

SAN DIEGO WEEKLY

VOLUME 36 / NUMBER 50
DECEMBER 13, 2007

Reader

TELL
ME
WHAT
YOU'RE
WEARING

The shame of our public bathrooms – see City Lights

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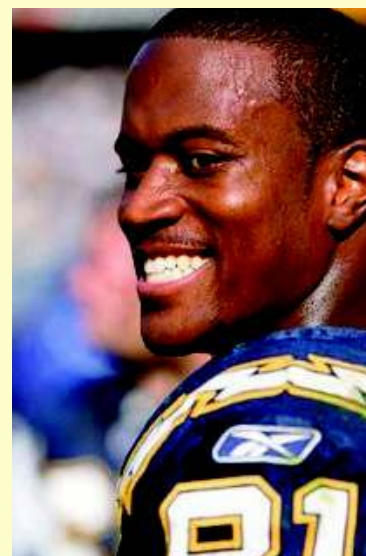
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BREAKING NEWS

The left boat Struggling liberal radio network Air America, thrown off KLSB-AM here last month, is making a San Diego comeback of sorts. Come February 23, the first Air America Radio Cruise is set to depart from downtown's cruise ship terminal aboard the Holland America Line's *MS Oosterdam* on a weeklong voyage down the Mexican coast, with stops at Cabo San Lucas, Mazatlán, and Puerto Vallarta. Besides network regulars like **Randi Rhodes** and onetime New York Democratic mayoral candidate **Mark Green**, voyagers can rub shoulders with Bush-bashing *New York Times* columnist **Paul Krugman**. Highlights, according to the cruise's website, include "Access to, and dining with guest speakers" and "Traveling with like-minded individuals." Just because it's for liberals, though, doesn't mean the cruise caters to the welfare set; accommodations range from \$1380 to \$6305 a person.

San Diego has become a popular departure point for themed cruises featuring big-name celebrities. **William F. Buckley Jr.**'s conservative *National Review* sponsored a summer voyage featuring cocktails with editor **Rich Lowery**, rejected Supreme Court nominee **Robert Bork**, and neocon icon **Dinesh D'Souza**. And San Francisco's Olivia Companies, which bills itself as the "premier travel and entertainment company for lesbians," hosted comedian **Lily Tomlin** on a women-only October trip to Mexico. Next year, **Billie Jean King** is set to be "guest of honor" aboard an Olivia cruise "celebrating Title IX," the federal law barring sex discrimination in school sports.

Air America's tenure on KLSB was inaugurated in August 2004 by station owner Clear Channel Communications, the Texas-based chain that also owns KOGO, home of right-wing talker and fallen mayor Roger Hedgecock. Program director Cliff Albert, a big Hedgecock defender not known for his First Amendment proclivities, proclaimed he was putting the progressive network on the air because "it makes sense financially." After it was yanked, the left-leaning gabfest was replaced with an all-jock format featuring, among others, a crew of macho sports writers from the *Union-Tribune*. ... Speaking of high seas, with the *U-T* in the midst of a pre-Christmas layoff spree, publisher **David Copley**'s \$30 million yacht *Happy Days* appears to be heading back from summer along the Riviera to its winter partying grounds in the Caribbean, according to amateur sightings reported on *yachtspotter.com*. On November 20, the 164-foot vessel traveled through the Strait of Gibraltar; eight days later, it was seen tying up at the docks of the posh Marina Rubicon in the port of Lanzarote, Canary Islands.

Writing wrongs La Jolla **Mark Fabiani**, who once worked for the late L.A. mayor **Tom Bradley** and Vice President **Al Gore**, has in recent times been toiling for Republican mega-

millionaire **Alex Spanos** in a seemingly never-ending quest for an expensive new taxpayer-subsidized Chargers venue. Now Fabiani has acquired another high-rolling client, the Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers, which is weathering an increasingly lengthy strike by the Writers Guild over how much money to pay for use of material on the Internet and other "new media." Management hired Fabiani and longtime partner **Chris Lehane**—who is famous for doing damage control during the **Monica Lewinsky** affair—to put a more positive spin on an offer that the union claims would roll back screenwriters' pay. The producers sacked their previous public relations person in favor of the take-no-prisoners Fabiani team after recent polls showed the public backing the writers.

Homies Los Angeles Democratic mayor **Antonio Villaraigosa** has hired **Jennifer LeSar**, a close friend of San Diego city councilwoman **Toni Atkins**, to "orchestrate development" of what a news release calls a "visionary plan" to redevelop Central City East in downtown L.A., including the run-down Toy District, the Seafood District, and the area "traditionally known as Skid Row." LeSar, who sits on San Diego's Centre City Development Corporation board, will conduct interviews with "50 key stakeholders" and come up with a plan. ... Opponents of Blackwater, that shadowy military outsourcing outfit that wants to build a training complex in San Diego's backcountry, are crying foul over a splashy show the company's skydiving unit staged during halftime of a recent San Diego State football game at Qualcomm Stadium. One irate spectator emailed friends, describing a phone call he'd just had with an official of the university's athletic foundation. "He says the event is to honor the military, but he seems to forget that Blackwater is a private firm. He confirmed that the Blackwater Logos were on the canopies of the parachutes, and that Blackwater did not pay anything for the advertising. Bottom line is that this is confirmed, and is an outrage. TAKE ACTION!" ... **Alan Bersin**, who at one time or another has been a U.S. attorney, San Diego school superintendent, and member of the State Board of Education and who is currently chairman of the regional airport authority, which runs Lindbergh Field, is set to put in a special appearance next month at a Harvard Alumni Association discussion of education reform at Santa Monica's Rand Corporation, the military think tank. Advance registration is required "due to security requirements of hosting facility," according to the invite.

— 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 619-231-0489.

Brandes Defies Market, Buys Stocks of Dailies

By Don Bauder

Charles Brandes, 64, and Warren Buffett, 77, have a lot in common. They both have made fortunes by following the

"value" investing concept. It was taught to them by the same person: Benjamin Graham, along with his academic sidekick

and coauthor David Dodd. Buffett studied under Graham at Columbia and later went to work for him on Wall

Street. Graham retired to La Jolla and in the 1970s met Brandes, a young stockbroker aspiring to be a money manager. Brandes spent a lot of time absorbing Graham's knowledge and went on to form a money management firm in 1974, one of the worst years for the market in the 20th Century.

Buffett went on to become the second-richest person in the U.S., with \$52 billion in net worth, according to the latest *Forbes* 400 tabulation of the wealthiest Americans. Brandes, worth \$2.5 billion, is tied for 165th on the recent *Forbes* 400 list. Buffett built a company, Berkshire Hathaway, that takes positions in stocks that he believes have intrinsic values the market has overlooked. Brandes built San Diego's Brandes Investment Partners, which manages \$125 billion for others, using the same "value" investing concept, often snatching stocks the market is thumbing down and is driving the same direction. These tools were first outlined by Graham and Dodd in their classic book, *Security Analysis*, published

continued on page 8

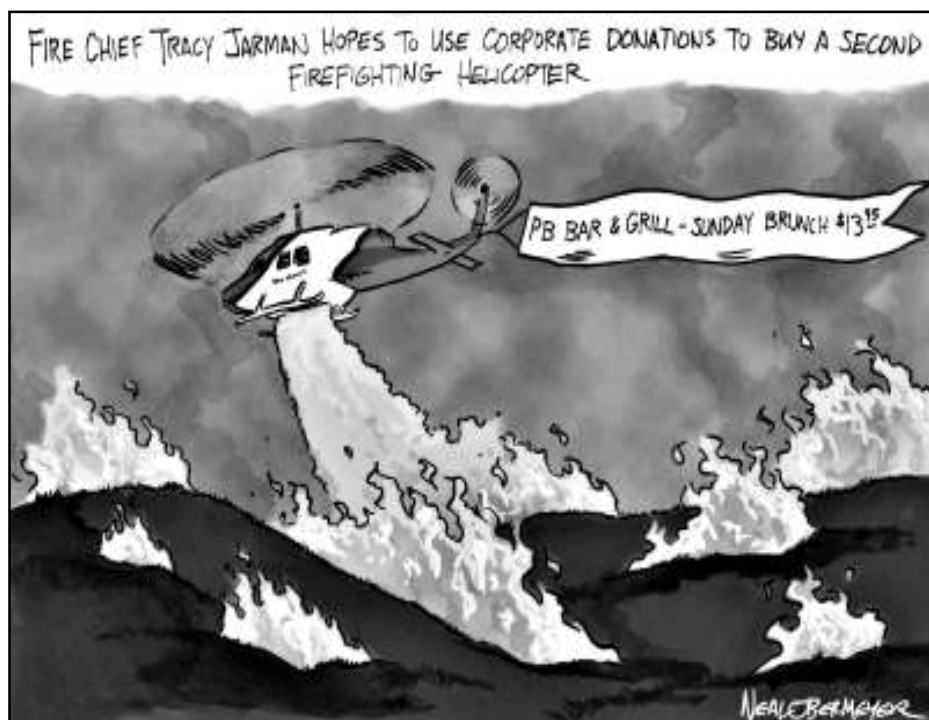
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Tanya and Charles Brandes

Neal Obermeyer



Pressing Need

By Joe Deegan

You decide to take the trolley to Tijuana. The day goes well, and you're ready to start homeward. Before boarding the Blue Line, a cup of coffee at the McDonald's Trolley Station in San Ysidro sounds nice. Then a refill and you're ready to go. "Maybe I should use that restroom in the corner," you think. "But the queue is too long. And what's this? They want me to put a quarter in the turnstile to get in? Think I'll just get on the train. If I have to, I can use the bath-

"Did I miss a bathroom at the Chula Vista Visitor Center (at Bayfront/E Street) on the way up?" Good thing you didn't try it. The building's front door has a sign saying No Public Restrooms. If you had gone searching for the restroom in a nearby business, the management might have wanted you to buy something more to drink — or

can take the Orange Line out to several portable toilets at the Euclid Avenue Trolley Station. (After 6:34 p.m., the train intervals on the Orange Line will also be a half hour.) You are lucky if you even have this info. No signs anywhere in the Metropolitan Transit System post the whereabouts of public restrooms.

We who ride San Diego's trolleys and buses see an occasional puddle on a seat, or on the floor underneath. Although drinks aren't allowed on board unless in sealed containers, the puddle can usually be chalked up to a spill. We make sure we sit a good distance away anyway.

Not many people are willing to talk candidly about this subject. When they do, it goes something like this. "I'll tell you a little story if you promise not to identify me in any way," says a man at the Grossmont Transit Center. "I had a long bus ride home and suddenly had to go to the bathroom. It was urgent, so I got off the bus right away. But there were no bathrooms around. Well, to get right to the point, nature took its course. I said to myself, 'I can't get back on the bus in



12th and Imperial Transit Center



Locked portable toilets at Old Town Transit Center



Old Town Transit Center

room up the line."

Recollection serves you well that building attendants at the 12th and Imperial Transit Center buzz folks into the restrooms inside Trolley Towers. But that's during the weekdays before 6:00 p.m. Today is Sunday. When you get to the station in 25 minutes, you see a locked gate instead of attendants.

Pressing your knees together, you now wonder,

something more expensive. And you would have risked missing the next trolley.

