t put off bankruptcy with the financial condition deteriorating as rapidly as it is now.” Sanders says he will eliminate 125 positions a year for three years. But will these people be pushed into retirement, where there will simply be costs of a different kind?

“They are living in a dream world,” says Steve Ehrlich, professor of political science at the University of California, San Diego. “They are just back-loading the problem — a hallmark of San Diego politics. They are pushing back the problem as far as they can. But the day of reckoning will come; they will face tax increases or bankruptcy. Aguirre is doing due diligence on the road to bankruptcy. He can go to court and say, ’I tried every avenue to reduce the liability.’”

Voters in the fall gave the nod to the idea of managed competition; city departments have to compete with the private sector to see who can come up with the best bid to handle a task. “Savings from managed competition are illusory,” snorts Erie. “If you want to see what is going out to bid, check the mayor’s campaign contributors. This is a mayor that gives contributors everything they want, including the upper two stories of a high-rise building near Montgomery Field. [Sanders] wants to repeal the rules of arithmetic. If you have to have a balanced budget, there is no way you will extract the savings from managed competition. It’s not about efficiency. It’s about rewarding the fat cats.”

Damashke’s scenario “could very easily be what is going to happen,” says Erie. “They will sell [or lease] things at fire-sale prices to their fat-cat friends. But these are one-shot deals. Once it’s gone, it’s gone.” He is wary of the proposed “public-private” deal for Balboa Park. The city-owned Torrey Pines golf courses are quasi-private already; with high greens fees and favoritism for hotel guests, he points out, “All these deals might do is delay bankruptcy until 2014.”

Ehrlich says the City must go bankrupt. “Somebody has to recognize that we cannot

continued on page 12
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Bury the head
continued from page 10

pay the outstanding pension debt and run the city of San Diego. There is just not enough money," he says.

He doesn’t understand how Sanders can insist he is not pandering to a tax increase or bankruptcy: “If this were his personal finances, he would have to do one or the other: either increase his income or file for bankruptcy,” says Ehrlich. He doesn’t know whether Sanders plans to dump assets and then go into bankruptcy, or if he has a plan to pay off debt. “There is just not enough money,” he says.

Diego. There is just not enough money, he adds, “A really long-term lease is no different than disposing of the property.”

Counselmember Donna Frye agrees that there is too much dirty linen on the line of assets to pay off debt. “And, in the long run, the budget can be balanced over time without bankruptcy and maybe without a tax increase. But fat sewer- and water-fee increases are already in the works, and the stormwater fee will have to go up, he says. He is counting on the City getting back to the capital markets and selling half a billion dollars of infrastructure bonds. And he does think a hotel-tax boost might go through if it were earmarked for infrastructure — not pensions. “Bankruptcy won’t undo the pension problem and won’t undo debt service,” says Barnett. He is counting on asset sales, leases, and privatization — for example, giving a long-term lease to a company to operate Torrey Pines golf courses.

of course, there’s another alternative that might fit with the San Diego mentality; let the joint rot and hope nobody notices.

Lockup 101
continued from page 9

Lockup 101
continued from page 9

ing around barefoot all the time. “You can call the cops,” says Miller, “and you can’t leave.” Isolating can work for a while in some situations. But other prisoners will not permit loners for long and will force confrontations in the yard, where everybody eventually has to go. “They want to see how you’ll act,” Scholl tells me that in their first consultations with clients, he and Miller try to discover “emotional vulnerabilities.”

When you first walk into the yard, he says, “the other prisoners will be looking for them. Are you a hothead? A controller? A pleaser?”

So DrPrison tries to alert clients to the emotional signals they are likely to give off. “We find them by pushing their buttons in the consultation. Then suddenly, when we’ve hit the right one, they will react strongly.” And the idea is not to stop reacting in that way entirely, but to control your style, use other styles, and vary them according to the situation. “Even the strongest and most controlling prisoner,” observes Miller, “cannot get away with threatening behavior all the time. Five other prisoners will easily take him down.”

The three main coping styles in prison, according to Miller, are the Controller, the Pleaser, and the Loner. Each is effective for protecting yourself, but never as an exclusive strategy. Doing something for somebody, such as acquiring money or stores from home, will become expected, and you may have to say no in a forceful way. It’s the varying of styles that will save you.

“Sometimes you may have to fight,” says Scholl, “but winning the fight is not crucial. Even if you get beat up, you are likely to land a few good blows. And the willingness to stand up is what gains respect.”

The work with prisoners’ families is likely to take up a big percentage of DrPrison’s time in the future. That’s because one of the greatest fears many people have who go to prison concerns what will happen to their relationships while they’re gone.

Miller tells me of a woman who wrote a first letter to her son in jail. “It read, ‘How dare you disappoint the family? It berated him something terrible. I told her, ‘Not good. All this is going to do is bring about resistance. You’re not an agent of change here by doing this.’ She had no idea. She thought she was going to make him feel bad so he’d have a change of heart. That’s not what was happening. I told her he’s only going to say something to please you because he needs you. So she finally called me last week to read me a new letter. She wrote, ‘I know when you get out there will be a lot of blocks to your getting ahead in society. But you told me once you have an interest in photography. And she sent him a mag-
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LETTERS

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 92186-5803; 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.

Corporate Control Freaks
Tom Larson’s article “No Bad Jobs, Just Bad Attitudes” (Cover Story, December 28) seems to accept the premise that the rise of the career-coaching phenomenon is the result of business’s desire for more productive and efficient employees. It’s not. Not that those things aren’t coveted by today’s businesses. The last 15 years have seen unprecedented levels of growth and improvements in those areas — not to mention record earnings.

What’s driving the demand for the career-coaching industry is not increased profits but increased control. The freer the market, the more control is needed over everything else, especially workers.

Corporations very much prefer to control their own resources. That’s why these career coaches mentioned in the article focus on changing “who you are” and not “what you do” for the company.

The frosting on the cake for corporations is gaining an economic good from workers (skill and time) in exchange for, as Larson cites in the coaches survey, noneconomic goods such as “appreciation,” “feeling in,” and sympathy. Not bad…if you’re a corporation.

Greg Sullivan
San Diego

Bungalow Benefits
It is wonderful for historical preservationists to want to save old bungalows in their midst (“I Own It,” “City Lights,” December 28). The question is who should pay for keeping them around for all of us to look at.

The owners of these old houses typically want to replace a falling-down house (or two) of 1000 to 2000 square feet with four condos or apartments totaling 6000 square feet. The latter will last 100-plus years, while the former would have turned to dust.

While we love seeing old buildings, it is wrong to shove the increasing cost of preserving them onto their unwilling owners. The fairest policy would have the preservationists buy up and save the old buildings or convince the government to do so. This already happens with truly worthy buildings. But to force owners to shoulder the burden of paying for a benefit enjoyed by the neighbors is a taking, pure and simple.

Bob Spaulding
San Diego

CORRECTION
The photo in the December 28 “Roam-O-Rama,” captioned “Butler Canyon,” was in fact a view of San Diego Country Estates from West Side Road.

The Blue And The Gray
With all of the great whale-watching companies in San Diego and excellent gray-whale information and pictures that are circulating on the Web, perhaps Reader writer Barbarella (Local Events, December 21) could come up with one picture of the species of whale — Eschrichtius robustus, or gray whale, that migrates south and north along the San Diego coast. Instead, the Reader publishes a picture of a blue whale breaching.

Talk about a rare sight. I have been out on hundreds of cruises and have seen two blue whales in 20 years and never a breaching blue! Those of us who are passionate about whales and the local gray-whale migration get a bit insulted when you put just any ole whale picture with a story. Seeing whales in their natural environment can be almost a religious experience. They are very different from each other.

Hornblower Cruises has been whale watching since December 16, and we keep a whale report of each of the two 3.5-hour cruises daily. We have sighted three breaching gray whales in the 12 days we’ve been whale watching as reported by seasoned captains and naturalists who cruise on Hornblower. These naturalists are all trained by the San Diego Natural History Museum about gray whales, their migration. They also speak about three types of dolphins (bottlenose dolphins, Pacific white-sided dolphins, and Risso’s) that we often spot with the whales and the sea lions we see on every whale-watching trip.

Speaking of all the great whale-watching companies in San Diego, Barbarella seems to imply there is only one, so let me suggest that you do your homework on which you choose to cruise with, because there are many, and they are vastly different. You can go on a kayak or in a helicopter, on a comfortable and stable yacht (Hornblower), or with one of many sport-fishing boats from the harbor or Mission Bay. On Hornblower, 25,000 whale enthusiasts go out whale-watching annually in the short 22-week migration season here. I suggest you take a trip out to see a gray whale. It may be a once-in-a-lifetime experience.

P.S.: October 23, 1997, the Reader did an awesome story on gray whales, written by Jeannette De Wyze, who proudly put her name on it instead of hiding behind some anonymous pen name.

Rebecca Milkey
San Diego

Spread The Outrage
You goddamn idiot. Your cover on December 21 states Ebonics is the language of black gangstas (“It’s Not A Race Thing...It’s Style,” Cover Story). You just declared 98 percent of my race as gangstas. You dummy, you need to read black history first before making such statements. You will be hearing from every black organization I contact. I am sure they will be just as outraged as I am. I am sure they will give you a history lesson in Ebonics, idiot.

Stefon Wilson
San Diego

The photo, correctly identified in the North County edition as a humpback whale, was chosen by the editorial department. — Editor
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Dear Matthew Alice:

It’s been a long time since I’ve seen news coverage of an unusual lunar event. Near a small town in Northern California some residents would line up near the railroad tracks, facing away. When a specific train passes by, they would lower their pants and underwear in unison, bend over, and moon the passengers. I don’t know if the media deemed this practice unsuitable for the 5 o’clock news or if this ritual is now defunct due to general embarrassment. Maybe you can find something out.

Finding something out is how we feed the troops, John. And if that particular something has anything to do with public butt-baring, well, the elves will swarm it like demented ducks, you can bet. But unless you consider Orange County to be way up north, this moon over Amtrak business is a bit of Social. Of course, anything that involves both beer and nudity has staying power. The event still goes on the second Saturday every July.

Beer has been a key component of the goofy festival since its inception. In 1979 somebody in the Mugs Away Saloon in Laguna Niguel dared a well-juiced pal to moon the next train that passed by. A beloved tradition was born. (These days, though, no beer is allowed in the mooning arena.)

On site, along the Sunliner train tracks, across the street from Mugs Away, there’s plenty of room for mooners; but moonees have to plan ahead to get a ticket for the show. Because it’s just plain fun to have dozens of strangers’ naked buttocks in your face. Amtrak always sells out that day’s train(s) way in advance (about 24 trips between 7 a.m. and 11 p.m.). Mooning after dark requires a big flashlight or camp lantern for proper buttock illumination. So, mark your social calendar. The 27th annual Mooning of Amtrak is set for July 14 at Mugs Away, along the chain-link fence next to the tracks. The elves have rounded up their Crayolas and are sketching ideas for derriere decorations, which are encouraged. Grandma’s ordering her ticket to ride. See more at moonamtrak.org.

Dear Sirs:

Do spiders bite people on a regular basis? In my short time on planet Earth, I must have heard women complain about “spider bites” 400 or 450 times. Now that I am married and actually use women to shuck my oysters, I can bet. But unless you consider Orange County to be way up north, this moon over Amtrak business is a bit of Social. Of course, anything that involves both beer and nudity has staying power. The event still goes on the second Saturday every July.

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- National City
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- Pacific Beach
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- Santee
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- La Mesa
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San Diego Reader January 4, 2007 17
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**SportingBox**

By Patrick Daugherty

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**iPod Sports**

Most of my four-fig iPod is taken up with audio books. There’s a little music, too, mostly country-western tunes or torch singers such as Diana Krall. I get along with my iPod, not looking for more than it provides: easy company on a walk or when standing in line.

And so it went until I had the thought, the thought that always brings trouble with it, to wit: “Why not be more productive?” Followed by: “Why not listen to sports podcasts while I’m about my duties?”

Actually, there are 893 podcasts listed under the “sports” category at podcasts.yahoo.com. There are, in fact, a blizzard of niche podcasts: Boston Celtics, Pittsburgh Steelers, Irish football, computer games, wrestling, boxing, surfing, climbing, the whole schmeer of sports.

Everybody has their own intro music and announcer. The Fantasy Football Guys, Lyle and Kevin, are introduced by a woman who sounds like she’s been calling bingo games for the past 30 years. I should note that there are 153 subscribers to this program, which, when put next to 300,000,000 Americans, is a depressing number. On the other hand, KNBR, a 50,000-watt clear-channel sports-talk radio station, has 45 subscribers.

Kevin opens the show with a cheery, “One of us is awesome. One of us sucks. You guess which one it is.” Intro music trails off. “This podcast and live show brought to you by Fante Forever, now on DVD,” blab, blab, blab, “and available at www.dot fantasyfootballguys dot com.” Silence. “No, I’m sorry, you did not have fantasy football for the past 30 years.”

Lyle makes a nasty laugh. “What a moron. It’s right in front of you. You can’t read it.”

Kevin says, “Lyle leaves his house to come over to the — quote, unquote — studio. This is, what, show 40 or something?”

“This season, it’s the 38th,” Lyle says. “And we did how many last year, another 40?”

“I don’t know.”

Kevin says, “Lyle doesn’t bring his computer.”

Lyle, getting angry, says, “I forgot it, man.”

“So, guess which one of us sucks,” Kevin says. “You, sir. You.”

“All right, fine, I suck, whatever. Can we move on now?”

“I guess we can,” Kevin says, using a twisted, I-hate-your-fucking-guts tone of voice. “Well, you know, we talked about last week’s show, last week’s… What am I trying to say?”

“Games!” Lyle says as if speaking to an annoying imbecile.

“Yeah.”

Lyle, still talking to the imbecile, says, “So, now we’re going to preview the games upcoming.”

Kevin says, “Both Lyle and I are off this week.” His voice trails off as if remembering a long-ago vacation. “Kind of tough, getting into the swing of exactly what it is we’re doing.” Silence. “You know what, if both of us had a computer, it might be a little bit easier. But, for some reason, my list of games has disappeared.”

Lyle says, wearily, “Well, you know what, just find it. Take your time, man.”

Kevin says, “This game I’m coming up with to talk about is Arizona and San Diego.”

“Nice,” Lyle’s voice brightens. He’s going to work. “This is a Who Cares Bowl, beginning with Who Cares.”

Dead air. Finally, Kevin says, “That’s all you gotta say about it?”

Lyle, says, “I would say about 10 percent of the fantasy-football community have their last game of fantasy football for the year, as far as playing in the games, a lot of people’s championships are this week…”

“No.”

“Ill-advised though that might be…”

“No, they’re not,” Lyle says.

“No?”

“I would say about 10 percent of the fantasy-football community have their last game this week.”

Long pause. Kevin says, “Okay, we owe everything we can give to those 10 percent.”

“I’m not disagreeing with you,” Lyle squeals. “I was just commenting about the game.”

“Well, why don’t you have your computer then? Obviously you’re not as dedicated as some of us.”

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**The Vegas Line**

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“He hath sent me to proclaim liberty to captives,” read the Scripture verse painted on the side wall. The Lucile lectern bore the church’s logo: a crown imposed over a tilted cross, itself imposed over a pair of hands breaking a chain.

Bursts of “Hallelujah,” and “Thank you, Jesus” dotted the room before the service — a woman roamed the space, crying, “Come on; say a prayer for Him!” and the congregation responded with applause and a gathering volume of outrage. By the time the band started — rollicking electric piano, thumping six-string bass, sharp drum set — the pump was primed. The five-woman choir repeated the refrain, “Let all the people of God say!” while a soloist launched into Hallelujahs, riffs, and exhortations. The congregation joined in, and the sound became a pulsing, tactile thing, while a soloist launched into an extended, years-long embrace. By song’s end, the air was filled with wails, howls, yelps of praise, and thanks. Ushers brought tissues to the weeping while Pastor Benson took the lectern and said, “Sometimes, God is so good to us that Scripture has not come up with a word to describe it. The only thing you can do is allow tears to run down your cheeks and just shake your head when you look back and see... what God did to show up and show out.”

Pastor Benson’s sermon began with two quotes from Scripture: God exhorting Samuel to stop mourning for Saul and go out to anoint the new king, and Jesus warning against putting purple wine in old skins. “God is getting ready to elevate and give gifts, but He can’t do it if you begin the year with old wineskins... So often, we go into the New Year with a new mindset, but the same bad attitudes. You want God to give you new favor, but you’re still holding on to old hate. This is the year you have to release, forgive your mother for not being there. Right here, right now, you have to forgive your father for abandoning you... Everybody that you’ve held hostage, you have to release. New blessings will not fit into old...” Shouts of “Hallelujah” echoed throughout — applauding, laughing, responding to Benson’s earthy analogies as the spirit moved them.

Benson’s voice gathered intensity. “God had to tell Samuel, ‘Why are you mourning? You’re not going to get anything from Saul. Get up!’ Speaking to the embittered, he cried, “You might not get an ‘I’m sorry,’ but you better get up! God wants to make a new king, and that king’s name is...’”

White-gloved ushers passed out fans for the over heated. “The presence of God is here,” said Rachelle. “It’s what happens when you worship; that’s what happens when you praise Him. His presence comes, and He’s happy to bless you... You just have to stay small...under standing gives God is going to deliver you. It’s not for punishment; it’s for preparation... Get ready to reap all the promises that He has made.”

It was offering time. Four gold canisters sat on a Lucite stand. “Stretch forth and give,” exhorted Rachelle as the congregation gave. “The power for you to take care of them!” shouted the congregation, which had been murmuring its “Amens” and “Say it, Pastors” throughout — applauding, laughing, responding to Benson’s earthy analogies as the spirit moved them.

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For hair, you can use mohair, fur, fake fur, yarn, silk, torn fabric, and even birdseed.

The dolls are fabric, but there’s still plenty of room for a variety of materials. “For hair, you can use mohair, fur, fake fur, yarn, silk, torn fabric, and even birdseed. One gal went to the hardware store and got bolts, washers, and wire for the hair. It was wonderful.” And of course, the variety of fabric is all but endless. “Boutique fabrics are becoming popular for making bodies; they’re mottled and more realistic. Or you can dye your own. Faces can be white, brown, or peach.”

Faces are one of Culea’s specialties; besides having written a book about them, she teaches a class on feature placement. (Because she’s a local and doesn’t have travel expenses, her classes are only $25.) Classes taught by out-of-towners can run up to $100. “I come from a fine-arts background; I did portraits for years. It’s key to get the features in the right spot. After that, everything is just circles: the eyes are three circles, the nose is three circles, and the lips are three circles and an oval. You use a regular mechanical pencil with a hard lead — that way, if you don’t like what you’ve drawn, it’s easier to erase. For coloring, you can use anything from crayons to colored pencils to watercolors.” (Not every mistake can be erased, however, and so Culea favors doll designs that feature a separate head. “If you’re going to mess up, it’s going to be with the head. If it’s separate, you can throw it away and start with a new one.”)

The doll-face book brings students along for a 16-week course, going from crayons to colored pencils to watercolors. “We show them how to lay it out, cut it, and sew it. We explain stitch length — you want a shorter-than-average stitch — how to sew around a curve, and how to sew fingers. Cutting is key with fingers; you don’t want too much fabric or it gets hard to turn them. I like to use brass tubes, the kind you can get anywhere from four to seven pieces. Then you stuff the nose to make it bigger, wider, or narrower. It’s the same with the lips; you can make them smiling, frowning, or puckering up to kiss someone.”

Besides a needle and thread, Culea’s favorite doll-making tool is a hemostat. “It’s a surgical tool, like a forceps. You can find them at swap meets. You can use them to grab stuffing, turn things, and hold things. I use it to grab the neck of the doll so I can push it up into the head.”

For more information, visit www.iolcc.com or call Sharon Goldschneider: 619-465-7730.

Columns archived at SanDiegoReader.com

1. Patti Medaris Culea
2. Goblin Princess by Patti Medaris Culea
3. Magic of Forest doll by Lois Boncer

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1. Patti Medaris Culea
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When the movie Wedding Crashers came out, I started receiving a lot of wedding invitations. Except for CD-release parties, weddings are the most common parties I’m invited to. I pick a few each year to attend. When I got a call from a young Latina named Wendy, I decided to cruise up to Escondido for her older brother’s wedding.

I used Map Quest to find the location, but it gave me the wrong directions. (This is only the second time that’s happened, so I didn’t get too upset.) I went the wrong way down Ninth Avenue and called Wendy to bail me out.

They live in a Latino neighborhood, and it was interesting to see their neighbors come over to the wedding on their front lawn. It may not have been as elaborate as some weddings, but you could tell the family put a lot of work into making the place look its best. I could see a broken-down shack in the back yard that had been covered with a white cloth. There were several tables set up in the front yard with white tablecloths and flowers. I often see people getting married at home in movies and on TV, but I had never been to a wedding at someone’s house.

Wendy greeted me at the gate of her mother’s home. Wendy and her boyfriend live in Mexico and work at a hospital in Chula Vista. The first thing she said to me was, “You like Asian women, don’t you?” I said, “Why? Do you have some?” She laughed. “You say that a lot in your stories.” For the life of me, I can’t remember writing that. I said, “I may have described somebody as being Asian and being cute, but that doesn’t mean I prefer Asian women over any other types. If it makes you feel better, though, I’ll refer to you as a cute, petite Latina.”

Wendy leaned toward me and said, “That means ‘kiss.’” I replied, “I thought it meant ‘bathroom.’” A car honked as it drove by, and Wendy said, “That’s customary when a wedding is going on.” She described for me the traditions of a Mexican wedding.

Jared met, and Wendy told me, “She would catch the bus for school, and he watched her walk by.” Her mom came over and there was an awkward silence. I said, “How did you first meet your mother?” She smiled and said, “It was a long time ago. In the womb.”

I asked her boyfriend if being at a wedding was uncomfortable, if he was feeling the pressure to propose. He smiled. “I’ve been asked that five times today!”

The DJ played a variety of mariachi and Spanish-style music. Everyone was speaking Spanish, too. When someone in front of us yelled, “Beso,” Wendy leaned toward me and said, “That means ‘kiss.’” I replied, “I thought it meant ‘bathroom.’” But I did get a C in Spanish.” Wendy was 19 years old, so I asked about her high school. “I went to school in San Ysidro. It was real ghetto there. One of the security guards was sleeping with a student. It was crazy.”

There were little boys who looked to be about five years old, and though they were dressed up in suits, they were playful. I was surprised they weren’t pulling at their ties and acting uncomfortable. A little girl of about eight kept ducking the frame of my camera as I took photos.

The ceremony was in Spanish. I noticed a guy wearing a sweat suit sitting in the front. I found it odd that the children were dressed up more than some of the adults.

When Wendy’s mom said, “Mi casa, su casa,” Wendy was going to translate for me. I said, “I know what that means.” I was too embarrassed to tell her that I learned it from Pulp Fiction.
I grabbed a Coke and sat down to eat. A few older guys in cowboy gear offered me "cerveza."

I love Mexican food, but the food there was different than anything I’d eaten before. They served frijoles puercos, barbacoa, and sopas. A relative of the groom owns a catering service and made all the food. I asked where in Mexico they were from and was told Culiacán, Sinaloa, 22 hours south of the border.

One guy at my table told me that his family raised pigs, which they eventually ate. A young guy at our table complained that he couldn’t have a beer. I thought it was because he wasn’t 21, but Wendy said, "Not with your medication." I asked her what she meant. "When he was eight, he was misdiagnosed and given steroid shots. His heart got three times as big. They brought him up to UCLA and gave him a heart transplant."

Everyone at the table cleaned their plates, except for the macaroni salad. I thought that was weird because it was the first time I had macaroni salad that I liked.

The groom was bugging Wendy for safety pins, and when she agreed to go out and get some, I offered to walk her to the market. She took off her high heels and her boyfriend lit a cigarette. I mentioned to the young couple that a guy at the wedding reminded me of Burt Reynolds. They asked who that was. I said, "Wow, I must be old." Then I thought, ‘He’s still making movies!’ I rattled off a few that he’s been in over the past few years, but to no avail. I had a flashback of when, as kids, my brother and I wanted to watch Friday the 13th on HBO, and my stepdad trying to tell us about old horror movies with Lon Chaney and Bela Lugosi.

The market made me feel as if I was in Mexico. Not because I was the only Caucasian in the place, but the items stocked on the shelves, the people working there... the whole vibe of the market felt like Mexico.

Wendy told me about her hometown and how they eat a lot of seafood there. She then told me about the tradition of the first dance and said, "I’m not sure if it’s a Waltz. I think it is, but I’m not positive."

She says her mom will love her new daughter-in-law.

"Women raised in Mexico... are different than the women raised here. She will know how to cook and clean. We learn that at an early age in Mexico. It’s not like that with girls here."

I asked them about crossing the border, and Wendy’s boyfriend said, "Yeah, that can be tough. It usually takes an hour or an hour and a half at the border. But we can afford a nicer place in Mexico."
There are three stages of man: he believes in Santa Claus; he does not believe in Santa Claus; he is Santa Claus.

— Bob Phillips

I heard the faint tinkling of bells and urged my sisters to be silent. I scanned the over-crowded Brooklyn apartment for my mother. When my eyes finally settled upon her face and registered her omniscient gaze, I knew my ears hadn’t failed me: Santa’s sleigh had just landed on the roof of our building! A series of steps that could only be reindeers’ hooves thudded on the ceiling and then the bells jingled louder and louder until the front door to the apartment flew open and the jolly man in red tumbled inside, bringing with him a huge red velvet sack and a gust of frosty air. I stood before him, seven years old and starstruck, until he handed me a present from his sack while chanting his famous trio of “ho”s. I stepped aside to allow my cousins access to the big guy and his bag of gifts wrapped in red and green paper; I was too distracted by my joy to note the peculiar absence of my uncle.

Of all the holidays, Christmas boasts the most mascots — Rudolph, elves, Frosty the Snowman, Jack Frost, Baby Jesus, and His mom. But of all the mascots associated with this most celebrated and renowned holiday (second only to Super Bowl Sunday), Santa Claus is the undisputed HMIC (head mascot in charge).

For children, Santa is magic. The fact that he could squeeze his giant body down the narrow shaft of a chimney, or out-wit the locks and alarm system when we lived in a house without a chimney, was impressive enough. But his real enchantment stemmed from his power to grant wishes. I prayed to Jesus and nothing happened. But when I asked Santa to give me something, there it was. No matter how late I stayed up, my adrenaline pumping with anticipation, on Christmas morning my stocking was always full, and I could barely see the tree for all the presents stacked around it.

I can’t remember exactly when I realized Mom was the real Santa. I resisted this knowledge because the magic of the lie was much more appealing than the truth — a reality that forced me to consider how hard Mom worked to pull off the grand illusion. With Dad’s help, cookies were eaten, doll-houses, desks, and bicycles were assembled, and stockings were stuffed. Even after it was obvious we were starting to catch on, Mom continued to insist on Santa’s existence; when we were in high school, she’d still wait until after we’d fallen asleep to pepper the base of the tree with additional gifts attributed to the mythical man.

Now two of my sisters have children of their own, for whom Santa dutifully delivers the goods. As I’ve watched my sisters cultivate the mythos of Santa in their children’s fertile minds, I have learned to enjoy this holiday on another level. Santa is magic for adults, too. The little ones’ unfaltering belief in the veracity of whatever their parents tell them infuses the magic with real world power — power that can be used for both good and evil.

For my sister Jane, the idea of Santa has become both a way to amuse herself and her husband, Simon, and a tool to discipline her daughter, Bella. When told of Santa’s impending visit to Bella’s preschool, Jane and Simon thought “it would be fun” to train their daughter to say something clever. In the days leading up to Bella’s one-on-one, Jane and Simon repeated the command, “When Santa asks you what you want, Bella Boo, you say, ‘world peace.’ Okay? What do you say!” ”World peace.” The agreeable three-year-old nodded and repeated the phrase to her pleased and smiling parents.

On the big day, Bella’s preschool teacher stood by with a note pad, ready to record the secret desires of her students for their curious parents. Once Bella was seated on the big man’s lap, she stared up into his white beard and confided, “I don’t want world peace, Santa Claus. I want a Chia Pet.” When Bella’s teacher relayed the news, it was the first Jane had heard of her daughter’s desire for the little clay weed-maker. She had already acquired the pink bicycle she thought was at the top of Bella’s wish-list and now found herself rushing from Wal-Mart to Target to Kmart, until she “finally found the freakin’ thing” at Rite-Aid.

As a child, I never doubted my mother’s claim to have a hotline to the North Pole. Still, no matter how naughty I was, Santa never withheld the goods. It takes kids a while to catch on to Santa’s kryptonite — his desire to dazzle and delight “his” children, no matter how bratty they behave. Until then, however, the threat of...
coal can be an effective tool for manipulation, one that parents wield like world leaders browbeating smaller nations into submission with the threat of a big bomb. Now that I am grown, I have the pleasure of watching my sisters wield the same wand to keep their kids in line.

On Christmas day, as is our tradition, we all gathered around the decked-out conifer in Mom’s living room. This year’s tree was barely 8 feet tall (it has been shrinking steadily from its record height of 13 feet), but no one seemed to mind, and gifts were joyfully exchanged.

Bella, who received the gift she’d requested from Santa earlier that morning at her own house, sang, “Cha-cha-cha cha” over and over. When she began taunting her cousins — my nephews Liam and Brian — by singing loudly in their faces, Simon invoked the wrath of Santa. But Bella, who had already received everything she wanted this year, was not fazed. Because next Christmas is now an eternity away (in kid years), the threat of coal has lost its punch.

“Every time Bella’s been acting up, I’d pick up the phone and say, ‘Get me Santa!’ and she would stop misbehaving and beg me to hang up,” said Jane. “We’ve been calling Santa all damn week.” Jane realized things had gone from ridiculous to absurd when, two days before Christmas, she happened upon Simon, who was standing over a guilty-looking Bella and holding up his right hand with the first two fingers intertwined, declaring through clenched teeth, “Me and Santa are like THIS!”

Now, surrounded by presents, Bella reluctantly obeyed, finally bringing her taunting to an end when a time-out was called. The magic of the morning — of seeing the glass of milk empty and cookies with bites taken out of them, of waking up to find her Chia Pet beside a shiny pink tricycle — was already forgotten. Santa had come and gone.

“How do you expect to keep her cooperative now?” I asked Jane. “Easy,” my sister answered with a mischievous smile. “Tomorrow we’re telling her we have the Easter Bunny on speed dial.”
San Diego’s Bad Behavior in the Spotlight

San Diego City Hall

Two thousand six marked the end of San Diego’s brief Prague Spring, a short interval of freedom and turmoil between the fall of Mayor Dick Murphy and the rise of Jerry Sanders and Sanders’s consolidation of power as the city’s first “strong mayor.” Elected in November 2000 with the backing of the Union-Tribune and other establishment power brokers, Murphy delivered on his promise to them of a new baseball stadium and lucrative development concessions for Padres owner John Moores before being forced to resign in the spring of 2005 by the same people who got him into office in the first place.

Murphy’s sins included being too cozy with organized labor and failing to mind properly the employee pension fund’s purse strings, leading to an embarrassing financial scandal and a cutoff by Wall Street of the city’s fat credit line, an unforgivable circumstance for his pro-growth backers. With Murphy out of the way and the city coming apart at the seams, a mob of reformers stormed city hall; even the U-T got into the spirit, airing criticisms and exposés the paper had bottled up for years.

In 2005 it looked for a bit as if Democratic city councilwoman Donna Frye’s populist candidacy might rupture the Republican Party’s perennial hold on the mayor’s office, but the moment was evanescent. Sanders, a low-energy ex–chief of police who glided through public appearances as though he were on tranquilizers, slipped into the job with the aid of $1.5 million in contributions from business backers and a series of sharp U-T editorial attacks on Frye. A smaller circle of business types had earlier bankrolled the strong-mayor campaign that vested the newly elected Sanders with unprecedented supremacy. But Sanders and his supporters wanted more.
In 2006, Sanders lent his name to another business- and U-T-backed campaign, this one to allow him to outsource city services such as trash collection to private contractors; the measure passed easily in November, giving the mayor more power, virtually unchecked. But that was still not enough. The people behind the mayor busied themselves raising the ramparts at city hall, plugging the holes so tightly that average taxpayers had little chance to see what was going on inside.

Press aide Fred Sainz ordered staffers not to talk to reporters without his say-so and blackballed publications and journalists who were not to his taste, behavior so egregious it drew a front-page story in the pro-Sanders Union-Tribune. City council members and the city attorney were not exempt: the mayor’s “chief executive officer,” retired admiral Ronne Froman, told them they had to put their requests for information about city operations in writing and then wait weeks or months for a response.

The city council, supposed to provide a legislative balance to the mayor’s expanded power, rarely challenged his initiatives and, when it did, frequently failed to prevail. Scott Peters, the councilman from La Jolla elected by his peers as council president, declined even to speak to the U-T about the mayor’s stifling of the information flow to the public, sending word through an aide that he wanted to maintain a “good working relationship” with Sanders.

In October, the relationship’s lopsided nature came into public view after the mayor slashed money for homeless and neighborhood swimming programs dear to the councilmembers’ hearts without telling them. Sanders policy aide Julie Dubick, a onetime school board candidate who many insiders believe is being groomed to be the GOP’s candidate to succeed Peters, showed up at a council meeting and insisted the council had “exceeded its authority” when it voted to reinstate the money. Even Peters protested.