Here at 12th and Imperial, however, and depending on your ultimate destination, there are two options. Getting back on the Blue Line will lead to City of San Diego public facilities at Third Avenue and C Street. (If it's after 8:59 p.m., the wait between trains is a half hour rather than the daytime 15 minutes.) Or you

this condition.' So, with three miles left to go, I started walking. I was going up this hill, and my legs were killing me, and I yelled out loud, 'Screw this.' I waited for the next bus and got on. You can imagine the looks I got. People held their noses and moved away from me. But what the hell was I supposed to do?"

George Brown (not his real name) rides the trolley and buses from where he lives

downtown to his work site on Shelter Island. Due to transfers and a walk at the end, his trip can take up to two hours. Brown tells me he used the suggestion cards available on some buses to complain about the lack of public restrooms in the transit system. "When you gotta go," he says, "you gotta go." And, Brown complains, "City College has a wonderful new multimillion-dollar trolley station and no public restrooms. Why? America Plaza is a very busy station with two doors labeled Men and Women, but they are always locked. Why? The Old Town [Transit Center] is very outdated, and the only public restrooms are in the snack shop. Guess what happens when the snack shop closes for the evening?"

The run-down men's restroom in Old Town has one urinal and one stall. The appliances are metallic, like the ones you see in the City's public restrooms at the beach. Those locked portable toilets you see across the Amtrak/Coaster tracks? They're for bus drivers.

In contrast, Brown's ideas are expansive. "There should be sets of restrooms on both sides of the tracks at Old Town, and not in snack bars," he says. "The men's rooms should have numerous urinals and 10 stalls. The women's should have 20 stalls."

And Brown is not happy with other aspects of the Old Town station. "I'm not a small person; I'm not big either," he says. "But the flip-down seats they have by the bus ter-



12th and Imperial Transit Center

minals are so narrow I can't get my bottom into them. They're useless."

During the hard rain two Fridays ago, I noticed an associated problem. The roofed shelters along the tracks were not wide and long enough to allow everybody to keep dry. Many people were left stand-



Old Town restroom

ing in the rain, and it wasn't an especially crowded day. In the summer, says Brown, "There is very little shade for people to stand in. And it gets very hot out there."

These deficiencies suggest that the relative scarcity of restrooms along the trolley

lines is part and parcel of running trains and buses on the cheap. Yet in November, the Metropolitan Transit System announced it would have to raise its charge for monthly passes. It also said that transfers would no longer be used. For some riders that would mean paying two or three fares to reach a destination. And to think that the San Diego Association of Governments touts public transit as the lynchpin of taking cars off the freeways.

But back to your restroom needs while riding the trolley. In toto, there are eight stations that have public facilities of varying quality: San Ysidro, Palm Avenue (portable toilets only), 12th and Imperial, Civic Center, Old Town, San Diego State University (the best of the lot by far), the Euclid Avenue Trolley Station (portable toilets only), and

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An archive of City Lights stories can now be searched on the Internet at www.SanDiegoReader.com

Brandes dailies

continued from page 6

in 1934 — another lousy year for the stock market.

Brandes and Buffett have their differences. Despite his enormous wealth, Buffett lives in a modest house in Omaha. Brandes, on the other hand, has recently completed a 54,000-square-foot home on 30 acres in Rancho Santa Fe —

the most expensive residence ever built in the county. *Forbes* puts the value of the house at \$60 million. Brandes and his strikingly beautiful wife, Tanya, got married there last year. Elton John provided accompaniment.

Although they share the same philosophy of investing, Brandes and Buffett have strongly opposing views on one industry: newspapers. The annual meeting of Buffett's

Berkshire Hathaway is a celebrated event throughout the investment world. At last year's meeting, Buffett stated, with his usual bluntness, "News-papers face the prospect of seeing their earnings erode indefinitely. It's unlikely that at most papers, circulation or ad pages will be larger in five years than they are now. That's even true in cities that are growing," Buffett continued, "It's hard to make money buy-

ing a business that's in per-manent decline. If anything, the decline is accelerating. Newspaper readers are heading into the cemetery, while newspaper nonreaders are just getting out of college. The old virtuous circle, where big readership draws a lot of ads, which in turn draw more readers, has broken down."

Buffett's company still has an interest in newspapers. As of the most recent proxy state-

ment, Berkshire Hathaway has 18.1 percent of the Washington Post Co.; Buffett sits on its board and chairs the finance committee. Berkshire also owns 100 percent of the *Buffalo News*.

Brandes, however, sees intrinsic value in newspapers at today's depressed stock prices. His firm owns 11.25 percent of Gannett, the largest newspaper chain. And he has been buying more, becoming

Gannett's largest holder. Between March and November of this year, he almost doubled his stake. This was a period in which the stock was plummeting from around \$55.50 to \$36.50, about where it is now. Only three years ago, the stock was trading above \$91.

Gannett publishes *USA Today*, the nation's best-selling newspaper, along with 84 other dailies and 1000 nondailies. A subsidiary is Britain's second-largest regional newspaper company. Gannett has 20 TV stations in the U.S. and more than 130 Internet sites. Newspapers are almost 90 percent of revenue. Gannett is a bellwether for the newspaper industry, and that's not a good portent. Standard & Poor's says Gannett's revenues will fall almost 5 percent this year, possibly rebounding next year. The company has a heavy presence in Arizona, California, Florida, and Nevada, where mortgage problems are cancerous. Stock-rating firm Morningstar has lowered its fair value of Gannett stock to \$43 a share from \$65.

Brandes Investment Partners also owns 14.63 percent of newspaper chain McClatchy. This is a disaster story. Last year, it purchased the much larger Knight Ridder chain. McClatchy's stock was above \$53 at the time. Now it's around \$13. McClatchy paid \$6.5 billion for Knight Ridder, then dumped a dozen papers it didn't want for what seemed like good prices. But it didn't work out that way. McClatchy still has a pile of debt, although it is trying to pay it off. Moody's, the bond-rating agency, is threatening to lower the ratings of McClatchy's junk bonds even further. Last month McClatchy wrote down the value of the company by \$1.52 billion. Revenues plunged by 9.2 percent in the third quarter, and Standard & Poor's sees a drop of 12.5 percent in the fourth quarter. In March of this year, McClatchy sold the *Minneapolis Star Tribune* for \$530 million — less than half what it had paid for the property seven years earlier.

Morningstar has lowered the fair value estimate of the stock to \$15 a share from \$20. It notes that McClatchy gets one-third of its revenue from Florida and California, where the mortgage crisis is whacking retail sales and advertising.

There are rumors that the

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2004	Chevy	Malibu	Silver	44K	Loaded, 30mpg	\$140	\$6,900
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CITY LIGHTS

Brandes dailies

continued from page 8

Brandes firm will use its heavy stock position to force Gannett to break itself up into different publicly traded entities. E.W. Scripps and Belo are already splitting themselves into separate stocks, peeling off the ailing newspaper segments from more promising businesses. Gannett says it won't hear of such a thing. The Brandes firm says it is a passive

CITY LIGHTS

investor — a signal that it won't be muscling Gannett into a breakup. There wouldn't likely be such a caper at McClatchy: the reigning family has a hammerlock on stock voting power.

It boils down to this: newspapers are actually more profitable than most other industries — for now, anyway. It's just that people like Buffett — as well as investors generally — don't believe metropolitan dailies have a future. Smaller dailies and weeklies are doing

CITY LIGHTS

less poorly and may have more promising horizons. The Brandes firm, which stresses long-term investing, obviously sees intrinsic value in stocks that have been dispiteously pounded by the market. That's what value investing is all about. But with newspapers, Brandes is battling inexorably declining results, as well as negative investor sentiment. Sometimes, the market has it right.

Charles Brandes isn't about to change his investment strat-

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egy, which has been so successful in areas other than newspapers. He has written three books on value investing. (San Diego's Janet Lowe has written at least twice as many books on the topic.) Brandes isn't the only San Diegan to tap Graham's expertise. Geraldine Weiss, who led the newsletter *Investment Quality Trends* to a sterling record beginning in the mid-1960s, is also a Graham follower.

Charles Brandes did not return several calls. The company's public relations department did not respond to phone calls or a detailed email seeking answers to queries. ■

Pressing need

continued from page 7

the El Cajon Transit Center. It is El Cajon where one best sees both the advantages and difficulties of providing public restrooms.

The El Cajon Transit Center performs a variety of functions. In addition to the Green and Orange Lines, four bus lines pick up and drop off passengers there. Inside a small building, monthly transit passes are sold from a snack bar. The Greyhound bus company has a ticket window and picks up passengers heading out of San Diego to the east.

The men's and women's restrooms lie down small hallways from the two entrances on either side of the building. The snack bar occupies the center between the two passages, making them narrow and dark. The bathrooms are similar to Old Town's, with three metallic fixtures, including a basin but no mirror. Despite the work of a cleaning lady six days a week, their run-down aspect makes them feel filthy.

There is almost constant demand for the facilities. In broken English, not all of which I understand, the cleaning lady tells me that people get mad at her when she has to close the bathroom for cleaning. She does that several times a day. Someone will want to use one of the fixtures at the same time she is cleaning another. Then she says, while pinching her nose, "They even make poo-poops in the hall outside the door."

From behind the snack bar, another lady tells me, "Oh, they are always urinat-

ing in those halls. And did you see the rainwater dripping into the bucket back there? The biggest problem we have, though, is people stealing the toilet paper. Then they come to me and complain that there isn't any in

the bathroom. Besides bus and trolley riders, a lot of alcoholics come in here. The worst is on Sunday, because that's her [the cleaning lady's] day off. There's nothing I can do about the toilet paper. I'm running a snack bar, and we're a pri-

vate company. The upkeep of the building is the responsibility of [the Metropolitan Transit System]. We close at eight o'clock, but the trolley lets people come in and out of the cold until 11:00. They own the building, and they

do send someone in once each morning to clean. But my boss hires our cleaning lady because he doesn't want it to get so bad in here."

It's easy to understand how, with as much traffic as goes through the station, the bath-

room problem becomes so bad. But there is little doubt that the bathrooms are needed. Maybe George Brown is right. There should be restrooms on both sides of the trolley tracks, with 10 to 20 fixtures in each one. ■



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LETTERS

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Another Four-Letter Word

I am a member of KPLUG, the Linux group mentioned in your "Night Is My Day" cover story (December 6). It was a nice article; however, I take exception to my friends being called geeks.

These are highly intelligent and well-respected men and women who contribute an enormous amount to the community. I would have appreciated the writer's selecting a nicer word than "geek," which can be derogatory or insulting.

Thank you for listening to my opinion.

Sabrina
via email

Confidentially Theirs

I enjoyed your article "Night Is My Day" (Cover Story, December 6), particularly the piece about the Rescue Mission's Nueva Vida Haven shelter. I worked there for two years, from 2002 to 2004, and I remember training Chris Kerns when she began at the Family Cold Weather Shelter. I remember the endless loads of laundry at night, dealing with police bringing in battered women, and the occasional ambulance call. One night, I was physically attacked by a woman having a violent schizophrenic episode. I almost quit that night but stuck it out another six months.

At the time, I was working full-time for the County of San Diego during the day and working the overnight shift at the Rescue Mission on Friday and Saturday nights while also earning my bachelor's degree. The staff was made up of a hodgepodge of college interns and former shelter residents.

I don't claim to be a Christian, so I can't say it was my calling, but one thing

Chris Kerns was right about is your heart has to be in the work. I never judged the women in the shelter. I didn't know what they had been through that landed them there. I still work with the homeless population sometimes in a different capacity, and I still see many of the shelter residents I worked with years ago on the street. Because of confidentiality, I can't approach them, but they often approach me. It feels good when they remember me in a kind way.