Mike Aguirre, elected city attorney in 2004, found himself at the halfway point of his tenure besieged from all sides. City workers loathed him for his attempts to roll back retirement benefits. His case against the pension benefits, on the basis that they had been improperly granted by a compromised retirement board, was shredded by superior court judge Jeffrey Barton. The city attorney vowed an appeal, but the Union-Tribune, one of Aguirre’s fiercest critics, called that avenue Reed proclaimed that there was a “noble” Aguirre, crusading against the city’s corrupt power structure, and an “opportunistic” Aguirre, hungry for the spotlight.
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“fruitless.”
Meanwhile, there was plenty of life beyond
the tumult at San
Diego’s city hall. Two
thousand six was the
year that the Internet,
and specifically blogs,
came into their own as
a political tool. Two exam-
ples: San Diego city
attorney Mike Aguirre’s
face-off with the Union-
Tribune and a mysteri-
ous blogger who made a
difference in the race to
replace GOP congress-
man Randy “Duke”
Cunningham.

Mike vs. Chris
Aguirre’s biggest critic
turned out to be a pro-
fessional blogger the U-
T hired to spice up its
flagging SignOn-
SanDiego website and
perhaps settle some
political scores in the
process. Chris Reed, a
former editorial writer
from the conservative
Orange County Register,
opened fire almost as
soon as he arrived in
town.

Reed’s one-man
forum, named
“America’s Finest Blog,”
a takeoff on “America’s
Finest City” (ironically, a
phrase coined by then-
Mayor Pete Wilson after
Richard Nixon pulled
the GOP convention out
of San Diego in 1972,
following one of the
city’s many influence-
peddling scandals), went
after Aguirre early in the
year.

On March 22, Reed
proclaimed that there
was a “noble” Aguirre,
cruising against the
city’s corrupt power
structure, and an
“opportunist” Aguirre,
hungry for the spotlight.
“From here on out,
every time Aguirre
appears in the U-T
headlines, I’m going
to offer my snap take on
which Aguirre seems in
charge of his tongue this
time around.”

As it turned out,
Reed saw only the bad
side of the city attorney,
calling him everything
from “unethical” to a
“city saboteur” and a
“lunatic.” In an August
post, he concluded,
“Mike Aguirre is one of
the worst public servants
imaginable. He is
incompetent. He spreads
himself too thin. He says
one thing one day,
another thing another
day. He will grandstand
on any issue. He uses
taxpayer resources on
quixotic and pointless
crusades.”

Aguirre was so

R.I.P.

January 10
Sidney Frank, 86
The wealthy importer of Jägermeister liqueur and
Grey Goose vodka, was a resident of Rancho Santa Fe, where he hosted
notoriously lavish parties on his sprawling estate. That was only one
of his six mansions. Frank’s brushes with controversy included a sexual-
harrassment suit filed against his company by members of the
Jagerettes, a crew of sexy young women in skimpy outfits who cruised bars pro-
moting the booze brand. One alleged she had been groped in a San Diego limo. And in 2005, Frank and an employee each pled guilty to a misdemeanor
and paid a total of $30,000 for their roles in a scheme
to launder campaign contributions to Sheriff Bill
Kolender.

January 26
Hamilton Marston, 95
An heir to the now-defunct Marston’s department-
store chain, the soft-spoken Marston championed such
progressive but ultimately failed local causes as
improved urban planning, growth control, and bet-
ter border relations. His effort to move the Naval
Hospital out of Balboa Park was rejected by the local
establishment, led by GOP congressman Bob Wil-
sen, Mayor Pete Wilson, and U-T publisher Helen
Copley. In 1974 he paid for a study by planners Kevin
Lynch and Donald Appleyard entitled “Temporary
Paradise” that showcased his utopian dreams, some
now realized, many not, including a trolley system
and development of Lindbergh Field as condos.

February 25
Henry Morris, 87
The father of modern creationism, Morris, a resi-
dent of El Cajon, founded the Insti-
tute for Creation Research in San-
tee in 1970. The Genesis Flood, which
he wrote in 1961 with theologian
John C. Whitcomb, takes Genesis lit-
erally, presenting evidence for the
biblical account of creation, and
argues that Darwin’s theory of evo-
lution is bogus. Morris was “the
most important creationist of the 20th century,
much more so than William Jennings Bryan;” Euge-
nie C. Scott, director of the National Center for Sci-
ence Education, a pro-evolution group, told the

March 2
Madeleine Cosman, 68
Founder of the Institute for Medieval and Renais-
sance Studies at the City College of New York in
1968, Cosman was an expert in medieval culture, specialize-
ing in food and medicine.

After she retired to Escondido, the experienced shooter and gun lover
became active in the California Rifle and Pistol Association and
joined the board of Wake Up America,
a group opposed to illegal
immigration.

continued on page 30
piqued he started his own blog, called “The Aguirre Report,” and began firing back, accusing the U-T of mounting “a vindictive campaign to discredit my efforts.” In a November entry, he wrote: “The politicians at the Union-Tribune (U-T) are at it again. Sunday’s (November 5) newspaper published a news story on the City’s ongoing pension trial that seeks to convince a court that unfunded pension benefits granted in 1996 and 2002 by the City Council to City employees was a corrupt deal that should be rescinded.

“The article, Pension trial pace expected to pick up, offers a prime example of what biased reporting looks like, even though I was interviewed at length for the story by the reporter. In the story, the reporter conveys that attorneys for the unions have characterized Aguirre’s legal interpretations suspect and his grasp of procedural matters weak.

“On the contrary, after I completed my opening statement union attorney Joel Klevens asked the Judge for an immediate verdict contending that the City Attorney did not make his case. The Judge swiftly ruled against Attorney Klevens and told him that his motion was procedurally defective. Somehow, this exchange did not make it into the U-T’s article.”

Aguirre’s responses delighted Reed, who threw back at him quotes from a series of exposes the U-T had commissioned from its reporters to portray alleged management turmoil under Aguirre’s reign and his “rotten track record in pension-related cases” that “cost the city at least $2 million.”

“Each of these stories was researched over a long period,” blogged Reed about his own paper’s coverage. “Each has stood up quite well against the predictable attacks from Aguirre and his allies. Only people with their heads in the sand could read these three articles and conclude Aguirre is the hero he thinks he is.”

Then, in October Reed seemed to get to the real point. Mark Fabiani, a veteran of the Clinton White House who now works for Chargers owner and multimillion-dollar GOP donor Alex Spanos, came to meet with Reed and the U-T editorial board. “He took about an hour of questions; four or five dealt with his criticism of City Attorney Mike Aguirre.”

As leader of the Spanos-family campaign to build a new football stadium for the Chargers, long lusted after by the U-T, Fabiani had repeatedly targeted Aguirre, claiming he would block any deal worked out with the City for taxpayer financing.

In his blog entry, Reed insisted that he was generally unsympathetic to public funding of football stadiums, then added, “But imagine if you, your family, your
company — whatever sympathetic unit you wish to employ in this thought example — were attempting to close a complicated deal. The entity you were negotiating with had in its employ a high-ranking official who at any time believed he had the authority to single-handedly sue to block the deal, whatever the wishes of the great majority of other high-ranking officials.

"This is not an entity you would want to bargain with, because you couldn't trust it to ever keep its end of the bargain. There was always the chance the rogue employee — who has repeatedly said he doesn't like you — might sue you. This is what the Chargers are up against with Aguirre."

Political Secrets
One of the most effective local campaign blogs of blogger noted that MoveOn had begun raising money for Democrat Francke Busby's race in the special election for the 50th District Congressional seat vacated by Randy "Duke" Cunningham. The year was also the most mysterious. Titled by its anonymous author "San Diego Politics Blog," it first posted February 21 with an entry about the movie Why We Fight, a liberal documentary critical of the war in Iraq, playing at the Ken theater. The same day the unknown

"Something scary is coming to San Diego, and it's not Halloween," said the caller in a child's voice.

March 2
Garrett Scott, 37
An independent filmmaker, Scott died of a heart attack while swimming at the public pool in his hometown of Coronado. His documentary Occupation: Dreamland about being embedded with the Army's 82nd Airborne Division was awarded an Independent Spirit Award in Santa Monica two days later. He and codirector Ian Olds produced 2002's Cal de Sac A Suburban War Story, about the Clairemont rampage of a man in a stolen tank.

March 27
Bernard Siegan, 81
The author of Economic Liberties and the Constitution, published in 1980, and a La Jolla resident who lived in a house once occupied by novelist Raymond Chandler, Siegan was a Libertarian hero, named by President Ronald Reagan to the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals in 1987. The nomination was killed by the Democrat-controlled Senate Judiciary Committee. He was a professor at USD law school until suffering a stroke in 2005.

April 5
Allan Kaprow, 78
A painter and student of experimental musician John Cage, Kaprow organized the first "happenings," a form of performance art, including Eighteen Happenings in Six Parts (Manhattan, October 1959). The self-described "un-artist," who later in life was an art professor at UCSD, switched from "happenings" to "activities," including one involving his daily tooth brushing.

April 6
Maggie Dixon, 28
The University of San Diego basketball star played for the Los Angeles Sparks of the Women's National Basketball Association before turning to coaching after being cut in 2000. Last year she coached the women's basketball team at West Point to its first NCAA tournament; her sudden death was said to be due to an undetected heart problem.

May 15
Judith Moore, 66
Senior editor of the Reader, her third book, Fat Girl, was nominated for a National Book Critics Circle award in 2005. "Judith Moore's book just might be the Stonewall for a slew of oversized people who do not fit the template of what every ostensible expert on beauty, health and nutrition tells us we should strive to be. Fat Girl is brilliant and angry and unsettling," wrote Jane Stern in the continued on page 32
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pubescent boys on his lap. A link to the San Francisco Chronicle website provided credibility and filled in the sordid details.

Roach was soon on the air with radio talk show host Roger Hedgecock, taking pains to explain that White was only an investor in his online brokerage business and denying any knowledge about the sexual charges against his former associate. But the damage had been done. Without mentioning San Diego Politics by name, the Union Tribune alluded to the story, noting it “was circulating anonymously in the blogosphere.”

The faceless blogger labored through the April 11 special election in which Busby was opposed by a pack of 17 other candidates. Some observers said they could detect a tilt favoring Busby; others surmised the blog was a well-camouflaged effort by the campaign of ex–GOP congressman Brian Bilbray to discredit Roach. Nobody claimed credit.

Busby’s best chance of getting elected in the heavily Republican district came in April, but she failed to get the 50 percent plus one vote majority she needed in the open primary to win outright over the large field dividing the GOP vote. Instead, she was forced into a June runoff with Bilbray, who had narrowly beaten Roach for second place.

Then, with days to go before that election, in front of a largely Latino crowd, Busby uttered her now-famous remark, “You don’t need papers for voting,” seized upon by Republicans as encouragement by her of voting by illegal immigrants.

“Francine Busby appears to have managed to save defeat from the jaws of victory,” reported San Diego Politics on June 5, the day before the election, which Bilbray won. “Busby and Bilbray had up until this point been pretty close in the polls. But this should tip the balance to Bilbray, who has run on the issue of stopping illegal immigration since Day 1.” Though the political season was only half over, it was the unnamed blogger’s last entry.

Wall Street Mike If Mike Aguirre’s stock was down at the U-T, it was flying high at the Wall Street Journal, which featured him prominently in its September 27 lead editorial bashing councilmembers Toni Atkins, Jim Madaffer, Brian Maienschein, and council president Scott Peters for their roles in the city’s pension-funding scandal.

“Michael Aguirre, the pugnacious city attorney, has brought suit in federal court to have some of the benefits granted since 1996 rolled back on grounds that they violated federal conflict-of-interest laws. A self-described liberal Democrat, Mr. Aguirre deserves kudos for risking the wrath of the public-sector unions, but his prospects for success are uncertain.

“If he loses, reining in the liabilities will become a matter of negotiation with the unions. Good luck with that. A victory, on the other hand, would send a signal that unfunded promises for public-sector employees are not etched in stone, which would be a valuable signal for other state and local governments grappling with extravagant retirement packages for public employees. As Mr. Aguirre points out, current retirees are drawing 100 cents on the dollar from a pension fund that is only 60% funded.”

continued from page 30

New York Times. Moore’s two previous books were The Left Coast of Paradise: California and the American Heart and Never Eat Your Heart Out. Her best epi- staph might be found in E.B. White’s Charlotte’s Web: “It is not often that someone comes along who is a true friend and a good writer.”

May 24
Fritz Klein, 73
Originally named Fred Klein, the psychiatrist and sex researcher specialized in the study of bisexuality and their relationships, authoring The Bisexual Option in 1978 and Bisexual and Gay Husbands: Their Stories, Their Words in 2001. He developed the Klein Sexual Orientation Grid and founded the American Institute of Bisexuality.

July 18
Tom Carter, 66
The ex–chief financial and loan officer of San Diego Federal Savings and Loan, Carter later developed real estate with his old friend, former county supervisor Jack Wald. But his biggest notoriety came after he stood up at a February 2006 meeting of the board of the San Diego State University Research Foundation and quit, saying that he could not support SDSU president Stephen Weber’s decision to shut down the foundation’s Paseo commercial development project and dispose of much of its real estate assets:

“This foundation is the largest contributor annually to the university — $2.5 million. That’s not going to be there anymore. When we start selling real estate, that money won’t be there in the future. I see a downward spiral that will be very difficult to turn around. I don’t want to be fighting with President Weber. He knows where I stand on these matters.”

September 3
Tom Suzuki, 76
Noted art director and graphic designer who revolutionized the stodgy textbook industry with his use of edgy typography and visuals, Suzuki got his start as assistant art director at General Dynamics in 1961. A Japanese American who spent World War II in a government detention camp, Suzuki cofounded with Don Wright the San Diego graphic firm of Suzuki & Wright. A major client was Del Mar’s CRM (Communications Research Machines), publisher of Psychology Today and many textbooks known for their groundbreaking layouts.

September 6
Warren Bolster, 59
Famed for his precedent-breaking photography of surfers, accomplished with underwater cameras, wide-angle lenses, and surfboard mounts, he later moved on to cover the emerging culture of skateboarding. The former San Diego resident committed suicide at his home in Mokuleia, Hawaii.

September 8
Fred Spiess, 86
Oceanographer and marine explorer at Scripps Institution of Oceanography, codeveloper of the floating instrument platform (FLIP), a 355-foot-long craft that goes from horizontal to vertical when its ballast tanks are flooded. He and his wife Sally successfully campaigned to save continued on page 34
San Diego Unified School District
Things have calmed down a lot at the San Diego Unified School District since the departure of Alan Bersin following the election two years ago that resulted in a board majority opposed to him and his controversial policies. After leaving the district, Democrat Bersin became something of a rolling stone, moving first to Sacramento to become education secretary for GOP governor Arnold Schwarzenegger.

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in July 2005, then resigning that $123,000-a-year gig abruptly last November when Mayor Jerry Sanders chose him to become an executive board member of the regional airport authority for $150,000 a year. (Bersin’s mother-in-law was a heavy contributor to the mayor’s privatization initiative.) The ex–school chief and wife Lisa Foster, a superior court judge, bought a $2.1 million house in Point Loma’s tony “wooded area,” well south of Lindbergh’s noisy flight path.

In contrast to Bersin’s rambles, two school board faces remained solidly in place. Katherine Nakamura, a one-time Bersin favorite, endorsed in her 2002 race by the Union-Tribune, was rescued in 2006 by the AFL-CIO’s San Diego–Imperial Counties Labor Council, which dispatched a round of so-called robo-calls to Democratic voters attacking her GOP foe in the supposedly nonpartisan contest: “Something scary is coming to San Diego, and it’s not Halloween,” said the caller in a child’s voice. “The vice chair of San Diego’s Republican Party is running for San Diego Unified school board. Republican Mike McSweeney has disguised himself as a moderate, but he is really a right-wing extremist who will destroy the balance of the school board.” Lorena Gonzalez, the labor council’s political director, later said in an e-mail that the actor who voiced the calls was a real ten-year-old — “an actual child in our San Diego’s Public School” — and a member of AFTRA, a broadcast performers’ union.

Nakamura’s board colleague John de Beck, an ex-teacher who’s been on the board since 1990, won his fourth reelection the easy way: no one opposed him. Four years before, pro-Bersin forces, including L.A. billionaire Eli Broad, financed ex–FBI agent Clyde Fuller against de Beck with dismal results.

Under the Radar
When Brett Maxfield, a young property agent in the city of San Diego’s Real Estate Assets Department, blew the whistle in March on what he said was a sweetheart lease deal for the Carlton Oaks Golf Course, he didn’t expect to be fired. But after Maxfield’s charges were reported here a week later, Maxfield was called into the office of acting department director Mike Boyle and told he would have to leave.

“I believe that the reason for this action is the article that came out in the Reader concerning Carlton Oaks and other issues I have raised concerning the Water Dept’s handling of property issues,” Maxwell wrote in an e-mail to Jim Waring, top development aide to Mayor Jerry Sanders, the day he was let go. “Can we meet and talk about it?”

Responded Waring: “Just so you know, Mike briefed me on your employment status before any article was known or published. Regardless, I will meet with you as a courtesy, but only with Mike present. I do not want you, however, to expect that meeting to change the decision that was made or become a debate of some type. For what it’s worth my free advice to you as a young, very educated man, is that your turning the page on this is the best life decision you can make for your future. Let me know if you want to meet.”

Maxfield spurned the invitation; on November 17, councilwoman Donna Frye, the mayor’s erstwhile electoral opponent, sent Sanders a memo “requesting an investiga-

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Contact info of others who might be interested in talking to him,” Lichter responded that all questions should be forwarded to Sanders’s people. “But again, they are probably not going to comment. At this point, my suggestion is that you just let Matt know (if he contacts you) that he’s welcome to reach out to the Mayor’s Office directly.”

Later the same day, Sanders media honcho Fred Sainz dispatched an e-mail to his underlings, making the mayor’s position clear. “To all copied here,” Sainz wrote, “Do not speak with any reporters from the Reader. Tell them that you do not speak with reporters from the Reader. No additional information or follow up necessary. Thanks.”

A public meeting of the group scheduled for December 13 to discuss “public wireless and best management practices,” including “business models of other cities” and “outreach to stakeholders,” was cancelled and continued to this month. — Matt Potter
Crushed

WITH DREAD

When I was in fourth grade at Sacred Heart Academy in Ocean Beach, a new student came to class. Her name was Stephanie. She had golden hair, freckles, and a smile that caused heads to turn. After seeing her in class three or four times and talking with her a little, I soon developed a crush. We would talk to each other every now and then and make fun of each other, just for laughs.

The years went by, and I still could not stop thinking about her. Then, in around sixth grade, I gathered up enough courage to ask her out to lunch after school. She came back to me the next day and she said that she “already had a boyfriend,” which I interpreted as a lie from the way she said it. That idea pretty much crashed and burned, but I didn’t give up.

Toward the end of our eighth-grade year, I had a plan: to ask Stephanie to spend the day with me at Disneyland on a beat-up BMX bike, and I couldn’t take my eyes off of him. After a few days of not being able to get him off my mind, I started to ask my friends about him. They were subtle questions, such as what his name was and what grade was he in. My friends caught on and then began to try and get us to be a couple. Naturally, I didn’t stop them and was excited, hoping that he and I would get together.

Thanks to the efforts of my friends, he and I began to talk and hang out more, although we didn’t have any meaningful conversations. I was so overwhelmed by this huge crush because I had never been so interested in a boy before. Hanging out with him and my group of friends seemed to always be embarrassing. They knew how much I liked him and would always pressure us into acting as a couple and to be “flirty” with one another. I didn’t mind too much; I just never knew how he felt and they didn’t either.

After a few months of this “does he like me?” phase, the heartbreak came; he told one of my best friends to tell me he didn’t have any feelings for me. I was crushed. I didn’t know what to do. He was part of our group of friends, so it was impossible to try and avoid him. I spent a few months crying and moping. My friends helped as best they could, and so did my parents, but when you’re heartbroken, nothing matters except the hurt you’re feeling.

One day I snapped out of the hurt and realized that I was moping for no reason. He obviously wasn’t feeling guilty about breaking my heart. Everyone had been trying to tell me that from day one, but I had to come to that realization on my own terms. After that, I started finding new boys to be interested in and having a good time with my friends again, even with him around. He and I became good friends. Now I know to handle my relationships on my own and to get to know the person before letting myself develop

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such strong feelings.
— Chelsea Kennedy, Madison H.S.

I was in kindergarten when my heart was trampled. Her name was Rosie. Memories are few, but they are vivid. In the classroom, colorful cubbyholes lined the wall. Children crawled, climbed, and chatted. I sat in a corner, skimming books upside down while Rosie sat beside me, racing Tonka trucks down the carpet. She was a tomboy with red hair and white freckly skin. She’d wear a puffy polka dot dress that made mothers cry. “Oh, she’s darling!”

It was a rainy day at Parkway Elementary School in Rancho Peñasquitos when all hope was lost. It was story time just like any other day, but a new kid was present. His name was Kevin, and he had blond hair and blue eyes. When he walked into the room, Rosie’s eyes trailed him like a tail on a comet. She gave him a massage that day. I think back now and it all seems inappropriate, but back then, it was only heartbreaking.

I confided in my friend, David, about my adoration for Rosie. We sat next to each other on the bus ride from school. One day, as Kevin got off the bus at his stop, Rosie offered him a hug. He smiled at her and she grinned at him as he stepped out into the drizzle, his babysitter waiting for him.

I never told Rosie how I felt. I didn’t know how I felt; I just remember not being a part of something. Jealousy flowed through all 60 pounds of me.
— Andres Perez, Valhalla H.S.

F or as long as I’ve been “aware” of the opposite sex, I have never had much luck with boys. That lack of luck became evident in grade school, with my first true crush. I was tall, athletic, and the object of most other barely adolescent girls’ affections.

We were in fifth grade, and Kevin had recently come to understand the concept of dating. Perhaps it was a bit early for actual dating, but this idea of a crush was new and exhilarating to the naive eighth grader, so that was where it was about ready to break out of me. To my shame, it did burst out when I revealed my feeling to one of my closest friends, Anthony. Confident that he would keep my secret, I told him everything.

I then watched with dread as he ran to tell William. I ran as fast as my legs would carry me, but in vain. By the time I got there, William knew, and all I could do was walk away, horrified that he hadn’t made any effort to return my affections.

One year passed and nothing had changed. I was still mad about William and he still seemed indifferent toward my crush. One math class changed all that, though. We were sitting at a table with a few other kids, and one of the other girls at the table was quizzing him on who he would go out with in the class, and she soon asked about me.

“Well, I don’t know,” William said. “We’ve been friends so long that it would just be weird. So, I guess not. Right, Rachell?”

I looked up from my math work. I nodded. I couldn’t do anything else. I was too surprised that he’d rejected me publicly.

So much for my feelings. …I never realized that I had a crush on anyone to any of my friends again. In fact, it became such a phobia of mine that I had to watch as multiple crushes went out with other people. Only recently was I able to break out of my shell and tell someone that I liked him. It took me six years to do that.
— Rachel Oliver, Madison H.S.

Although there have been other cases, probably the most drawn-out incident of me directing my affection toward someone who couldn’t care less was in eighth grade. Let me start by saying that I was a rather naive eighth grader, so that didn’t help my cause; on top of that, the object of my affection was an extraordinarily mature eighth grader, and she knew it, too.

At my middle school, eighth graders could elect to go on an East Coast trip, a weeklong excursion; this was when it all started. Although guys and girls weren’t allowed to share rooms, I spent every other waking moment following her around. I would try to do everything with her, and she didn’t seem to mind much. Basically, she had me wrapped around her finger, and I was too stupid to realize it.

While I can’t remember if I ever came out and said it, I did everything I could think of to find out if she liked me. I talked to her friends, to the girls who were her roommates on the trip, and I even talked to her ex-boyfriend, a friend of mine, to try and find out what kind of stuff she was interested in. I did everything except what I should have done — come out and said something to her!

Toward the end of the trip I thought I had struck gold. We were coming back from a Yankees game, and I was sitting next to her on the bus. When she fell asleep on my shoulder, I thought the world was about to end. At that point, I knew for sure she had to like me. Sadly, the moment was ruined when one of her friends took a picture of it; after that, she was unhappy with me. I was crushed.
— Grant Barba, La Jolla H.S.

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MEDICAL CENTER FOR CLINICAL RESEARCH
“Fly-fishermen have a saying,” says Rich Oldham, a fishing guide at Andy Montana’s fly-fishing shop in Coronado, “If you’re not tying on your first fly in the light of your headlights, you’re late.”

We’re not late. It’s 5:30 a.m. on a Sunday in early September, but Oldham isn’t tying on his fly in the headlights. Instead he works under the trunk lamp of his beat-up early-’90s Honda Accord, which is parked in the Mission Beach parking lot south of the roller coaster. He’s here to teach me how to fly-fish in the ocean.

A surprising number of people are out at this hour. Bums sift through the trash cans in the half light. Insomniacs and early risers stroll the boardwalk. A group of college kids stumbles up from the sand, sleeping bags draped over their shoulders. Solitary figures wander about in chemical euphoria. Near Oldham’s Honda sits an ancient recreational vehicle. It’s clearly the primary residence of its owner who has just fired up the generator. The ensuing cacophony grates on Oldham’s nerves as he attends to the fine work of attaching a fly to a fishing line. “It’s bad enough getting up at 5:00, without having to listen to that,” he grumbles.

Beside his car, Oldham has set out a pair of waders and water boots. “Put those on while I rig up your rod.”

The waterproof Gore-Tex waders are bibbed, like a farmer’s overalls, and have neoprene booties integrated with the pant legs. Unlike a wetsuit, which allows water in for the body to warm, the waders are designed to keep the wearer dry. I pull them on over my socks and sweatpants, then pull boots over them. When I’m done lacing up the boots, Oldham, who stands six feet or so, with close-cropped reddish-brown hair under a baseball cap, hands me a fly rod. It’s nine feet long and maybe half an inch thick at its base. The line in the reel is not what you think of as fishing line. It’s as thick as twine and off-white in color, except for the first 30 feet, which is black. “This white line is PVC-coated monofilament,” Oldham explains. “The black line is called a shooting head. It’s made of a powdered tungsten which is added to the PVC coating.

“You want to fish at sunrise because the fish are aggressive in the dim light. They have bigger eyes than their prey, and they hunt harder because they have the advantage.”
The shooting head gets the fly down through the wave to where the fish are on the bottom.

Tied onto the end of the shooting head, and hooked onto a tiny ring called a hook keeper just above the cork handle, is the “fly” that will serve as bait. From a few feet away, it looks like a marble-sized ball of olive green and orange fuzz. But up close, one can see the care that went into winding thread around the dyed calf tail and fish hook until the mass resembled a cross between a native mole crab and a baitfish; eyes, legs, and all. “That’s a Darter Clouser fly I’ve put on there. I’ve caught a lot of fish with that fly lately,” Oldham says.

Waders and boots on, fishing license stowed in a pouch on the inside of the waders’ bibs, I feel like a real fisherman, the kind often pictured on the cover of the Field and Stream, except I’m in a trash-strewn parking lot by the beach instead of a canyon in Montana.

“You’re not ready yet,” Oldham says. “You need this.” From his trunk he pulls what looks like a giant fanny pack, except that instead of a zipper pouch, the buckled strap holds a stiff plastic basket about half the size of those handheld baskets light shoppers use at supermarkets. “That’s called a stripping basket,” Oldham explains. “Clip it on and push the basket around behind you. I’ll show you what it’s for later.”

Waders, boots, and stripping baskets on, and fly rods in hand, we set off through the grass picnic area between the lot and the boardwalk. It’s 5:45 a.m. Seagulls are beginning to stir, fighting over scraps of food left by Mission Beach’s nocturnal humans. Out over the water, squadrons of pelicans, silhouetted against the dark western sky, glide along parallel to the beach, sometimes only three feet off the surface. Despite the early hour, we’re not the first fishermen out here. Oldham seems disappointed by the sight of a middle-aged man with a regular spinning rod and reel, fishing straight out from the parking lot.

The tide is so low today that Mission Beach is twice as wide as it normally is. Half of the exposed sand is packed and wet. As we reach the water’s edge, Oldham stops and looks north toward Pacific Beach, down the sand toward the Mission Bay jetty, and back up again. “What we’ve got to figure out is where the holes are.”

“Yeah, holes. The tide chart showed that today there would be a very low tide coinciding with the sunrise. You want to fish at sunrise because the fish are aggressive in the dim light. They have bigger eyes than their prey, and they hunt harder because they have the advantage. You want the extreme low tide. That gives you access to the holes that the fish gather in.”

I know what a fishing hole in a mountain creek looks like. But to my sleepy eyes, the Pacific Ocean looks like one big hole. Oldham sees the puzzled look on my face, and explains, “Waves come in but they also have to retreat, and the retreating wave causes currents. Where two
There are waves breaking at me and called her kids about it. ‘She just looked third wave, and there isn’t are sucked out past the it is, and it won’t take 20 ‘Y es. ‘ I said,’That’s because in front of where your kids and said ‘Do you see how straight over to the mom of watching them. I walked on the beach and was sort Their mom plunked down pool to the right of me. started swimming in this morning, and these two mer, about 7:00 in the in Mission Beach last sum- fishing this huge hole here to learn more, please call the supervisions of experienced physicians and research specialists. All telephone calls and visits are confidential and safely conducted under the exams and lab services and investigational medication or placebo at no cost. Participants will receive study-related mental health assessments, physical in overnight stays WANTED for CLINICAL RESEARCH To qualify you must: • be a man or woman • be 18 or older • be able to participate in overnight stays If you qualify to participate, you may be compensated up to $1,475 for your time and travel. Call Mon-Fri for more information 1.866.818.3253 (English) 1.866.977.8322 (Spanish) 9665 Chesapeake Dr., Suite 200, San Diego, CA www.testwiththebest.com Continues up the beach toward the Crystal Pier, now becoming visible in the growing light, Oldham occasionally slows down or stops to examine a potential fishing hole. But, each time, he rejects the spot and looks furiously over his shoulder toward the middle-aged fisherman, still ensconced at the waterline straight out from the parking lot. “I wish we’d beaten that guy here,” he mutters again, and on we walk. In the middle of his own story about being genetically pre-programmed for ocean fly-fishing — he’s the grand-son of an “old school” California shore caster, while his other grandfather was an Idaho trout stream fly-fisherman — Oldham stops in his tracks and stares at the ocean. After a silent minute, he says, “This looks pretty good. Can you see that hole right there?” I nod, though some-what dishonestly. All I see is ocean. “Let me make a few


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casts here and see what we come up with.”

Oldham wades out into the 65-degree water until he’s thigh deep. He unhooks the fly from the hook keeper and lets it drop into the water. The out-flowing current pulls the fly with it, and Oldham hand-feeds the sinking line with it. When 15 or 20 feet are out of the rod tip, he feeds a little more into the water and pulls the cork grip back toward his shoulder with a deliberate motion. The fly, which has been lying on the ocean floor, jumps out of the water and flies back toward the beach. When the line straightens out behind him and his fly rod starts to bend, or “load,” Oldham punches his right hand forward and the fly reverses its flight path, whizzing past his head back toward the breaking waves. As the line starts to straighten again Oldham, with his left hand, allows a few more feet of line out of the rod tip. He repeats this process three or four times until some 45 feet of fly-tipped line whir over the head. With a final punch, like a heavyweight administering the knockout blow to a staggering opponent, he propels the line forward. Immediately, he puts the rod tip down in the water, onto the sand. “The back-and-forth casting motion,” he says, “is called false casting. It’s meant to get out enough line to load, or put strain on the rod. The rod is engineered to cast a weighted line, not a lead weight as in conventional fishing. The fly is just along for the ride.”

As he talks, he starts “stripping” in the line with his left hand. “Fly-fishermen don’t reel in line; we strip it in by hand,” he explains. “That’s what the stripping basket is for, to hold the line as we strip it in. Stripping line in causes the fly to skip along the bottom where the fish are. The motion attracts their attention, and they bite.”

“There’s one,” Oldham proclaims. “This spot will work. Let’s teach you to cast. Have you ever fly-fished before?”

“Yes, for trout up in the eastern Sierras. I even

RESEARCH STUDIES

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caught a few."

“That’s good,” Oldham responds, “but this is a little different. In a creek, you’ll rarely have to cast more than 30 feet. Here we are punching flies into the wind 60 to 80 feet sometimes. It’s the same principle as what you were doing up in the Sierras, but technically a little more challenging. Basically, you just have to tighten up your fundamentals. I have a lot of clients that have fished for years in the mountains, but when they get down to the beach they realize they have a lazy cast or never really learned how to cast correctly in the first place. You can get away with it in the mountains, casting 20 feet, but the beach is not as forgiving.

“Let’s try water loading the line and see how you do.” Water loading, Oldham explains, is a way to get enough line out of the rod to fish without a lot of casting skill. Instead of false casting back and forth and feeding line out, you let the current pull line in front of you, then with one swift back-cast you load the rod, then come forward and out the line goes. That’s the theory anyway. I try the water loading, but it’s just not working for me despite Oldham’s tutoring. “Can I try false casting?” I ask.

“I got pretty good at it on my last backpacking trip.”

“When was that?”

“Six years ago.”

Oldham smiles half-heartedly and says, “Let’s give it a try.”