Tanya Roome
via email

Blackwater Blowback

Don Bauder's excellent exposé of mercenary Blackwater ("Potrero: Still Burning," "City Lights," November 21) leaves much more to be revealed of this gestapo organization established to protect State Department employees in Iraq. Jeremy Scahill, reporter for *Nation Magazine* and author (*Blackwater: The Rise of the World's Most Powerful Mercenary Army*), made the following statement before the

continued on page 14

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LETTERS

continued from page 12

Senate Democratic Policy Committee on September 21, 2007.

"[T]hey have acted like cowboys, running Iraqis off the road, firing indiscriminately at vehicles and, in some cases, private forces have appeared on tape seemingly using Iraqis for target practice." Scahill testified that contractors' actions have created blowback and revenge attacks against U.S. military personnel, that contractors operate with "immunity and impunity," answerable to no higher authority, and that Iraqis cannot prosecute these crimes. In Najaf, in early 2004, one Blackwater operative was filmed on tape saying that shooting at Iraqis was "like a turkey shoot."

Scahill continued, "Colonel Thomas Hammes, the U.S. military official once overseeing the creation of a new Iraqi military, has described driving around Iraq with Iraqis and encountering Blackwater operatives. '[They] were running me off the road. We were threatened and intimidated,' Hammes said. But, he added, 'They were doing

their job, exactly what they were paid to do in the way they were paid to do it, and they were making enemies on every single pass out of town.'"

Scahill testified that Brigadier General Karl Horst, deputy commander of the 3rd Infantry Division, said that contractors "run loose in this country and do stupid stuff." In Baghdad over a 60-day period, Horst documented "at least a dozen shootings of Iraqi civilians by contractors, resulting in six Iraqi deaths and the wounding of three others," according to Scahill.

Wayne Madsen of the Wayne Madsen Report (WayneMadsenReport.com) says at least 55 U.S. law enforcement agencies have been indoctrinated in Blackwater "tactics"; some have abysmal civil-rights and police-brutality records, spelling trouble for civilian control of police and paramilitary forces.

Furthermore, the training and potential indoctrination of police officers by extreme right-wing and proto-fascist Blackwater could cause bloody public reactions resembling Baghdad and Fallujah (potentially triggering martial law as

hoped for by the Bush-D.C. new-world-order crowd).

Madsen concludes that citizens must confront local elected city-county officials; pressure them to reveal numbers and identities of officers trained by Blackwater, subjects covered, revenues spent; and demand that they cease and desist in such training.

Blackwater, federally funded and directed, might be better understood from House Joint Resolution 192 of 1933, which declares that the "American people are the enemy of the United States Incorporated."

Remember Waco and Ruby Ridge? Now it's atrocity by local cop.

Jess Turner
Carlsbad

Comments from Reader Website

Blurt

Published December 5

Posted by Gob Bluth on 12/5/07, 4:49 p.m.

RTX is "grindcore/speed-metal"? Christ, you get something wrong in the very first sentence, and I am supposed to believe anything else you write? hack.

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Christmas Issue

Some leaves have fallen off some trees, temperatures have sunk below 50 degrees, and Fashion Valley Mall is open an extra hour in the evenings. This means it's Christmastime, people.

I'm getting a fast start on my Christmas shopping, beginning the agony two weeks before Santa's due date, a personal best. And, in order to get the hunt off the mark lickety-split, I've slogged into chain-store world and purchased \$40 worth of magazines, confident I'll find sport-gift ideas and Christmas bargains within.

First up is *Bitch* magazine, promoting "a feminist perspective on our world." Articles: "Multiply and Conquer — How to Have 17 Children and Still Believe in Jesus" and "The Asexual Revolution Gets Organized." Sport-gift idea: The "Buy Bitch Gear" display ad showing female personhood wearing a gray pullover with "Bitch" embroidered on its front. Indeed, this could be a special sports gift, something for Mom to wear on her lawn-bowling days.

Us Weekly. There has to be something in here. Articles: "Controlled by a Creep: The Scary Past of the Man Taking Over Britney's Life." And, "If You Don't Have \$100, Do This!" I eagerly read on, "You don't have to break the bank for a chic celebration. Treat ten pals to an intimate, wine-fueled soiree. . . Choose two reds and two whites and serve a platter of cheeses, grapes, figs, cherries, and candied pecans."

HOW CHIC CAN YOU GET!!!
Sport-gift idea: This was harder than I thought it would be. The magazine is lousy with editorial content, which means a scarcity of ads. The closest sports ad, and I do think this qualifies under the subcategory "Sports Medicine," is Best Hammertoe Healer. Readers, I'm referring to the breakthrough product Yoga Toes. The large, blue plastic device looks like a pair of dentures, except these dentures fit over human toes. "Surprisingly refreshing."

Now comes *Men's Health*. Articles: "Smart and Stylish Rules for Guys," "Be The King of Your Kitchen," and my favorite, "The New American Man: 137 Ways to Find Happiness at Home."

There's a full-page photograph of a seductive blond dressed in what looks to be leather mini-lingerie, standing in a doorway, hips cocked. The caption reads, "Will she stay or go? It may depend on your towel selection." I am advised to acquire "fluffy, clean towels." Probably should make that a Christmas gift to self. Sport-gift idea: This is another

magazine with wall-to-wall editorial. How do they survive? Even so, there is a boffo sport-gift idea found in the "Build the Ultimate Home Gym" sidebar. I give you — *ta-da!* — the "Tanitas Ironman BC558 Body Fat Scale. . . it audits the muscle, water, and fat composition of your core and each arm and leg." What more could you want for \$300?

All right, let's take a look at *Spread Magazine*, "Illuminating the Sex Industry." Articles: "Yoga for Strippers," "Co-Op Brothels in Canada?" and "Hos in History, From Marilyn Monroe to Rudolph Valentino."

Sport-gift idea: Not much to buy, although you could make an argument that sex is a form of sports, so \$18 for a year's subscription "delivered right to your door in discreet packaging" might meet the criteria.

Next up is *Plenty*, with the teaser "79 Earth-Friendly Gifts" on its cover. Finally, some real shopping advice. Articles and blogs: "Extinction Blog" and "Ecolibations for the Festive Season." Now we're talking Christmas.

Sport-gift idea: A Jorg&Olif bicycle, which is a Dutch citybike made in Vancouver and imported to anywhere you'd like to be. "It's a Dutch bike, with its mod design and sustainable production process. . ." A paltry \$495 gets you the one-speed Oma model. While we're here, I might as well consider the Eden Gift Basket stuffed with delicious, wholesome food, "most are certified organic and kosher, and ALL are stress and shopping mall free." A must-buy gift for self.

Lets take a look at *NYLON*. Teasers on the cover: "A Fashion Renegade Speaks" and "445 of the Season's Best Puffers, Purses, Baubles, and Bubbly." I'm liking this.

Sport-gift idea: This one's tough. A magazine devoted to hip women's artifacts, 178 glossy pages of pouty adolescent models. Even so, there are sports-related services in the department "Treat Yourself." I considered and rejected "The Eyelash Perm," "The Seven-Hour Massage," and thank goodness I did or I might have missed "Ionithermie...[The author] was invited to experience ionithermie, essentially a form of electric shock treatment that targets cellulite...." Said author underwent 30 minutes as roast turkey and wanted more. Big success: lost an inch in her ugly areas. Hmm...this treatment should be good for guy bruises and welts. Possible gift certificate.

The Vegas Line

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SHEEP AND GOATS

PLACES OF WORSHIP REVIEWED

Denomination: Episcopal Church USA
Address: 6556 Park Ridge Boulevard, San Carlos, 619-460-6442
Founded locally: 1948
Senior pastor: Tom Phillips
Congregation size: 350-400
Staff size: 7 full-time, several part-time
Sunday school enrollment: about 75
Annual budget: around \$600,000
Weekly giving: around \$11,000
Singles program: no
Dress: semiformal to formal
Diversity: mostly Caucasian, some African American
Sunday worship: 7:45 a.m., 9:30 a.m., 5 p.m.
Length of reviewed service: 1 hour, 30 minutes
Website: www.stdunstans.org

St. Dunstan's — the building was dedicated in 1969 — is a church on the cusp. If you look back and up as you pass through the front door, you behold a row of exquisitely detailed stained-glass windows, with the crucifixion in the center. To your left is a sort of miniature chapel — short pews facing a crucifix. Other traditional elements: shields on the church walls bearing the symbols of the evangelists; a measure of old-style gothic carving on the communion rail. The building's shape, however, is a progressive-style inverted ark. The blocky priests' chairs are made from '70s oak, and the corpus-free central cross is fashioned from gold tile and wood and backed by an enormous blue-and-ivory permabanner patterned after mother-of-pearl. But surrounding this somewhat modern touch? A massive bank of organ pipes.

A few of those progressive (perhaps "casual" would be a better term) elements showed up in the course of the liturgy. Two guitars and a tambourine accompanying the choir for "On Jordan's Bank," the blessing of quilts for the sick, a youth minister doing a jumpy dance in the sanctuary to teach kids about the Bible's references to Christ. ("The books of the Old Testament point forward to Jesus; the Gospels point at Jesus....")

But from the moment the choir processed in — at least 30 strong, draped in robes, and singing "Comfort, Comfort Ye My People" while the organ sounded forth — a more formal, even traditional sensibility carried the day. It was the second Sunday of Advent, and change was in the air — the old-fashioned change from sin to righteousness. Instead of a Gloria, we had a sung Canticle of Zechariah: "My child, as prophet of the Lord, you will prepare the way/ To tell God's people they are saved from sin's eternal sway." The Collect pleaded with God, who sent "prophets to preach repentance" to "give us grace to heed their warnings and forsake our sins." The readings rejoiced in hope for the coming Kingdom of God, while the Gospel gave us John the Baptist: "Prepare the way of the Lord!"

"You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" "One who is more powerful than I is coming after me.... He will baptize you in the Holy Spirit and fire.... He...will gather his wheat into the granary, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

Father David Montzingo sallied forth into the center aisle for his sermon — another casual touch — and then dug into an examination of John the Baptist: who he was (a prophet), why he was popular (he announced the coming of the Kingdom), what he preached (repent!), and what his purpose was (prepare). As a prophet, he announced God's plan. In preaching the Kingdom, he touched "our deepest longings...the eternal reign of justice and peace."

Repentance got a more thorough treatment. "The Old Testament word that we translate 'repent' means to make a U-turn in your life" — and John stands as "the hinge between

the Old Testament prophetic tradition and what comes to us in our Lord Jesus Christ." But "the New Testament word we translate 'repent' means to have a change of mind and a change of heart.... I change what is at the very center of my life.... God's coming kingdom is not something you can casually saunter into.... You've got to be born anew; you've got to become a new person.... C.S. Lewis wrote, 'We are not merely imperfect creatures who must be improved; we are rebels who must lay down our arms.' That's what repentance means: to surrender to God and say, 'I want to be a new person; remake me for the Kingdom.'... John prepared the way for Jesus to come and baptize us with the Holy Spirit and fire, and that changes us, and it hurts — because it burns.... I have a suggestion for people who have Nativity scenes...

get a John the Baptist and put him out there."

What happens when we die?