The trick, he explains, is patience. You can’t just whip the rod back and forth and expect the fly to do the same. You’ve got to wait for the rod to load before you apply pressure in the opposite direction. Otherwise, you’ll be waving the rod around, but the line will be doing nothing.

“Your goal is to get at least that first 30 feet of sinking line out of the tip of the rod. Then the rod will load. So feed out about 15 feet of line, and not too quickly, pull the handle back toward your shoulder and wait for the line and...”
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the fly to stretch out behind you. False cast and feed out line until you feel the weight of the line start to bend the rod. It helps if you extend your thumb along the grip because you can feel that load right in your thumb. When the rod’s fully loaded, punch the handle forward like you are throwing a dart. When you have 30 feet of line out of the tip of the rod, it will bend the rod and you can let it fly. Now, give it a try.”

My first attempt ends with the rod moving back and forth and the line going nowhere. “You’ve got to be more patient,” Oldham says. “Wait for the load. If it helps, turn your head around and watch the line. When it stretches out straight, then you can start your forward motion.”

Watching does seem to help me, and I complete a successful backward pull, but on the forward thrust I feed out too much line and the line goes slack.”

“A little bit at a time,” Oldham says, “and remember to wait for that load. Watch me.” He casts back and forth until so much line is out of his rod that the fly kisses the wavetops before reversing and flying back almost to the shoreline. Oldham never looks back to see the line stretching out behind him. Instead, the feeling in his right hand tells him when to push or pull. And as he feeds out more and more line, the wait time between push and pull grows to two, three, almost four seconds. It’s an impressive display. With a final huge stroke, he sends the fly past the second wave.

After pushing his rod tip down through the water and stripping in a little

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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.”

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Oldham grinaces. “Oh, no. I hate fish.”

— Ernie Grimm

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As Oldham, 15 feet to my left, hauls in perch after perch, I work on my casting. After ten minutes or so, I start to develop a rapport with my fly rod. Instead of having to watch the line travel back and forth, I can feel the rod loading and unloading, and I respond accordingly. The sensation reminds me of the pole-vaunting I did in high school a decade and a half ago. Back then, it took me a month to learn to trust the pole and let it do the work. Once I did, I found myself soaring over heights I thought I’d never reach. Today, in much less time, I find myself casting 65 feet and more fly line into the Pacific Ocean. And the feeling exhilarates me the way clearing 12 and a half feet did back then.

After a thrilling minute or so of stripping in line, he hooks another perch, this one the biggest of the day so far. “I had about 90 feet of line out that time,” he says. “It’s not necessary to get that much line out. I was just trying to show you that, if you’re patient and wait for the rod to load, you can cast almost any amount of line you want. Now, give it another try.”

This time I successfully work about 40 feet out of the rod, but on the final forward cast, I lose control of the line with my left hand. The fly and the 40 feet of line end up in a clump all around me. “You were right there,” Oldham says. “Keep trying.”

As Oldham, 15 feet to my left, hauls in perch after perch, I work on my casting. After ten minutes or so, I start to develop a rapport with my fly rod. Instead of having to watch the line travel back and forth, I can feel the rod loading and unloading, and I respond accordingly. The sensation reminds me of the pole-vaunting I did in high school a decade and a half ago. Back then, it took me a month to learn to trust the pole and let it do the work. Once I did, I found myself soaring over heights I thought I’d never reach. Today, in much less time, I find myself casting 65 feet and more fly line into the Pacific Ocean. And the feeling exhilarates me the way clearing 12 and a half feet did back then.

Once I finally get the fly out to where the fish are, Oldham says, “Drop your rod tip and strip in the line.” I do—and BAM, a perch “smashes” the fly. The “take,” as fishermen call it, is one of the amaz-
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1. Breast augmentation
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3. Breast lift
4. Breast reduction
5. Male breast reduction

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cosmetic surgery before

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This began as a story about breakfast. I had been thinking about breakfasts and the near-obsolescence now of extravagant morning meals. These meals were eaten by people on America's farms and in its small towns; they were eaten in the dark in winter and in gray dawn in spring and summer. Fried eggs, yolks straining against tense, transparent membrane; bacon slices cut from sugar-cured slabs, the bacon fat cameo-white between dark lean; biscuit that steams: I remember all this. I remember French toast. The egg-and-milk-soaked bread puffs up in the iron skillet. Chilly morning air puffs up too, swells to an ambrosial ferment the nose can't get enough of: sage-seasoned pork sausage, caramelizing sugars, sliced orange, coffee. 

I remember breakfast tables from my earliest childhood; sunshine spills across a blue-checked tablecloth stiff with starch and fresh air. Cut-glass bowls hold jelly and jam. The Concord grape and strawberry wriggle, seem to live a life of their own, nurtured by a slow, hidden heartbeat.

From my seat at the table, my father's law books stacked under me, I saw, out the window, two cardinals flutter in midair. The larger pecked the smaller. "Stop them," I screamed. Even before the first word came out of my father's mouth, the birds flew. My father said, calm down, the birds were making babies. Maybe the birds built their nest in our poplars or maples or elms. Maybe the mother redbird plucked up my lovely hair from the day before, when we set me in the yard on a chair and trimmed my curls so my neck wouldn't get so hot and sweaty. Maybe she lined her nest with my curls. "Imagine that!" my father said and smiled.

My mother then may have said to my father, as she often did, "Don't fill her head with ideas. You'll make her wild."

I remember fried green tomatoes and fried apple rings. My father and mother dip a forkful of charred tomato or apple into the lake of marigold yolk. They bite down with huge fierce teeth. Butter gleams on their lips. They spoon yellow cream into coffee; the coffee instantly turns pale, the way people do when they hear bad news. I remember the glurg-glurg when they swallow coffee, their enormous heads thrown back, pale white throats exposed. My father leaves a coffee taste on my lips when he kisses me goodbye in the morning. Years later, at the movies on Saturday afternoons, I buy coffee Charms and suck them. Coffee-flavored liquid rises over my bottom teeth, pools on my tongue, floods my mouth with my father's kisses.

These memories seem pleasant enough, even with battling cardinals and strain between my mother and father. But as I enumerated dishes that weighted breakfast tables in my childhood, I felt uneasy. One specific morning and a second, also specific, kept coming back. Sun isn't up, rain hits curtainless windows. The furnace is turned off, and the house is cold. I see my mother's heart-shaped face and my grandmother's doughy cheeks. I smell their newly applied makeup and deodorant and Bluegrass cologne. In the dim kitchen, their lipstick is greasy red and their rouge unnaturally bright.

My grandmother has spread the morning paper open under my bowl. I dawdle with my oatmeal, pat its stucco surface with the back of my spoon. Oatmeal splats against the paper. My grandmother says we don't have all day, we need to get on the road if we're going to get to the farm before bedtime.
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I ask why we can’t take my cat Zoe. My mother says Zoe stays, period, that’s it, no nonsense. The cat will find a good home.

Who will give Zoe the good home? Why can’t Zoe go to the farm and chase away mice in my grandmother’s barn?

“No more questions,” my mother says.

My grandmother grabs the spoon. She’ll make me eat. She sticks the spoon heaped with oatmeal in my mouth. I swallow. She sticks it in another spoonful. I swallow. Another, another, faster and faster. The bowl is empty. The oatmeal rises up and out my lips and splashes into the bowl, onto the newspaper, the table, down my dress front. My grandmother daps me.

That was the last meal I ate in that house.

They drag me into the dark bathroom, pull off my dress, my underwear, scrub, than dress me again, from the skin out, in clean clothes. They tell me if I want to do Number One or Two, I had better goddam well do them, there won’t be any stopping every ten miles.

My cheek burns, and my teeth ache from the hard slap. I am shaky from vomiting.

My grandmother hustles me out the front door to the driveway. The rising sun breaks through clouds and splashes light across bare treetops and our house’s green shingles and bare dirt where my father would have put in his victory garden, had my mother not tossed him out.

The tan Packard sits low on its tires. Earlier that morning, my grandmother and mother packed the back seat and trunk, heaped the roof with boxes, and tied them to the car with clothesline. The boxes are covered with tarp.

Wind blows the last leaves off the poplars and maples and elms. I am knee-deep in wet yellow leaves; leaves off the poplars and maples and elms. I am knee-deep in wet yellow leaves; leaves stick to my bare legs.

Winds the last leaves off the poplars and maples and elms. I am knee-deep in wet yellow leaves; leaves stick to my bare legs.

My grandmother pushes me into the Packard’s back seat, wedges me between boxes stacked with pots and pans that will rattle all day through the long ride. When my grandmother slams the car door, Zoe tries to jump in. My grandmother’s blunt foot thuds against Zoe’s ribs. Even though they washed me, I can smell the vomit on my skin.

Memories come back to you in your mouth. Decades pass before I eat oatmeal; to this day, when I become sick to my stomach, I am terrified. I fear something more awful than vomiting. As an older child, when, for instance, I ran a 102-degree fever with measles and vomited myself empty into the pan my mother left on my bed, that morning came back to me. I was back at that table, newspaper opened out under the oatmeal bowl. Always when I was — ah, sick, my body felt — feels — more than ache, sore throat, sick stomach; I felt like a sausage stuffed with sorrow.

That rainy morning I lost the life I was born to. I never trusted anyone again.

Then there is the second breakfast. After my mother divorced my father, I lived with my grandmother...
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To the right of the barn was the hen house. Next door to the hen house stood the brooder house, where baby chicks were let out when they arrived, by mail, in boxes. You could hear the chicks peep in the boxes. And next door to the brooder house, inside a wire fence, was a shack where cockerels were fattened for market and fried chicken dinners.
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tipped the pole. They had left tufts of their stiff russet hairs on the pole.

If three days passed without a letter, I kept my distance. A disagreeable woman at best, my grandmother turned fierce when she worried. For the slightest slip-up, say, breaking an eggshell when I gathered eggs, she’d slap you so hard your ears rang. She was short and fat, and when she had hitting to do, she moved fast. So I always hoped that when I stood on tiptoes to get into the mailbox that she’d have a letter from Uncle Carl, or at least a letter from my mother, of whom, alas, she was not as fond.

I wanted to love my grandmother. I didn’t. When I was older and my grandmother had been dead for years, I said to my mother that I had been miserable with my grandmother. My mother looked up from photographs of my children, convinced for a grade school play, that she had been studying. She turned her face toward me, the heart-shaped face lined and drawn downward, but still beautiful. She scooted to the edge of her chair. She inhaled. I could hear the warm air enter her.

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A small woman, five feet tall, slender and delicately boned, was wearing an expensive knit dress, the yarn a clear red. She inhaled and her diaphragm enlarged, as singers’ diaphragms will. When I was a child, this slow enlargement frightened me. It was like something an animal does before striking.

She spoke in these moments with the careful enunciation she gave to a Puccini aria or Schubert lied. She grew cautious with dental consonants, fitted them tidily between the easy, open vowels. She said — sang, really — that I should thank my lucky stars my grandmother took me in. She raised her eyebrows and pursed her lips. “Do you think,” she trilled a thrilling crystalline vibrato, “that your father’s new wife would have taken you?”

Evenings after my grandmother and Bushes and Buckles herded cows into their stalls, milked them, strained and separated the milk, filled the cows’ feed boxes with feed and hay and got chickens gathered in, hasped the hen house door against skunks and coons, my grandmother turned on the big cathedral Philco, set-tled deep into her plush easy chair, turned up her hearing aid high as it would go, and grabbed up her mend-ing or fancywork. She’d say, “Shut up, I want to hear what they say.”

“They” were Edward R. Murrow, Eric Severeid, Lowell Thomas, Gabriel Heat-ter, Richard Hottelet, Walter Winchell. Even young children recognized the voices. We might not know, and I didn’t, what a world war was, but we knew the news these sonorous voices carried into our living rooms was about whether Japs or Nazis were going to stick bayonets through you. We listened and watched our grownups’ faces; their frowns or smiles or tears told you if news was good or bad.

My grandmother’s bedroom was crowded with heavy, carved furniture — wardrobe chest, vanity table, two smaller chests and four-poster bed. Across the sur-faces she’d scattered doilies she’d tatted herself, and atop those doilies she’d set out bic-a-brac she’d picked up in her travels — a hollowed-out armadillo, a pottery log cabin incised in gold with “Land of Lincoln,” a metal oil derrick, a wooden music box in the shape of a steamer trunk. The music no longer played. Roosevelt’s photo-graph hung on her bedroom wall. The photograph had been hand-tinted and had that odd pastel haze you see over pictures of saints. Tucked into the corner of that photo-graph was a smaller photo, torn from a newspaper Win- ston Churchill flashing the V-for-Victory sign.

You read now in history books that Roosevelt was the first president to broadcast regularly over the radio. He gave what he called “fireside chats.” All over America, people sat in their living rooms, radios tuned, and waited for his “Good evening, my friends.”

Nights when President Roosevelt gave his fireside chats, my grandmother took down the map and draped it over her knees. “This way,” she said, “I can follow along with what President Roo-sevelt says.” She pronounced his name “Rue-sevelt.” She worshiped him. “Now there’s a man,”
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my grandmother said, “who loved his mother.” Which was how you knew she was going to tell you the story of Roosevelt’s life. That his father was rich, older than his beautiful mother, that they lived in a mansion high on a hill above the Hudson River in New York in a town called Hyde Park. He was the only child because little Mother Roosevelt, the doctor said, was too delicate to have more children; she was small, in the pelvis. When young Franklin was eight, his father had a heart attack and lived for the next ten years as an invalid. Franklin was good as gold, my grandmother said, not wanting to do anything to set off his father’s heart or worry his mother. When Father Roosevelt died, Franklin was going to Harvard College, and after the funeral Mother Roosevelt was so lonely she moved to Boston to be near Franklin.

After Franklin graduated, when he was 21, he told his mother he was going to marry his fifth cousin, President Teddy Roosevelt’s niece, the homely orphan Eleanor, and it about broke Mother Roosevelt’s heart. But he married Eleanor anyway, and that marriage, my grandmother said, was about the biggest mistake in the President’s life, except for when he went swimming on a cold day and let himself take a chill that left him open to come down with infantile paralysis.

According to my grandmother, some people claimed that Mother Roosevelt was an “interferer.” Because she always stayed “right close” to the president, even after he married. “He could have told her to mind her own business,” my grandmother said, “if he’d felt like that. But he didn’t!” My grandmother believed Eleanor Roosevelt was such a bad housekeeper and hostess and careless mother that Mother Roosevelt had no choice but to keep close to her son to help raise the six children the couple had.

My grandmother didn’t have one good word for Eleanor. Mrs. Roosevelt had a column, “My Day,” that ran in newspapers across the country. When my grandmother read this column, she’d say that “Mrs. My Day” gadding around too much, that she ought to stay home in the White House, keep track of her children, who got married and divorced faster than you could count. She said the president should make his wife keep her big flapping mouth shut. She thought Mrs. Roosevelt “ugly as sin, what with those big horsey teeth jutting out.” She criticized Mrs. Roosevelt’s clothing as “Dutchy-looking,” a term that meant “unstylish” and “country.” She laughed at her hats. But the worst thing, according to my grandmother, about Mrs. Roosevelt, was that she encouraged “race-mixing.” She brought “colored” into the White House and entertained them “right there in front of God and everybody.” She was always trying to get the president to “do for the
My grandmother believed that after the war, thanks to Mrs. My Day and her “do-gooder” friends, the “colored” would no longer “know their place.” She said that while she knew “good colored people” and “clean colored people,” colored did not belong with white. No way.

My grandmother said that one thing Mother Roosevelt did that was wrong was that after the polio crippled up her son, she begged him to retire. He refused. He’d already been a big man in government in Washington, D.C., with President Wilson, as assistant Navy secretary. “A big man,” my grandmother said, “can never go back to being a nobody.”

He fought the polio and got back some use of his legs and became governor of New York. Then when the Depression got bad as it could get and the Bolsheviks were about to start a revolution, he ran for president against that goddamn cheapskate Hoover.

My grandmother liked to tell about when Mother Roosevelt died, a few months before the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor. She’d say that even though the president’s mother was almost 87, she was pretty as a picture. “She blued her hair,” my grandmother said, putting her own white hair, which she rinsed with laundry bluing, “the same as I do mine. That way it doesn’t turn all yellow.”

The president knew his mother was sinking and got on the train to Hyde Park and was holding her hand when she passed away. After she died, my grandmother said, he didn’t come back to the White House for a long time. He just shut himself up there in Hyde Park. He got out the box Mother Roosevelt had kept with his baby shoes all bronzed up and his toys and some of his hair from the first time the barber cut it, and he held on to that box and cried his heart out.

When I was older and had young children of my own and wanted to understand my family, I read everything I could find in the library about Roosevelt. He seemed as much a part of the people I came from as my grandmother or Uncle Carl or mother or father.
so hard that her fancywork she said. She beat her knees setting those Japs on fire, “fists and cheered. “They’re beat on her knees with her incendiary bombs on Tokyo beings. They gave me the Ese POWs laughing and talk-repulsive. I watched Japan-ese were looked upon as I soon gathered that Japan- that our enemies were still America.”In Europe we felt she was unusual, here’s some- World War II, hated the pled. But they must have

one holding on to either side of him, and he’d grip their arms, and they’d propel him forward. No one talked much about Roosevelt being crip- pled. But they must have known.

My grandmother, like most Americans during World War II, hated the Japanese. So you won’t think she was unusual, here’s some- thing Ernie Pyle wrote that appeared in papers all across America. “In Europe we felt that our enemies were still people. But out here in Japan I soon gathered that Japan- ese were looked upon as something subhuman and repulsive. I watched Japan- ese POWs laughing and talk- ing just like normal human beings. They gave me the creeps, and I wanted to take a mental bath after looking at them.”

When American pilots dropped ton after ton of incendiary bombs on Tokyo and Osaka, my grandmother beat on her knees with her fists and cheered. “They’re setting those Japs on fire,” she said. She beat her knees so hard that her fancywork fell to the carpet. But when news from the Pacific the-ater indicated that Japanese torpedoes blew up a U.S. ship or that kamikazes had dive-bombed a U.S. patrol boat, my grandmother went to bed weeping. Wearing the nightgown she’d sewn from pink outing flannel, she sat at the edge of her bed. She took out her teeth and dropped them into the glass of water on her bedside table. She pulled out her hearing aid amplifier from the yellow- lowed nook between her breasts and the hearing aid button from her ear and tugged the contraption under her pillow. She sloughed off her slippers. Those nights her sobs rose and fell, throb- ing through our bedrooms’ thin walls. She moaned the bing through our bedrooms’ long, low moans that cows, enduring a difficult birth, would emit. She moaned the bing through our bedrooms’ long, low moans that cows, enduring a difficult birth, moaned, I felt helpless to comfort her, and I was.

By 1944, FDR had been president for 11 years. My grandmother studied his photograph in newspapers, Life magazine and Saturday Evening Post. She shook her head, said, “Look at those bags under the poor man’s eyes. We’ve done worn him out.”

When Roosevelt ran for re-election to his fourth term, he dumped his old vice pres- ident, Henry Wallace, and ran with the senator from Missouri, Harry Truman. His Republican opponent was New York governor Tom Dewey, “a horse’s ass,” my grandmother seethed, “with a silly mustache.” No way, she told Bushes and Buck- les, would Dewey win. He didn’t.

Harry Truman my grandmother hated and looked down upon as a failed farmer, which he was. My grandmother said we should pray Roosevelt didn’t die in office and leave us with Harry. Of course, he did.

The day in April when news came of Roosevelt’s death, my grandmother took to her bed. She didn’t cook dinner. She didn’t milk cows, didn’t gather eggs. Next morn- ing, when she walked into the kitchen, her eyes were swollen from crying.

Pretty soon after Roo- sevelt died, my grandmother
cheered up. Because the war was winding down. "My boy," she'd say, "will soon be home."

Lord, how she loved the A-bomb. The day that the Enola Gay dropped the bomb on Hiroshima, my grandmother cheered. She loved, she said, the thought that all those Japs were finally getting theirs. She clacked her big false teeth and cackled. "Old Tojo," she said, "I bet his old yellow feet are feeling the heat."

Harry became her hero. We heard no more talk about Harry's inability to farm. Harry became the man who "saved the lives of our American boys." Bess Truman, castigated as a "bridge club priss ass" and "plain as an Irish potato," became "the good woman behind a good man."

After VJ Day, Uncle Carl was due to be demobilized. In his letters he wrote that he couldn't say when he'd actually get out. "I'll surprise you," he wrote. By then, potatoes were dug and taken down to the storm cellar in gunny sacks. The tight cabbage heads, outer leaves wrapped tightly around the head, veins sticking out, were also down in the storm cellar, with turnips, purple at the shoulder and ivory below, and beets and carrots. Canning was done. Baby chicks, arrived that spring in boxes, by then were pullets who filled nest boxes with eggs. When you got up
in the morning and looked out the window, you saw frost on roofs and pasture. About four one afternoon, I woke up. I was sleeping under heaped quilts. A dream woke me, I thought, or my grandmother, who called out in her sleep to people whose names I didn’t know. My room was dark. I got out of bed and looked out my window. I pulled aside the curtain. The sun hadn’t come up, the red-combed roosters weren’t crowing and scratching dirt with their yellow feet.

I heard a knock at the front door and a moment later, more knocks against the dining and living room windows. A voice called, “Mother, Mother.” I didn’t recognize the voice. I didn’t think to go shake my grandmother awake. I thought only of the voice crying, “Mother, Mother.” The person from whom the voice came sounded like someone in trouble.

I ran through the house to the front door. The top half of the door was inset with murky glass. I looked through the glass and saw a man. A white sailor’s cap tilted to one side of his head. I stood on my toes and snapped on the porch light. “Open the door,” the man said, “it’s your Uncle Carl.”

He didn’t look like the face that came to mind when I thought “Uncle Carl.” Years later, studying photographs taken before Carl joined the Navy and at photographs taken the afternoon of that morning he arrived at the farm, I see that Navy life thinned him down, left him appearing younger than his 40-some years. He looks boyish, hoydenish, and his blue eyes look larger, more open.

I threw the bolt and opened the door. Surely he hugged me, but I don’t remember. I do remember that he wore a navy-blue sailor middy with white anchors embroidered on the square collar. I remember that slung over each shoulder he had a huge sea bag and that once inside the door, he hoisted the bags off his shoulders onto the floor. The bags were filled with sea shells from the Pacific, many of them hand-size scallop shells that he used in years ahead for ashtrays when he gave parties.

I told him Grammy didn’t hear him knocking because she took out her hearing aid at night. He whispered, “We want to wake up Mother carefully, so the shock doesn’t give her a stroke or heart attack.” My mother and Uncle Carl worried their mother would have a heart attack or stroke because her blood pressure was high.

I don’t remember how we woke her up. I do remember she grabbed Uncle Carl around the waist and held on so tight he screamed, “You’re going to cut me in two, Mother.” Her head didn’t come up much further than his stomach. She cried until the front of her nightie was spotted with tears.

Uncle Carl wanted breakfast. He said that while he was on ships out in the Pacific and on Okinawa, he went to sleep nights thinking about her breakfasts. “The biscuits, Mother, the fried eggs, the sausage, your strawberry preserves. Oh, my God!” He rolled his blue eyes and told us that in the Navy they fed them powdered eggs and powdered milk and bacon from cans.

The enormous kitchen, painted bright yellow, had windows that looked out to the west and south. Along the west wall was the deep sink from whose faucets poured the medicinal well water. My grandmother was so short she stood on a box to get to the sink, and she often stood there, her fat, hard belly bumped from dishwasher, and gazed out onto her pasture. A four-burner, two-oven gas range was backed against the north wall. The kitchen table and four chairs around it took up all the space in a windowed nook that afforded a view into the vegetable garden and, beyond the garden, to the barn and hen house.

I know that table well, because after my grandmother died, my mother had the table and chairs that went with it shipped Railway Express to our house. She stripped off the paint and, evenings, wearing a mask because sawdust was bad for her voice, she sanded the oak smooth. When a guest praised the table, my mother ran her pretty hand over the table. Tears rose in her eyes. She said, “It was my mother’s table.”

I would remember my grandmother’s ugly face. I would think how, on her deathbed, she told my mother she never loved her as much as she did Uncle Carl. My mother walked into the hospital corridor and sobbed. Uncle Carl petted her shoulder. He said, “She’s out of her mind, she doesn’t know what she’s saying.” I always thought she knew precisely what she was saying and enjoyed the hurt her statement caused.

A pantry off the kitchen...
was almost as big as the kitchen. Shelves ranked from floor to ceiling around all four walls. My grandmother stored canning there, extra pots and pans, a fruit jar filled with pencils, canning equipment, mops and brooms, perhaps as many as 50 one-pound cans of Folgers coffee, sacks of sugar and flour and cornmeal, the Sears & Roebuck and Montgomery Ward catalogs.

Next to the stove — my grandmother called it “the range” — was the refrigerator, which my grandmother referred to as “the icebox.” Mornings, she kept her percolator coffee pot on the range. She liked coffee burnt black, and years later, while she was dying of stomach cancer, my uncle and mother whispered that the burnt coffee hadn’t helped her any.

You don’t see stove-top percolators much anymore. A straight-sided pot, fitted out with a basket into which coffee grounds were ladled and a tube that fitted through a hole in the middle of the basket and ran from top to bottom of the pot. You put the water in the pot and then set it in the basket with its tube. The lid had in its center a hollow glass knob. You put the pot on the stove with the flame on high. Once the water began boiling, the hot water rose up through the tube and then down through the coffee grounds that sat in the basket, thus extracting their essence. When this process began, one said that the coffee had begun “to perk.” At this point, the flame was turned low beneath the pot. You could see the water jet up into the glass knob on the lid. As the water recirculated, the water you saw through the glass became darker and the circulation increased its speed. The sound was chug, chug, chug.

That morning Uncle Carl came back from the war, my grandmother blew her nose and put on the percolator and stuck a match in the oven and lit it. She tied her apron on over her nightgown. She got out flour, baking powder, lard, and salt, and buttermilk. She poured the flour, the salt, the baking powder without measuring, into the mixing bowl. She scooped out lard from the lard bucket with a tablespoon. She picked up the red-handled pastry mixer, the same one she used to

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make pie crust, and cut the white lard into the flour, until the flour turned to pea-size balls. Uncle Carl pulled a chair out from the kitchen table and sat down. My grandmother’s broad fat back, apron bow tied and flopping above her monstrous, massive buttocks, faced him. Over and over, she’d stop in the middle of blending the dough, turn and say, “Oh, son, let me get another look at you.” She stood, flour on her hands, and smiled.

I sat on the cold floor, on the black-and-white speckled Armstrong linoleum, at Uncle Carl’s feet and stroked his dusty black boots. I wanted him to open his sea bags and show the sheashells. I knew better than to ask.

Sun was coming up. Dirty brindle dog trailing behind them, Bushels and Buckles came up from the bunkhouse into the kitchen, as they did every morning. They brought their doggy, sour-washcloth, urinaceous odors with them.

She fed Bushels and Buckles every morning, my grandmother did, and that morning, too, they would have wanted coffee, their ham or sausage or bacon, eggs and pancakes and biscuits. They talked about which cows were “fresh,” which heifers ready for breeding, a hog who seemed off his feed, a motor that needed oiling, an off-taste in the morning’s milk, that sort of thing. They talked, too, about the war.

But not this morning. “My son’s here,” she told them. Uncle Carl stood, shook the old men’s hands. Surely, they congratulated him on his safe return, and he no doubt thanked them for being a help to his mother.

What I do remember is that while the three men talked my grandmother slapped together sandwiches made from old biscuit and thick slices of bologna. She told them to take their food and coffee on out to the barn and get started milking.

She had sharpened her favorite butcher knife so many times that its blade had narrowed to a thin steel sliver. That morning, I’m sure she used that knife as she cut thick slices of bacon off a smoked rasher from hogs she’d butchered. The rasher’s exterior, rubbed with salt and sugar and spices and smoked with hickory in the smokehouse, had taken on the burnish of oiled mahogany furniture. She held up a bacon slice for Uncle Carl to see. She told him about the hog from whose side the slice had been cut.

I don’t remember the hog’s name, but unlike most farmers, my grandmother named her hogs, and out in the hog pen, she addressed them by name — Ben, Abner, Robert E. Lee, Stimson, Salavatore, Isadore, Pappy, Daisy Mae are names I recall hearing her use. (And years later, when I told my father some of these names, he said that at least two were names of my grandmother’s boyfriends.) I do remember that she told Uncle Carl about butchering day, how she and Bushels and Buckles did all the sticking and bleeding and sawing apart bones themselves, that she worked right along with them, like a man. I remember that she sided over to the table and bulged up her biceps and asked him to feel it. She would have said, as she often did, “Feel that, hard as a rock, huh? Hard as a goddamn rock.”

I do know that while she cooked that morning, she cried. “For joy,” she said, “for pure-out joy.” I know that she had reached out so many times to touch her son that the shoulders of his navy-blue uniform were dusted with flour and imprinted with floury fingerprints.

She set the bacon slices to cooking in the high-sided iron skillet. She sent me to the pantry for red Winesaps that she cored and cut in rounds. She arranged the apple rings in a skillet whose surface burbled with freshly churned butter. She browned the apples and, using tongs, turned them carefully, then tossed handfuls of brown sugar over them and set a lid atop the skillet, so the sugar would caramelize over the tart Winesap slices. The bacon fried, its fats sizzling.

The biscuit, by then, put a full mouth full of red Winesaps, a good month. You would have been happy many times to touch her son, she would have said, as a rock, huh? Hard as a rock.

But she might have said, as she often did, “And look how high these here yolks set up.” Then, she may well have told him which of her hens were the most prodigious layers and how many eggs they laid in a good month. She may have said, as she would have said, “For joy.”

The biscuit, by then, put out its heated high-summoned wheat-field, floury aroma into the kitchen. The bacon’s salty haze drifted across the kitchen like weather. And the apple rings’ caramel sweetness bore down on us like sunshine. My grandmother stood next to Uncle Carl. Her blue hair stuck out in oily strands off her big head. She placed her hands on her wide hips and she smiled. She’d forgotten to put in her teeth. Her lips encircled the emptiness. Her pink tongue emerged over her glistening gums. Tears streamed down her fat face. She said, “Well, as far as I’m concerned, my war’s over. My boy’s home.” She must have been happy many times after that, but never again would I see her as happy as she was that day.

— Judith Moore
Goin’ to a Boat Show
High Seas Dreams at the Convention Center

W built a boat for a cinematographer of Star Trek,” says Dan Peter, owner of Cabrillo Yacht Sales. “He wanted a perched perspective of everything and had us build a radar arch davit system (normally a small crane used for suspending and lowering a dinghy or lifeboat) with two seats on top and an arch for mounting electronics. He likes that high perch where he can kind of look out over everything from a nice viewpoint. Most people would never think of putting a couple of seats on top of the davit. It was $25,000, four years ago, just for some metal hanging off the top of the boat. The whole yacht was about $750,000.”

A 52-foot replica of the cinematographer’s boat will be in the San Diego Boat Show, which runs from Thursday, January 4, to Sunday, January 7, at the Convention Center and Marriott Marina. “This guy saw [the cinematographer’s] boat and wanted one exactly like it,” says Peter. “We’ve built custom tubs, Jacuzzis; once we built an altar to Matsu, a female Buddha. She protects the fishermen and people out at sea. For one guy, an engineer who did consulting work, we built a grand navigation station. It had a big worktable area to lay out all of his stuff, and we accommodated a wheelchair. He called his boat the Other Woman.”

“There was an attorney who bought a boat over on Harbor Island, and he kept having problems with it,” says Peter. “He called it a Piece of Ship and painted it on the boat. It was the funnest name I’ve ever seen.” One couple, whose profession was building mobile homes, dubbed their boat Trailer Trash. When the couple had to sell their boat, they recommended the new owners change the name.

“There’s a tradition where you’re supposed to christen the boat initially,” explains Peter. “But changing the name...there are superstitions about it. By placing a gold coin underneath the mast step, it’s a sign to the gods that you’re changing the name of the boat. There’s another thing where you sail the boat a mile backward, which is supposed to release the evils for changing the name.” According to Peter, leaving a boat nameless is not an option. “Nameless boats are like unloved boats. You always name them to give them some character.”

The most expensive boat Peter sold was a 73-foot motor yacht for $2.5 million. “There was a luxury tax on boats years ago,” remembers Hancock. “The idea was to tax the rich, but as a practical matter the rich didn’t pay it.”

According to Peter, some boat buyers take their new purchases to Mexico to avoid sales tax. “They go from here down to Mexico for six months to a year. It depends on the law at the time,” he says.

Most boats come with a slip, or a place in the water where the boat can be kept. “Most marinas really want to meet you first. It’s kind of a tight community,” says Peter. “In the old days, when they were at 75 percent occupancy, it wasn’t that big a deal. Now marinas are at 95 or even 99 percent occupancy. They can afford to be a lot more choosy about who they let in.”

Peter says local marinas charge from $13 to $20 per foot for rent a month. “In a $20-per-foot marina, a 50-foot boat would pay $1000 a month,” he says. The price often depends on the marina’s accommodations. “In the Marriott downtown, you get full use of their pools and jacuzzis and room service to your boat and even maid service. They will come and clean the inside of your boat for you.” — Barbara

San Diego Boat Show
Thursday, January 4, through Sunday, January 7
San Diego Convention Center
Marriott Marina
111 West Harbor Drive
Downtown
Cost: $10 adults, $5 children
Info: 858-274-9924 or www.sandiegodboatshow.com

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OUT & ABOUT

LOW-BUDGET FUN!