"I am a lifelong C.S. Lewis advocate," said Montzingo. "He talks in several of his books about the judgment of God being a consuming judgment — in an obliterating sense. I would echo his sentiments: if we are without the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, then in the end when we die, we are nothing.... I tell people in this congregation, 'If you know Jesus Christ as a part of your life, you don't need to be afraid of death, because First John says that we have already passed from death into life.... In the end, if we have not acknowledged the presence of God through Christ in our life, why would we want to be in eternity? There is nothing that would interest us there.'" Still, he noted, Lewis's novel *The Last Battle* "holds out hope for the righteous captain" who mistakenly worships Tash instead of Aslan.

— Matthew Lickona

Columns archived at SanDiegoReader.com



DAVID MONTZINGO

Saint Dunstan's Episcopal Church
San Carlos
★★½

Sermon

content★★★½
delivery★★★★

Liturgy

.....★★★★

Music

congregational★★
band★★★★

Snacks

.....★★

Architecture

.....★★½

Friendliness

.....★★½

Poor to satisfactory.....(none)

Good★

Very good.....★★

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Extraordinary★★★★

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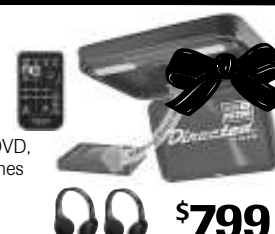
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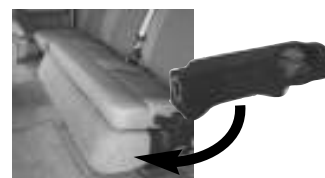
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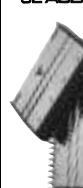
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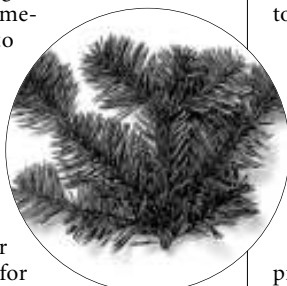
—EVE KELLY

My earliest Christmas-tree memories are not of candy canes or twinkling lights, but of cold knuckles and snow boots. Always, in the first week of December, our family would tromp out through the early-winter cold to the farthest corners of a Christmas-tree farm in search of the perfect specimen. Papa Kelly was a big fan of “roof scrapers,” something we’d have to trim just to stand it up straight. But since moving to San Diego, I’ve been contenting myself with lot trees, mostly out of convenience. I never seem to plan ahead for that trek to the tree farm. This year, I decided to revive the tradition. This year, the Kelly clan will take saw in hand.

“We grow the Monterey pine,” said Richard Gass, owner of Family Christmas Tree Farm in El Cajon (619-448-5331; cachristmas.com/familychristmastree-farm). “It’s the tree of choice for choose-and-cut farms in Southern California. It’s basically the only tree we can grow that looks nice — it’s a dark green, and it holds its needles really well. It’s like a cut flower — if you take it home right away and put it in water, it’ll stay fresh right through to January.”

Growing a Monterey Pine into a decent-sized Christmas tree “takes approximately five to six years,” said Gass. “That will give you a six- to seven-foot tree. We plant them from what we call bare root, or seedling. In the first year, we’ll do some top pruning to maintain the top. In successive years, the top pruning has to be done monthly. All pines are just pines until they are shaped into Christmas trees. We have to do a lot of side shearing. I use a knife because it gives a nice, clean shape. Other people use hedge clippers or power clippers, but I like the knife. It looks like a long bread knife; you have to swing from top to bottom to make a nice, clean cut on the young growth. I walk through at least once a month.” While he’s walking the lot and pruning, Gass can make assessments about water and pests — his chief enemies are the pine tit moth and mites (the latter suck chlorophyll out of the needles, taking the green out of evergreen).

The average price for choose-and-cut trees, said Gass, “is \$40 to \$50. The tags are on the trees; they go from \$29 all the way up to \$200 for the really tall ones. We provide the bow saw — I try to keep them sharp. You go out there, get on your knees, and hack away — it doesn’t take very long. The average tree weights 20 to 25 pounds; two people can handle it. You bring it to us, and we shake it to drop out any dead needles or lizards that are in it. Then we can net it for you, and if you’ll be putting it in water within an hour, we’ll re-cut the butt.” (Otherwise, Gass advises re-cutting the butt yourself before watering the tree.) “And we



1



2



3

“We provide the bow saw —
I try to keep them sharp.”

can also do a flame-retarding. We spray a salt on the tree that will keep flame from spreading. But your best bet is to keep the tree moist, keep it green. That way, it won’t burn. Keep the water level above the bottom of the tree.”

Gass also carries a large selection of potted trees. “They’re grown in Escondido, up on the east end of Highland Valley Road. I have Monterey pine; it’ll last about 20 years in Southern California. I carry an Aleppo, which is more of an open-top tree, kind of wispy. It grows well in San Diego County, all the way out into the desert. I have an Italian stone pine; they’ve been around for eons. In Italy, it’s called an umbrella pine, because of its flat top. Next, I’ve got the deodar cedar, which is called the California Christmas tree. It’s bluish-gray, with a short needle. The Eldarica pine is a good desert pine, but it leaks sap and gets a sort of white spittle on it — some people don’t like that.

The Leylandi cypress is very bushy. Potted trees are nice for someone to use as a Christmas tree and then plant or give to the parks. I Love a Clean San Diego has a program for donating potted trees after Christmas. And I have blue and green spruce, which are short-needled and prickly, but they’re brought in for people who live in higher elevations or on the coast. They don’t like the heat.” And the festive-minded herb gardener can get a rosemary bush pruned into the classic Christmas shape. Prices on all the potted trees vary by size. “I have the Aleppo in six-inch containers starting at \$10 and also in 5-gallon and 15-gallon pots. A three- to four-foot tree is going to cost \$30; a four-to-five foot tree will be \$40 to \$50; a six- to seven-foot tree will be around \$100. We’ll give you a care sheet when you take one home.”

Maximum convenience, of course, comes from the cut trees. “The noble fir is probably the most popular, but we also have the Douglas fir, the grand fir, the Nordman fir, and the Fraser fir. They’re all short-needled. The Noble is unique because it’s so layered; it’s good for displaying ornaments. The Douglas is denser and dark green, while the Fraser’s needles are silvery. The grand fir is silver-green as well, with longer needles — about an inch — that smell lemony when you squeeze them.” Cut firs range from \$29 to \$100, depending on size and kind.

The Family Christmas Tree Farm is open through December 23 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Gass noted that the lot is not spotlit, so customers looking to cut their own should consider the early darkness in planning their visit.

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1. Noble fir sprig
2. Monterey pine
3. Italian stone pine

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by Barbarella

Comet Courtesy

The road to Hell is paved with good intentions.
— English proverb

I was yanked into consciousness — adrenaline tensed my muscles for fight or flight, and my heart was pumping fast, as though I’d stumbled off a cliff in a dream and barely escaped with my life by awakening moments before my plummeting body was to crash into the unyielding earth below. I detected pressure on my shoulder and tried to shake it off. I heard my name being whispered and was somehow aware that this was one in a series of attempts to gently call me to attention. When I realized David was the source of the pressure, that he had been methodically nudging me as he said my name, I relaxed a bit and muttered into my pillow, “What’s wrong? You okay?”

“Yes, I’m fine,

nothing’s wrong,” David said softly. “Look out the window. You can see the comet.” I opened my eyes to a squint. We were on twin beds that David’s mom had pushed together; the window above each bed was covered by its own shade. David was on his right elbow, holding his shade aside with his left hand, staring through the gap in awe. The blinds above my head were inflexible, making a racket as I tried to push them aside. My angle was all wrong — frustrated, I flipped onto my stomach and wrenched the accordion paper out of the way. “See? Right there,” David said, aiming his finger in the general direction of the sky. “Isn’t it beautiful?”

I looked up and saw

nothing. I wiped at my eyes, hoping to rub away the sleep that blurred my vision, and looked again. But all I saw was a field of black. “I can’t see — oh, shit, what am I doing?” I grumbled. “Of course I can’t see — I’m not wearing my glasses.” Growling with annoyance, I excavated myself from the cocoon I’d made out of a sheet, two blankets, and a down comforter. Because he’s a hot sleeper, David insisted on leaving a window open to let in the frigid (or as he called it, “refreshing”) New England air. My teeth were chattering before I was fully upright. I fumbled around in the dark, trying to locate the nightstand by the door and made a ruckus as I knocked over a can of mousse and a bottle of perfume. “Hey, there goes a shooting star!” David said, as my fingers finally found my glasses. They felt like ice against the bridge of my nose, so I quickly removed them and held them in front of my face as I leaned over the bed, pushed aside the shade once more, and looked out the window.

“See it?” David said, his voice alight with wonder and amazement.

“You mean that speck of white?” I couldn’t control the edge in my voice as I added, “The one surrounded by all those other specks of white? You know, I was in the middle of a good dream.”

“I thought you’d want to see it.” David’s face fell, dragging my heart along

with it.

I mustered some enthusiasm for the great cosmos and gazed out the window once more. Injecting some excitement into my tone, I said, “I guess it’s really cool, if you think about it. I mean, how often do we get to see...which one is it again?”

“Holmes.”

“Right. How often do we get to see Comet Holmes?”

“I’m sorry,” said David, sounding defeated. “I struggled with the decision of whether to wake you or not, and I just thought, well, I thought that you wouldn’t want to miss seeing the comet. The sky is so clear out here.”

“You were right to wake me, beh beh,” I said, in an obvious attempt to placate him. He wasn’t buying it. “Really. I appreciate that you wanted me to see something cool. But I’m going to go back to sleep now, okay?”

I am quick to remind myself that my dear darling David’s intentions are always honorable. But when it comes to deciding whether or not to let me sleep through an event I might find interesting, David can’t win. In the last week of September, I dozed off on the train from Nice to Paris. That time, David chose to let me sleep through the passing view of the French countryside. When I finally opened my eyes, it was to see David staring at me with a troubled, desperate look on his face. Before I had a



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chance to stretch my arms and blink myself fully awake, David launched into a litany of all the picturesque scenes featuring windmills, cows, emerald-green pastures, and quaint villages I'd missed while sleeping. Then he said, "It killed me to see it all go by, to know that you were missing it, but you looked so peaceful sleeping there, and I didn't want to disturb you." I was about to explain how he'd undone his good deed of letting me sleep by making me feel bad about all the things I'd missed out on, but the tortured look on his face and the earnest sparkle in his blue eyes kept me from doing so. Instead, I rolled my eyes, sighed heavily, and asked, "Why didn't you wake me up?"

I must admit that, in my relationship, well-intentioned irritation is a two-way street. On more than one occasion I have heard David ask me, "Why is it you only want

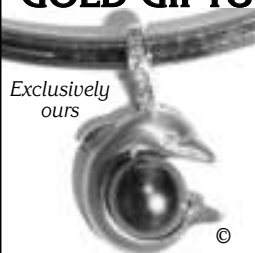
me to see something amazing when I'm comfortable and need to get up and turn around in order to see it?" David's seat of choice in our home happens to be facing away from the western windows and mine toward them. Therefore, when we are lounging in the evenings, the sunset is directly in my field of vision, and it is often beautiful. I would be remiss not to interrupt our conversation to say, "Wow, look at that!" To which David, after twisting and turning or rising from his seat, invariably responds, "Oh. It's a sunset. Again." I sometimes wonder if I do it on purpose. As if on some level I get a bit of a sadistic thrill out of depriving David of comfort so that he can see something I think is pretty. But I don't think that's the case...at least not all the time.

There are some visions in life that are so arresting in their splendor,

scenes so extraordinary that the only way one can fathom their magnificence is to share them. It's not enough for me to say to David, "You should have seen it," and then try to describe what I'd seen. I'd rather *show* him. There are some occurrences — like witnessing the universe in action by way of a comet or watching the sky paint itself — for which words are inadequate. Such experiences make up some of life's best moments and despite my initial crankiness, I'd hate to miss any of them. ■

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TELL ME

I stopped

folks from Chula Vista to Del Mar, at the malls and on the street, to ask them about their clothes. Questions ranged from sartorial specifics (“Why this outfit?”) to cautionary tales (“Your biggest fashion mistake?”). And I asked what they hated to see on other San Diegans. It’s just as you suspected: everyone is watching you...

Michelle Dalessandro, 25 | Fashion Student | Golden Hill

This outfit was about \$250 to \$300. Leggings from American Apparel. Baby doll shirt with capped sleeves and string of gold pearls and plastic gold bangles from Studio 1220. The boots from Anthropologie are somewhere between 16th-century Elizabethan and Louis XIV. I always spend my money on accessories. I look for unusual fabrics — those that cost less but look like they cost more. I pay attention to the way clothes are designed, the way they fit. If it doesn’t fit well, I won’t get it. Leggings are a staple for me; they’re comfortable and I always wear them. I don’t have a chest, so baby doll tops work great for me. The shoes are very me — the girl in me: very feminine, lots of detail, and a little fur.

I wish I didn’t have to hem my pants. I wish I could wear long, long pants and long dresses. If money were no object, I would buy Louis Vuitton, Max Mara, Betsey Johnson. I usually don’t regret anything I’ve worn because everything is intentional when I get dressed. That said, I once wore sandals to a Scarlet Symphony concert and started a dancing pit — a case of choosing the wrong outfit for the wrong occasion. I wish people would buy the right size, what looks good on them, not just what’s in style.

As far as what women in San Diego wear, there’s definitely a retro vibe in San Diego, and the women that do it, do it well. Otherwise, women seem to have a lack of imagination and confidence. And they need more color! More color, more confidence.

*“I love Prada,
Anna Sui,
Moschino,
Comme des
Garçons — but I
can’t afford it.”*

WHAT YOU

PHOTOGRAPH BY DEREK PLANK



Barbara Dooley, 27
Personal Banker
Pacific Beach

I'm wearing one of my favorite dresses that is super cute and super comfy. I bought it at H&M for \$35. I decided to pair it with some boots — BCBG, \$100. My sunglasses are Marc Jacobs, and the purse is Helen West. Both were about \$100, so this outfit costs about \$335. I like to add odd, unexpected colors with what I'm wearing, so that's where the necklace and tank top come in. I don't go by brand at all...just cuteness and style!

I chose this dress because I bought it at a store that we don't have in San Diego. That way I won't see myself walking down the street! I think this style dress is very flattering on all different body types. I like the wrap part because it accentuates the waist.

I'm very fortunate because I don't feel limited in what I can or can't wear. Some pant styles are really cute, but they aren't long enough for me. If I could afford whatever I wanted, I'd probably buy big-name designers.

I could always use a second opinion — or a third — before I leave the house, but I try not to make many mistakes or go to extremes with what I'm wearing. Sometimes it's hard to keep up with changing fashion seasons — new styles can get expensive. We've all had our own personal episodes of *What Not to Wear!* I don't think women should lie to themselves about what looks good on them. Just because it's in style doesn't mean it's right for them. On the other hand, I think that the way a woman dresses says a lot about her personality and how she views herself.



“My biggest fashion faux pas was wearing gauchos to work every day.”

’ R E W E A R I N G

Linda Cobo, 18

Student, Sales Downtown

I'm wearing a yellow, gray, and black printed dress and a black knitted shrug. My mom made the whole outfit for me. She's been making dresses since she was 15; she learned it from her mom, who was also a dressmaker, my grandma. In Mexico, my mother made everything — wedding dresses, you name it. I just give her a copy of the dress and she'll make it even better...she's very creative. I'm also wearing patent leather flats from Saks Off Fifth. The whole outfit probably cost me \$70 — \$20 for two yards of material, \$30 for the shrug's yarn, and \$20 for the shoes.

I like wearing dresses; I'm a girlie girl and have been since I was five years old. But I'm too

short to wear long dresses or long skirts. I wish I could afford BCBG and Marc Jacobs.

Before I choose an outfit, I run it past my

mom. She always knows what's right because she makes clothes, and it helps me avoid fashion mistakes. Certain members of my family aren't as

lucky: one of my cousins still wears short tops — you know, styles that are over with already...something that was in a year or two ago, and she's still

wearing it. I don't like baggy jeans on anyone.

Christine McLaughlin, 35
Retail Management
University Heights

This is a wool-blend suspender skirt from Cas-cas-tette that I bought at Neighborhood Boutique. I got the yellow tie-dyed T-shirt there too. Everything except the vintage combat boots, which I bought at a thrift store in Chula Vista. The whole outfit was probably under \$200. I chose this skirt because it's edgy and fashion forward, and suspenders are big again. I like to mix different eras — the new skirt, the combat boots from the early '90s. I love Prada, Anna Sui, Moschino, Comme des Garçons — the modern design element, it's genius — but I can't afford it.

I can't wear high-waisted, wide-leg pants, which are really in right now. I could wear heels, but those pants just look better on tall people. I've made mistakes in the



Linda Cobo, Downtown



Christine McLaughlin, University Heights



Lindsay Trowbridge, South Mission Hills



Randy Bryan, Mission Hills

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past wearing things that were just wrong for my body type. I'm curvy, so I need to keep that in mind. Something right now that's big is the '60s trapeze dress. When you have a chest, like I do, it just makes you look bigger. You kind of have to be flat, so I don't wear dresses like that, but usually I'll wear anything.

As for what I don't like: for some reason, San Diego women think that tight means sexy. It doesn't always. Loosen it up!

Lindsay Trowbridge, 29
Nonprofit Management
South Mission Hills

I'm wearing a white tank from H&M with black-on-white pinstripe pants and a gray sweatshirt-hoodie. I'm crazy about this jacket because it adds style to everything. I can wear it with jeans, even a dress, and still be casual. The silver sandals, which I picked up at Ross for 20 bucks, add some flair. I



Dara Carkner, Hillcrest



Shannon Nosenzo, Lemon Grove



Carolyn Nigh, Coronado



Laz Smith, Talmadge

bought the jacket and the pants at Studio 1220 — probably \$120, total. Boutiques are much better for me; I don't have the patience to shop the malls, plus I enjoy the personal attention I get. If I could, I'd only buy in

boutiques.

I can't wear heels with a lot of pants, because pants usually aren't long enough for me — I'm 5'11" — so finding a long hemline is a challenge. My biggest fashion faux pas was

wearing gauchos to work every day two years ago because I just didn't have the energy to think about being fashionable. I finally tossed them. Actually, I think I may have burned them! A fashion mistake a friend recently

made was wearing a worn-out pair of shoes with a fancy cocktail dress. She said the shoes were still "functional." I said, "Sweetheart, I don't care if they can carry you from San Diego to New York, get rid of them!"

A big fashion no-no in my book: panty lines. All women need to have a few pairs of nude G-string underwear. Full-coverage underwear is comfortable, but it is not flattering under a pair of fitted white pants.

Randy Bryan, 40
Salesman
Mission Hills

This is a casual look for me, and it really fits my personality: casual but also shows off my upper body — because I work out and I work hard to be healthy! I bought most of it at Nordstrom; the rest I got on sale from Macy's. I probably paid a total of \$170. I like the cut of the jeans; they really fit my waist. I chose the brown tank because I have every other color. The rust suede loafers — I love them! — they reminded me of my brother, who passed away when I was young. It's his style: classic. They're Cole Haan.

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I really learned how to dress from my brother when I was a kid. He was really into fashion. He taught me what matches, what goes together, what's in season, what's out of season. I haven't found anything that I can't wear, but if I could, I'd buy more Versace.

As for fashion mistakes, people need to realize not to wear too much of one print, like plaid; not everyone can wear checkered material. I'd say men in San Diego don't know how to match, to coordinate. A lot of women here make the mistake of confusing summer white with winter white. I'm from New York; we have seasons.



Candace Ridley, Downtown



Laura Rottman, Mission Hills



Victoria Abbou, La Jolla



Troy Munsey, Normal Heights

all wear the same thing. I rarely see anything where I think, "Wow, I love that outfit."

Shannon Nosenzo, 33
Marriage and Family Therapist
Lemon Grove

The weather was going to be warm, and I like to be comfortable, so I wore fall colors, even though I wanted to pretend it was still summer. This is a Hurley T-shirt, probably \$10. I'm wearing it over a black tank. I bought the paneled brown skirt at the Viejas outlet, \$40. The wedgies are Seychelles, \$45; I got them at *shoes.com*. Black-and-white Chanel knock-off bag, maybe \$25. Jackie O glasses, \$10. This outfit fits my personality. Easy, fun, simple.

I really like the new puffy dresses — bubble skirts, the tent dresses — but it totally buries me. If I could afford it, I'd shop at Nordstrom all the time. Past mistakes, probably

Dara Carkner, 25
Sales
Hillcrest

This is a work outfit. I bought the purple dress online — *shopbob.com*, which has about 100 different labels. The brown suede short boots are

Steve Madden. This is a signature stripe Coach large tote, Coach sunglasses — I used to work for them. The dress was \$200, the shoes \$100, the sunglasses \$200, and the bag \$400, so total, about \$1000. Purple is good on

me, and the flow-y dress is great for fat days — let's just say it's forgiving after a long weekend. I got the boots last year, before they got so popular. I thought it was going to be colder today, so I just threw the boots on. I like

color; I have a lot of plummy, purple clothes.

I haven't tried skinny jeans yet, but I don't think I'll be able to wear them. If I could afford it, I'd buy Chanel. My biggest fashion mistake of the past was Ugg boots with skirts.

As for other people's fashion mistakes, I don't like huge logos on tops or jackets. I'm from New York, so I think there's a lot of nonstyle here in San Diego. A lot of girls wear the same look; whatever that style is, they

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jeans that were too low and too tight. I can wear them, but I still get the little squish, and when someone comes up and grabs you — it's a little embarrassing if they can feel it.

I don't like when friends wear pants that are too baggy and too long and cover the shoe. I know it sounds weird, but it really bugs me. Show a little toe! In my opinion, San Diego women are beautiful, but they just wear too little!

Carolyn Nigh, 40 Biomedical Research Coronado

I had a lot of meetings today, and this seemed like a cool option for a hot day. Black pleated skirt, Preview from Nordstrom, \$40. Giraffe-print chiffon blouse, \$25 on sale, and Ann Klein patent Mary Janes, \$59, both bought at Macy's — on sale! I'm carrying a clear Baby Phat animal-print bag, \$70. It's actually a beach bag, but I take it everywhere. I have to look professional, but I don't wear hose and I try to keep the fun element. If I could, I'd wear sundresses and flip-flops every day, but with work, I can't. I would love to buy Versace, but it's too dressy for the office. And Chanel. As for fashion mistakes, wearing longer skirts. I'm too short for them. When they were in fashion, I bought a lot of them and thought later, *never again*.