Mutual Appreciation, Thursday, January 11. Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego. (SEE FILM)

Outdoors

Recent Chilly Days and Nights only confirm that San Diego’s low-est temperatures (according to more than a century of weather records) tend to occur during the month of January. January’s mean temperature at Lindbergh Field is about 55 degrees Fahrenheit. (July’s mean is a balmy 70 degrees.) To experience much colder temperatures, journey to the Cuyamacas; -1 and -4 degree readings were once recorded there — the two lowest temperatures ever recorded in the county.

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1-800-343-8582.

Three Wise Men Parade, the ‘last event of the Christmas sea-son’ starts at 8 p.m. on Friday, January 5, at Paseo de los Héroes in Zona Rio. Free. (TIJUANA)

Hypnotists Taurus do Brazil and John Milton return to Centro Cultural Tijuana — performances begin on Friday, January 5, and continue through January. Curtain rises at 8 p.m. Mondays–Wednesdays, at 6 and 9 p.m. Thursdays–Saturdays, and at 5 and 8 p.m. on Sundays. Tickets: $10-$13 U.S. Find center at Paseo de los Héroe and Mina Street in Zona Rio 011-52-664-687-9636. (TIJUANA)

Take a Bike Ride with other riders on Sunday, January 7, 10 a.m., at Tercera Etapa in Zona Rio.

REMEMBER TO SEND US YOUR LISTINGS: Contributions must be received by 5 p.m. Friday the week prior to publication for consideration. Do not phone. Send a complete description of the event, including the date, time, cost, and 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 EVENTS, Box 11993, San Diego, CA 92119. 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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San Diego Natural History Museum’s Outdoors

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Class size limited to 300 students

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San Diego 60 mile cast! Includes breakfast in our 21$79 Sweetheart Package. $99!

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Local Events

Events that are underlined occur after January 11

How to Send Us Your Listings: Contributions must be received by 5 p.m. Friday the week prior to publication for consideration. Do not phone. Send a complete description of the event, including the date, time, cost, and a 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 EVENTS, Box 11993, San Diego, CA 92119. 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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at 8 a.m. in parking area between
Lakes, Saturday, January 6. Mod-
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Restaurant Week Dinner Cruises
Cruise & Save

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Local Events:


Escondido Historical Museum: "Fashions of the 1920s," Saturday, January 6, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m., 245 Old Escondido Boulevard. Free. 760-733-5100.


San Diego History Center: "New Year's Eve," Tuesday, January 23, 7 p.m., 1549 30th Street. Free. 619-234-5549.


San Diego Natural History Museum: "Birds of the San Diego Coast," Saturday, January 6, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m., 1 Natural History Museum. Free. 619-234-5549.


San Diego Zoo: "ZooLights," Tuesday, January 23, 5 p.m. - 9 p.m., 1 Zoo Park Drive. Free. 619-234-3153.

San Diego Zoo Safari Park: "Experience the Magic," Tuesday, January 23, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m., 1 Safari Park Drive. Free. 619-234-3153.

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Event is in conjunction with current "Nikkei Youth Culture Past, Present, Future" exhibit. $5. 619-238-1233. (BALBOA PARK)

**Low-Budget Fun!** See Mutual Appreciation, described as "one of the best-kept secrets from last year's Sundance Film Festival," when Andrew Bujalski's comedy screens for winter film series, Thursday, January 11, 7 p.m., at Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego (700 Prospect Street). $7. 619-238-1233. (BALBOA PARK)

Reuben H. Fleet Science Center, currently screening in the MAXX Theater: Roving Mars (BALBOA PARK)

**“El Guercino,”** 17th-Century Italian artist Giovanni Francesco Barbieri to be discussed by guest curator Shilpa Prasad for Art in the Afternoon lecture series at Timken Museum of Art on Thursday, January 4. Talk in conjunction with "Guercino: Stylistic Evolution in Focus" exhibition begins at 12:30 p.m. Free. 619-239-5548 x15. (BALBOA PARK)

Collectors’ Panel, Dr. Sally Yard, USD art history coordinator, will moderate a panel of prominent collectors, artists, and/or gallery owners in conjunction with SDMA’S Personal Views exhibit on Thursday, January 4, 6 p.m. Included in San Diego Museum of Art regular admission. 619-232-7933. (BALBOA PARK)

"Changing Interpretations of Image of Native Americans in Early 20th-Century Art" examined by Pomona College art history professor Frances Phelps for docent guest lecture at San Diego Museum of Art on Friday, January 5, 10 a.m. $10. 619-496-1986. (BALBOA PARK)

**Hands-On GPS Classes** explaining functions and features of these devices, Saturday, January 6, 10 a.m.—4 p.m., at REI San Diego (5550 Copley Drive, 858-739-4400) and REI Encinitas (1590 Leucadia Boulevard, 760-944-9020). $55 for nonmembers. Call for reservations. (JEFFERY MESA, ENCINITAS)

"Editors’ Roles in Book Publishing" explored when "wordworker" Laurie Gibson speaks Saturday, January 6, 10 a.m., at Mission Valley Library (1213 Fenton Parkway). Focus on different types of editors, "how many types are there?" 619-239-5548 x15. Free. (JEFFERY MESA, ENCINITAS)

**Make Fiber Flowers** using various methods — felting, knitting, weaving, crocheting — when Palomar Handweavers Guild meets Monday, January 8, 9:30 a.m., at Trinity Episcopal Church (185 Chestnut Street). 760-723-4969. (ESCONDIDO)

"This Is Smart Growth" publication will be distributed by

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**LECTURES**


"How We Know the Climate Is Changing" explained by Mark Z. Thompson of UCSD, Tuesday, January 9, 6:30 p.m., at San Diego Natural History Museum. Attention paid to possible impacts on Southern California. Free. 619-235-4025. (BALLA PARK)

"Torture: People of Faith Called to Respond" presented by Survivors of Torture, Interna-

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**January 7-12, 2007**

Experience cuisines that delight the palate and define the art of dining during San Diego Restaurant Week. Choose from more than 100 of the city’s best restaurants and enjoy a three-course dinner for either $30 or $40* per person, depending on restaurant. For more information and on-line reservations, visit SanDiegoRestaurantWeek.com.

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**Savoring the Art of Dining**

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**January 7-13, 2007**
A GUIDE TO AN UNEXPECTED SAN DIEGO AND BEYOND | BY JERRY SCHAD

Sunny winter days are perfect for exploring San Diego County’s population-equivalent of Saudi Arabia’s Al Rab Al Khal, or “Empty Quarter.” Virtually no one lives in the county’s northeasternmost 100 square miles, an area of fault-dotted basins and sinuous ravines bisected by the mile plus high summits of the Santa Rosa Mountains. More than a century ago the scene here was more likely — at least in winter and early spring — when bands of rock-obsessed Cahuilla Indians settled in at lower elevations to stay relatively warm and exploit the growth and ripening of the native desert vegetation.

Today, Anza-Borrego Desert State Park (phone 760-767-4205) has jurisdiction over the area — though you should not interpret the word “park” to mean a recreational area that’s easy to get into, either by car or by foot.

The following long, looped walk — ten miles over gently rising and then gently falling terrain — can be a good introduction for experienced hikers who appreciate solitude and profound silence. Don’t forget to pack along essentials such as plenty of water, food, extra clothing, and maps and skills to navigate the consuelated terrain.

At mile 26.7 according to mile markers on Highway S 22 (north and east of Borrego Springs), turn north on Clark’s Well Road. Park souvenirs and then you continue driving on dirt, bearing left at 5.5 miles onto Rockhouse Truck Trail. In a short while you skirt the west edge of the normally dry and salt-encrusted Clark Lake. (When wet, after heavy rain, a short section of the road ahead can become muddy and impassable.) After nine miles of dirt-road travel in all, you arrive at the junction of primitive roads going into Butler and Rockhouse canyons. Park near here.

On foot, follow the Rookhouse “road,” a rough jeep track at this point, north into the broad, dry wash of Rockhouse Canyon. The San Jacinto Trail (a San Andreas splinter) parallels this section of canyon. At about three miles, there is a road closure sign. Continue another mile to Hidden Spring — more of a seep than a spring — identified by a sign or the left. The small basin there may hold a gallon or two of insect-infested, nonpotable water.

From the spring itself, a path past some mesquite bushes will guide you to a deep, wooded, eroded trail starting south and upward across a 200-foot-high spur. Just over the top, on the eastern edge of this basin Flat, are the remains of a Cahuilla Indian village occupied as recently as the late 1800s. You may chance upon some old fire pits, pieces of pottery, and flakes of a metamorphic rock known as wonderstone, which was once used for stone tools. Do not remove any items of any kind (a state park rule), no matter how small they are.

New head west about a mile to the head of Butler Canyon, which carries water from Jachss Flat south. Follow Butler Canyon, assisted by gravity all the way, as it descends for four miles through a sinuous gorge carved out of glowing granite rock — a rewarding concluding segment of the hike.

Inside Butler Canyon

Borrowed path by: Bob Schubert

Get Outside: Wildlife Basics Courses with lectures and four weekend field trips offered by Sierra Club. Ten-week course begins Tuesday, January 16, at San Pasqual High School (3300 Bear Valley Parkway South) and Tuesday, January 23, at Scotch Rite Masonic Temple (1895 Camino del Rio South). $10. 619-388-3037. Be sure to sign up early. Space is limited.

Get Outside: Wilderness Basics Courses with lectures and four weekend field trips offered by Sierra Club. Ten-week course begins Tuesday, January 16, at San Pasqual High School (3300 Bear Valley Parkway South) and Tuesday, January 23, at Scotch Rite Masonic Temple (1895 Camino del Rio South). $10. 619-388-3037. Be sure to sign up early. Space is limited.

Who is the First Lady of OBC? Find out when Jessica Cook performs for Ocean Beach Comedy along with Stu Swanson, Travis Robbins, Thursdays, 5 p.m., at Wonderland Club in Point Loma (2121 Arlington Avenue). $5. 619-688-9845. (OCEAN BEACH)

IM PRESS

World-Beat Music and Dance, Damaru performs along with multi-instrumentalist Sujitha Rose and Afro-Cuban dancer Karen Tapia, Thursday, January 4, 9 p.m., at La Jolla Cove Lodge (901 Camino del Rio South). $10. 619-688-9845. (BAYSHORE)


Time: 6 p.m., at Winstons Beach Club (2818 Avenida Del Rey). Free. 619-236-1199.

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Inside Butler Canyon

Jackass Flat/Butler Canyon

Explore a lonely corner of Anza-Borrego Desert State Park, an area of archeological interest.

Distance from downtown San Diego: 110 miles

10 Miles

Difficulty: Strenuous

Jackass Canyon, which carries water from Jackass Flat south. Follow Butler Canyon, assisted by gravity all the way, as it descends for four miles through a sinuous gorge carved out of glowing granite rock — a rewarding concluding segment of the hike. Beyond the mouth of this
Enjoy cool, starry nights in our newly renovated lodge. 
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San Ysidro to Rosarito *21
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Project convenes on Cassius Carter Centre Stage at Old Globe Theatres. Tickets $15 general, $12 for students, seniors, military. Times, reservations: 619-239-8222. 
[SDCL] [JLP]

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For information & reservations call: 619-766-4525

The Campanile Ringers play traditional winter holiday music for family music series on Wednesday, January 10, 7 p.m., at Borders Books and Music (159 Parkway Plaza). Free. 619-593-5119. 
[SDCL] [JLP]

The 22nd Season of “Plays by Young Writers” presented by Playwrights Project and Old Globe runs January 11–21. Scripts were selected from 234 submissions by teenagers nationwide. Full productions presented of Elevated, The Courier, Stage Directions, and The Aftermath of a Suicide; three additional scripts will receive readings. Project convenes on Cassius Carter Centre Stage at Old Globe Theatres. Tickets $15 general, $12 for students, seniors, military. Times, reservations: 619-239-8222. 
[BALBOA PARK]

[LA JOLLA]

Mystery Author J.A. Vance signs, discusses Web of Evil, Thursday, January 11, 1:30 p.m., at Mysterious Galaxy Books (7051 Clairemont Mesa Boulevard, 858-268-4747). Free. 
[CLAIREMONT]

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[CLAIREMONT]

[NORMAL HEIGHTS]

Button-Down-Style Comedy, television hall of Famer Bob Newhart performs Saturday, January 13, 2 and 8 p.m., at California Center for the Arts, Escondido (340 North Escondido Boulevard). Musical guest is Susan Egan. Tickets: $40-$55. 760-839-4100. 
[ESCONDIDO]

“Long Time Traveling,” Anonymous 4 has reunited for project with lyric folk songs, religious ballads, gospel hymns, joined by renowned musicians Darol Anger (fiddle) and Mike Marshall (mandolin). Concert begins at 4 p.m. on Sunday, January 14, at St. James by-the-Sea Episcopal Church (743 Prospect Street). $25 general. 858-459-3421 x109. 
[LA JOLLA]
**Reading**

**Moon Pies and Movie Stars**

By Amy Wallen

Viking, 2007, 308 pages, $23.95

**WHAT THE REVIEWERS SAY:** Booklist: Ruby Kincaid can't believe the way her life is going. While running her late husband's bowling alley, she is also taking care of her wayward daughter's two small children. When she sees her daughter, Violet, on television on a Milk Maid commercial, Ruby decides that she has no choice but to go to California and bring her daughter back home to Texas. What transpires is a road trip in a winne-

nebago across the desert and four states with Imogene, Violet's star-struck mother-in-law; Lorala, Ruby's sexy, game show crazy sister; and Ruby's two rambunctious grandkids.

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR:** Amy Wallen is the host of open-

mic night for San Diego Writers, Ink. She also teaches creative writing at University of Califor-

nia San Diego Extension. This is her first novel.

**A CONVERSATION WITH THE AUTHOR:**

On the day I phoned Ms. Wallen, Seattle was in the second of what would turn out to be a four-day power outage, following a hor-

trendous winter storm. I had hoarded the last of my cell phone's battery power and lit a dozen candles in order to scratch notes on a glow legal pad while we spoke.

“I understand you traveled a lot as a child.”

“I was born in Louisiana, but my folks are from Texas, originally. My dad worked in explo-

ration for an oil company, so his job took us all over. We spent a lot of time overseas ‘pilgrimage the world,’ as they say. Eventually we came back to Okla-

homa and I went to university there.”

“Who was Genevieve Cleo Sims Wallen Freeman Williams?”

“That’s my grandmother, who is the inspiration for a mon-

ey of several of the characters.”

“As you can tell, she was married

and authentic food for sale during San Pasqual History Days, Sunday, January 7, 10 a.m.–2 p.m., San Pasqual Battlefield State Historic Park (15088 San Pasqual Valley Road). Free: 760-757-2201.

**Stamp-Collecting Show, stamp and cover dealers offer wares, Sun-

day, January 7, 10 a.m.–4 p.m., at Al Bahr Shrine Temple (5440 Kearny Mesa Road). Free: 613-218-7835. (DELLA)

**Seventh Annual Archaeology Fair**

Hosted by the Archaeological In-

stitute of America, Sunday, Jan-

uary 7, 11 a.m.–3 p.m., at San Diego Marriott Hotel and Marina (333 West Harbor Drive). Learn about past by participating in hands-on exhibits, meet field arch-

aeologists, ask questions of ex-

perts about ancient civilizations. Archaeologists, field experts from around country present activities. Children can reconstruct clay pots, play ancient board games, partici-

pate in mini-digs, enjoy contests. Children: $5 adults: $7, 8-14 fam-

ily: 617-353-8770. (DELLA)

**Fifth Annual Native Plant Sale**

and open house planned Sunday, January 7, noon–5 p.m., at Coastal Sage Gardening (3685 Scenic Dr. \(100%\) parade). Botanical crafts for family demonstrated by Anne Garver. Free admission. 619-223-5229. (DELLA)

**Witness the Gray Whale Migration**

During outings hosted by Birch Aquarium and San Diego Harbor Excursions daily through April 1. Scippers naturalists and as-

sistants are on hand during cruises to search for whales, on their way sometimes being-

copy edited. The book actually started

with Intelligence, other psychic arts fea-

ured: $20 per reading. 619-298-

3422. (SPORTS ARENA)

**Southern California Wolf Center**

hosts public programs focusing on North American gray wolves every Saturday at 2 p.m. Programs in-

clude slide show, visit and tour with resident wolf pack. Tickets: $8 general, $5 for seniors, $4 for children ten and younger. Re-

quired reservations: 619-234-

WOLF. (JAM)

**The 2007 Juried Biennial Exhibition**

is on view Sunday, January 7, through Sunday, March 4, in Cannon Art Gallery at Coastal Library (1775 Dove Lane). Biennial attracted 288 artists who submitted more than 110 slides for this year’s competition; juror Elizabeth Armstrong se-

lected 68 works of art by 33 artists.

619-462-2021. (DELLA)

**Time for San Diego Restaurant Week**

Dine deals offered at a variety of San Diego County restaur-

ants, January 6–February 25, departing from “A dock” at San Diego Marriott

Marina. The America sailing adventure is a search of migrating whales. $75 for adults, $37.50 for those 12 and younger. Reservations: 800-644-3434. (DELLA)

**Psychic Fair and Metaphysical Conference, Saturday and Sunday, January 6 and 7, noon–6 p.m., at Alexander’s Book-

Store (3545 Midway Drive, suite G). Alexandra Andrews makes “Predictions for 2007 and Beyond” on Sunday. Tarot, palmistry, nu-

merology, other psychic arts fea-

ured: $20 per reading. 619-298-

3422. (SPORTS ARENA)

**SAGE Gardening (3685 Voltaire Lane). Biennial featured 288 artists.

619-223-5229. (DELLA)

**Diego Marriott Hotel and Marina**

Fair on San Diego Bay. $8 general, $5 for seniors, $4 for children ten and younger. Reservations: 619-297-8000. (DELLA)

**Coastal Sage Gardening**

288 artists who submitted more than 110 slides for this year’s competition; juror Elizabeth Armstrong se-

lected 68 works of art by 33 artists.

619-462-2021. (DELLA)

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FLIGHTS

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Scenic 1920s-era biplane rides for up to 2 passengers per flight.

Fly an Air Combat mission in our special dogfighter aircraft. Win a trip to take a real flight.

You can call the shots... literally!

Ride the glory days of aviation in our 1941 North American SNJ-4, the advanced trainer for WII pilots. You get to fly, and can even do loops and...
They are very different teachers, so I feel lucky to have gotten the best of both worlds from them.

“What did you learn from them?”

“Jen has a good way of nudging you to take your writing deeper and to open all the doors you can and to look for all the detail. Mary has this amazing brain. I felt safe writing whatever I wanted to write with her. She made me feel I could write my story how it was supposed to be and not to worry about what others thought.”

“How did you come to teach creative writing at UC San Diego Extension?”

“Judy Reeves was already teaching there and she referred me. At first I taught a basic creative-writing class and a character class. One of my strengths was creating characters, so I felt I had a big idea to share.

“What kinds of challenges do your students face that are also challenges you have in writing?”

“I’m teaching a novel-writ- ing class right now. I did two different things with them. From my experience with Jen Fitch, I encouraged them to keep expanding and to keep going further. Then, I did an exercise where I told them to cut everything down. It was interesting seeing their reactions. For me that was always a fine balance – deciding when to make something bigger and when to make it smaller.”

“How has publishing a novel changed you as a teacher?”

“It actually makes me feel more confident that I can share what I do with all kinds of people and that what I have to pass on really can help them.

“As much as I try to tell students that publishing isn’t the first thing they should focus on, it’s always what they want to know most about. At the first night of class I tell them not to talk about publishing until the end of the workshop. Unfortunately, it seems to be the thing no one can get away from. We’re still writers even if we aren’t published. At least, publishing is the way we feel validated.”

“About people who move to California from other places, one of your characters says, ‘People come here to find themselves, to leave behind who they used to be, to get discovered.’ How does it all work and what did that mean to you?”

“When I was writing that, I felt I was observing about others. Many people come here with hopes of becoming actors or of being discovered or discovering themselves. Yes, I did that. You do have a certain freedom here that you don’t have in the Midwest – of just being who you are.

“I moved here in 1988, so I’ve been here almost 20 years.”

“What keeps you in San Diego?”

“The weather. I have to admit, having lived in different places with lots of different weather, it really is easy to live here. I chose San Diego because it reminds me of a lot of Latin America, where I spent so much of my childhood. You have the same architecture and the same climate. I speak Spanish, so the Hispanic community is a draw too.”

“What is Writer’s Ink?”

“They are a local organization whose goal is to keep the writing community of San Diego going. I’m on their advisory board, but my main role is hosting First Friday Open Mic.”

“Where are you located?”

“Second Fridays at 7 p.m. at 885 Orange Avenue, San Diego 92101”

“Based on regular price. Limited availability.”

“TCP-19029”

“**Behind the Scenes**

“**The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe** is next production for actors and crew of San Diego Junior Theatre, running January 5-21 in Casa del Prado Theatre. Four curious kids enter a magic wardrobe and find Narnia, where adventures abound, animals talk, and a wise lion named Aslan reigns over all. Directed by kite Rodda, based on The Chronicles of Narnia by C. S. Lewis. For those eight and older. Curtain rises at 7 p.m. Friday; 2 p.m. and 6 p.m. Saturday; 2 p.m. Sunday, January 7. Performance on January 20 is ASL translated. Tickets: $8-15. Reservations: 619-239-8352. (BROADWAY)

**Pet Pals Kids Club** convenes Saturday, January 6, 10 a.m.—noon, at San Diego Humane Society and SPACA (5300 Gaines Street). Kids 6-13 have “fun with other animal-loving kids.” Kids’ zone is free to attend. Required reservations: 619-243-3442. (LINDA VISTA)

**A Kid’s Life** with Zack, Zoe, and a golden retriever named Stanley is presented Saturday, January 6, at 2 and 5 p.m., at Californi-A Center for the Arts, Escondido (340 North Escondido Boulevard). Tickets: $10—$15. 619-839-4100. (ESCONDIDO)

**Botanical Craft Class**, this Botany for Kids class is offered Saturday, January 7,1:30 p.m., at Coastal Sage Gardening (3685 Voltaire Street). Free. 619-223-5229. (POINT LOMA)

Round Robin Chefs **Dinner Party** planned through Yonder for those from kindergarten through 12th grade at La Colonia Community Center (715 Valley Avenue). Series one is Saturday, January 27, 2:30 p.m. Points awarded at each tournament, with overall winners determined after June 26 competition. Pre-registration is $27 per tournament, or $44 for all six tournaments; space-available day-of-tournament fee is $30. 760-721-4400. (SUN VALLEY)

“A Disney Adventure” hosted by One Center for performances January 31—February 4. This Disney on Ice production hosted by Mickey and Minnie Mouse caters to the various characters that happen when the Incredibles take a family vacation. Discounted tickets available on Ticketmaster with promo code “Janet” through January 13. Tickets: $10–$15. 760-839-4100. (SPRING VALLEY)

**Barona Cultural Center and Museum** is located at 1095 Barona Road, 619-443-7003 x2. (LINDA VISTA)

**California Surf Museum, “The Surfer-Shape-Off,”**through 2008, showcases several surfers whose conceptual abilities and craft-inspired talent radically altered surfboard design. The show has always been for lighter, faster, more maneuverable boards, from Duke Kahanamoku in early 1900s to Tom Blake in 1920s to Simon Anderson in early 1980s.

The museum features surfing artifacts and memorabilia — such as surfboards and clothing — of local legends Phil Edwards, John “L.J.” Richards, and Peter Johnston, and Duke Kahanamoku. The museum is located at 223 North Coast Highway; 760-721-6876. (DEL MAR)

**Chula Vista Nature Center**, an interactive living museum devoted to the endangered Southern California coastal waters, located in Sweetwater Marsh National Wildlife Refuge. Visitors can use a Bioscanner to view animal species macroscopically, use a Wentzscope for views of microscopic organisms found in the “Sweetwater Soup,” and interact with computed videos exploring how tides affect the bay in the “Moon Tides, and the San Diego Bay” exhibit. Pet sharks and rays in the David A. Wergeland Shark and Ray Experience, see burrowing owls and migratory birds, and enjoy the xerophytic gardens.

The museum hosts the unique **Midwest — of just being who you are.”

**“What is Writer’s Ink?”**

“They are a local organization whose goal is to keep the writing community of San Diego going. I’m on their advisory board, but my main role is hosting First Friday Open Mic. "We strictly prose read- (continued on page 78)"
ings. We give a time limit of three minutes for each reading. Most people bail at it first, but they keep coming back. It only goes for an hour and a half. We get about 30 readers who each bring one little gem and they share it that night. It ends up being fun and fast paced.

I’m really strict on the time. They call me the time Nazi. But it’s come to the point where if anyone goes over everyone reacts. We’ve started recording them as well. We have a website where people can go on line and vote. It’s www.firstfridayprose.com.

Are the readings open to the public or just to the writers who are reading?

We usually have 50 people listening there and 30 who have come to read. It’s at the Grove on 30th and Juniper in South Park. We have a lot of fun. We just had our second anniversary in October.

“Violet is the only tragic character in your book. What are the challenges, as a writer, of placing such an element in an otherwise light and hilarious story?”

“I did worry about becoming maudlin with it. Of course I’m more spoken of than actually to avoid that. I prefer writing humor but I didn’t want to have a meaningful real quality, because life isn’t just fun and games. Violet gave me that little bit of depth, especially for the main character, Ruby.

“All of the Texas I know are incredibly State-Proud. Some of them speak of their state as if it were a country unto itself. What explains that?”

“My father tells me repeatedly that Texas is a republic and that it can become, once again, its own country as it was at one time. I think they stick to that otherwise lighthearted thing.”

“When I was young I’d go and visit my grandmother, who lived out in the country. The observation was that they were very independent people. They do have to survive in a pretty wild place. There is still a bit of the old West going on there. I think they’re just proud that they’re still able to do it.”

“I don’t think so. I mentioned that Locafo is modeled after my grandmother who was married so many times, but I sort of took my grandmother and pieced her into different characters.

“My family likes the book a lot because they know all the family stuff and they recognize little bits of people we all know.”

Readers can hear Ms. Wallen read from Moon Pie and Movie Stars on January 23 at Warwick’s in La Jolla at 7:30 p.m.

— Jerry Miller
Events that are underlined occur after January 11.

**CLASSICAL MUSIC**

Scott Pratt presents a “New Year’s Piano Celebration” for First Thursday Concert in Escondido Library’s Tower Room (239 South Kalmia Street) on January 4, p.m. Free. 669-839-4329. (escondido)

Tokyo String Quartet plays “String Quartet in F Major” in recognition of 150th anniversary of Schumann’s death for La Jolla Music Society’s Recital Series, Saturday, January 6, 8 p.m., in Sherwood Auditorium, Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego (700 Prospect Street). Also on program: pieces by Beethoven, Debussy. Pre-concert talk by Ronald Shaban, 7 p.m. Tickets 827-855. Reservations: 858-459-3728. (escondido)

**“Primarily Praetorius,” seasonal concert by La Jolla Renaissance Singers of sacred music — including rarely performed works by Hieronymous Praetorius, Jacob Praetorius II, and celebrated Michael Praetorius — Saturday, January 6, 7 p.m., at St. Elizabeth Seton Catholic Church (6628 Santa Isabel Street). Offering. 760-234-8233. (la jolla)

**Guest Organist** Iacov Lash presents concert on Sunday, January 7, 2 p.m., in Speckel Organ Pavilion. Free: 619-556-5180. (la jolla)

The San Francisco Chamber Orchestra plays Handel’s “Trumpet Concerto” with trumpeter Jeff Strong, the Shostakovich “Piano Concerto No. 1” with pianist Robert Schwartz, and “Symphony No. 5” by Shostakovich for Fallbrook Music Society concerto concert, Sunday, January 7, 3 p.m., at Bob Burton Center for the Performing Arts (2400 South Stagecoach Lane). Conductor’s preview: 2:30 p.m. Tickets: $35 general, $10 students. 760-451-8444. (palomar)

“Music at the Madeleine” series continues with German baroque and high Italian Renaissance music by La Jolla Renaissance Singers on Sunday, January 7, 3 p.m., at St. Mary Magdalene Church (1945 Illion Street). Free: 619-276-1041 (bay parks)

Pacific Camerata presents post-holiday concert of international music Sunday, January 7, 4 p.m., at San Rafael Church (17252 Bernardo Center Drive). Program includes pieces from von Bingen to Gregorian chant, Palestrina, France, “newly composed Arme-

**ART MUSEUMS**

**HOW TO SEND US YOUR LISTINGS** Contributions must be received by 5 p.m. Friday the week prior to publication for consideration. Do not phone. Send a complete description of the event, including the date, time, 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 READERS, Box 85803, San Diego CA 92186. Of fax to 619-838-2401. You may also submit information online at SanDiegoReader.com by clicking on the events section.

**ART LISTINGS**

**San Diego Art Museum**


**Museum of Photographic Art**


“Oceanside Museum of Art,” “La Voz de las Islas” features 43 works of art from 725 entries submitted by 318 artists from 20 countries, including Baja California, Mexico, Patricia Malarcher, Lloyd Herman selected pieces offering "surprises in design and nontraditional materials.” Closes Sunday, January 21. Find the museum at 700 Prospect Street. 858-454-3341. (la jolla)


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**San Diego Museum of Art, “Personal Views: Regarding Pri- vate Collections in San Diego” features 25 of the finest private col- lections to be found in the San Diego area. The collections highlight light historical artworks from the 19th and 20th Centuries, including works in various media by artists such as Rembrandt, Cassatt, Matisse, Klee, Keesle, de Kooning, Kahlo, Goldin. Closes Sunday, January 7. "Becks," on exhibit through February 18, focuses on top five paintings where im- portant information such as age and ownership is revealed. Works are drawn from museum’s Euro- pean collection. Labels, inscriptions, and markings divulge details of painting’s history of attribution, exhibition, ownership, sale. For further information, call 619-232-7931. (balboa park)

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**Gregorian Chant Mass**

Schola and congregational singing. Hymnals/missals provided with Latin-English pages.

Sunday, January 14, 4:00 pm

Pizza Social with singing by the Schola after Mass.

**Our Lady of the Rosary Church**

San Diego’s Jewel Box of Baroque and Rococo Art State and Date Streets (Little Italy) Downtown San Diego
the inside track

Wednesday, news of the Sultans’ “last show ever!” was included in a press release. The band will play a January 10 benefit at the Casbah for San Diego hardcore band that’s now on tour.” It was at a really cool club called the Machine Shop.

Fourth Project Entertainment, the film and graphic design concern of Marc Gariss (member of Radio Wendy, proprietor of Bandwagon clothing line), Gariss’s India Street office was ruined by a fire on December 17. The blaze, which took 55 firefighters, eight engines, and four trucks an hour to contain, caused over $1 million in damages.

What Reis fans read most clearly was the announcement that the show would be the Sultans’ last; then there was concern that damage had been done to the footage Gariss was using to had one too. Prior to this I was already thinking of wrapping things up…to simplify things by focusing on one thing at a time…. If it wasn’t for this benefit, [Sultans] would not be playing again. It will not be a teary goodbye. I definitely don’t want to say we will never EVER play again, but I just don’t see it happening.”

— David Stampa

Aching for Rock School "I just got named the national music director of the Paul Green School of Rock and will be opening a San Diego branch of the school early next year," says guitarist Mike Keneally. "I've come to know a lot of brilliant musicians in San Diego through the years, and I'm looking to see who among them's got the teaching bug...the locale is still being sorted out. Our plan is to be open for business by early February."

Founded in 1998 by musician Paul Green, the School of Rock Music (unrelated to and dissimilar from the 2003 Jack Black film) has facilities operating in around a dozen U.S. cities. For tuition that ranges from $180 to $280 a month, students between the ages of 7 and 18 get weekly private instruction on the instrument of their choice and supervised rehearsals with other students. Professional touring musicians often guest-lecture, and seminar topics include "Songwriting," "How to Get Gigs and Promote Your Band," "Music Business 101," and "What Really Goes Into a Tour."

"This certainly will cut into time devoted to my career," says Keneally, the former Frank Zappa sideman, "but I was pretty much aching for some kind of a change anyway."

Keneally will perform with a touring lineup of School of Rock Music students at the Epicentre on January 21.

— Jay Allen Sanford

Hardcore Holiday "We played a small show on a cold, snowy winter evening in Flint, Michigan," writes Brian Sheerin, vocalist for Mower, a San Diego hardcore band that’s now on tour. “It was at a really cool club called the Machine Shop.

"The road conditions were horrible, and it was a small turnout, about 50 people, so we stepped it up a notch. At one point we invited the crowd to join us on stage and the next thing you know you just about everybody in the crowd came up with us. It was great. A mosh pit even formed on the stage. We were dumping bottles of wine over our heads and just partying really hard because it was a winter night and an intimate setting.”

After the set, the club owners, who had been impressed by a Mower performance several months earlier, invited them back to the club to hang out over the weekend.

“They said if we were still going to be in town, we should come back and have a drink with them because Taproot [from Ann Arbor, Michigan] was playing both Friday and Saturday night. As it turned out, the next town we were supposed to play [Creve Coeur, Illinois] got blasted with freezing rain and snow and we had to cancel…so we took them up on their offer.