I'm not a fan of clothing that's too tight. The biggest fashion mistakes come from not looking at yourself in the mirror before you leave the house. That's what I tell my children! Bra straps showing are a huge pet peeve of mine. I don't care how young or old they are. It's inappropriate in my opinion.

Laz Smith, 30 Barista Talmadge

I'm wearing brown Dickies — work pants — and

a western shirt I picked up at Salvation Army for three bucks. I like the western shirt, the colors — kind of fallish, orange piping on the pockets, fits in with the coffeehouse work environment. The black-and-

white glasses are from Lenscrafters — I'm kind of an emo guy... I dunno, a little indie.

I'm a designer-phobe; I don't like wearing anything with a label. As for what I can't wear? I think I'm so good-look-

ing, I can wear whatever! My biggest fashion mistake was late-'80s/early-'90s denim shorts. I hate fake ripped jeans. Drives me nuts. San Diego men and women should never wear anything you'd see in an MTV video.

Candace Ridley, 20

Full-Time Student, Researcher Downtown

I'm going out with friends after work and I wanted to look classy, so I put this black-and-white

retro outfit together. I got the top at Ross for \$13, the skirt from Act II was \$9, the ankle-strap sandals were \$8, drop earrings were \$5, and the headband was \$1. So, for the whole outfit, under \$50. Everything has to



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07-0991 (12/07)



Jaya Fux, Chula Vista



Kenji Renka, La Jolla



Megan Nicholson, Pacific Beach



Andrea Evans, Alpine



Gabriel Hagen, Normal Heights

match for me. I'll go out of my way to find it. I can get a shirt in La Jolla and drive all the way to El Cajon for the skirt.

I'm so into Dolce & Gabanna, and I'm a Britney Spears fanatic. If I could, I'd wear stilettos,

but they kill me. And I love dresses, but I don't always have the body for them.

Fashion mistakes: sweats and a headscarf. Whenever I wear sweats and a headscarf, that's when the hottest guys

come up to me. When I dress up, I never meet hot guys. It's crazy! I hate the dickie thing that people wear under shirts — the sweater/turtleneck thing, that's like a half shirt? I think it's so ugly. Too '60s. People shouldn't wear clothes that are too tight or too small. Women try to squeeze themselves into some-

thing that doesn't fit. Just be you!

Steve Brunolli, 20 Tutor North Park

I go for a rock 'n' roll mod look. I like to be flashy and be seen and be noticed — I like people to remember me. These pants are Gloria Vanderbilt; they're women's

jeans. I sewed 'em up so they'd fit. Paid \$3 at some thrift store. Gold belt with studs, about \$15. Italian Beatle boots from Flashbacks — can't remember what I paid for them. Velvet jacket, \$5. Striped boatneck T-shirt, \$10. Medallion from Claire's, \$3. And the Who button, a few bucks. If I could spend

whatever, I'd get my clothes custom-made in London by the same guy who designed for Mark Bolan, from T. Rex, and all the mod guys. I like a lot of girls' coats, but they have the boob darts. I gotta figure out a way to get rid of that.

My biggest fashion mistake? I had a sparkly purple silk coat that I used to wear all the time. It was so ugly. I look back on it now and wonder, "What the hell was I thinking?" I have a friend that wears short little leather jackets that are cut off, and he has a really long torso, so it doesn't look good on him at all. I don't like the headband look on women, and I hate cargo shorts on men. The Uggs boots with short skirts? I never understood it.

Laura Rottman, 39 Real Estate Development Mission Hills

I wore this outfit because it's comfortable and cool. It's a little bit warmer today, so I was trying to find something easy that

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clean-cut, neutral. It
won't offend anybody —
I work in a semiconserv-
ative environment —
also, I'm running around
a job site, so I try to get
things that will hide dirt.
I'm wearing a silver-blue
silk top from Banana
Republic, probably \$50.
Gray pants are Ann Tay-
lor Loft — love them, I
just bought them — they
were \$69. Black leather
pumps, around \$50. I
have a change of shoes in
the car because I don't
wear heels on the job site.

I'm not really good
with designers, but I'm
sure I'd have a lot of
fun in Nordstrom and
Macy's going into the
higher-end stuff that
really fits your body. I
pretty much can wear
anything I want,
though I'm limited in
the workplace. But I
don't wear Talbots, for
example, because it's
too conservative.

Big fashion mistake
of the past: Can I just say
“the '80s”? As for others'
mistakes, people make
choices I would prefer
not to make. Variety is
really lacking in our city
in terms of fashion for all

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ages. Everything's about what's totally "in." You really have to seek out unusual stuff to find variety. I wish San Diego would showcase a little more versatility.

Victoria Abbou, 38
Cosmetology Student, Stylist
La Jolla

I had an interview this morning, and it was a little chilly, so I wanted to dress warm and look professional but stylish. I like the fall colors and a little bit of flash. My skirt and shirt are from United Colors of Benetton. The shirt was \$39, the skirt \$75. My sweater — that's chiffon piping and camel fur — I purchased from the La Jolla Farmers Market for \$75. I have on camel fishnets from Nordstrom and Jessica Simpson brown suede boots with bows that cost \$99. The brown Ellen

Tracy leather bag was probably \$200. I'm wearing earrings that my mother gave me. I took them apart and remade them — they're 18-carat



Steve Brunolli, North Park



LeeAnn Sardone, Del Mar



Tami Lorigan, El Cajon

gold with glass beads. I'm a Valentino girl; he's my favorite designer. And I love Fendi shoes and bags. I'd wish I could wear Betsey Johnson —

especially her evening wear — but I have to be very selective since I'm very hourglass. I'm not comfortable in bright colors; once I tried to



Andrea Duran, Chula Vista

wear bright green, and it just didn't look good on me. I don't like it when girls wear the lowrider jeans with thongs,

whether it's on purpose or not. Maybe it's not intentional, but if jeans are too tight for you, don't wear them; go with your size. A lot of women are in denial about what size they really are. Each designer fits every body differently. I noticed that when San Diego women go out in the evening, they don't really dress. They have no style of their own. It's the spaghetti-strap top, jeans, and stiletto sandals or pumps. When you go downtown, that's all you see girls wearing.

Troy Munsey, 22
Stylist
Normal Heights

It was cold this morning, but the sun was out. The weather's been pretty schizophrenic, so I figured warm and cool clothing. This outfit shows how insane my brain is. Comfort and a

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little outspoken. So I'm wearing a long, white thermal T-shirt — inherited from a friend — under a graphic T-shirt from the Blue Room in Fashion Valley — 20 bucks. Plaid Hurley shorts, \$50. Tredair U.K. black-and-white shoes, \$18 at Buffalo Exchange.

If money were no object, I'd wear a lot of tailored suits; I like Prada a lot. What I can't wear is layered

collars — like sweater vests with collars underneath; they just don't look good on me. Maybe I haven't found the collar that flatters my face. I read in *Details* magazine that there are other kinds of collars, so I need to investigate.

I've learned that whatever you wear, there are never fashion mistakes, only fashion discoveries — you find out what doesn't work.

When I was young, I wore a lot of neon colors, but that was in at the time. The spaghetti-strap phase — I hope that's passed. A lot of girls were wearing them that shouldn't have been. What do I hate that San Diego women wear? For me, it's all about the hair! I hate overly highlighted long hair with no strengths.

Jaya Fux, 38
Voiceover Specialist,
Hispanic Market
Chula Vista
I'm wearing a turquoise layered skirt I bought from Costco, \$10, and a black tunic with turquoise beading from New York & Company, probably \$20, and a black tank, also from Costco — a three-pack for \$9.99. The sandals

are Clarks from Macy's, \$25. I've got fake diamonds in my ears, but the turquoise silver bracelet from Mexico City is real! It cost more than all the clothes put together. But not as much as the Ralph Lauren sunglasses, which were \$90. I'm on my way into the studio to do a commercial, and I wanted to dress com-

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fortably but with color and some style. I like that this skirt has flair and movement; I can work in it, and I feel good in it.

If I could afford it, I would wear the clothes I see women wear in Mexico City. I go there often, and I see how beautifully those women are dressed. I wish I could wear lower-cut tops and backless dresses, but I don't have a

big chest, so those clothes don't flatter my figure.

Red lipstick doesn't look good on me, nor does black eyeliner. The worst was the very big blouses that cover your figure, just long and shapeless, that we wore with leggings. That style didn't do anything for me. I have a friend who's quite chunky, and she tucks in her top and pulls it out so it's hang-

ing. It's her way of hiding her weight, but it just makes it worse; it makes her look very round. Flip-flops are the worst. I hate seeing them on San Diego women.

Kenji Renka, 20 **Accounting Associate** **La Jolla**

I'm wearing a full-length pinhead coat from Ipso Facto, an online punk-Goth store. It was about \$100. Black silk shirt, probably thrift store — probably ten bucks. Guess? black cargo pants, I paid five or ten dollars for them, but they're easily \$100 originally. The chain was about \$20. The silver pendant was \$15 from Spencer's. I choose what I'm wearing based on who I'm associating with. I used to just wear random clothes, without any thought to how they went together. People really interpret what you're wearing. This outfit tells you a lot about who I am, what I'm into.

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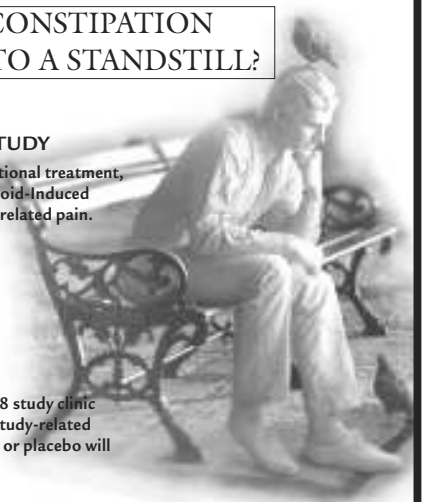
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Are you between the ages of 18 and 65 and finding life hard to tolerate? Has your energy and motivation to enjoy your life decreased? Do you find even simple pleasures empty? If so, you may qualify to try an investigational medication being studied for depression.

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

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

- You receive up to \$450 for your participation.
- You receive no-cost research study medication and medical care.
- No reports are made to employers, schools, or insurance companies.



Are You A Night Owl Who Can't Fall Asleep Till Midnight (or Later)?

Who me? Yes, you, the one who is up most of the night. Have trouble getting up early in the morning? Feel like you could sleep all day and should say, "who, who" all night?

If you are healthy but have chronic problems falling asleep before midnight, you may qualify for a research study in our state-of-the-art sleep clinic and receive an investigational medication for poor sleep.

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

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

- You may receive up to \$2600 for time and travel.
- Receive no-cost study-related medication and study-related medical care.
- No reports are made to employers, schools, or insurance companies.



Are you being treated for your sleep apnea and depression but still have sleepiness during the day?

Because these two disorders have tiredness and fatigue in common, people who suffer from both feel like they drag all day long. California Clinical Trials is conducting a research study of an approved medication to see its effects on individuals with both sleep apnea and depression. If you are 18-65 years of age and in stable health, using your prescribed CPAP regularly and taking antidepressant medications, you may qualify to participate in this research study. Every study conducted by California Clinical Trials is staffed by a team of skilled and experienced physicians and medical professionals trained to place your comfort and well-being first.

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

- You will receive up to \$550 for your participation.
- You will receive study-related medication and study-related medical care.
- No reports are made to employers, schools, or insurance companies.