“We had played with Taproot once before in San Diego at Cox Arena with Disturbed and Papa Roach. We arrived at the Machine Shop with some booze as a gift for the band, all of whom were really down to earth and cool.

“So, that Friday night we watched Taproot rock a packed house, and the next day we told them that we were snowed in in the Flint area and asked if we could play with them Saturday night. There were a number of local bands on the bill, but we told them we’d open up early in the night if they wanted and that we would play for free. We figured, what the hell, it can’t hurt to ask.

“The Taproot camp was so generous; they not only let us play on their sold-out hometown show, they put us in the direct-support slot right before them… We went from having nothing to do in Michigan to playing for a sold-out crowd.”

— Edwin Decker

Jewel Watch Blender magazine reports that Jewel (Kilcher) has left Atlantic Records after a six-album deal that began in 1995 with Pieces of You (which sold ten million copies worldwide) and ended with last year’s largely ignored Goodbye Alice in Wonderland. Atlantic claims Jewel has sold more than 27 million records worldwide.

Following the success of Pieces of You, it was reported that Jewel and her mother, Nedra Carroll lived in a Rancho Santa Fe Tudor-style home valued at $2 million. The 31-year-old singer/songwriter now lives on a ranch in Texas with 7000 Frames... 3 Convenient Stores

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Rockstar Supernova
FEB. 25 • Tickets starting at $65
George Carlin
MARCH 1 • Tickets starting at $60

Lupillo Rivera
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Tickets are available at all Ticketmaster outlets including Tower Records, Macy’s, Save Mart, Wherehouse Music (select locations) and f.y.e.
Mary Poppins Gone Mad “Our band revolves around a purple electric guitar, drums, and a multicolored toy xylophone that cost $14 at Target,” says Tragic Tantrum Cabaret singer/guitarist Zeph. “We aren’t afraid to venture into the territory of melodicas and glass bottles either.” The performance-art trio appears frequently at Twigg’s Coffeehouse, calling itself “punk cabaret” in flyers. “The term was coined by the Dresden Dolls, who have [in their act] living statues you can write on, ballerinas, milkmaids, belly dancers… We’re currently working with a puppet-maker on props for one song, we have a projector for film and photography, and we’re attempting to work a sculpture or two into the act.” Singer/syristic Zoé says, “It feels a bit like Mary Poppins gone mad, or like you’ve fallen through the looking glass into a world of red, black, white, stark colors, make-up, masks, and burlesque theater. At the same time, it can be very emotional, deep, human, and erotic…” Tragic Tantrum’s third member, Meagan Widdles, “has things,” explains Zoé. “Mostly drums.

Screws out “Mark and Tom made the call to MCA,” says former Finch drummer Alex Pappas. “Five years ago, former blink bandmates Mark Hoppus and Tom DeLonge signed Finch to their Scout Management company. The duo helped engineer the band’s deal with MCA/Geffen. The first Finch record, 2002’s What It Is to Burn, sold half a million copies, according to Pappas. Finch toured with New Found Glory, Brand New, and Coheed and Cambria. Finch left MCA in 2003 because of “artistic differences,” but he was fortunate enough to get publishing/songwriting credits on Burn. It paid off for all the Finch boys.

Unscrewed “Dance and sing with the member, Zaza, sometime explains ZöE. “Mostly drums. Widdes, “hits things,” and we’re attempting to work a sculpture or two into the act.”

Once, she had a boyfriend who was sort of drum-shaped. It didn’t last.” An occasional fourth member, Zaza, sometimes dances and sings with the group, though “she’s not always available for performances,” says Zeph. “She studied ballet when she was younger, and she’s a talented painter… We’re currently on the lookout for new dancers, as well as other painters and art-centered locals. Actors, photographers, puppeteers, filmmakers, face painters, clowns — we’ll even take a mime. What the hell, nobody else will.”

“BURN” PAYS OFF FOR PAPPAS “You don’t need to sign a deal with a manager. If he produces for you, you keep him. If he doesn’t, he’s out. Never sign a management contract. Managers are not there to help the band anyways. If the manager really cares about the band, they’ll work without a safety net; i.e., a contract.” — Ken Leighton

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San Diego Reader
February 14, 2007
When Lisa Marie Presley played at the Belly Up Tavern in November, I saw Linda Love Saenz, whom I had met at a party a month earlier. Years ago, I had seen her collection of Elvis memorabilia at the Del Mar Fair. She wanted to tell me about every Elvis collectible she owned. Some of the stuff was fascinating. For example, she has some of the leather from the same roll that was used to make Elvis’s outfit for his 1968 “comeback special” on TV. That was interesting, but I wanted Mrs. Saenz to tell me about the time she parted with Elvis.…

“I was maybe eight years old, living in Nashville, Tennessee. My mom and dad bought about the time she partied with Elvis.… In 1968 "comeback special" on TV. That was inroll that was used to make Elvis’s outfit for his captivating. For example, she has owned. Some of the stuff was fascinating. For example, she has her collection of Elvis memorabilia at the Del Mar Fair. She wanted to tell me about every Elvis collectible she owned. Some of the stuff was fascinating. For example, she has some of the leather from the same roll that was used to make Elvis’s outfit for his 1968 “comeback special” on TV. That was in-

“People, people, please, please go away. If you stay, I will not get to stay out and play. My daddy is in Las Vegas.” We did what she asked; we left. The guard never had to say a word.

“Let me tell you how I got to see Elvis. In 1970, we went to Vegas to see him at the International Hotel. We also stayed there. I sat third person from the stage, with Del next to me. Ladies were going to stage for a kiss from Elvis, but I could not move from my chair. I was in awe. I was mesmerized. The show, with dinner and two drinks, costs $15 a person. …

“The next year we went to see Elvis at the same place. I couldn’t keep myself away from the stage, and I got three kisses. It was his first of two shows of the evening on February 13, 1971. When the curtains came down and it ended, we had to leave so the crew could get ready for the second show. As we were in the lobby I spoke to one of the [members of the] Stamps Quartet, his backup singers. He told me that after Elvis’s second show, [Elvis] would be having a wind-down party at his hotel suite and if I wanted to go I’d have to talk with the security guard up there. I asked if I could bring Del, and he told me only ladies were invited to go to Elvis’s party, except for his bodyguards, family, and special guests. My friend, also named Linda, and I went up to the suite, and it turned out the guard was from Kentucky, where my friend was from. We talked to him while Elvis performed his second show. Then his entourage and others started to come up to the suite. The guard asked one of Elvis’s stepbrothers if we could go to the party, and we got to go in. This was around 2:30 a.m. on February 14, Valentine’s morning. There was no way that our husbands would have told us we couldn’t go to Elvis’s party. They were actually happy for us. …

“We had all gathered in the suite, in the living room, and dining area. There were drinks and hors d’oeuvres being served. I was sitting on a sofa which faced the front door, where Elvis would enter. We were told by one of the guards, ‘No screaming, no photos.’ We were to be perfect ladies, or we would be asked to leave the party. Elvis came in, wearing a red shirt with elastic around the sleeves. He was drinking Gatorade, and when he’d finish one his stepbrother would have another ready for him, every time. Elvis was like a kid in a candy shop, talking, showing off his honorary sheriff’s badge and other badges he received. He played albums on a record player, but not his music; it was Mac Davis, Joe South, and others.…

“At one point, I went to the restroom. It was large. It had a barber chair and was decorated in all black and white. I had my camera with me, but in fear that I would be seen from a hidden camera, I didn’t take a photo. All the ladies were very nice and talked. Elvis did most of the talking, though.

“It seemed 5:00 a.m. came really fast, and all the ladies lined up to leave. My friend and I were at the end of the line. All received a kiss from Elvis as they left his suite. My friend and I — and I don’t remember for what reason — got to stay. It was just Elvis and us left in the party room. I remember my friend standing behind the bar, and Elvis and I were standing in front of it. I could not keep from touching him on the left side of his face. I took one finger, slowly over his cheek. He turned me to a surprised look. I said, ‘Elvis, I would never hurt you.’ He was just so beautiful; I couldn’t resist. ‘He showed my friend and I pictures from his wallet of Lisa Marie and Priscilla. He showed us his rings. One of them Priscilla had designed for him. He even let us try them on…. He was a perfect gentleman the entire morning. He didn’t even drink alcohol. Just Gatorade.”

“Uncle Vester… yelled, ‘I thought I told you not to touch anything!’”

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San Diego Reader
January 4, 2007

Friday January 5

Serge Devant
Allen S. | Austin Scott

Info and presale tickets

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Saturday January 6

Basic Perspective

Upcoming Events

Friday January 12
Kaskade

Dj Ideal | Cris Herrera

Saturday January 13
Landshark

Lance Desardi | Erick Diaz | Markalan

Friday January 19
Gabriel & Dresden

Boris MD
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Gaslamp Tavern: Thursdays, DJs Billie Knight, Tek, and guests spin true hip-hop, Fridays and Saturdays, DJ Silke Knight spins Taven music. Sundays, DJ Tek spins 90s. 868 Fifth Avenue, Gaslamp. 619-239-5550.

Habana Restaurant: Saturdays, Adventurous Jazz, salsa, merengue, and chachas with David Garcia and David Sucre. 10 p.m. 7777 University Avenue, La Mesa. 619-713-1711.

Honey Bee Hive: Wednesdays, Mista Stax, underground hip-hop, downtempo, and breakfast with DJ Ricky Wrecks and Mada. 8 p.m. to 1 a.m. Thursdays, Deep, drums / bass with DJs Wallrander, Probable Cause, and Stylerc Mac. 10 p.m. to 2 a.m. 1491 C Street (corner of 14th Street, across from City College), downtown. 619-762-6000.

Inferno Young Adult Nightclub: Fridays and Saturdays, DJ Kooll J spins hip-hop, house, and reggae. 9 p.m. to 1:30 a.m., high-school students and up. 777 Morena Street, Escondido. 760-741-1271.

Jack’s Lounge: Fridays, very dance music with DJ Maha and weekly guests.

Saturday, vocal house with DJ Sean Wilson. 7665 Girard Avenue, La Jolla. 858-416-8111.

Kadam: Wednesdays, Diverse Garden, punk, gothic, and civilized with DJs Bryan Pollock, Stern, and Grendell. First Saturday of the month. Brednaitz Night, live electronic, machine funk, and break. Second and third Saturday of the month. Underworld Hypersound, breaks, house, and progressive with Jack Tripper and guests. Tuesdays, Distortion, mashups, bastard pop, and electrobass. 9 p.m. to 2 a.m. 21 and up. No cover. 6000 30th Street, North Park. 619-650-2900.

The Kava Lounge: Second Friday of the month, Ascension, Robin Roth and Tom King spin the best in dark underground dance music. 9 p.m. to 2 a.m. 21 and up. 2121 Kettner Boulevard, Midtown. 619-545-0933.

The Kemington Club: Wednesdays, 6th-Per, hip-hop, rock "n" soul, and funk with DJs Buddha and SC. 9:30 p.m. 4079 Adams Avenue, Kensington. 619-284-2484.

Michael’s Lounge (Hyatt Regency): Thursdays, DJs Nuka, Sky, and Chris Mullins spin hip-hop, dance, and ‘70s/80s. 9 p.m. 5777 La Jolla Village Drive, La Jolla. 858-552-1224.

Mission Valley Resort: Thursdays and Fridays, Menlo Lounge, salsa, bachata, and cha-cha with DJ Uzi. 9 p.m. to midnight. 875 Hotel Circle South, Mission Valley. 619-248-2801.

Moondogs Pacific Beach: Saturdays, hip-hop & R&B with DJs Enigma and Cisco. 9 p.m. to 2 a.m. No cover. 582 Garnet Avenue, Pacific Beach. 858-483-5550.

Moos’s Gaslamp: Sundays, Montrose, house and trance with DJ Nuka. 9 p.m. 555 Fifth Avenue, downtown. 619-762-5599.

Riley’s Sports Bar: First Friday of the month, 30 Furry, funk, gothic, and industrial with DJs O’Grady and guests. 9 p.m. to 2 a.m. 21 and up. 2001 Nimitz Boulevard, Fort Loma. 619-285-8635.

San Diego Sports Club: Wednesdays, Club Pump Culture, Robin Roth and other female DJs spin indie, electro pop, and ‘90s Second and fourth Saturdays of the month, Club Fashion, electroclash, Brit pop, and indie dance punk with DJs Naro, Scimitar, Saul Q, Barry Weaver, and more. Third Saturday of the month, Club de Suce, gothic, industrial, and ‘90s with DJs Darkman and Crisp. 9 p.m. to 2 a.m. 1271 University Avenue, Hillcrest. 619-239-7227.

710 Beach Club: Sundays, hip-hop, funk, and old school with the Hustle Boy Allstars. 710 Garnet Avenue, Pacific Beach. 858-465-7444.

Shooterz: Thursdays, Club 70s, new waves, new romantic, and punk synthpop with DJs Bryan Pollock, Sidney, and Stein. Saturdays, Underworld, industrial, gothic, and dark electro with DJs Bryan Pollock, Cuban, and Harlot. 515 30th Street, North Park. 619-574-0744.
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Solana Beach

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Best Live
Music Venue
for 2006!

San Diego Reader January 4, 2007 91
**DANCE**

**Static Lounges**
- Saturdays, house music to dark dance beats. 9 p.m. to 1 a.m. and 2 a.m. at 634 Broadway (between Sixth and Seventh Avenue), downtown. 619-544-1619.

**Whiskey Girl**
- Fridays, DJ Marc Thorne mixes music videos. Saturdays, DJ Famous Dave and DJ Marc. DJ Marc Thorne mixes mix music videos. Sundays, DJ Dr. Maltese. Mainstays, DJ Mansion. DJ Mix. DJ Mix and guests. 9 p.m. to 2 a.m. and 4 a.m. at 615 Fifth Avenue, downtown. 619-264-1616.

**The Whistle Stop**
- Second Thursday of the month, Progressive Zora, indie, Brit pop, and soul. First and third Saturdays of the month, Transport, Brit rock, indie, and electrolab with DJs Gabe Vega and guests. Second and fifth Saturday of the month, Beaches (Corner of Prospect & Magnolia). Saturday, 6:30 p.m. to 9 p.m. and Saturday, free live rock/blues.

**The Calypso Cafe**

**Canoes**

**Ché Café**
- UCSD Campus, 5500 Gilman Drive, Student Center B-0123G, La Jolla. 619-534-2311. Saturday, 8 p.m., Fridays, Lollipops, W.O. Mutes, twins, Honey Troop, and Porcelain Wigs. workshops/seminars/punk. Sunday, the Hope Conspiracy, creampuff, Final Fight, and Tomcat, hardcore punk.

**Clay’s**
- the Hotel La Jolla, 7705 La Jolla Shores Drive, La Jolla. 858-499-5941. live jazz.

**Cody’s La Jolla**
- 8050 Girard Avenue, La Jolla. 858-639-0640. Thursday, 7 p.m to 9 p.m., Jay Arnette. Light classical music/tin pan alley. Friday and Wednesday, 7 p.m., Dick Kang, jazz guitar. Saturday, 7 p.m., Stefan Stern, jazz piano. Sunday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. by Jay. Carafas, acoustic jazz-rock.

**Dreamstreet**

**The Lodge at Torrey Pines**

**Pasquale on Prospect**
- 220 Prospect Street, La Jolla. 619-454-2146. Thursday, Gil Barnes, Mark Frames, Jimmy, and PT’s Jam. Wednesday, acoustic. Saturday, Jeff Dammel and the Revolution and the Mayan Kogs. reggae wednesday, the American Statesman, the Beaters, Reggae, and Orange Kap, rock.

**The Kraken**
- 8515 Navajo Road • 619-465-1730 (Albertsons shopping plaza at Navajo & Lake Murray)

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**Pasquale on Prospect**
- 220 Prospect Street, La Jolla. 619-454-2146. Thursday, Gil Barnes, Mark Frames, Jimmy, and PT’s Jam. Wednesday, acoustic. Saturday, Jeff Dammel and the Revolution and the Mayan Kogs. reggae wednesday, the American Statesman, the Beaters, Reggae, and Orange Kap, rock.

**The Kraken**
- 8515 Navajo Road • 619-465-1730 (Albertsons shopping plaza at Navajo & Lake Murray)

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**The Kraken**
- 8515 Navajo Road • 619-465-1730 (Albertsons shopping plaza at Navajo & Lake Murray)
Friday, Saturday, Sunday, and Wednesday, Steve Brewer, acoustic.

**Borders Books and Music** (Gastown), 106 Sixth Avenue, San Diego. 619-298-0119.

**Buslaechi’s Historianta** (San Diego, 858 Fifth Avenue, San Diego, 619-298-0119.

**The Crash** (San Diego), 3230 Ketter Boulevard, mailbox. 619-212-6666. Music is rock/alternative unless otherwise noted. Thursday, the Tranquil Brothers, Lava, and Dead Rock Walk. Friday, Grand Ole Party, the C’V Tiger, and the Prayer. Saturday, Transfer, Skin Party, and the Modern Falls. Sunday, Apples Mafehns and the folk. Monday, Fifty on Their Back, the Sekers, Vito Eliea, and Peter and the Wolf. Tuesday, Hector and Totemos.

**Club Montage**, 2028 Hancock Street, Balboa Park. 619-294-9590.

**Croce’s Jazz Bar**, 901 Fifth Avenue, downtown, 619-231-9355. All music is jazz unless otherwise noted. Thursday, the Tranquil Brothers, Lava, and Dead Rock Walk. Friday, Grand Ole Party, the C’V Tiger, and the Prayer. Saturday, Transfer, Skin Party, and the Modern Falls. Sunday, Apples Mafehns and the folk. Monday, Fifty on Their Back, the Sekers, Vito Eliea, and Peter and the Wolf. Tuesday, Hector and Totemos.

**Dance**.

**San Diego**

**The Aero Club**, 585 India Street, San Diego. 619-297-7211. 


**Borden Books and Music** (Mission Valley), 1727 Camden North, Mission Valley, 619-295-2301. Friday, 8 p.m., Lee Tyler Post, acoustic rock.

**Brick by Brick**, 1101 Bonus Avenue, Bay Park, 619-275-4200. Friday, 7 p.m., Live rock/swing/dance.

**Club Salsa**: Thursday, 6 p.m. to 9 p.m., DJ Famous Dave. Friday and Saturday, 8 p.m. to midnight, Lee Tyler Post, pop/jazz/standards. Saturday, 8 p.m. to midnight, Karen Giorgio, pop/jazz/standards. Sunday, 7 p.m. to 10 p.m., Cynthia Hawthorn, jazz.

**The Casbah**, 858 Fourth Avenue, downtown, 619-298-1870. Rock and roll sing-along dueling pianos.

**The Clubhouse** (at College and University). 619-469-2081.

**Cajon Boulevard**, 1072 Camino del Rio North, Mission Valley, 619-295-2301. Friday, 8 p.m., Lee Tyler Post, acoustic rock.

**The Crush** (San Diego), 3230 Ketter Boulevard, mailbox. 619-212-6666. Music is rock/alternative unless otherwise noted. Thursday, the Tranquil Brothers, Lava, and Dead Rock Walk. Friday, Grand Ole Party, the C’V Tiger, and the Prayer. Saturday, Transfer, Skin Party, and the Modern Falls. Sunday, Apples Mafehns and the folk. Monday, Fifty on Their Back, the Sekers, Vito Eliea, and Peter and the Wolf. Tuesday, Hector and Totemos.

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**Dance**.

**San Diego**

**The Aero Club**, 585 India Street, San Diego. 619-297-7211. 


SAN DIEGO (continued)
rock/alternative. Sunday, sold out.

Wednesday, jazz.

We’re Moving! Grand Opening Fri., Jan. 5! New Location: 1900 San Diego Ave. Oyler’s, 2228 El Cajon Blvd, Normal Heights. 619-284-6594. Friday, 7 p.m. to midnight, Rob Deez & Shannon Curtis. Friday, Big Rig Delusion and The Duke of Ragged, country-rock. Saturday, Van Halen, Lindsey, and Aaron Brown. Sunday, Angela Panta and Chad Ferris. Monday, open mike. Wednesday, the Barrett and Cross, rock/alternative.

Lucky Star Nightclub and Ballroom, 3893 14th Street, San Diego. 619-280-4222. Wednesday, 7 p.m. to 9 p.m., the Victory Rose Trio, vintage jazzy/swing. Thursday, 11 p.m. to 2 a.m., Vintage Vegas, jazz.

O’Connell’s Pub and Nightclub, 1150 Mission Boulevard, Bay Park. 619-276-5637. Friday and Saturday, live rock/punk/alternative.

The Odd Sod, 3773 Adams Avenue, Normal Heights. 619-284-6594. Friday, Gene Waver, Irish folk. Tuesday, traditional Irish jam session.


Friday and Saturday, live garage rock/punk/alternative.


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Friday and Saturday, live garage rock/punk/alternative.

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Hotel del Coronado, 1500 Orange Avenue, Coronado. 619-435-6611. Babcock and Story: Thursday through 4:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., Creek, San Diego. 619-291-3718. Friday, 6 p.m. to 10 p.m., the Justin Brothers, rock and roll. Saturday, 6 p.m. to 10 p.m., live rock. Sunday: 5 p.m. to 9 p.m., David Harvey, acoustic. Wednesday: 5 p.m. to 9 p.m., Gary Srile, acoustic.

ISLAND SPORTS AND SPIRITS, 3454 Orange Avenue, Coronado. 619-435-6611. Wednesday, 5 p.m. to 9 p.m., live rock. Sunday, 5 p.m. to 10 p.m., live rock. Saturday, salsa dancing. Saturday, 8:30 p.m. to 10 p.m., music is acoustic/folk unless otherwise noted. Thursday, the Justin Brothers, Friday, live music. Saturday, the Offsets, rock. Sunday, Jim Moore, Monday, David Harvey. Tuesday, 2 Guys Will Drive. Wednesday, live music.
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Nomad: Second Wind (Gaslamp)
Nicky D. & the Whiskey Dickens: 710 Beach Club
The Offbeats: McP’s Irish Pub and Grill
One Theory: Canes, Brick By Brick
Orange Kap: 710 Beach Club
Peter and the Wolf: The Casbah
Private Domain: Dick’s Last Resort
Dennis Quaid and the Sharks: Balboa Park
The Rarities: Lestat’s Coffee House
Joe Rathburn: Del Dios Bar and Grill
Ratt’s Revenge: Tower Bar
Reason to Rebel: 710 Beach Club
Red Lantern: Coffee Bar and Grill
The Reventos: 710 Beach Club
Rick Rocket: Dreamstreet
Rockstar: Dreamstreet
Dane Scott and the Panty Peasors: Dreamstreet
Serious Guise: Windy Second (San Carlos)
Shockwave Four: Tiki House
Silent Civilian: The Jumping Turtle
The Stilletos: Henry’s Pub
The Strikers: The Casbah
Ten 13 Concept: The Jumping Turtle
The Tigerwashes: Tiki House
The Tijuana Barbarians: Dreamstreet
Transfer: The Casbah
The Truckee Brothers: The Casbah
Trunk Monkey: Bar Louie

Paint-by-numbers rock evolved from nu-metal. When people rooted their eyes at Fred Durst’s rapping and turntablism hybrid, paint-by-numbers rock was born.

Unsent: The Jumping Turtle
Viny Radios: The Casbah
Warner Drive: 710 Beach Club
Way Cool, Jr.: Canes
Wild Child: Canes

Jesse Davis: Brunn Grono Restaurant
The Disco Pimps: Dick’s Last Resort
James East: Pasquale on Prospect
Mark Fulton: Pasquale on Prospect
The Good Times: Henry’s Pub
Jimi Lee Lewello: Dukas Grill and Sports
The Love Rangers: The Alley
Makihai: Humphrey’s
Melissa and the Monkeybusiness: Del Dios Bar and Grill
P.T. truck: Pasquale on Prospect

Jazz / Big Band
Burnett Anderson: Café LaMaze
Tom Bishop: Rancho Bernardo Inn
Blue Lagoon: The Book Works/Panama Cafe
Ray Bric: Don’s Last Resort
The Jumping Turtle: Dreamstreet
Crew’s Jazz Bar
Sammy Cominoloda: Café LaMaze
Gilbert Castellanos and His Quintet: Don’ty’s

The Soul Raver: Jimmy Lee’s
The Stepping Feet: Whiskey Girl

ROCK
Allied Records:
Alpine Daze and Boogie Nights:
The American Hitmen: 710 Beach Club
The Atomic Cowboys:
Bedpost Buzzard:
The Dukes of Haggard:
The Detroit Underground:
Dreamstreet
Fish and the Seaweeds:
The Atomic Cowboys:
The Instinct of Aggression:...
Insight:
Jimmy Love's
Barbara Jamerson: Hotel del Coronado
The Jazz 101 Band: Pasquale on Prospect
Jazzilla: Turquoise Cafe
Dick Koenig: City's La Jolla
Tony Lasley: Hotel del Coronado
Mark Lesemann: Cosmic Bar and Grill
Barry Levich: La Valencia Hotel
Brian Levy: Dance's
Stella and Dave Lindgren: Hotel del Coronado
Peggy Lloyd: Vescovino Gourmet Restaurant
Fran Loskota: The Wagonette Hotel
Masterpiece: Jimmy Love's
Jerry Melnick: The Inn at Rancho Santa Fe, Rancho Bernardo Inn
The Shep Mayers Quartet: Croce's Jazz Bar
Mystique: Jimmy Love's
Mike Nelson: Sogno Di Vino, The Lodge at Torrey Pines
The New Standard Jazz Trio: Boardman's Romance
Mario Olveras and Latin Spices: Pasquale on Prospect
Dan Papalia: The Lodge at Torrey Pines
Peter Prince of Piano: The Wagonette Hotel
Primo: Croce's Jazz Bar, Belly Up Tavern
Ritmo Caliente: Seville
The Victoria Rose Trio: Lucky Star Nightclub and Ballroom
Rick Rosas: La Valencia Hotel
Salsa Caliente: Seville
Christian Scott: Humphrey's
Dave Scott: Pasquale on Prospect
Robert Sebastini: Cafe LaMaze
The Speak Easy Quartet: Claire de Lune Coffee Lounge
Stage 4: From Giorno Restaurant
Stefani Stevenia: City's La Jolla
Trece de la Suerte: Portagalli
The Jaime Valle Quartet: Tutto Mare
The Jaime Valle-Bob Magnusson Jazz Duo: Harry's Bar and American Grill
Vintage Vegas: Martin's Bar and Grill
Scott Wallingford: Cafe LaMaze
Jason Weber: Humphrey's
Yaven: Croce's Jazz Bar

REGGAE / SKA
Diego Roots: Belly Up Tavern
Elijah Emanuel and the Revelations: 710 Beach Club
Fighting Chance: The Jumping Turtle
Godly: 710 Beach Club
Marcia Griffiths: 6th & B
Beres Hammond: 6th & B
Irie It: The Jumping Turtle
Kingsland: Dreamweaver, The Jumping Turtle
Leon and the Peoples: 4th & B
Barrington Levy: Belly Up Tavern
Lion's Paw: The Jumping Turtle
The Mayan Kings: 710 Beach Club
The Jerry McCann Band: Coyote Bar and Grill
The Mystic Roots: 710 Beach Club
Social Green: Dreamweaver
Uplift: The Laubouche

COUNTRY
Big Rig Deluxe: Local's Coffee House
The California Rangers: McCabe's Beach Club
Fishball: Gasperini Tavern
The Honky Tonk Kings: Runaway Family
The Working Cowboy Band: Tringa Tea and Coffee Company
as i hear it
BY BRIAN CARVER

Austere

SAN DIEGO SONGS TAKE THE STREET TEST

Artist: The Heartaches
Song: “Time” (from the CD Too Cool for School)
Headed By: Andy Urzua, Banker’s Hill

The melody, for some reason, I kept thinking of Buddy Holly. Buddy Holly meets the Clash or something. It had a constant riff and it didn’t really change and his singing would be the part that I say sounds like the Cure. It had a nice little rhythm to it. I like to hear that (song) on the radio or maybe catch it at a show. That constant riff is what keeps it going — I put that kind of music on when I’m driving. It makes it feel like you’re driving faster.

They seem pretty mainstream — just rock and roll to me. The lead singer’s voice stood out. I liked the voice. Parts of it (sounded like) Eddie Vedder when he gets really low. Musically, for some reason it struck me that I’d like to see them live. It got a little repetitive at the end, I thought. It’s something that I think wouldn’t be that objectionable to people if you threw it on in the background.

ON THE ROAD

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Artist: Axe
Song: “Ragga Muffin Soldiers” (from the CD Shining in the Shade)
Headed By: John Nguyen, Pacific Beach

It reminds me a lot of Sean Paul. It (also) reminds me of the guy who sang “Mr. Boombastic.” It was reggae meets gangsta rap — they had gunshots going off in the background. It didn’t sound right to me when you mix it together. I think they were trying to be catchy (and) get just some airplay for the group or that song. It was more of a “hang out” song (for) either cruising in your car or hanging around with all your friends.
The Best of Tastes, 2006

Yesterday — all those dinners seem so far away. Another hundred-odd restaurant meals have gone to my hips since the Best Bites of '05. This past year has seen more chefs who are dedicated to cooking as a creative art, or at least a devotional craft, using the best ingredients they can find — which means our region’s amazing local produce, along with well-cared-for heritage breeds of meat and poultry and non-endangered wild fish. At the same time, the dreary, once-ubiquitous steamed “Sysco veggie medley” of pre-cut blah produce is growing less common, though still served at some of the older “view” eateries and neighborhood hash-houses. Is San Diego reaching the tipping point to becoming a “foodie city”? I suspect so. The year has also seen positive changes at the lower price end. Many new and remade ethnic restaurants are serving food with some actual resemblance to the cuisines of their homelands, rather than a mess of American-oriented compromises. And when it comes to all-American favorites, this year a couple of newbies reaquainted me with the joys of serious, non-chain burgers and pub grub.

With so much variety, it’s always impossible to choose a single “Best Restaurant,” but here are some where I’ve enjoyed exceptionally good meals this year — plus more where a particular dish was especially memorable.

**Best New “Money-Nothing” Restaurant:**
Blanca (Beachwalk Plaza, 437 South Highway 101, Solana Beach, 858-720-0827). Sheek and sophisticated Blanca is our first true 21st-Century restaurant. That the cuisine is driven by wholesome and delicious ingredients is just a start. Then comes the art of highlighting perfect ingredients so radiantly and originally that diners roose to rapt attention. Chef Wade Hageman, a protégé of renowned San Francisco chef Michael Mina, has imported a similar complex, intellectual, labor-intensive style of cooking that appeals as much to the mind as to the senses. You can’t quite taste all the flavors layered into each dish here, so much as sense their presence. The only flaw lies in a stony-cool ambience with a soupçon of “in-crowd” claustrophobia. But if you concentrate on the cooking, you won’t even notice it.

**Best New Almost-Affordable Restaurant:**
Market (3702 Via de la Valle at El Camino Real, Del Mar, 858-523-0007). Carl Schroeder left Arterra to open his own restaurant, and it’s a winner in decor, ambience, and especially food. The restaurant’s name is a hint that it specializes in “market-driven cuisine” — the daily changing menu is inspired by whatever seasonal foodstuffs the chef finds at the local produce market (Chino Farms, in this case). Not only are the flavors fine, but this is an exceptionally comfortable restaurant, with great care taken to keep sound levels moderate and the sphere is relaxing and casually sensual. The staff readily cook at home, making this something like a cookbook you can order up. The international wine list may not be a tome, but sommelier Scotty Johnson offers some of the most interesting bottles in town.

**Best New Restaurant to Gobble French Food Until the Wee Hour:**
Galileo 101 (2204 Fourth Avenue at Ivy, Banker’s Hill, 619-236-8516). Nathan Coulon, the scion of the Belgian Robinson, Hillcrest, 619-299-8272, and 906 Market at Ninth Street, downtown, 619-595-0115) abandoned Americanized vegetarian-fritling blandness and introduced chef-specialty sections on the menu of both its old and new locations. The chefs are from Northwest Thailand, and in their lively dishes now you can almost smell the Ping River and the fog-shrouded hills of Chiang Mai. Oh, and their Rambutan Cosmo vies with Samba’s caipirinha for my “cocktail of the year.”

**Best-Kept Secret:**
Galileo 101 (West Tower, Harbor Club, 201 J Street at Second Avenue, Suite 101, downtown, 619-702-7101). Like the heavenly bodies studied by its namesake astronomer, Galileo has ever been in transit, moving through various phases, from upscale Italian cuisine to its current “progressive European cuisine.” Let’s hope that it now becomes a fixed star. At an old but pretty location across from the Convention Center, Joe Craig (formerly sous-chef of Chive) has taken over the kitchen, turning out dishes with superb ingredients, imaginative preparations, and consistently fine execution. The room is beautiful in a spaced-out mode, but the food is down to earth. Try scallops with oso bucco, or a wild mushroom and duck confit tart, and you’ll be glad there’s life on this planet.

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of the unique, richly seasoned cuisine from an ever-expanding menu. You sit at tables with chairs, making the experience less “Arabian night out” and more about enjoying great cooking and charming service, bistrot-style.