Healthy Male?

Covance needs healthy men to take part in a clinical research study.



Qualified participants must be:

- Healthy Men
- Age 18 to 65
- Non-smokers
- Able to participate in overnight stays

Call Sun.-Fri. for more information:
866-818-3253



Participants will receive all study-related exams and investigational medication at no cost. Participants may receive compensation up to \$4,650 for time and participation.

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I'd maintain the same style, even if I could afford whatever I wanted. It's not a question of money for me; it's a question of what looks good and what I feel good wearing. I really like how fishnet looks, but I'm not willing to wear it.

As far as others' fashion mistakes, I think people generally wear clothing that shows how they want to be viewed by others. Bad choices? To them, they're not mistakes. I don't like the whole new-age gangster clothing. It just perpetuates black stereotypes.

Megan Nicholson, 25
Nursing Student
Pacific Beach

I based everything around the boots today, figuring out how I could make them work. I put the skinny jeans on and tucked them in, because I wanted the boots to show. I love color, which is why I'm wearing three different tops! It starts with two tanks — green and pink, probably \$4 each — under a long yellow sweater, about \$20. I've got on Marlo skinny jeans, about \$60, tucked into lace-up Steve Madden boots, around \$120, which aren't vintage, but they're about seven years old. The fedora is from Christy's of London, around \$50.

If I could, I'd dress edgier. I like what Prada does. I love the relaxed Bohemian style of clothing, but it doesn't really suit my personality. As

for fashion missteps, the schoolgirl pleated skirts. Wouldn't do that again...

Depending on your attitude, you can pull things off and avoid any fashion mistake. Some girls want to copy a certain look, but they can't quite carry themselves into believing it. And I just don't like leggings. I think it's overplayed.

Andrea Evans, 31
Human Resource Director
Alpine

I have a history of devotion to the environment. I wear Bono jeans on his EDUN label and try to be mindful of the environment, so I got this outfit on Adams Avenue at Richard Frederick — it's the first boutique in San Diego that sells organic clothing and cruelty-free accessories — no leather. I'm wearing a black-and-white striped "ecoganic"



RESEARCH STUDIES

CLINICAL RESEARCH

Bipolar Disorder • Depression • Schizophrenia

Researchers at Sharp Mesa Vista Hospital are currently enrolling men and women into inpatient and outpatient studies.

Eligible participants may receive all study-related care at no cost, and may be reimbursed for time and travel.

Participation is confidential and trials are safely conducted under the supervision of experienced physicians and research specialists.

To learn more, please call the Sharp Mesa Vista Clinical Research Center at

(858) 694-8350.

Clinical
Research Center
SHARP Mesa Vista
Hospital

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SCHIZOPHRENIA

Is your current medication working?

If you're taking Seroquel® and have experienced a return of symptoms, you may want to consider participating in a clinical research study.

This study is evaluating an approved medication to see if it may provide control of schizophrenia symptoms and to evaluate its effect on weight.

Seroquel® is a registered trademark of Astra-Zeneca.

Do you qualify? You may qualify for this study if you:

- Are between 18 and 55 years of age
- Have been diagnosed with schizophrenia
- Have experienced a return of symptoms after taking Seroquel® for three months or more

All study-related care and study medication will be provided at no cost for up to eight months.

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- A Type II diabetic?
- In overall good health?
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- Between 18 and 70 years of age?
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If you answered yes to all these questions and are available for study-related visits for a year, you may be eligible for our investigational drug research study. If eligible, you will receive medical evaluations, including blood tests and electrocardiograms, nutritional counseling, investigational medication treatment, and visits to the clinic at no charge.

For more information about this study, please contact:

(619) 688-6565

or visit us online at: www.ari-inc.com



Anxiety?

If you are troubled by worries, tenseness, difficulty sleeping or concentrating, you may be eligible for

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✓ Difficulty Sleeping?

✓ Restless/Tense?

✓ Difficulty Concentrating?

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Center for Understanding and Treating Anxiety

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<http://nas.psy.sdsu.edu>



Is waking up tonight affecting your tomorrow?

Do you or someone you know have trouble staying asleep? Is it affecting daytime activities? A study of an investigational medication is under way for people who have trouble staying asleep, characterized by waking up throughout the night (sleep maintenance insomnia).

To qualify for participation in this research study, you must:

- Be at least 18 years old
- Have trouble staying asleep through the night
- Be impacted in your daily life by your sleep problems

If you qualify and choose to participate in this study, you will receive an initial consultation, study-related examinations and laboratory evaluations, all follow-up visits, and you may receive study medication at no charge to you. Compensation for time and travel provided.

If you are interested in learning more about this study, please call:

(619) 688-6565

See our website: www.ari-inc.com



New Research Offered For People with Hepatitis B

Hepatitis B-positive volunteers are needed to participate in a new research study of an investigational medication for the treatment of Hepatitis B.

You may be a candidate if you have:

- Chronic infection with Hepatitis B
- No prior treatment for Hepatitis B
- Are otherwise in good health
- Are HIV negative

All study-related care is at no cost if you qualify, including doctor visits, lab tests, and study medication.

Call: 858.277.7177

This study is being conducted by:

Medical Associates Research Group

An alliance of physicians devoted to the finest patient care through state-of-the-art research.



Sadness, low energy, trouble sleeping, can't concentrate...

Depression – have your symptoms returned?

Clinical research study for adults with depression.

If you or someone you know is:

- 18-55 years of age
- Currently experiencing a depressive episode and have a history of recurrent depression

You may be eligible to participate in this clinical research study.

Qualified study participants will receive:

- A comprehensive medical evaluation as it relates to the study
- Supervised care by medical professionals during the study
- Study medication at no cost

Compensation for time and travel and an aftercare program may be provided.

If you are interested in learning more about this study, please call:

(619) 688-6565

See our website: www.ari-inc.com



Is your Schizophrenia medication making you heavy?

If you have been diagnosed with schizophrenia and would like to participate in a study that monitors weight, you might consider participating in a medical research study that is studying an investigational drug for schizophrenia.

You may qualify if you are:

- Diagnosed with schizophrenia
- Have taken Zyprexa (Olanzapine) or Risperdal (Risperidone) for the past 3 months
- Have not been hospitalized for schizophrenia in the past 3 months

Those who qualify will receive study-related procedures, such as physical exams, laboratory tests, and study medication.

For more information about this study, please contact:

(619) 688-6565

See our website: www.ari-inc.com



Do You Have Rosacea?

If you think you may be suffering from Rosacea and are at least 18 years of age, you may be eligible for a clinical research study.

You may qualify if you have: red skin around forehead, cheeks or nose, red bumps similar to acne (minimum of 8), or tiny blood vessels over the nose and cheeks that appear as a blush from a distance.

**Please call University Clinical Trials at
(619) 202-0173
to see if you
qualify for this study.**

Qualified participants will receive study-related medical exams and investigational medications at no cost.

Medical insurance is not required for study participation.

Is Acute Mania Due to Bipolar Disorder Throwing Your Life Out of Balance?

We are seeking volunteers for a clinical research study of an approved medicine under investigation for acute mania due to bipolar disorder.

TO QUALIFY:

- You must be at least 18 years of age
- You must have been diagnosed with bipolar disorder
- You must be experiencing symptoms of acute mania

QUALIFIED PARTICIPANTS WILL RECEIVE, AT NO COST:

- Monitoring of bipolar and acute mania symptoms
- Study-related medical and lab exams
- Study medication

PLEASE CALL TO LEARN MORE!

**SYNERGY CLINICAL RESEARCH CENTERS
888-619-7272**

long tank with black lace detail and palazzo-style black pants. They're so soft and comfortable. The top was \$48, the pants were \$68. The shoes are Charmoné, made in Italy but designed in San Diego. I like them because they're unique, they're red, and I'd never walk into a party and see anyone else in them. They're a little expensive — \$269 — but not really for shoes made in Italy. My Michele watch is \$500, so it's all relative.

If I could, I'd buy everything at Harvey

Nichols — a store in London — and a long list of others: Dior, Chloe, Chanel, Vivian Westwood, Miu Miu, Linda Loudermilk. Victoria Beckham has great style, but I could never get away with wearing her choices. J. Crew has cute clothes, but they're too conservative for me.

My big fashion mistake was a horrible blue Jessica McClintock dress — it was more like Laura Ashley-style, down to my ankles, with long sleeves — that I wore for a wedding. Never again! My mom's a fashion mis-

take. She dresses like she's 80. Pants with elastic, you know.

I hate when San Diego women try to dress like L.A. ladies — too tight, too low, too what it's not. Stop trying to catch the L.A. vibe; it's San Diego, for God's sakes!

**Gabriel Hagen, 20
Bank Teller
Normal Heights**

I don't like the dull, drab, usual stuff; I love funky colors. I only have to wear shirt and tie for work, with khakis or black pants. I wore the

RESEARCH STUDIES

Are You Treating Your Insomnia...



Physicians nationwide are researching whether the use of an investigational medication may safely and effectively help you discontinue taking Ambien.

You may qualify if you:

- Take at least 10mg of Ambien four or more nights a week
- Are not taking Ambien CR (controlled-release)

If you qualify, you receive all study-related care and study medication at no charge. Financial compensation for time and travel may also be provided. To learn more, call:

**North County Clinical Research
760-639-4378**



Are you having diarrhea again and again?

Or, do you alternate between diarrhea and constipation?

We are now doing a clinical research study to test the safety and effectiveness of an investigational medication for **FEMALES** who have diarrhea-predominant or alternating irritable bowel syndrome.

You may qualify if you:

- Are having diarrhea for the majority of the time or are alternating between diarrhea and constipation for the majority of the time
- Have at least 3 bowel movements per week

If you become a participant, all study-related care will be at no cost including doctor visits and study medication or placebo, and you'll also receive up to \$300 for time and travel.

For more information, please call Medical Associates Research Group: (858) 277-7177

Does the constant urge to go to the bathroom disrupt your sleep?

You may qualify to participate in a clinical research study of an investigational medication designed as treatment for adults with Nocturia (frequent nighttime urination).



Participants must be:

- 40 to 75 years of age
- Have experienced Nocturia for at least 3 months
- In generally good health

Qualified participants may receive study related medical care and study medication at no cost as well as compensation up to \$2,000 for time and travel.

For more information, call:
eStudySite at (619) 321-6604 or toll free 1 (877) 857-2084



Do you or someone you know suffer from Generalized Anxiety Disorder?

Do you:

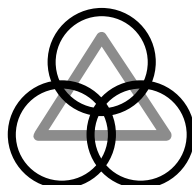
- Worry excessively and can't relax
- Have persistent anxiety, tension or nervousness
- Have muscle tension or upset stomach
- Worry about how you will deal with each day

You may be eligible to participate in a clinical research study of an investigational medication.

Participants will receive at no cost:

- Study-related exams
- Investigational drug
- Compensation for time and travel

For more information call:
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— Suzanne W.

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jacket because it was raining. It's casual, yet it's business-appropriate. It's still fun and outgoing; it's a conversation starter. Khakis from JCPenney, around \$20, and Ecco loafers from the Walking

Company, around \$150. Jacket from the Assembly, \$70. Purple tie, \$20. Turquoise shirt, about \$20.

If money were no object, I'd buy Armani — I love the colors, the

styles — and a lot of Gucci — I fantasize at the Gucci store all the time. I love print shirts with patterns, but it doesn't work on me; it's not made for my face structure. I wish I could wear them.