Honorable Mentions, “Ethnic Gets Serious” Category: D’Mood (4628 Park Boulevard at “University” Heights overhead street sign, 619-297-6665). Persia’s vestigial civilized culture comes with the cooking here, which embraces traditional dishes and creative improvisations on Middle Eastern themes, including a bar menu of “small plates” available until late on weekend nights. The food is delicious (try the pomegranate-glazed roast game tender — and chef Johnson cooked at the dearly departed Juke Joint, and here he’s turning out equally worthy casual food. Fish and shrimp are fried tender and moist, coated in a thin, flavorful cornmeal-bread batter jacked up with black pepper, cayenne, and a pinch of Cajun spices. The tartar sauce is house-made, or you can choose cocktail sauce or house-made Dijon remoulade. The chicken tenders (sandwiches actually are tender — and chef Mel’s thick, juicy, and incendiary “Brine or the Heat” burger left me happily breathing fire.

Eight Great Dishes: 1-6 (H almost Salomon, 161 6th Street at Sixth Avenue, downtown, 619-531-0744). Chef Christian Grases’ truffled white-corn roasts with butter-sauced whole, fresh chanterelle mushrooms in a creamy chive-and-lemon-fondue sauce — devasting! Paradise Grill (Flower Hill Mall, 2690 Via de la Valle at I-5 off-ramp, Del Mar, 619-530-0800). The marinated grilled shrimp kebabs coated (for crunch) with Rice Krispies, impaling a hunk of grilled watermelon, is a wickedly witty dish. But even more impressive is the miracle that chef Justin Hoehn confers on quinoa, that bland “good for you” Peruvian grain — turning it into a lively, tomato-spiked “conscoucous.”

1500 Ocean (Hotel Del Coronado, 1500 Ocean Avenue, Coronado, 619-522-8490). There are plenty of great dishes here, but my favorite was ’’Bubalus Bubalis buffalo ricotta gnudi.” ’’Bubalus” is Latin for water buffalo, the source of chef Jason Schaeffer’s California cheese enclosed in the gnudi — thin-skinned dumplings resembling ricotta-filled dim sum. The ricotta tasted fresh and sunny, and the Meyer lemon sauce that robed the spheres was so flawless a match that I wanted to lick the plate.

Stangler’s (445 Sixth Avenue between J and K, Gaslamp Quarter, 619-544-9500). Chef Antonio Friscia’s Torchon of chanterelle mushrooms in a truffle sauce — devastating!
A Surprise On Sourdough

Something about the flavor of that goat cheese, and what the pear does to it.

‘S eat” says Hank. He’s pointing at a piece of salmon in the chilled display cabinet. It’s sitting on a piece of wood.


“North pole? Cedar trees?” I say. “This I gotta test-taste.”

“The same thing.”

“But I’ve got a special treat for you.”

“Oh, yeah?” Since when?

“Since it’s gonna cost about 12 bucks and you don’t have two dimes to rub together. I don’t

“Sure.”

Good sign. Someone here’s interested in food.

So Hank makes mystery orders for the two of us. Ten minutes later, one of the cooks, Andy, brings out this big wide square china plate loaded with a rainbow of roasted vegetables, like zucchini, mushrooms, squash, red and green peppers, and tomatoes, and a rosy square of salmon. Wow. Classy.

Hank lets me take a couple of chunks. Mouth-melters, with a sorta sweet, sorta herby, and maybe I’m imagining this, but, a slightly “woody” flavor. A little salt, and for me, perfecto.

But now Andy turns up with my plate. Jeez. Just a sandwich.

“Where’s the justice, dude?” I say. I clamp my jaws down on one piece of the sandwich. Chomp. Oh, man. Shaft of light pours through the clouds. The water parts, I taste the sourdough. I taste the sweetness of pears. I taste the sharp, strong gunk at the bottom, and the candied crunch of something nutty between. My eyes search the menu board. Of course! Goat cheese and d’Anjou pear ($7.00), with mustard, candied walnuts…

“My man,” I say. “For once, you’ve nailed it. This is awesome.” The combo taste is really great. Something about the flavor of that goat cheese and what the pear does to it. And how those walnuts come in like referees and say, “Come on now, fellas, cool it a little.”

The iced tea Hank ordered ($1.50 each) hits the spot too.

But maybe I should’ve had Coke. “We get it from Mexico,” says Clive. The owner. “They still use cane sugar. U.S. Coke uses refined white sugar. There’s a difference.”

Clive trained as a chef in Baltimore. His dad was a Navy captain. “We were always moving,” he says. “It’s brought us up to this site came up a couple of years ago, two blocks from his home, he grabbed the opportunity. “It’s brought our family together,” he says. “My dad comes around. He loves working with the ‘family firm. We grow our own herbs in our garden up the road, recycle 40 percent of our green waste into compost.” Whew.

“I just love cooking,” Clive says. “We did a North African carrot ginger soup ($4.50) the other day.”

And Hank’s cedar plank salmon Arctic thing? “I saw it at a Williams-Sonoma cover,” Clive says. “The idea comes from the Inuit Indians. They soak a plank of cedar in water, tuck the salmon to it, then cook it on the edge of an ember fire. It gets cooked three ways. Steam from the wet wood steams it, smoke from the fire, and indirectly from the heat. We do just the same, and we finish it with honey, rice wine vinegar, or rosemary and lemon. But cedar definitely adds one of the flavors. The place smells like cedar when we’re cooking.”

Huh. At a table outside, this couple, Janet and Bob, are just finishing off a hot pastrami panini. “Have this next time,” says Janet. “It’s as good as at the Wine Cask in Santa Barbara.”

“So what do most people ask for?” I ask Clive.

He looks a little embarrassed. “Actually, the fried egg sandwich,” he says.

If it hadn’t been for the big guy here,” I say, “that’s what I would’ve ordered. For once, I’m glad I followed orders.”

The Places: 3 Squares Gourmet, 6366 Del Cerro Boulevard, Del Cerro, 619-286-1636

Type of Food: American

Prices: Fried egg breakfast sandwich (with two eggs, cheese, bacon, tomato), $5.50; grilled vegetable omelet, with cheese, $5.50; chicken Caesar wrap, $6.50; goat cheese and d’Anjou pear sandwich, $7.00; eggplant Parmesan, $10.00 per pound; curried chicken salad with chutney, $4.25; mezze salad (with provolone, olives, garlic, parsley), $8.00

Hours: 7:30 a.m.–3:00 p.m., Monday–Friday; 8:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m., Saturdays; closed Sundays

Buses: 14, 115

Nearest Bus Stop: College and Del Cerro

Happy Hour

Mon.–Fri.
4:00 pm–7:00 pm

MEXICAN AND SEAFOOD SPECIALTIES

25% OFF YOUR ENTIRE CHECK

(Automatic beverages excluded)

Valid up to 6 people. 7 days a week. Not valid with any other offer or Happy Hour. No take-out, please. Offer expires 1/17/07.

New Big LCD TV in Bar

Lunch Menu Only
11:30 am–4 pm

Daily

Purchase one item and receive a 2nd item of equal or lesser value free. Salad items enjoy 50% off. One check, one coupon per table. Not valid with any other offer. No take-out. Offer expires 1/17/07.

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WINE

1/2 Off wine on Wednesday!
Live entertainment featuring Fuzzy

SUNDAY LUNCH CLUB!
BIG MIKE & JAMES invite you to join our Sunday Sushi Club and receive 25% Discount every Sunday!

PRIVATE PARTIES CATERING AVAILABLE TAKE OUT SERVICE

SYNISTER SUSHI & MARTINI LOUNGE
858.259.0176
1030 JIMMY DURANTE DR., DEL MAR, CA 92014

2040 Harbor Island Dr. • 619.291.8011
boathousersrestaurant.com • FREE PARKING
Outside seating available. Private rooms for banquets, receptions and parties.
Lasagna for Two

Big Jim’s Old South Barbecue
19 North Coast Highway 101
Seaside 92154 • 858-721-2121

Fast Food • Southwestern • Barbecue

Taco, burrito, quesadilla, and more. Served with rice and beans. Inexpensive—E.B. (12/04)

A Delight of France
126 West Harmont Avenue
Encinitas 92024 • 760-756-6844

French

With a twist of French cooking, everyday cuisine becomes a treat. Inexpensive—E.B. (12/04)

Golden Egg Omelet House
1126 West Mission Avenue (at Escondido Boulevard)
Escondido 92029-4820

B&B • American • Mexican

Breakfast and lunch daily. Inexpensive—E.B. (12/04)

Top Tip Meals
618 Paseo Del Norte
Encinitas 92024–2931

Salads, soups, and sandwiches. Inexpensive—E.B. (12/04)

Bolsa Vietnamese Restaurant
5975 San Dieguito Drive
Encinitas 92024 • 858-758-7858

Vietnamese

One of the best Vietnamese restaurants in the region. Inexpensive—E.B. (12/04)

SOUTH COASTAL

Americana
1454 Camino Del Mar
southwest corner of 15th Street
Del Mar 92014–0865

American

Inexpensive—N.W. (11/01)

Royal Delight
3515 5th Ave., Hillcrest
619-299-6080

Asiatic

Open daily. Inexpensive—E.B. (12/04)

Toys for Tots
7580 Mission Boulevard
Encinitas 92024

American

Inexpensive—E.B. (12/04)

Check out the bargain-priced samplers through until Wednesday until 8 p.m., Thursdays through until Saturday 9 p.m. Inexpensive—N.W. (4/0/5)

Knockout Pizza
2591 Carlsbad Blvd.
Carlsbad 92008

Italian • American

15.45

With any two toppings.

*One coupon per party. Plus sales tax. Not valid with any other offer.

Mexican

Inexpensive—N.W. (4/0/5)

Goldie’s Cafe
576 North Coast Highway 101
La Jolla 92037-4282

California

10.95

For a la carte Mexican

*One coupon per party. Plus sales tax. Not valid with any other offer.

Freez California Ice Cream
101 North Coast Highway 101
Carlsbad 92008-1505

American

Free Delivery

$5 Off Thursday Buffet
Buy one lunch buffet and a drink, get $5 off 2nd lunch buffet. Exp. 1/15/07.

*Cannot be used with any other offers, discounts or specials.

Free Entrée
Buy one, get the second of equal or lesser value free. Expires 1/31/07. Not valid with any other offer.

FREE Entrée
Buy one, get the second of equal or lesser value free. Expires 1/31/07. Not valid with any other offer.

$5 Off Thursday Buffet
Buy one lunch buffet and a drink, get $5 off 2nd lunch buffet. Exp. 1/15/07.

*Cannot be used with any other offers, discounts or specials.

November 4, 2007
salad (not peanut) oil. Reservations ad-
vised. Lunch and dinner on weekdays,
three meals on weekends. Moderate,
with some expensive specialties. — N.W. (8/04)

L A J O L L A
Brockton Villa 1235 Coast Boule-
vard, La Jolla, 858-454-7393. Pretty and
romantic, this sprawling cottage perched above La Jolla Cove and offers
heated terraces as well as semi-enclosed tables indoors to admire the view. The
culinary masterpiece is "Coast Toast," invented for breakfast but now served all
day — it’s the French toast of your
happiest dreams, puffy and airy with a
flavor that defies description. Modern
cuisine that can be sheerly hedonistic. At our sole Moroc-
can restaurant, the fare is arranged into
categories that manifests itself in oddly
hybrid cuisine of Morocco is like no other in the world — influenced by
both Arab and Berber cuisines, but more intense and
pushes the Italian envelope with as-
atured flavors. Reservations are rec-
omened. — E.B. (10/04)

La Jolla Brew House 7368 Fay Aven-
eue, La Jolla, 858-458-6279. Don’t ex-
pect to wear the beach. Do expect to taste some good beers made right here and
good solid food, such as the prime rib
sandwich which goes great with their
truffle fries or the roasted potato. Or
maybe you’re a fan of the buffalo burger —
big, fatty, and low on cholesterol. You’ll
call this a family, multi-genera-
tional sports bar eatery. Nice mix. It’s
La Jolla, so it’s not diet cheap, but the
patrons here seem really interested in mak-
ing interesting beers and good food to
accompany them. Open for dinner seven days, lunch and dinner week-
ends. Inexpensive to moderate. — E.B. (9/01)

Marrakesh 634 Pearl Street (at
Draper), La Jolla, 858-454-2500. The
North African fare of Marrakesh is like
good solid food, such as the prime rib
sandwich which goes great with their
table outdoor dining to admire the
perches above La Jolla Cove and offers
rooms and terraces arranged around a
ren of white-painted, high-ceilinged
rooms. The setting and service are dra-
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Dumpling Inn features lanterns, decorative strings of scarlet and little revelation. It’s located in the busy Kearny Mesa, 858-268-9638. Hole-in-the-wall atmosphere for bright and clean, if 858-573-0000; Uptown Shopping Center.

MISSION VALLEY

AN W. (11/00)

— E.B. (5/02)

— E.B. (2/03)

— E.B. (4/05)

— E.B. (2/03)

— E.B. (5/02)

— E.W.

— E.B. (11/00)

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— E.B. (11/00)

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— E.B. (5/02)

— E.W.
All-you-can-eat buffet
seafood [sushi bar] | hawaiian barbecue | dim sum [oysters, dumplings, taro, ribs & lump shrimp served after 4 PM]

lunch buffet $7.79
MON.-SAT. 11 AM-4 PM, INCLUDES BEVERAGE.
FRI. and SAT. (DINNER) 4-10 PM.
SUN. and HOLIDAYS: 11 AM-9:30 PM, INCLUDES BEVERAGE.

lunch buffet $11.49
MON. - THURS. 4-9:30 PM, INCLUDES BEVERAGE.

buffet tickets available: LUNCH $3.49/LB. | DINNER $4.69/LB.
GIFT CERTIFICATES AVAILABLE | PARTY TRAYS AVAILABLE.

10% off total bill

2 free buffet passes per guest for 10 guests or more.

1 free buffet with purchase of 1 dozen birthday cake
Order 3 weeks in advance; minimum 10 guests.

Samba Grill
514 Horton Plaza Mall
Top of the plaza • Gaslamp
San Diego, CA
619-236-1000

Pho Hung Trang Vietnamese Seafood Restaurant
3296 University Avenue, City Height, 858-582-0601.
Original branch is 4172 Cameron Street, Community, 619-580-8730.
Tired of putting up with the crowds at the popular Cameron Street restaurant? Go out, where you’ll find the same menu with the same quality. The Korean ‘J’ soup is exactly the same. The selection of soups and meats is the same. The service is the same. The food is the same. The atmosphere is the same. The price is the same. The only difference is the crowd. For a more intimate setting, try the Pho Hung Trang Vietnamese Seafood Restaurant. Located in the Gaslamp Quarter, this restaurant offers a cozy and intimate atmosphere. The menu includes a variety of Vietnamese dishes, ranging from traditional pho to more modern options. The food is delicious and is sure to satisfy your cravings. The service is friendly and attentive, ensuring a pleasant dining experience. Whether you’re looking for a quick lunch or a more formal dinner, Pho Hung Trang Vietnamese Seafood Restaurant is the perfect choice for lovers of authentic Vietnamese cuisine.
CALIFORNIA

Cafe Zia 666 El Cajon Boulevard (at Market), 619-429-4845. Late trattoria serves up a robust selection of American beers, sakes, and wines. Lunch advised for Friday/Saturday evenings, they’re delicious fun. Free parking in the building parking area and on the street. Open daily for lunch and dinner.

BUCOLO is a new restaurant on Hillcrest Drive, 619-293-3967. It’s a neighborhood restaurant that has big-city aspirations. Bucolo’s menu is a mix of small plates, shareable dishes, and entrees—think wood-fired pastas, seasonal seafood, and a generous wine list. The restaurant has a breezy, modern décor with a large patio that’s perfect for alfresco dining.

The Bistro at Cafe Zia, 666 El Cajon Boulevard, 619-429-4845. This is a smaller version of Cafe Zia, offering the same menu in a more intimate setting. It’s a great option for a romantic dinner or a special occasion.

EAST COUNTY & COLLEGE AREA

Café Marta 6055 Mission Boulevard, 619-463-5211. This is a family-owned Italian restaurant that’s been around for over 40 years. They serve up classic Italian dishes with a modern twist, and the atmosphere is warm and inviting.

Pasta Luna, 25425 8th Avenue, 619-474-5546. This Italian restaurant offers a wide variety of pasta dishes, sauces, and meats. They’re known for their homemade pasta and fresh ingredients.

Yelp’s Taste of Texas 2033 Second Street, El Cajon, 619-444-9295. This is a great spot for Texas-style barbecue, with ribs, brisket, pork, and sausage. They have a fun atmosphere and friendly staff.

The Cafe 2105 El Cajon Boulevard (at Market), 619-463-0321. This is the same chef that runs Bucolo but on a smaller scale. They serve up classic Italian dishes with a modern twist, and the atmosphere is warm and inviting.

San Diego Sushi Company 4139 23rd Street, 619-293-3967. This is a sushi bar and restaurant that serves up fresh, high-quality sushi. They also offer a selection of sakes and wines.

The Bistro at Cafe Zia, 666 El Cajon Boulevard, 619-429-4845. This is a smaller version of Cafe Zia, offering the same menu in a more intimate setting. It’s a great option for a romantic dinner or a special occasion.

UPTOWN & OLD TOWN

Bamboo Bistro 8804 Fourth Avenue (at University), 619-299-9727. This is a great spot for Thai food. They offer a variety of Thai dishes, including curries, padthai, and fried rice. They have a nice atmosphere and friendly staff.

La Cañada’s 8715 University Avenue (at 40th Street), 619-295-2787. This is a classic American restaurant with a great atmosphere. They serve up hearty dishes, and the service is always friendly.

Komo Saba 9385 Fifth Avenue (off University Avenue), 619-292-6882. This is one of San Diego’s best restaurants. They serve up Asian cuisine with a modern twist, and the atmosphere is elegant and sophisticated.

La Posta de Acapulco’s Taco Shop 1515 Florida Avenue (off 40th Street), 619-295-9882. This is a great spot for Mexican food. They serve up fresh, high-quality tacos and other Mexican dishes.

Lunch Specials

Served with soup, salad, spring roll, wontons and rice! Sunday through Thursday, 11 a.m.–2 p.m. or until 2 p.m., whichever comes first.

Lunch Specials from $5.95

Fonda La Jolla 7500 La Jolla Blvd. Served with soup, salad, spring roll, and steamed rice. Daily, 11 a.m.–2 p.m. or until 2 p.m., whichever comes first.

2-for-1 Italian Dinner Entrees

First course, second course, and dessert. Two entrees for the price of one. Monday through Friday, 5 p.m.–10 p.m.

$10 Off Specials

Happy Hour 4–6 p.m. Thursday & Saturday

$5 Off Specials

FREE 2 FOR 1 ENTREE

Breakfast Specials

Enjoy a breakfast entree, plus a child’s breakfast entree for just $5.95. Valid Monday through Friday, 7 a.m.–11 a.m.

$9.95 Lunch Specials

Served with soup, salad, spring roll, and steamed rice. Monday through Thursday, 11 a.m.–2 p.m. or until 2 p.m., whichever comes first.

$5 Off Specials

Served with soup, salad, spring roll, and steamed rice. Monday through Thursday, 11 a.m.–2 p.m. or until 2 p.m., whichever comes first.
DOWNTOWN

Bay Cafe 1050 North Harbor Drive, downtown, 619-593-1085. If you’re hungry at the city ferry landing, you can eat any time. This bare-bones or take your tray upstairs to a handsome bayview terrace (with no wheelchair access). Until 1 a.m. Friday and Saturday, and 11 p.m. on Sunday. Inexpensive to moderate. — E.B. (10/05)

Venissimo Cheese 354 Washington, Mission, 619-491-0788. Just don’t ask for Volubles here. Everything else, they’re got: try plus-variety cheeses, mostly from Europe. But a meal? Yes you can. Get a baguette-style sandwich stuffed with cow cheese, sheep cheese, goat cheese, fresh mozzarella, stinky, any cheese in the house, some price, around five Bucks. Even fresh honey cheese, with traffics in it, which sells at around $3 per pound, or Napoleon’s masterpiece, smoky Gouda-fermented, or the beautifully tangy Stilton. Plus you can get grapes or a pear to go with the sandwich. Where to eat! Starbucks, a few doors down, usually doesn’t mind. Coffee, bread, interesting cheese — fruit — it’s a perfect combo. Open 10 a.m. to p.m.; closed Sunday. Inexpensive. — E.B. (5/06)

Darband Fifth Avenue Grill 836 Fifth Avenue, downtown, 619-234-5554. Darband is named after an exotic mountain resort north of Tehran. Quite a contrast to this sloping office-and-car-park strip of Fifth. Lunchtime, office workers fill the tables. Evenings feel more, I dunno, Persian. It’s mostly men, some playing backgammon, talking, arguing, laughing. With all the Farsi flying around, it feels like a local café back in Tehran. Unpretentious, quite reasonable. Dinner 5 p.m. to midnight weekdays. Moderate to expensive. — N.W. (8/05)

House Of Blues Restaurant 1055 Fifth Avenue, downtown, 619-299-2583. The name may hint at some titillating international wine list at below-average prices, including Frontenac, shipped from France. Open 11 a.m. to midnight. Moderate to very expensive.

Mediterranean Cafe and Lounge 1352 Fifth Avenue (between A and B ads), 619-692-3610. It’s loud and crowded, and you can afford to eat here? Yes and no. Dinner 5 p.m. to 11 p.m. Upscale, with great chicken gyros making up an ossetian (Cajun) sausage and okra in traditional German style. Open 11:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. daily. Moderate. — E.B. (11/05)

Beaumont's 1009 3rd Avenue (at J), downtown, 619-232-3140. This place is so loud and crowded you can’t have your space! — for a few extra cents each, the kitchen will add extra ingredients (Jack or Cheddar, mushroom, grilled onions, bacon, jalapeno). Breakfast, lunch and early dinner, daily. Inexpensive. — N.W. (6/05)

Dakota Grill and Spirits 901 Fifth Avenue (at E), downtown, 619-234-3554. The name may hint at cowboy cooking, but look for simple — Inexpensive to moderate American food comfort of the back deck. The meat is perfectly seasoned and cooked to order and served piping hot to accentuate the flavors. Service is attentive and inviting. Open 11:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. daily. Moderate. — E.B. (4/06)


Rainwater’s on Kettner 1202 Kettner Boulevard (at B Street), Little Italy, 619-236-3575. You could eat out all your life from here. Fine food, fresh, regular Persian. It feels like a local café back in Tehran. Unpretentious, quite reasonable. Dinner 5 p.m. to midnight weekdays. Moderate to expensive. — N.W. (8/05)

Peets In Boca 2400 Ponce de Leon Avenue (at Hand Lagoon), North Bay Village, 619-236-4900. Argentines love their beef and they love it lean and wholesome — free-range and firm-bodied onion rings and wash it down with some flavorful herbs. Open 11:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. daily. Moderate. — E.B. (10/04)

New York Steakhouse and Seafood 827 Fifth Avenue, Garland, 619-299-1995. As steakhouses go, Max’s offers a good value, offering huge portions of food with prime meat and lots of sides. Open 11:30 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. Monday through Sunday. Moderate to very expensive. — E.B. (10/05)

Morton’s 340 Fifth Avenue (at J), downtown, 619-234-1981. The Morton’s Hot Chocolate Cake is exceptional. But go for the steak. Friday and Saturday, 5 p.m. to midnight. Expensive. — N.W. (9/99)

Argentine Grill 1056 12th Street, downtown, 619-231-6010. Good steaks, good food. The motto of this place is “Every day’s a good day.” Upscale, with lots of conversation. Dinner 5 p.m. to midnight. Moderate to very expensive. — E.B. (3/02)

The Morton’s 340 Fifth Avenue (at J), downtown, 619-234-1981. The Morton’s Hot Chocolate Cake is exceptional. But go for the steak. Friday and Saturday, 5 p.m. to midnight. Expensive. — N.W. (9/99)

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MEXICAN AND SEAFOOD SPECIALTIES

MEXICAN AND SEAFOOD SPECIALTIES

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MEXICAN AND SEAFOOD SPECIALTIES

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THIS OFFER IS GOOD FOR THE COME-TO - THE - FOOD FOR THE FUN FOOD FAMILY PIZZA RESTAURANT — SINCE 1954 5500 Grossmont Center Drive, La Mesa • 619-691-8220

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11:00 am-3:00 pm daily. Not valid with other offers. — E.B. (10/05)

11:00 am-3:00 pm daily. Not valid with other offers. — E.B. (10/05)

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Asian Noodles

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619-487-4987

A special promo promises 'over 100 items daily.' Yellow-golded girls confidently rotate the rows, checking, stirring, wiping. A lot of the stuff is very good, like the cups of beef soup that look like large blushing spiders, or the mushrooms in their shells, bubbling golden on top with melted cheese, and, of course, roast beef and rice. If you must have it, you may be getting salami and adequate sauce. It's an incredible value. Lunch and dinner daily. Inexpensive. E.R. (10/01)

PIzza King Oaco

600 Palm Avenue

4291-orange
619-430-5230

With a covering from Navy returnees to the singles barely of drinking age, the popular party on McP's patio is nurtured by above-average food. On a warm day, fresh-from-the-grill burgers (pork steaks, potatoes, naches), pasta sauce and a ton of vegetables is good enough. Mulligan stew served in a hollowed bread loaf and an absolutely fabulous crusty French bread (like a French bread loaf) with its crusty, thick slices surrounding cabbage so you can just squeeze the leaves out and eat it. Good soups, too. Open daily, starting brunch hours. (Breakfast and football season) Inexpensive to moderate. E.R. (7/07)

Cafe Card Room

2540 Broadway, Vista

619-432-3333

It's mostly Chinese and Vietnamese food, but you can't find good food in Vista. The long list includes a good bar and a great place for burgers, spaghetti, and mom's chicken. No one seems to know what they're doing, so it's hard to judge if it's good or bad. From the beach to get supplies for sunset "green mile," from tacos and tamales to from cactus and eggs to carrots and a delicious soup of roast beef juices, we're happy. It's an incredible value. Lunch and dinner daily. Inexpensive to moderate. E.R. (9/07)

Cafe la Especial

Avenida Revolucion #8210, Tijuana, 685-7309. Bring hot peppers. This buffet promises "50% Off" if you buy two adult meals and one drink. Great food. Open daily for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Moderate to expensive. E.R. (3/07)

El Faro de Mazatlán

Boulevard Agua Caliente #37, Colonia El Faro, Tijuana, 685-9380. Pizza and Mexican food. Great place to have a meal. Open daily for dinner. End. Open daily for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Moderate. E.R. (11/05)

La Vueltita

Avenida Revolución #8210 (above 110), Tijuana, 685-3799. Bring your loved one here and hide away in one of the cuddly corners — nooks. El faro is crowded and the buffet promises "50% Off" if you buy two adult meals and one drink. Great food. Open daily for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Moderate to expensive. E.R. (3/07)

Bouca de Bepo

705 Avenue (at Gentero), Tijuana, 685-4362. Tijuana's only steak house on the corner of Gentero and 16 de Septiembre. Excellent Mexican food. Open daily for lunch and dinner. Expensive. E.R. (6/03)

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Eight-courses in a chef's tasting menu at Bouca de Bepo ("Joe's Cellar") is a mighty national claim — but it has nothing on Del Mar's Restaurant Week, Downtowner's ribbon-warrior of low-traffic dining rooms placed with Italian photos (check out Sophia Loren, transfigured by Jane Manfolds' beauty) and crowded with customers chowing down from portions large enough to feed two or more. Try the gochujang sauce with its spicy sausage or the popular chicken parmigiana. Standard stuff but the heck — you're having fun. Don't leave without checking out the mountainous, wicked Bells Feva, two huge balls of ice cream on double chocolate cake running with satellites of zany blueberries, and nuts on an 18-inch plate.
Open for lunch and dinner daily. Inexpensive to moderate. — E.B. (12/05)

California Pizza Kitchen 1363 Nol-bird Drive, La Jolla Village Square, La Jolla, 858-457-4222. Also at Beachwalk Plaza, 457 South Coast Highway 101, Suite 601, Solana Beach, 760-793-0999; Carmel Mountain Plaza, 10620 Carmel Mountain Road, Carmel Mountain, 888-675-4424; and Fashion Valley Mall (second level), Suite 601, 7807 Friars Road, Mission Valley, 619-294-0789.

Two Beverly Hills lawyers started this chain in 1985 to exploit "the premium market." The chain's first hit, is still their top seller. Two pizza ovens with real logs burning golden wood and black furniture, and carpeted walls, are also a hit. The chain's first hit, is still their top seller. Two pizza ovens with real logs burning golden wood and black furniture, and carpeted walls, are also a hit.

The Nobel Drive branch features a view "Hawaiian" pizza, try the pear and Gorgonzola, but are embarrassed to order and mozzarella cheeses, BBQ chicken, and the chain's first hit, is still their top seller. Two pizza ovens with real logs burning golden wood and black furniture, and carpeted walls, are also a hit.

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Gains, Losses, Highs, and Lows

Just across the courtyard, without fanfare, the Globe staged one of the year’s gems.

I suspect I’ll remember 2006 as much for its disappointments as achievements. This was the year Claudio Raygoza’s Ion Theatre and Calvin Manson’s Ira Aldridge Players lost their homes. Both had found flexible, promising spaces. Both produced several worthy efforts to growing audiences. Both gone.

After 65 years of continuous productions in La Mesa, including the last 30 at the Ben Polack Art Center, the Lamp-lighters Community Theatre lost its performing space in August. This pillar of local theater — which produced five shows a year, plus special events and solo performances — is currently looking for a new home.

The artistic disappointment of the year, by far, was Twyla Tharp’s The Times They Are A-Changin’, a dance, musical, something-or-other based on the songs of Bob Dylan. It flopped at the Old Globe and on Broadway. The world premiere couldn’t make up its mind what it should be about: Dylan’s music; the shabby, pseudo-Melvil-lian, pseudo-carnival story Tharp concocted; or the music. Hard-core Dylan fans said to deep-six the wreck (I thought it’d make sense not to use all of Dylan’s music, but take one of the albums, like Blood on the Tracks, and stage it). When I play Times back on my mental DVD, I still can’t figure out if it was a tribute to, or a parody of, the music. I still see those charcoal gray beach balls bouncing across the stage to the ’60s anthem “Like a Rolling Stone” and want to pop every last one of them.

Just across the courtyard, without fanfare, the Globe staged one of the year’s gems: Body of Water, Twyla Tharp’s exhibit A of how a creative production can transform a fair-to-middlin’ script into unforgettably good theater.

In Lee Blessing’s drama, Avis and Moss find themselves adrift. Were they husband and wife? Are they just strangers? And where are they? Neither recognizes the locale, a mountaintop surrounded by water. Do they have Alzheimer’s? Trauma-induced amnesia? When a young woman calling herself Wren enters, rather than clarify, she sharpens the questions. She could be a caregiver, a doctor’s sadistic assistant, or a lawyer defending the couple from the murder of their 11-year-old daughter. Or, the whole play could be happening in Moss’s mind. Or Wren’s. Or only yours.

Before coming to the Cassius Carter, the overly long, pseudo-philosophical script received a realistic staging back East. What an odd choice, since the play thrives on surrealism and a hall-of-mirrors psychology. At the Carter, director Ethan McSweeney and scenic designer Michael Vaughn made the mountaintop a stained-wood pool deck surrounded by pale blue water. All sharp angles, there wasn’t a single curve in the sleek design. It could be a real place — the world’s most pristine timeframe — or a netherspace where nothing intersects. Or both.

The set, York Kennedy’s lighting — bright, smog-free sunshine and slanting shadows — and Michael Roth’s dissonant music combined for one of the finest uses of the Cassius Carter arena stage in quite some time. Some of 2006’s most interesting acting involved playing characters who are losing, or have lost, their center. In Body of Water, Ned Schmidlik, Sandy Duncan, and young Samantha Soule were never the same person twice. All three resembled shuffled decks of cards, with some new version of Moss, Avis, or Wren suddenly appearing.

Yasmina Reza’s Life X 3 asks four actors to play a dinner party from hell three different ways. But in doing so, they must play three versions of the same character: one berserk, one negotiating...
(or wavering) between the two, and one in control — like Freud’s id, ego, and superego.

And when one changes, say, from id to ego, the three others also shift. Robert Smyth, Glyn Redington, Colleen Kollar, and Lance Arthur Smith turned four characters into 12 and turned in — along with the casts of Body of Water and Ion Theatre’s All in the Timing — some of the year’s best ensemble work. (All in the Timing, Old Town Theatre’s Forbidden Broadway Special Victims Unit, and Starlight’s wonderful Urinetown were the year’s funniest shows).

In Trying, also at the Carter, Jonathan McMurry played Francis Biddle, former U.S. attorney general under FDR. When the story begins, Biddle is 81, chronically arthritic, and losing chunks of his mind to senility. One second he remembers details from four decades ago; the next, vacant.

Actors have been trained for decades to make a character add up to something whole and rounded. In each new scene, McMurry had to subtract some quality, physical or mental, from Biddle. In this memory play about memory loss, McMurry showed how it feels to fragment in slow stages.

In the year’s most detailed, astonishing performance, Joshua Everett Johnson played physicist Werner Heisenberg in Copenhagen. When he met with his mentor, Niels Bohr, after WWII, was Heisenberg just a slick-haired scumbag in post-Nazi denial, or had he tried to stop Germany from creating the atomic bomb? David Frayn’s drama resembles Bohr’s princi-
The San Diego Repertory Theatre stages Eugene O'Neill’s drama about an alcoholic and Jamie. Ridenhour directed.

CASA MADRIS THEATRE, 79 HORTON PLAZA, DOWNTOWN, SATURDAY AT 7:30 P.M. AND SUNDAY AT 2:00 P.M. 619-544-1015.

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Joey and Maria tie the knot in a not-so-ordinary interactive dinner theatre setting.

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National Comedy Theatre

Improvisational cinema, making up funny stuff on the spot, is difficult enough. Years ago, however, Keith Johnstone thought if he could do something entertainingly, he could find a way to produce a “workshop” (where “Terrible Turks mangled deadbolts, while puns and dast dyled insults and grannies waved their handknaps”). National Comedy Theatre, an offshoot of Johnstone’s Showtime (artistic director Gary Kramer says the two companies like “right and American football”), resembles an athletic event more than an improv. Teams work uniforms and compete on气势, not the script. Of the eight teams that caught the show, three San Diego comedians played a challenge.

1:00 P.M. 619-544-1015.

A Moon for the Misbegotten

The National Theatre Company presents Paul Muni’s adaptation of Brian Friel’s play, “a political satire with music.”

9:45 P.M. 619-544-1015. www.nationaltheatre.org

South Coast Repertory Theatre

FRED LOOMIS STAGE, SOUTH COAST PLAZA, SAN JOSE. SATURDAY AT 7:30 P.M. AND SUNDAY AT 2:00 P.M. 408-254-7484.

Pig Farm

Greg Ketas’s agricultural comedy (“the pigs are restless on the farm”) plays at the South Coast Repertory.

1:00 P.M. 619-544-1015.
As Good As It Got

The audience declared itself unwilling to follow this filmmaker down the path of anguish he has chosen to explore.

In recognition of 21st-century reality, I might say that the best new film I saw in 2006 was Hou Hsiao-hsien’s Café Lumière, the Taiwanese director’s centenary tribute to the inimitable Japanese master, Yasujirō Ozu, albeit in his own, no less distinctive style. To try to tighten my grip on reality, though, I would have to say that that was the best new DVD I saw. (To tighten my grip still further, I should say the film was new in 2003.) But that’s how we see things now. We program our own. And I elected to watch and write about Café Lumière in the midst of a drowsy summer. By the rules I observe on Prize Day — all contenders must have premiered in a San Diego theater between January 1 and December 31 — it is strictly ineligible. Hou’s newer film, Three Times, did in fact have a premiere at the San Diego Asian Film Festival in October, but it, while it has placed on other critics’ lists around the country, was to me a sizable letdown. Which is not to take away any credit from the festival for the film I saw in the past year. Undeniably, it was something of a dud at the box office, the mass audience declaring itself unwilling to follow this once popular and still venerated filmmaker down the path of anguish he has lately chosen to explore. I can’t really blame them, though I can’t help but feel they are missing out on a remarkable spiritual odyssey. Maybe they’ll catch up on DVD.

As Good As It Got

This year goes to Flags of Our Fathers, Clint Eastwood’s tormented war film (and, still tormented, postwar film) on the faceless flag-raisers of the Battle of Iwo Jima. Most, if not all, of the critics I have unscientifically sampled seem to give the edge to his Japanese-language companion piece, Letters from Iwo Jima, including those critics in the San Diego Film Critics Society who voted it the best film of the year and who clearly play by a different set of rules from mine. (Abruptly moved forward from its nationwide opening date next February — apparently because Flags wasn’t generating the anticipated Oscar buzz — it is now scheduled to open locally on January 12.) Inasmuch as I was utterly unaware of its existence when I was seeing Flags, I remain unswayed by it. I am judging Flags only in relation to the other 248 films I saw in the past year. Undeniably, it was something of a dud at the box office, the mass audience declaring itself unwilling to follow this once popular and still venerated filmmaker down the path of anguish he has lately chosen to explore. I can’t really blame them, though I can’t help but feel they are missing out on a remarkable spiritual odyssey. Maybe they’ll catch up on DVD.

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Deadline to enter is Thursday, January 4, at 1:00 pm. Limit one entry per person. No purchase necessary.

Opens in theaters January 12.
she likes it, could have expected nothing else.

And the white ribbon goes to Shut Up and Sing, Barbara Kopple’s (and Cecilia Peck’s) documentary on the burst bubble of the Dixie Chicks after ill-timed wisecrack, by their lead singer, about the warmongering President of the United States. It tells a story better than most fiction films tell one, and it tells a better story, too. You could argue perhaps that such documentaries as An Inconvenient Truth and Deliver Us from Evil had more urgent stories to tell, or more urgent information to impart, but that wouldn’t make them into better movies. (And I’m not altogether sure about the greater urgency, either.) In view of our current inundation with documentaries, Kopple’s narrative freedom, more specifically her freedom from narrator and interviewee, merits a second examination.

With that, I am fresh out of ribbons. Just to carry on and close out the topic of documentaries, my Honorable Mentions, in no particular order, might start with 49 Up. Michael Apted’s dutiful continuation of his unique series on an arbitrary assemblage of same-aged but otherwise dissimilar Brits. Unknown White Male, Rupert Murray’s provocative rumination on the question of identity, centered around a case of anniesha which demands to be either updated in a sequel or unmasked as a hoax; and Wordplay, Patrick Creadon’s engaging group portrait of the old devious and solvers of crossword puzzles.

To extend the honors: Woody Allen, on a prolonged sojourn in England, had a fruitful year with the repeatedly darker, weightier Match Point (behind the camera only) and the reputedly lighter, slighter Scoop (behind as well as in front of it), pretty much a case of amnesia which demands to be corrected, and perhaps of its unsetting Cache, Dominik Moll’s unsumming Lebanon Cartier’s disquieting Heading South, Emmanuel Carrère’s disconcerting La Montagne, François Ozon’s slick and sentimentale Time to Leave, Jean-Pierre and Luc Dardenne’s unslick and unsentimental L’Enfant, and Olivier Assayas’s untidy Clean. Other mentions for other tongues should go to Zhang Yimou’s sumptuous and smoldering Riding the White Swan, and to Manuel Martín Cuencas’s densely woven Malas Temporadas, the latter from last spring’s San Diego Latino Film Festival, always a dependable source for at least one mention.

Among revivals, which I can never quite view favorably, but still highlights, Army of Shadows, 1969, was not first-class Jean-Pierre Melville and Classe Tout Risques, 1960, was not first-class Claude Sautet, but neither had ever before been circulated in the States, and both of them showcased the formidable Lino Ventura in their respective lead roles. Carol Reed’s The Fallen Idol, 1948, was never so difficult to see but was nevertheless good to see again. All three were issued by the intrepid Rialto Pictures, as was Christian-Jaque’s Fanfan la Tulipe, 1952, which could be mentioned, without honor, solely for the delicately nude Gina Lollobrigida.

But I have descended.

MOVIE LISTINGS

All reviews are by Dusan Shepherd. Priorities are indicated by one to five stars and antigutters by the black spot. Unrated movies are for now underrated. Thousands of past reviews sorted alphabetically, by year of release and by rating, are available online at SandiegoReader.com.

Apocalypse Now — Evidently Mel Gibson is in it only for the barbarity. Scouring the globe, naming the pages of history, he has slighted here on the illuminating example of the Mayan people, past their civilised peak, where a happy, peaceable, practical-joking tribe of jungle dwellers (sample joke: the prescription of a red-hot herb as a topical fertility drug, so that the doped husband must, in full view of the gawking villagers, hop around buck naked and plunk down his burning loin in a water trough — wait, it gets even better — and his wife could pour a pitcher of water down her gallut) is curiously set upon and rounded up by a storm troop of fanatics. Morosily, born out of the nose killings in search of sacrificial offerings to their god Kukulkan. A paradise, in other words, not so distant as the 15th-century Scotland in Braveheart or 1st-century Palestine in The Passion of the Christ, where Gibson may indulge his appetite for mayhem, persecution, torture, mayhem, and of course, mayhem. (The nine-tenth naked natives enable him, further, to indulge his lesser appetite for homosocios.) The English subtitles and the no-name cast might almost lead you to believe, were it not for the tepid slickness and the Gissianbiano snooze for dramatic stress, that you’re watching a product of, say, the Guatemalan New Wave or the Undiscovered Mexican Cinema. At the very least, the film does nothing to fan the flames of Gibson’s suspected 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, Dalila Colquhoun, Jonathan Brewer, Morris Bird. 2006.

Babel — Communication problems the world over. An American tourist is struck by rifle fire in Morocco, arousing erroneous worries of terrorism. An illegal nappy drags along the towheads in her care to a Mexican wedding, and runs afoul of the Border Patrol on their return. And a lovely pasty-faced deaf mute Japanese girl can’t get a man, any man, to take an interest in her. These three storylines are fashionably “interlocked” (anyone who can recognize the voice of Brad Pitt over the telephone will immediately know the connection between two of them), and the film strategically ends in the same place, from a different point of view, as it begins, coming full circle. The illusion of complexity, for all that, could scarcely be more transparent. Mexican director Alejandro Gonzalez Inarritu, much in the manner of his Amores Perros, achieves depth only in the way that a hot sandwich achieves it, and it achieves length — almost two and a half hours of it — in the same way as a footlong at any Subway shop. Tenseus in construction, slack and buggied in pace, sketchy and far-fetched in plot, the film does nothing to justify its epic length or its cosmic ambitions. (The Mexican storyline, particularly weak, goes nowhere until it goes banana: a series of decisions so bad as to forfet all sympathy for the characters, let alone for the storyteller who compelled the characters to make the decisions.) With a somewhat colder camera than his norm, however, the director does some nice scene-setting, some impressive documentation of the locations, to help sell his goal in sheer duration. With Cat Blanchett, Adriana Barraza, Gael Garcia Bernal, Kei Takahashi, and Eliseu Iziuchi. 2006.

Blood Diamond — Serviceable action-adventure despite frequent interruptions for sermons on human rights and capitalist wrongs. The ripped-from-the-headlines story (yesterday’s headline news: the war in Sierra Leone, 1999) features the stock figures of a self-interested soldier of fortune, in league with slaughterous rebels and unscrupulous jewellers, an engage foreign correspondent, and a hapless native peasant enslaved in the diamond mines and separated from his family, all united on a treasure hunt for a priceless boulder, “a pink,” big as a walnut. Without the politics, the strong-arm manipulation of emotions would be inexcusable. Or rather, more

5 GOLDEN GLOBE NOMINATIONS

"THE PARTY OF THE YEAR!
"DREAMGIRLS" DAZZLES LIKE NOTHING ELSE ANYWHERE."
clearly inexcusable. It's still inexcusable even now. (The on-screen standing ovation at the final curtain is an unseemly elbow-in-the-ribs to the moviegoer.) Behind the oped posturing, the film roughly resembles a middle-period, middle-drawer Robert Mitchum vehicle, except that Leonardo DiCaprio, affecting an acceptable Africaner accent, is no Robert Mitchum. For all his recently acquired bulk, including the heftyness of his credits in Martin Scorsese's oeuvre, he remains too boyish to be a persuasive action hero: Robby Bensonitis, let's say.

In a word, over-the-top and high of its credits in Martin Scorsese's middle-period, middle-drawer Robert Mitchum vehicle, except that Leonardo DiCaprio, affecting a banal, white and sprinkled with flashbacks, stunts spectacular in favor of bland brutality; and the action to follow seems to be under no compulsion to "top" 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 sure) and has yet to earn his boss's trust. There is no equivalent of "Q" and his cute presentation of the gadgets do not: There is no casual bedding of "Bond girls," and the one romantic relationship (with the enigmatic, darkly eyelined Eva Green) attains an emotional weight beyond even the all-way-to-the-altar affair of On Her Majesty's Secret Service. The hero's lame quips and puns, meantime, have thoroughly been expunged from the script. And "I don't give a damn" is his response to the bartender's inquiry as to whether he'd like

Judi Dench is nothing less than great in a performance of UNRELENTING FEROCITY."

Manohla Dargis

**A WICKED DELIGHT, YOU'LL HANG ON EVERY TWIST AND TURN.** Judi Dench's scheming spinster is a viper for the ages. Cate Blanchett has never been more intriguingly life-size than in this wonderfully complex role.

David Ansen, Newsweek

"If you want to see explosive action, just watch Judi 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."

Peter Travers, Rolling Stone

**WATCHING DENCH AND BLANCHETT IS POSITIVELY HISTORIC. YES, EVERYONE KNOWS SHE IS THE GREATEST ACTRESS ALIVE TODAY, BUT NOTHING SHE HAS EVER DONE WILL PREPARE YOU FOR THIS."**

Manohla Dargis, The New York Times

**A CINEMATIC TRIUMPH OF SCALING INTENSITY with a hypnotic, detailed, three-dimensional performance by Judi Dench that is POSITIVELY HISTORIC. Yes, everyone knows she is the greatest actress alive today, but nothing she has ever done will prepare you for this.**

Richard Schickel, Time

"If you want to see explosive action, just watch Judi 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."

Peter Travers, Rolling Stone

**ONE OF THE TOP TEN FILMS OF THE YEAR**

Book critic

"If you want to see explosive action, just watch Judi 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."

Peter Travers, Rolling Stone

**NOTES ON A SCANDAL**

San Diego Reader

January 1, 2006

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**Calendar**

**Movies**

GROSSMONT CENTER: HORTON PLAZA 14; LA COSTA 6; MIRA MESA 18; MISSION MARKETPLACE 12; MISSION VALLEY 20; OCEANIDE 18; PALM PROMENADE 24; PARKWAY PLAZA 18; Poway 10; RANCHO DEL REY 16; RANCHO SAN DIEGO 10; SAN MARCOS 18; TOWN SQUARE 14

Children of Men — Vision of the future, with Clive Owen, Julianne Moore, and Michael Caine, directed by Alfonso Cuaron.

(CARMEL MOUNTAIN: CHULA VISTA 10; ENCORE 12; OCEANIDE 18; PALM PROMENADE 24; PARKWAY PLAZA 18; RANCHO DEL REY 16; RANCHO SAN DIEGO 10; SAN MARCOS 18; TOWN SQUARE 14; TOWN SQUARE 13)

Code Name: The Cleaner — Spy comedy with Cedric the Entertainer, Lucy Liu, and Nicolaet Sheeridan, directed by Les Mayfield.

Curtse of the Golden Flower — The re-union of filmmaker Zhang Yimou with his one-time muse and leading lady, Gong Li, over ten years after their personal falling-out, post-Shanghai Trial, makes this film into a real “event,” and the actress brings to it an inner fire to outgrow even its multilayered color scheme. In addition to which, the director’s dynamic visual style demonstrates exceptional balance, timing, 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. Noble hubris would quite do justice to a tale of courtly and amatory intrigue (Tang Dynasty, 10th Century) that aspires to Shakespearean, even Sophoclean, tragedy. Without dispute, the film is some-what talky and slow, but it’s preferable nevertheless to Zhang’s Hero and House of Flying Daggers, the reason in large part would be precisely the long postponement of the gravity-defying martial arts. Defying that is, 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. With Chow Yun-Fat. 2006.

**Dreamgirls** — Broadway backstory musical — not, that is to say, backstage on Broadway but backstage in Motown — charting the breakthrough of RB&B into the pop mainstream in the Sixties, more specifically the rise of a girl group called the Dreamettes (hymns with Supremes) and attendant heartbreaks, breakups, downs, and assorted other maladies. True, a musical can get away with a banal storyline if the music is good, but these Broadway-ized soul tunes are as inspired as they are incessant. It seems it’s not easy to write another “Where Did Our Love Go?,” another “Come See About Me,” another “My World Is Empty Without You,” another “You Can’t Hurry Love.” And the one familiar number, the one unforeseen number, the big abandonment solo of former American Idol contestant Jennifer Hudson (big voice, big figure); screams out for rephrasing not a muzelle. Neither is it easy, evidently, to be another Aretha Franklin. Beyoncé Knowles looks glamorous enough as the Diana Ross diva who metamorphoses into disco queen Donna Summer (under the Svengalian guidance of the Berry Gordy stand-in, Jamie Foxx); and the period clothes and hairdos — something near a beehive on Eddie Murphy when we first meet him, higher and higher than Jackie Wilson. — are enjoyable as expected. Writer and director Bill Condon, who adapted the screenplay for Chicago but whose own directing credits run to Gods and Monsters and Kin-ssey, shows it’s not easy to be Stanley Donen. 2006.

Eragon — A teenage boy, a telepathically talking dragon, a captive princess, an evil king, a sorcerer, an oppressed populace, a rebel band, and a first-time director schooled in CGI (Stefan Fangezinger, who surely sought to have cut his teeth on a vampire film). Altogether, a snugger when not a muzelle. With Ed Speleers, Jeremy Jess, Si-cina Guillathy, John Mathovich, Robert Carlyle, Dijmon Hounsou, and the voice of Rachel Weisz. 2006.

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 Oscar buzz — and back before he chained himself to the muckymonkey format, Waiting for Guffman, Best in Show, A Mighty Wind. Any sense of liberation.
The Good German — A nostalgia-film noir, one more black-and-white postwar thriller, over a half-century tardy in its arrival — would transform this also into a hunger. Reassuring archaisms, such as the 4:3 aspect ratio for the opening credits (afterwards widened only to 1.66:1, it looks倏然). The blue-y, icy, ashy palette, means something of an event at three-and-a-half hours. But at least for me, it’s well worth it. It’s funny, poignant, unpredictable, and it will make you think long and hard about the closing credits have faded to black.

MAGNOLIA (USA) 1999
New Line Platinum Series
List price: $29.98

GEORGE SCHMALZ
Marketing coordinator, Landmark Theatres

The Woods center this on a “60s era girls’ school run by witches. Agnes Bruckner plays the rebel- lious newcomer who thwarts their evil plans. Bruce Campbell has some great Bruce Campbell moments. This film is far from camp, though, as it’s a beautifully shot, well-acted film high on atmosphere and low on cheap scares.

Hail the Conquering Hero is something that Stages was at perfect moment before the balls came off. His most fast-paced and breathless film. It’s wall-to-wall dialogue with zingers and one-liners coming at you in waves. As always, the dialogue is delivered by a stable of character actors and anchored by William Demarest. Subtle as a sledgehammer, it is a wartime political satire that holds up as well today as it did 60-plus years ago.

THE WOODS (USA) 2006
Sony Pictures
List price: $24.96

List price: $59.98 (seven discs)

Joseph Meryan arranges an Internet home exchange for two weeks at Christmastime, between two wounded women desperate to get away: a London newspaper columnist (Kate Winslet) with a cozy cottage in Surrey, and a Hollywood trailer-cutter (Cameron Diaz) with a modernist mansion in Beverly Hills. The agreed-upon date of “tomorrow” initiates a pattern of time-compression that effectively removes the action from the realm of the real world. Then, Meyers does not seek to inhabit the real world. Underneath her superficial smooth talk, she’s really just a seductive dope peddler, charming up to her susceptible sisters on the subject of romantic disillusionment, and then hooking them on the same old delusions — the grooved path, greased wheels, and phantom obstacles en route to Mr. Right. The film, at best, is a testament to the dearth of the dream. The sample of the trailer-cutter’s work — an extended action thriller starring Lindsay Lohan and James Franco — is dead funny: the two stars running straight at the camera and away from a mushy-mushy football, the male star diving sideways in slow-mo with two guns blazing. But the fantasies wherein she sees her own life in terms of a movie trailer never really take flight. Meyers’s affection for Golden Age Hollywood — chiefly fumled through the character of Eli Wallach as a widdowed Oscar-winning screenwriter grappily surviving a Tristar achievement award from the WGA — is doubtless genuine, but our agreement with her must stop short of her persistent hints.
that she herself should be painted golden. With Jude Law, Jack Black, Rufus Sewell. Edward Burns. 2006. ★★ CARMEL, MENDOCINO, CAL MARILYN 8; ENCINITAS 8; ESCONDIDO 8; FASHION VALLEY 15; GASLAMP 15; GROSSMONT CENTER 16; MIRA MESA 18; MISSION VALLEY 7; MISSION VALLEY 20; OCEANSIDE 16; PARKWAY PLACE 14; PIRATE 10; RANCHO DEL REY 10; RANCHO SAN DIEGO 10; SAN MARCOS 18; TOWER SQUARE 14

Kinky Boots — Pauline gender-bender comedy about a staid old British shoemaking firm (“since 1895”), which, to survive in the brazen new world, seeks out a “niche market,” namely women’s shoes for men, under the counsel of a cabaret drag queen. “Look to the heel…. The sex is in the heel.” (Quality craftsmanship will be insufficient compensation if the style suits a bloody Ukrainian peasant.”) The latter role permits quite an expansion of range for the proven Chivist Efojiro, who looks a little bit Diana Ross, a little bit (more) Jesse Noreen. The third generation shoe man, Ed Edgerton, looks a little Michael Anderson, Jr., just past his prime. Directed by Julian Jarrel, 2006. ★ SAN DIEGO PUBLIC LIBRARY, 1/7, 2 P.M.

Little Children — Todd Field’s sophist more-direct effort, following up his quirky sensationalism in *In the Bedroom,* is less qualitatively sensational, in other words more blantly sensationalized, and truly more soporific. The adaptation of a Tom Perrotta novel, complete with a snotty third-person omniscient (i.e., know-it-all) narrator, undoubtedly tells us less about the malaise of our middle-class suburban parents today than about the archetypes of our juvenile moviemakers and the audi collective. An adulterous playground liaison between a belligerently handsome 12-year-old Mr. Moon (Patrick Wilson, with his New-enue-blue eyes and jutting upper lip), graduate of law school but a dorker of the bar exam, and a latter-day Madame Bovary (Kate Winslet, the dancer editor), who, married to a cop, champions her literary forerunner as a proto-feminist in her book-discussion group — cannot be considered sufficiently spicy without the added tang of a neighborhood sex offender, a vigilante ex-cop with innocent blood on his hands, and a married Internet porn addict in secret correspondence with Stuffy Ray. To have these separate male characters matriculating on screen on three separate occasions must set some sort of record. And there’s not even any clear evidence of developing skills since the director’s freshman effort, which really was praised too highly, perhaps too intoscintically. See, for example, the flash-cut facade of innocuous bric-a-brac at the outset. Or see the overly choreographed scene at the public swimming pool when the sex offender’s arrival morkel and flippers gets everyone out of the water faster than if he were a Great White accom 

punished by the theme from Jaws. Or see the treatment of the night-league amateur foot- ball players, through distorting wide-angle lenses, that could grace a suitable for an Adam Sandler comedy. In short, see all too ostentatiously, the director with. With Leonard Maltman and Earl Harly, and Noah Emmerich. 2006. ★★★

The Nativity Story — A bearably dull Christmas worship service, fully supernatu- 
ral in its vision (the voice of God, a luminous Messenger, an avant-garde Holy Spirit), fully of luxuriously tactile costumes, odd sets, atmospheric locales, and early Mediterranean faces. (The half-Maori Keisha Castle-Hughes, though harmo- 

niously unolve in composition, seems a bit overwhelming in the role of the Virgin. Un-

derstandably.) The treatment hits all the es- 

cential points of the story without pervert-

ing them into much: the three Magi on camels, Mary on a donkey and Joseph on foot, the sheep in the stable, the spotlighting of the Virgin in the epic mode of Milos Rizova. After the adolescent drug prophesies of Luther, the pacifist, the set-piece skateboarding of Lords of Dogtown, this makes an odd project for di-

rector Catherine Hardwicke, who hereby renounces themes and embraces tradi-

tion. Although her focus quite reasonably is on the plight of a pregnant teen, the film-

maker has made no attempt to “reimagine” the character for a new age, simply to imag-


eize her as she might have been, a trachea-

ous assignment carried out with unforeseen taste and compassion. Oscar Isaac, Ciaran 

Hinds, Shoresh Agahdastian. 2006. ★★ CARMEL, MENDOCINO, GALAPAGOS 13; MI-

SON VALLEY 20; PALM PROMENADE 24

Night at the Museum — Jumanji-esque jungle of special effects, in which all the exhibitors at the Natural History Museum in New York City come to life after dark. This allows for a lot of, frankly an excess of, vari-

city: Lilliputian cowboys and Roman sol-

diers who tie down the new night watch-

man like Culver; a mischievous monkey who pees on him, pickpockets his keys, and engages in a Three Stooges-style slapfest with a T-rex skeleton who wants to play fetch; a talking, bubblegum-chewing Easter Island head; Attila and some Huns; some lions, an elephant, a zebra, a rhino, and so on. It also allows for logical mix-ups whereby, for example, the way figure of Teddy Roosevelt knows full well he’s a face figure of our twentieth President, while the wax figure of Saddam Hussein is regarded as the actual, taxidermized Indian maiden, a boon to the tour guide who is writing a disser-

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Notes on a Scandal — Two thespian flirtations, Cate Blanchett and Judi Dench, going toe to toe, but a drawing room drama, as it comes to light, is the illicit and illegal affair of a married-with-children, thirty-something art teacher, Blanchett, and a fifteen-year-old male student (Andrew Simpson), a ripped-from-the-headlines affair made perfectly plausible if not comprehensible. What doesn’t come fully to light, except to the voyeuristic viewer, is how a self-deluding lonely old Lhasa Apso teacher, Dench, attempts to use her knowledge of the affair to her own advantage, again perfectly plausible if not exactly politically correct. Both of the women are individuals, not representations, and they’re played that way. The drama gets a bit overwrought toward the finish, and Philip Glass’s phone-in musical score is no asset, but all in all a compelling effort.

Richard Eyre. 2006.

With Bill Nighy and Phil Davis; directed by Richard Eyre.

Charlotte’s Web — Two thespian grit is in the graininess of the digital image. Through to schmaltziness), but the only real emotional payoff — this isn’t post-punk Italy. What is it? — is the amiable Will Smith, but the director is Italian, Gabriele Muccino, going toe to toe, battling to a draw.

Antonio Banderas, going toe to toe, battling to a draw.

But what man, after all, with washboard abs — and the emotional payoff — this isn’t post-punk Italy. What is it? — is the amiable Will Smith, but the director is Italian, Gabriele Muccino, going toe to toe, battling to a draw.

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Stranger Than Fiction — The first filmed screenplay of Zach Helm crowds in on the domain of Charlie Kaufman: a Pirandellian brain teaser about a robotic IRS auditor (Will Ferrell, constrained by catatonia) who discovers he is a character in the work-in-progress of a blocked novelist (Emma Thompson) and is destined to die. A new approach, there, to the standard time-travel and second-sight courtroom can the foregoing be avowed through foreknowledge? He discovers all this when, he being alone, he starts to hear the voice of the omniscient narrator — don’t ask how or why — accurately describing his life as it lives it, “but with a better vocabulary,” and he then seeks help not from a therapist but from a literary theorist (Dustin Hoffman). The pedantry tends to get in the way of laughs, and the twisted logic sometimes trips up the plot developments (what does the author think she’s narrating when her hero is dashing to a phone to dial her own number?), and the voice-over prose samples do not remotely live up to the writer’s reputation. Nevertheless, the improbable romance between the infallible tax man and a drily disobedient, tropically tattooed baker, currently under IRS scrutiny, is oddly touching, thanks in large part to the touchingly odd line readings of Maggie Gyllenhaal, who can work wonders with an ethnic little query like, “You don’t like cookies?” And immediately after that, her sensuous recital of the goods in her early culinary repertoire hovers breathlessly between sheer poetry and utter pornography: “Lemon chiffon cake with zestly peach icing,” etc., etc. Directed by Marc Forster. 2006.

Sweet Land — A breakthrough role for the wholesome beauty and noble forehead of Elizabeth Reaser, as a mail-order bride advertised as Norwegian but in fact German, a proselytizing mail-order bride, as a mail-order bride advertised as Norwegian but in fact German, a proselytizing small-town woman who discovers she is a character in the work-in-progress of a blocked novelist (Emma Thompson) and is slated to die at 6 P.M., AND 14, 2 P.M. (HILLCREST CINEMAS)

Volver — Almodóvar adds to his familiar sour comedy and mock melodrama the new element of an apparent apparition, a mundane ghost, a flatulent phantom, blended in with the familiar elements in uncertain time. He shows nary a trace of the erstwhile “bad boy,” nothing now but a good, good man, devoted to mothers in particular, reverential of females in general, the Spanish George Cukor. (The cadaver in the freezer, male, is but a further sign of his respect and his awe.) The result can be recommended to the well-trained legions who are willing to meet this filmmaker seven-eighths of the way. Even the foot-draggers must concede that it’s deftly staged and well acted, and that Penélope Cruz, beyond acting well, shines like a star. Or more descriptively, a heavenly body: Carmen Maura, Lola Dueñas, Yohana Cobo, Blanca Portillo. 2006. ★★★ (WILDCUTS CINEMAS)

We Are Marshall — Triumph-over-tragedy true story about the resurrection from literal ashes — a 1970 plane crash — of the Marshall University football team, the Thundering Herd, in the small West Virginia steel town of Huntington. A golden opportunity, obviously, for film-maker McG (Charlie’s Angels and its sequel) to expand his heart if not his name. For the purpose, he adopts a close-up happy style that seeks to squeeze every drop of emotion from his actors, like grapes in a winepress. Admittedly, the spreading of the bad news and the immediate responses to it deliver a can’t-miss punch. Once past that, however, the movie turns tragedy not so much into triumph as into triteness the underdog formula. A somewhat goofy Matthew McConaughey plays the footloose volunteer coach, the only man in town — an outsider, duly noted — who sports the gaudy plaid pants and jackets of the period, and David Strathairn is the saturnine straight man, the beleaguered college president who persuades the NCAA to relax its strict rule (ancient history) against the use of freshmen in varsity athletics. On that score, it’s a seeming oversight that no mention is made of the standing class of freshmen (Class of ’74) who wouldn’t have been traveling with the team and would be an eligible class of sophomores the following year. Another oversight, or blind spot, in the game action, is the blissful unawareness that a stumble in college football at that time (more ancient history) could not be advanced by the recovering player unless plucked out of mud before it hit the ground. With Matthew Fox, Ian McShane, Anthony Mackie. 2006.

Sweet Land — A breakthrough role for the wholesome beauty and noble forehead of Elizabeth Reaser, as a mail-order bride advertised as Norwegian but in fact German, a proselytizing small-town woman who discovers she is a character in the work-in-progress of a blocked novelist (Emma Thompson) and is slated to die at 6 P.M., AND 14, 2 P.M. (HILLCREST CINEMAS)
Carrera mortal

Un tren de carga embistió a un autobús de pasajeros y lo arrastró por los rieles en el Estado de México el jueves pasado con saldo de 22 personas muertas y 14 heridas. El suceso ocurrió en la ciudad de Cuitláhuac, al Norte de la Ciudad de México, declaró el portavoz local de la Secretaría de Seguridad Pública, Alberto Mená.

Todas las víctimas eran pasajeros del autobús, propiedad de la compañía privada Melchor Cárdenas. Mená afirmó que el pericance ocurrió cuando el conductor trató de cruzar las vías antes que el tren. De acuerdo a autoridades, el tren jalaba 36 vagones vacíos. El conductor y el maquinista fueron detenidos para interrogarlos.

El funcionario detalló que José Alberto Hernández Domínguez, chofer del tren, no logró encender el motor de la unidad que se había detenido justo en el paso de las vías. El conductor sólo atinó a bajarse del camión abandonando a los pasajeros, pero dos calles más adelante fue detenido por la policía.

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Desfile espacial

Cientos de miles de espectadores cubiertos de sacos y mantas desafiaron el frío el lunes primero de enero para ver la edición 116 del Desfile de las Rosas, que incluyó un saludo a la “Guerra de las Galaxias” en el 30 aniversario de la película. El evento comenzó con una majestuosa flota de la Fuerza Aérea B-52 que arrasó vitores del público, a pícaros y en las calles.

Muchos asistentes acudieron para ver al Gran Mariscal del desierto, el realizador George Lucas, y una caravana de tres carreras cómicas de los “Guerra de las Galaxias” que incluyó 200 soldados del Imperio (stormtroopers).

El desfile incluyó 45 carreras, 22 bandas militares y 23 unidades equestres. El actor James Garner, Miss Estados Unidos Jennifer Berry y la leyenda del baloncesto Kareem Abdul-Jabbar también participaron. Entre las más antiguas estuvieron “Una historia única”, de 100 años de Ohio, y “Erase una vez”, de 50 años de altura, inspirada en las tumbas de las filas clásicas y las poesías infantiles.

Las temperaturas en la sierra bajaron a unos 40 grados centígrados, pero durante el día rondaron los 15 grados. El año pasado el evento se vio empapado por la lluvia por primera vez en 50 años.

Jared Borgetti fue presentado como el flamante recluta de la Máquina Celeste del Cruz Azul por los próximos dos años y desde su llegada se mostró comprometido a entregar buenos resultados.

El arquero mexicano está convencido que la directiva retuvo a algunos jugadores que considera pueden ayudarlo a recibir balones con oportunidades claras de gol y su labor será ser corredor al momento de concretar.

Borgetti será apoyado por, mi futbol, mi embargo y mi goce. Creo que dentro del equipo hay muchos buenos jugadores, apuntó el arquero. Borgetti no le tiene a la presión que sufren los jugadores que llegan a equipos de la calidad del Cruz Azul, pues siempre se ha considerado un hombre de retos y ahora no será la excepción.

Vengo a unirse al concepto y al sistema que se tiene. Siempre me ha gustado tener responsabilidades, tener retos y ser una persona que doy la cam a en las bue nas y en las malas”, apuntó el goleador azteca.

El lunes entró en vigor en el Estado de California el aumento de 75 centavos al salario mínimo que subió de 6.75 a 7.50 dólares por hora. Los más beneficiados de este aumento son los latinos porque representan el 97 por ciento de los trabajadores que perciben sueldo mínimo, lo que en promedio reciben un ingreso anual de 14 mil 040 dólares.

El aumento al salario en California fue aprobado por las propuestas de ley presentadas a la Legislatura estatal por el senador demócrata Gil Cedillo, el senador republicano Abel Maldonado y la asambleísta Sally Lieber, cuya propuesta fue aprobada con algunos modificaciones. Durante el verano pasado el gobernador Arnold Schwarzenegger firmó la ley para aumentar el salario mínimo un dólar y 25 centavos en un periodo de dos años, comenzando la primera fase el primer día del 2007.

La ley aprobada por Schwarzenegger contempla un incremento de 50 centavos más para el 2008, con lo que el salario de California será de ocho dólares por hora, uno de los más altos de la nación. El próximo año, 28 estados de la nación tendrán aumento al salario por arriba del mínimo federal de 5.13 dólares por hora. Se espera que el incremento en los salarios empiece a costearse entre el Estado de California.
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Solution to and winners of the Reader Puzzle for 12/28/06. There were 86 entrants. The winners are:

1. David Fair, San Diego
2. Phuong Do, San Diego
3. Amanda Perez, Point Loma
4. Marie Woodward, La Jolla
5. Jacob Kelly, Lakeside

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Last week’s place (due: “First tree in California” died here) Memorial plaque at Santa Ynez and Presidio Drive near Old Town recalls the “Serra Palm,” the earliest [European] planted tree in California,” placed here in 1769 by Father Junípero Serra. Nearly 200 years later (in 1957), the dying palm was cut down.

PACIFIC BEACH

SHERMAN HEIGHTS/DOWNTOWN:

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1523 San Diego Reader January 2007

NAME This Place

Q: Flight home?

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E-mail to ThisNamePlace@SanDiego Reader.com; fax to 619-231-0489; or mail to Reader, Name This Place, Box 85883, San Diego 92186 — include your name and address. (Deadline, Tuesday, 9 a.m. In case of ties, lottery will determine top five winners.)
I don't see what the problem is. I don't see that the media is influencing anyone. I mean, it's not like people are going out and buying the New York Times because they've heard that it's a good newspaper. It's just not happening. People still buy newspapers because they like them, not because they're influenced by the media. And I think that's a good thing. We should encourage people to read newspapers, not try to control their reading habits.

Jeff Brown
Sailman
San Diego

I'm not sure what the fuss is all about. The media is just doing its job, giving people information. Some people might not like what they hear, but that's their problem, not the media's.

Antonio Sebastian
Solar
San Diego

I agree with Jeff. The media is just trying to inform, not influence. People should be able to form their own opinions, not have them dictated to them.

Steve Levi
Real estate broker
Spring Valley

The media is doing what it's supposed to do. It's trying to inform people about what's going on in the world. Some people might not like what they hear, but that's their problem, not the media's. The media is just trying to do its job, that's all.

Asaad Vakdashkhat
Aviation employee
University Towne Centre

I think the media is doing a good job. It's trying to inform people and help them make informed decisions. Some people might not like what they hear, but that's their problem, not the media's. The media is just trying to do its job.

Bil Hernandez
Technical support
Sera Men

Because of all the trouble it's going to take to make the media do what we want, I've decided not to get involved. It's just not worth it.

Kimberly Ford
Theater student
Mira Mesa

Does the media scare or influence you in any way?
**DOWNTOWN NORTH**

- **$590**: 1 Bedroom, 1 Bath + Living Room, Des Moines, N. Switch St., 1010-11.
- **$790**: 2 Bedrooms, 2 Baths, Eastlake, 3950 7th Ave., 211.
- **$1,360**: 2 Bedrooms, 2 Baths, 3237 Girard Ave., 122.

**DOWNTOWN SOUTH**

- **$590**: 1 Bedroom, 1 Bath + Living Room, 1015 First Ave., 30.
- **$890**: 2 Bedrooms, 1 Bath, 1300 1st Ave., 201.
- **$1,360**: 2 Bedrooms, 2 Baths, 3860 1st Ave., 115.

**DEL MAR**

- **$525**: 1 Bedroom, 1 Bath + Living Room, 9207 Del Mar Blvd., 304.
- **$600**: 1 Bedroom, 1 Bath, 9220 Del Mar Blvd., 301.
- **$920**: 2 Bedrooms, 2 Baths, 9377 Del Mar Blvd., 101.

**DEL MAR/CLAIREMONT**

- **$525**: 1 Bedroom, 1 Bath, 4900 San Diego Ave., 112.
- **$635**: 1 Bedroom, 1 Bath, 5000 Clairemont Dr., 202.
- **$735**: 1 Bedroom, 1 Bath, 5100 San Diego Ave., 101.

**ENCINITAS**

- **$1,250**: 1 Bedroom, 1 Bath, 1012 S. Elm St., 111.
- **$1,450**: 2 Bedrooms, 1 Bath, 1029 S. Elm St., 112.

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- **$1,250**: 3 Bedrooms, 2 Baths, 1012 S. Elm St., 111.
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**PACIFIC BEACH**

- **$590**: 1 Bedroom, 1 Bath, 1525 Garnet Ave., 101.
- **$850**: 1 Bedroom, 1 Bath, 1620 Garnet Ave., 302.
- **$995**: 2 Bedrooms, 1 Bath, 1750 Garnet Ave., 303.

**SOLANA BEACH**

- **$750**: 1 Bedroom, 1 Bath, 201 Valley View Dr., 101.
- **$850**: 1 Bedroom, 1 Bath, 205 Valley View Dr., 102.
- **$995**: 2 Bedrooms, 1 Bath, 211 Valley View Dr., 201.

**CARLSBAD**

- **$575**: 1 Bedroom, 1 Bath, 505 E. San Mateo Ave., 101.
- **$725**: 1 Bedroom, 1 Bath, 510 E. San Mateo Ave., 102.
- **$895**: 2 Bedrooms, 2 Baths, 520 E. San Mateo Ave., 201.

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**DOWNTOWN**

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- **$890**: 2 Bedrooms, 1 Bath, 1300 1st Ave., 201.
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EL CAJON. Sleek apartment. Right, close 2 bedroom apartment. High ceilings, hardwood floors, lots of cabinet space, on-site laundry, covered parking. $1595. 130 26th Street. 619-497-2344.

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EL CAJON. 4 bedroom, 2-1/2 bath home. 3 car garage. Beautiful manufactured home. Freshly painted. New carpet, dishwasher, appliances. Gated community. Private fenced yard, storage shed. 5 minutes to Downtown. Move in special, 1/2 off first month's rent. One year lease required. 1924 Sheridan Avenue. 619-447-9193.

GOLDEN HILL. 1 bedroom, 1 bath, newly remodeled. 619-822-8024.

GOLDEN HILL. 1 bedroom, 1 bath, newly remodeled. 619-822-8024.

HILLCREST. 2 bedroom, 1 bath. Kitchen, living/dining room, laundry in unit. 858-274-3500.

HILLCREST. 2 bedroom, 1 bath, newly remodeled. $1500. 2966 E Street. 619-220-5295.

HILLCREST. 2 bedroom, 1 bath, newly remodeled. $1350. 6240 El Cajon Blvd. 619-442-4644.


HOTEL VILLAGE. $1595. Sunny 2 bedroom, 2 bath. 2966 E Street. 619-220-5295.

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BRAKES $49 99 OFF 4-Wheel Service

**FREE Brake Inspection**

**COMPLETE SERVICE INCLUDES:**
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**MANAGER’S SPECIAL:**
- Additional
- Drain & replace coolant (up to 1 gallon)
- Change oil (10W30) and filter
- Complete 120-point inspection

**FREE OIL CHANGE**

**INCLUDES:**
- 24-HOUR PHONE ASSISTANCE • ANY MAKE OR MODEL

**OIL CHANGE**

**INSPECTION**

- Front or rear.
- 15K or 30K may not require all services or parts listed.

**FREE ALIGNMENT INSPECTION!**

**Thrust Angle**

- Most cars.

**FREE BRAKE INSPECTION!**

- Most cars.

**FREE TOWING**

**90 DAYS INSTANT CREDIT: 90% QUALIFY.**

**TRADE IN SPECIAL:**

$2500 Mail-in Rebate on all new cond. 0-30,000 miles. Mention this ad when you come in and we’ll deduct $2500 from the sticker price! Some restrictions apply.

**MH9000**: 15% discount on all new cond. & 4-wheel disc extra. Most cars & 4-cyl. 30K/60K/90K/120K SERVICE ($99 99*).

**ON THE BALANCE:**

**COMPLETE SERVICE INCLUDES:**

- Inspect front, rear or all 4 wheels.
- Replace spark plugs (necessary)
- Change oil (10W30) and filter
- Inspect emission control system
- Replace air filter (necessary)
- Inspect drive belts & coolant hoses
- Replace new cond. & 4-wheel disc extra. Most cars & 4-cyl. 30K/60K/90K/120K SERVICE ($99 99*).

**FREE AIR FILTER SUBSTITUTION WITH ANY SERVICE OVER $250.**

**FREE TOWING**

**90 DAYS INSTANT CREDIT: 90% QUALIFY.**

**TRADE IN SPECIAL:**

$2500 Mail-in Rebate on all new cond. 0-30,000 miles. Mention this ad when you come in and we’ll deduct $2500 from the sticker price! Some restrictions apply.

**MH9000**: 15% discount on all new cond. & 4-wheel disc extra. Most cars & 4-cyl. 30K/60K/90K/120K SERVICE ($99 99*).

**ON THE BALANCE:**

**COMPLETE SERVICE INCLUDES:**

- Inspect front, rear or all 4 wheels.
- Replace spark plugs (necessary)
- Change oil (10W30) and filter
- Inspect emission control system
- Replace new cond. & 4-wheel disc extra. Most cars & 4-cyl. 30K/60K/90K/120K SERVICE ($99 99*).
**SMOG CHECK**

$16.85

Pass BS2 for certificate and $2.50 if_indicator necessary.

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**Precision Tune Auto Care**

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**Brake Service** $30 Off
Replace pads or shoes, re-align drums or rotors, inspect entire system

**12-12 Nationwide Warranty**

**Factory-Scheduled Maintenance**

30K/60K/90K

We offer a generic package that includes a tune-up verification, replacement of PCV valve, fuel filter, air filter, oil filter, oil change (up to 5.0 l), rotate brake pads (up to 2 pads of 50/50 life), brake inspection, and a complete maintenance inspection. Our service package price is $195.95 with this $30 discount applied.

Or we can build a vehicle-specific package as per your manufacturer’s specifications and quoted accordingly. Either way you save $50!

**Check Engine' Light** $29 Off
Full computer trouble codes and provides a written description.

**Transmission Power Flush** $89 Off
Includes 2 quarts of automatic transmission fluid transiton.

**Headlight Restoration** $79 Off
Restores headlight lens to new/luster.

Our 3-step process can remove the yellow, rock-chipped surface and restore the clear lens that will help the nighttime vision that you once had.

**Oil Change** $13.95

Basic includes up to 5 qts. 10W-30 or 10W-40 motor oil, top-off fluids (includes brake fluid).

**Premium**

Includes up to 5 qts. 5W-30 or 10W-40 motor oil, top-off fluids and maintenance inspection.

**Smog Check** $19.95


**Save $50**

Free reset when we do the repairs.

**Wheel Alignment** $39 Off
2 wheels. Includes front toe adjustment.

Not valid at Encinitas location.

**Appointments & walk-ins welcome!**

5 Locations:

- El Cajon • 619-441-8888
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  Encinitas • 760-634-1000
  310 N. Avenida De Mejico
  Point Loma/Sports Arena • 619-226-7822
  3425 Midway Dr. (Behind Shell station)
  Kearny Mesa • 619-569-1111
  8027 Balboa Ave. (Between 163 & 805)
  Miramar • 619-450-6677
  6540 Miramar Rd. (At Camino Santa Fe)
  Open Sunday 9 a.m to 3 p.m

Point Loma/Sports Arena • 619-226-7822
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We offer a generic package that includes a tune-up verification, replacement of PCV valve, fuel filter, air filter, oil filter, oil change (up to 5.0 l), rotate brake pads (up to 2 pads of 50/50 life), brake inspection, and a complete maintenance inspection. Our service package price is $195.95 with this $30 discount applied.

Or we can build a vehicle-specific package as per your manufacturer’s specifications and quoted accordingly. Either way you save $50!

**Brake Fluid Exchange** $39 Off
Replace master fluid under-boost fluid exchange

**Save $50**

Free reset when we do the repairs.

**Cooling System Services**

$195 Off

An annual service
- drained & filled
- Power steering service

**Improve your MPG**

$16.95 Off
Premium Fuel Injection Service
- Decarbonizes pistons and valves
- Check fuel filter
- Check all sensors

**Complete Axle**

$59.95 Off
Labor extra. Most cars.
news of the WeRD

by Chuck Shepherd

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LEAD STORY

— Bungee Baby: Nick Fennelly, 31, was rushing his in-lab girlfriend, Sharon Taylor, into the parking lot at Calderdale Royal Hospital in West Yorkshire, England, just as their baby’s head started to appear. and, in a corridor inside, little Ashleigh shot out of her mother so quickly that Fennelly couldn’t grab her in time. She hit the floor, skidded, and then came back onto the umbilical cord, according to a December report in the Halifax Courier. Except for a bruise, Ashleigh is fine.

Christmas Mania (continued)

— Melody Howell of Richburg, N.C., expanded her collection of full-sized, designer-decorated Christmas trees this year to 52, all placed inside her 2,500-square-foot home. Said Howell’s adult daughter, “My mom is over the top. Everything she does is over the top.”… On the less joyous side, the city council in Kingston Upon Hull, England, prohibited its trash collectors from wearing their traditional Santa hats this year, declaring that the hats “do not create a professional impression.”

Latest Religious Messages

— Checking up just before his bar mitzvah, Orthodox rabbis in Sydney, Australia, found that his rabbi-supervised circumcision had not quite been “complete” and that it must be done again. Because, according to the boy’s mother, no hair was cut, and, according to the rabbi, he refused to receive his going-away gift. The law prohibits gifts to public officials of more than 100, with a few exceptions, such as wedding gifts. In (2) October, judge Robert Armstrong of Riverside, Calif., dismissed a indecent exposure charge against a woman solely because a state statute makes criminal only a person who “lewdly exposes his person, or the private parts thereof,” which to Judge Armstrong limited the law to males. The prosecutor quickly filed an appeal.

The Problem with Kids Is Their Parents

— Dan Hinkle is the commissioner of the South County Youth Association, which plays in a large football league in Fairfax County, Va. Hinkle’s son Scott played on the age-12-to-14 Rappers, which was a foul-up from a previous year. Hinkle fired their two coaches for violating his order to play Scott only on defense. (The coaches used him successfully on offense for one game.) The Rappers, to support the coaches, voted to disband the team even though they had made the playoffs, but Hinkle wouldn’t change his mind.

Least Competent Criminals

— (1) Three women were arrested in Columbus, Ga., for a robbery of a convenience store. They were an 18-year-old, 19-year-old, and Young’s plot unraveled. (2) Jeffrey Turpin, 41, was arrested in August in Kansas City, Mo., on an attempted kidnapping charge against a woman solely because a state statute makes criminal only a person who “exposes his person, or the private parts thereof,” which to Judge Armstrong limited the law to males. The prosecutor quickly filed an appeal.

Cultural Diversity

— About a dozen Asian women living in Seattle flock to Bigelow Street every September for hours at a time to gather fallen chestnuts, according to a report in the Seattle Times. The residents of the upscale homes say they’ve come to accept the ladies, some elderly, who thoroughly search yards for hours and make themselves at home on the properties (including relieve themselves in the shrubbery) while waiting for the next batch to fall. — After the aircraft maintenance staff of Turkish Airlines finished up a repair job ahead of schedule in December, they celebrated by sacrificing a camel at Istanbul airport, with hundreds of pounds of meat distributed to workers. The government of Turkey, which is working hard to be accepted into the European Union, might have preferred the sacrifice be done elsewhere.

Send your Weird News to Chuck Shepherd, San Diego Reader, P.O. Box 8803, San Diego, CA 92116 or to WeirdNewsTips@Yahoo.com

Leather Model Fucked by aosed Monkey

— No body has really been a fan of this 3-year-old monkey named Hinkle, who was a gift from his parents. He has a beard and a tail, and people have been teased about him. Now, the monkey has been found to be a psycho, and people are warning others not to get close to him. The monkey, who is now in a cage, has been seen to grab people and throw them to the ground. He has also been known to hit people with his tail.

— After being mad at his parents, the monkey attacked them and then went on a rampage, hitting and biting people. He has been seen to climb up trees and throw stones at people. He has also been seen to throw monkey poop at people.

— The monkey, who is now in a cage, has been seen to be agitated and aggressive. He has been known to hit people with his tail and throw stones at them. He has also been seen to throw monkey poop at people.

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Free Brake Inspection for SUVS, Cars & Trucks

Brake Special $89 (Regularly $129)

Most cars. Ask about our lifetime brakes. Guaranteed for 1 full year. Safe-brake package includes: • Clean and lube hardware • Inspect and adjust calipers • Inspect wheel bearings Keep your family and yourself safe while eliminating irritating brake noise. Call for brake service.

Premium Oil Change $19.95

Most cars.
• Up to 5 qts. of 5W-30 oil
• Check fluids
• Check tire PSI
• 60-point inspection

San Diego's Most Complete
30K/60K/90K Major Service
Looking for quality? There is a difference. Compare our service with other services.

Most cars.
Includes:
• Maintenance tune-up
• Drain & refill radiator
• Replace air filter
• Install spark plugs (premium plug extra)
• Inspect brakes
• Clean & adjust rear brakes
• Change engine oil
• Change master cylinder fluid
• Brake fluid
• Check suspension
• Tip fluids
• Adjust tire air pressure

Most cars and light trucks. We also honor extended warranties. We follow manufacturer's service schedule on inspection, adjustments, and replacement parts. Timing belt extra. Removal of plenum, injectors, etc. extra if necessary. Platinum package additional.

How can you get over $400 worth of auto repairs for only $89? Call us for information.


Exhaust Performance $39 With ad. • 4-Wheel Computerized Alignment $49 • inspect shocks & struts, computerized printout upon request. • inspect steering linkage, inspect tie rod ends, inspect tires to manufacturer's spec. Most cars.

Catalytic Converters As low as $169 • Installed. 6-cyl. add $20, 8-cyl. add $30. Trucks and vans add $40. • Call for availability.

Fuel Injection Service $49 • Call for availability.

Belts & Hoses Replacement '20 Off • Belts & hoses inspection, replace if necessary.

Pre-Purchase Inspection '39 Bumper to bumper

PASS OR DON'T PAY
$21.75 Smog Test Required
$31.75 Smog Test Only

Most cars & light trucks. Plus $.25 cert fee. Must bring original registration or purchase receipt PLUS application to 1/5/07. Sunday by appointment only. Any day Wednesday.

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**Thirty Years Ago**

*Just a Suggestion, You Understand*

After returning from Red China in November, Colleen O’Connor said she always believed “that the corporate executives ought to be on the line riveting bolts for a week and they’d improve the working conditions of the workers.”

—“Who ‘DA THINK?” — Carla Bey, January 13, 1977

**Twenty-Five Years Ago**

Jeremy Lighthouse was born fourteen months ago in a fiberglass hot tub in the double garage of a La Jolla house on La Jolla Coronado Drive. When he emerged from the body of his mother into the warm, salty water, he remained under the surface for 20 minutes.

His parents, Jia and Patrick Lighthouse, 34 and 33 years old, respectively, shared the tub with him. Seven other adults were in the room, and apart from them, few people knew about this first documented underwater birth in America.

—**CITY LIGHTS:** "IT’S THE WATER," Jeanette DeWyze, January 7, 1982

**Twenty Years Ago**

Now Roger Hedgecock has joined the ranks of electronics salesmen with an advertising pitch that trades directly on the format of his popular radio talk show.

The former mayor debuted December 8 as spokesman for Dr. Carlos Soria, a Baja California physician who claims his secret "Facial Rejuvenation" formula can "literally wipe ten to twenty years from your face" without scalps, collagen injections, or chemical peels.

Soria’s clients pay $3500 for 12 days at his Villa of Youth resort clinic near Tijuana.

—**THE INSIDE STORY:** Paul Kreuger, January 6, 1987

**Fifteen Years Ago**

This letter is for the person(s) at your paper who call San Diego “Dago.” I bet that when you write home to your parents in Anywhere, USA, that you write your return address as Ashley Ego. That way you really sound as though you have put down your roots here! I hope you stop to visit us at your home in sunny ‘SoCal,” you probably show them around such places as Elka John, Jahmool, Jackoomba, and San Wysedero. Don’t forget one of the most popular spots for tourists, La Jawlah. How about taking the trolley down to Twawanna for your friends to sample some taquaella?

—M. Barou
**Normal Heights**

—LETTERS: "DAGO: LOVE OR IT LEAVE IT."

**January 9, 1992**

**Ten Years Ago**

When my mother tells the story of her life, she says she knew not to marry a man like her brothers. She escaped as women usually do, by marrying a man from out of town. What she escaped from is picturesque, violent, and ordinary, like all lives told in anecdotes. There was the time she cut her head ducking under barbed wire and her hair turned red with blood. Her brother’s friend pushed his hand under her sweater, her brothers fought, her Mormon father rolled his own cigarettes. She saw a wreck once in the canyon, and a dead girl lay like a doll on the rocks. In times of heavy rain, my mother and her brothers would run to the ranch and watch the river flood its banks.

—**FAIRY GODMOTHER’S ART,”** Laura McNal

**February 1, 1997**

**Five Years Ago**

Chargers owner Alex Spanos, who, according to some reports, may be on the verge of pulling his team out of San Diego for the greener pastures of Los Angeles, has given $50,000 of so-called soft money to the Republican National Committee, according to end-of-year reports. Sempra Energy, on the other hand, gave $50,000 to Senate Democrats.

Porn magnate Larry Flynt is said to be planning a new “upscale” dance club sans nudity in San Diego to be called Flynt’s. At least that’s what Jimmy Flynn, Larry’s brother, is telling the media in Cincinnati, where the Flynts say they want to try the same concept.

—**CITY LIGHTS, Matt Potter,** January 3, 2002

Columns archived at SanDiegoReader.com

Good credit only. Indoor cat OK. Call for appointment. 1/2 block to beach, off-street parking. On bike trail to Pacific Beach.

On the beach between Reed Street and Going, spacious cottage-style 3 bedroom, 2 bath. Patio, laundry room. Cat OK. 9-unit complex. No pets. Available now. 1844 Diaz St., Oceanside. 619-439-4162.

3 block to beach. Ground floor, 1 bath, laundry on site. 1 year lease. Available now. 3711 Kingsley Dr., Pacific Beach. 619-270-2071.

Luxury living in a great location. 858-272-4398.

275 LIST.

2825.

$1395 rent. $1200 deposit. Call 714-505-4923. PACIFIC BEACH, NORTH.

2081.


6-bedrooms. Great atmosphere. 858-272-4398.


Senior complex. 201 32nd St. 858-483-0349. 619-270-2071.

$900. 2 bedroom, 1 bath. Close to all. 100% 2-year warranty. Trucks/vans higher. Most cars. Please call for details.

$99. 15K/30K/60K Major Service $99.99

Includes new filter. All services done same day. All services may not be applicable or necessary for your vehicle. Some trucks & 4x4 slightly higher. Timing belt replacement extra if required. Most cars. Please call for details.


PACIFIC BEACH.

$165. 2 bedrooms, 1 bath. 1 year lease. Available now. Pacific Beach. 100% 2-year warranty. Trucks/vans higher. Most cars. Please call for details.

$110. 1 bedroom. Kiss the maintenance man goodbye! 1 pm to 7pm, Mon-Sat. 619-270-2071.


$1100 2 bedroom, 1 bath. Minutes to beach. Walk to walk to La Jolla Cove. 807 E. Torrey Pines Rd. Take the del Mar/Encinitas exit. Drive 7 miles South. $752-558-5977.


MANGA-EYED TERROR

My boss is a crime lord.

I don’t want to talk about why it is that a couple of weeks ago I was online at 5:20 in the morning, except to make myself sound suitably awesome with self-justifications like “insomnia,” “mosquitoes,” and “pixel addiction.” So I’m checking my e-mail and am vaguely shocked to learn that my boss is writing me from the airport.

You say: Yeah? And?

And then I say: But I just saw his paunchiness in the bar splitting sunflower shells onto the floor a mere ten hours ago.

I quote: I got some family emergency, I will go back the states, I will call u when I got there. Meanwhile Li Ge will take care the Biz. meantime if anyone ask for me the boss, just tell them my last name is Wang.

His lechhest is a crime lord.

Later that night, Kyle and I sat around in bed trying to rate his potential outlawliness on the patented “duvet hogging-to-serial-killer” scale.

Me: Mafia? Come on, it’s got to be mafia.

Kyle: Naw. It’s probably something disappointingly boring, like import-export fraud.

Me: Chop suey?

Kyle: Yeah? And?

Me: No. Chop suey’s a delicacy. Like spitting sunflower shells onto the floor a mere ten hours ago.

Kyle: Oh, sweetest revenge! Glorious, quivery, manga-eyed terror.

Me: And you said, ‘yes’?

Kyle: Hmm... Because I’m thinking that the police came around at eight. Asked me if you were here.

Me: What did you say?


Me: What you said, yes?

Kyle: Nope. Told them the boss’ last name is Wang.”

Me: Wait for it... “Oh, and the ladies are out of toilet paper. Better get Little Pail on that.”


Next week: “A husky man with facial lacerations and a mouthful of worms, preparing for the inevitable escalation of insistence in my own little private, two-person bathroom, when Calculator Nazi materializes at my side.

“The boss’ name is Wang!” she blats.

Calculator Nazi is awesome. Thirty-two, unmarried, and wields ye old registry key as if it was Anduril, Flame of the West. Her other titles include Seeker of Precision in Inventory, Perfecter of the Inscrutable Hate-You Face, Scourge of Basically digi English vocabulary now includes such useful phrases as, “Bush, get out of my bush,” and the increasingly poignant “no pain, no gain.”

Anyway, since I figure it’s only a matter of time before the place explodes in a gently fluttering storm of laundered massage-parlor gift certificates, I’ve decided our bar is going to double as a distributor of Beijing’s underground zines.

All two of them.

Putting out a zine in China has its own peculiar challenges. Being illegal, for instance. All publications, roughly photocopied or otherwise, are supposed to be registered with the Ministry of Culture and bear its seal of approval. So the problem arises when the would-be authors of our blustery city are too refreshingly angst-filled to either bother with the bureaucracy or make it past the censors.

If I’m going to martyr myself for four walls and a kitchen full of roaches, I’m gonna do it with as much pretentious DIY-pushing as I can squeeze in before being forced to rean from the bottom of an outraged dog pile.

I was never very good at pacing myself.

Remember kids: fatalism is the stuff of life.

http://barelytzu.diaryland.com
Free Classifieds!

Post free online ads with photos at SanDiegoReader.com
FOR SOME REASON I WANTED AN OLD FASHIONED, hang-up paper calendar. I’d never had one before. I always relied on people telling me if the date was closer to Martin Luther King’s birthday or Hanukkah. I’m usually content to stand in line at the bank and ask, “Is it Friday?” On Saturday night I started harassing The Girl to get me a calendar on her trip to the grocery store. She came home without one.

Getting drunk and drowning on bourbon, I eyed the empty pale rectangle on the wall and cursed her, “You can’t help me out? All I wanted was a damn calendar.”

“I know.” I held both options up to imagine how each would look on my wall. “I feel like ‘80s music so he quit. I think it’s time for me to do the same. I’ve got my Soundgarden tape. I’ll be in the garage if anyone needs me.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 6
CRITTER GITTERS
KUSI 1:30 P.M.
Here’s a great indication that you have a chemical dependency problem: Critter Gitters comes on and you don’t give a damn. Your crankhouse hangover prevents you from reaching for the remote so you settle into a half hour of whatever-the-hell-this-is. Call someone. If you’ve ever seen this show, Call someone and tell them you want to quit. Critter Gitter is step one.

WHEN INNOCENCE IS LOST
LIFETIME 7:00 P.M.
I remember when my innocence was lost. It’s probably the same story everyone tells. I wore Laura Ingalls petticoats. There was a fake leg and a glass of merlot. That poor frog was purple for a week. Try explaining that to the bicycle mechanic who has to fix your handlebar light. Ah, to be 26 again.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 7
AMERICAN Dad
FOX 8:30 P.M.
My father told my brother and me, "Whoever washes his hands first gets to plug in the Christmas tree." We raced into the bathroom, ran our hands under the water, jostling each other for a week. Try explaining that to the bicycle mechanic who has to fix your handlebar light. Ah, to be 26 again.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 4
SPIN CITY
FX 9:00 A.M.
Who said that? Who said “Shake City”? That’s mean. Michael J. Fox is handing out one-way tickets for an eternity in the Hot Place and whoever piped up with that little joke gets cuts to the head of the line.

DREAMGIRLS: DIVAS DRAMA AND DESTINY
WHV 8:00 P.M.
A block from my place is a gunshot and g-string, five-and-dime, radio club called The Minx. All this week there’s been a man in a Santa outfit front, hailing potential customers. Ah, strip-club owners. Is there a depth to which they won’t sink?

FRIDAY, JANUARY 5
COMMON and WILL AM PRESENT: FREEDOM WRITERS LIVE
MTV 8:00 P.M.
My dad got off the new-music bus about 1979. His last purchase was a Kenny Rogers 8-track.

He didn’t understand and didn’t like ‘80s music so he quit. I think it’s time for me to do the same. I’ve got my Soundgarden tape. I’ll be in the garage if anyone needs me.

I bet you won’t do that again.

MONDAY, JANUARY 8
GAY STRAIGHT OR TAKEN?
LIFETIME 8:00 P.M.
Lifetime Channel, you are doing a bang-up job. Where would we be without you? (If you listen carefully on a quiet Monday night, you can almost hear an entire nation roll its eyes.)

TUESDAY, JANUARY 9
DATELINE NBC: BIGAMY MURDER
NBC 8:00 P.M.
I’m trying to convince the girlfriend that I need her plus two wives. She’s been reluctant so far, but I’m breaking her down steadily. I think I got through to her the other day with “you won’t have to do the dishes anymore. One of them will handle all the cleaning.” I wonder if Mormon girls can cook.

THE 33RD ANNUAL PEOPLE’S CHOICE AWARDS
CBS 9:00 P.M.
The 33rd Annual Self-Congratulations-A-Palooza What Do You Love About Me Show

THURSDAY, JANUARY 11
40 THINGS YOU DIDN’T KNOW ABOUT THE SUPER BOWL
ESPN 9:30 P.M.
I know that seven-layer dip is delicious. Everything else about the Super Bowl is a list of inconsequential details.
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**A.B.C. AUTOBUYERS.**

Cars.
At the lobby, the clerk looks at you as if you had slaughtered goats up there last night.

By John Brizzolara

You started Friday afternoon at the office party, you think. Technically it was Friday morning with the eggnog instead of a second coffee by the fax machine where you started talking to Danielle. Okay, that much you have down. But where are you now? This is not my happy office...that is not my happy wife...and you start singing all the wrong words to that Talking Heads song. My chips, my coffee, I'm not happy. I'm not happy, aren't I? Always a bad sign when you know you passed out. It means you're going to pay very hard and not much later.

Think on your pants. Be a man, that's it. Wallet. Four dollars. Oh. C'mon. Look around. Motel. What the? Oh, Angie's after-party place. Where's Angie? That was going good. Your Caio diver's watch — that's a laugh — 5:55. What? Am, or p.m? Dark. You stood up too fast. Take a minute, hang on the drapes. Oh, Chri-i-i...here it comes...see what you ate last. False alarm. Out the window is a parking lot, half dozen cars in the light of an Easy-8 sign. That's almost no help. There's a half dozen of them in your half of San Diego County alone. You are in San Diego, no? Man, you don't even know.

Looking at the soap wrapper, you see you are in Chula Vista. Why? God only knows. Throwing up in the geez. Aw, that's gross...could be worse.

Shaking now. You've got to stop the shaking and the paranoia. What did you do last night and maybe Saturday night, for all you know? The money. You do last night and maybe Saturday night, for all you know? The money. Thank God there's a tinfoil packet of Excedrin in your suit-jacket pocket. Where did all those little papers go?

You get credit 'til nine because you help him load bottled beer into a white cowboy hat, carrying a newspaper and a coffee from McDonald's. You try to rise in your throat, fails. A break in the fog reveals a darkened sign, LIQUOR.

As you approach, timing your arrival at what you can now see is the Boot & Cantinero, you notice a white cowboy hat, carrying a newspaper and a coffee from McDonald's. You know it can't be right. What is this place? A bookstore? You staggering, what kind of bookstore? It's a place where you buy beer. You hit and read Jaime's paper. It's Friday, January 5th, but you knew that pretty much somehow anyway. "Hey, at least I didn't kill anybody...probably. What's the problem?"

"What did you say, man?" Jaime's head is in the cooler.

"Nothing!" You kind of sing/talk along with David Byrne on the jukebox. "Same as it ever was...same as it ever was."
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