When I was in high school I tried to follow trends, the cheap versions. I used to see all these ads for Hawaiian prints, so I tried wearing those. I grew up in Iowa; it just didn't work. Nei-

ther do muumuus, which people wear out in public. And those sweats. Okay, you're a mom, you're busy. You're going to the gym, it's everyday use, but you can still dress up. I hate the fact

that San Diego women wear...very little clothes. You can make yourself stylish and still wear clothes. Cover yourself up!

LeeAnn Sardone, 21
Au Pair
Del Mar

I wore this because it's funky, it's unique. You gotta get out there and show 'em what you got. I bought this vintage-inspired Trina Turk black-and-white hounds' tooth-checkered dress at Caroline's Designer Resale in Del Mar for \$75. The black boots are Ferragamo's, \$150. I've paired them with black thigh-highs that I've rolled down so they show over the boots. I threw on some colored bracelets to add a little flair. So total, maybe \$300.

Oh, everything I wore up to 18 was a fashion mistake. I would never be caught dead in my pajamas outside anymore...flannel comfortable pants in public? No. No. No. My friends' mistakes: collared button-up shirts. Don't do it.

If I had the money, I'd buy Miu Miu — it's Prada's line. I love mini-dresses, but I can't wear them. Well, maybe I can wear them...I don't like the quarter-length tights, the leggings, that girls wear under dresses or jackets. I just don't.

Tami Lorigan, 25
Bookkeeper
El Cajon

I wear a lot of vintage dresses — they're easy, comfortable, feminine, fun. I like my hair and makeup to match the era. My husband has a '49 Ford, and we go to the car shows, so dressing vintage is part of my everyday lifestyle. I'm wearing a late-'50s day dress, \$44 from Girls from the Park in Ocean Beach. Wool beaded '50s sweater, around \$30. The baby-blue flats are current — Seychelles, \$25.

RESEARCH STUDIES

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I'd buy a lot Diane von Furstenburg if I could; I love her stuff. I admire Calvin Klein — it's very modern, very clean — but I don't have that angular look. I'm curvy; that's why vintage clothes work on me.

In the past I wore too-comfortable clothing — it was a little boring. Those are the fashion mistakes I see my friends making — a lot of jeans, a lot of T-shirts, nothing unique. I really hate it when women wear platform foam flip-flops. I don't care if it is summer!

Andrea Duran, 21 Student, Sales Assistant Chula Vista

I dressed in black, because that's usually what we wear at Bloomingdale's. But I'd wear this to go out to dinner downtown. As for the lacy, midriff top, I'm not showing anything on top, so it's okay to show a little bit on the bottom. You gotta go one way or the other. I bought the top at Forever 21 for \$23. The crop pants are Frenchi from Nordstrom, about \$38. The suede boots are Nine West, \$60. The black hobo bag is

Lulu, around \$40.

I love BCBG, it fits really good; Bebe works well too. In jeans, I like Seven, Rockin' Republic, True Religion. The loose styles that are in right now? I get lost in them; I'm too small. My past mistakes include tops that were too short and jeans that were too tight. Same with my friends. Jeans that are too tight or too loose or too low, so that you bulge out on the side. What San Diego women need is to stop dressing too provocative and showing too much skin. ■

— Sue Greenberg

RESEARCH STUDIES

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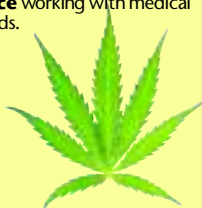
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Do you have Body Dysmorphic Disorder?

Are you **preoccupied** with a defect in your physical appearance, spending hours a day **worrying** about it or looking in the mirror? Do you groom excessively or try to **camouflage** your flaw? Do you **avoid** having people see it?

The UCSD OCD Program is looking for people who are excessively concerned about a physical flaw to take part in a study that is providing:

- 12 weeks free medication treatment • Brain imaging scans
- Diagnostic evaluation • Neuropsychological evaluation

Study participants must:

- Be age 18-65 • Not be on any medications that affect brain functioning
- Not have any active medical conditions • Weigh less than 280 lbs.
- Not have a history of chronic substance abuse

There is NO monetary compensation for participation.

For more information call Dr. Jennifer Sumner at: (858) 534-8056

Celebrate with us at our new office Sat., Dec. 15, 10 am-3 pm.



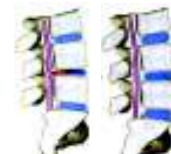
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Do you have high blood sugars?

You may be qualified to participate in a clinical
research study for people with Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus



You may qualify for this study if:

- You are male or female 18 to 70 years of age with Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus.
- If you are female, you must not be able to have children.
- You have been taking the same dose of metformin for at least 2 months.

If you qualify, your participation in the study would last about 4 months, during which you will receive the investigational study drug and study related medical care at no charge. You will also be reimbursed for your out-of-pocket expenses, commuting expenses, meals, and parking fees.

To learn more about the study, please contact eStudySite at:

(619) 321-6604 or toll free 1(877) 857-2084



Farewell, Nazi Harlot



Vigilant readers may recall an article published in these pages last fall. It was a story about used cars and hubris — deep, seductive, mind-enchanting hubris.

I still remember, precisely, making a left off Orange Avenue in National City and glimpsing, for the first time, that elegant Mercedes-Benz. At first glance, the vehicle presented a particularly manly squat, sunning itself on smooth asphalt like a napping Leopold tank.

How could I possibly be selling a Benz for \$1300 with a new engine, new tranny?

I thought, “Now here is a brute with some heft to it.” It was a ’65, so it had the enormous chromed grill, set off by the mark of the beast, the Benz triangle hood ornament perfectly balanced by discreet tail fins. Lord, how it called to me.

And I answered. I fell in love: hopeless, unthinking, devoted, all-giving love.

A young, very fat, tall Mexican male takes me for a test drive. Am enveloped by leather bucket seats — wide, deep, ample. I notice that the engine runs loud, not a lot of pep to it, but the feel, the ride! My soul ached. I had to possess the Benz and, after the shallowest thrust and parry, paid his \$900 asking price.

I drove off enraptured, feeling the dignity of own-

ership we discriminating few acquire when we first captain a luxury automobile.

Next morning the Benz began to teach me about life as it’s lived. Before my lessons were over, the Benz would require a new oil pump, new shocks, new power brakes, completely rebuilt engine (\$1400), new transmission (\$1100), new battery, and that, let me stress, was just for openers. To this day I can’t make myself review the receipts, can’t make myself look at the other 40 items that, in total, added up to more than \$4000.

That miserable harlot died on the highway six separate times, needed a jump-start an additional seven times. On 13 occasions I called the AAA and would

have kept calling if it weren’t for their veiled threat sent to me by first-class mail: “Gee, we’ve noticed you’ve been keeping in touch with us,” then listing all my calls and locations, times, and dates.

And each and every time that faithless whore Benz went into the shop, to Mel or Cesar or Howard or Jerome, my little fairy-tale child’s heart would leap, would hope, that it would be the last time, that this time the Benz would return and truly love me as I loved it. And each time I got behind the wheel, that soulless bitch would crush me like a bug slapping up against a jet aircraft’s windshield. That disloyal, heartless slut never ran more than 72 hours at one stretch.

And as the months

RESEARCH STUDIES

Do you have psoriasis?



If you are age 18 or older and have moderate to severe psoriasis, you may be eligible to participate in a new research study testing an experimental drug for psoriasis. Please call or e-mail MedDerm Associates to see if you qualify.

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passed, I came to despise that money-eating heart-breaker, hated it as I have hated few things in this life.

Finally, nine months after The Evil One first began to suck my life's blood, at I-8 and Tavern Road, at three o'clock on a Wednesday afternoon, the trollop began to spout oil, belch, and die.

I sat, \$4000 poorer, gripped the wheel, reared a size-13 foot, kicked the dashboard, and determined that this was the end. This was it. We would divorce or I would kill it.

My first thought was shoving it off a cliff. How satisfying to watch that despicable ball of cursed metal go pounding, crashing, careening down an enormous ravine, its metal and glass ripped by the unstoppable force of gravity. Meanwhile, I, standing on bank's edge, watch as sharp boulders—hundreds, hopefully thousands—cut, grind, slash into its body, hood, trunk, puncturing its tires, ripping its chrome, and if it all went right, finishing, at pit's bottom, as a huge fireball, burning leather and metal and rubber until it

RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS NEEDED

Are you taking only one of the following:

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and experiencing any cognitive impairment?

Cognitive impairments include:

- deficits in areas such as memory, attention, planning, and problem solving
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- having a hard time managing emotions

Medical researchers at UCSD are currently conducting a clinical research study to evaluate an investigational drug for the cognitive impairment in schizophrenia. Participants must be between 18 and 65 years of age to be eligible.

Medical and psychological evaluations and study drug will be provided at no cost. Eligible participants will also receive reimbursement for time and travel.

For more information, please call:

866-550-UCSD

UCSD Department of Psychiatry



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- ✓ Do you **AVOID** going to social events and meeting new people?

If you answered YES to any of the above, you may be eligible to participate in an experimental research study comparing several study drug options to treat social anxiety disorder. Medical assessment and clinical care provided.

For more information,

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

Or e-mail: veryschy@ucsd.edu



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

For more information and to see if you qualify, please call **858-784-7867**

or visit **www.pearsoncenter.org**

for more detailed information.



If you are one of the 15 million adults affected by depression, you may be eligible to participate in a research trial of a new depression medication now being studied.

You may be eligible for the study if:

- You are between the ages of 18 and 70
- You are experiencing symptoms of depression

All qualified participants will receive study-related care and study medication for up to 8 weeks at no cost.

To find out if you qualify for this study, or for more information, please call: **858-566-8222**

**The California Neuropsychopharmacology Clinical Research Institute, LLC
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Are you taking moderate to high doses of pain medication for cancer but still experiencing breakthrough episodes of pain (Breakthrough Cancer Pain)?

We are seeking volunteers for a clinical research study to test the effectiveness and safety of a medication for such pain episodes. This will be delivered by a simple nasal spray, which may mean that the medication works more quickly.

Volunteers should be cancer patients over the age of 18 taking moderate to high doses of pain medication daily and still suffering from at least one episode of Breakthrough Cancer Pain a day.

Trial participants will be regularly monitored by qualified medical staff.

**To learn more about this study, please call
Ritchken & First M.D.'s Donna Perez at: 858-292-0108 ext. 207**

Attn: Heavy Drinkers

Researchers at The Scripps Research Institute are working to develop new treatments for people with alcohol problems.

Is your current alcohol use causing problems with your family, your work, your life? If you want to stop drinking, The Pearson Center for Alcoholism and Addiction Research is conducting a clinical trial to help you reach that goal.

Qualified participants receive lab tests, medication or placebo, individual counseling and compensation for travel. All information is confidential.

Call: 858-784-7867 (STOP)

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Spa Treatments

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3-3 1/2 hours. Package includes:

- **European facial**
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PCA Chemical Peel
Purchase 6 PCA treatments and receive 7th treatment free. Treats the following conditions:

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- acne

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Deep Cleansing Facial \$65
Begin with face mapping.

- Includes steam, prep scrub & extraction
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FREE 15-min. back massage or Hydroxy Acid Peel

Summer Package \$110
European facial, facial massage including head and neck acupressure, back facial with 15-minute back massage, and body detox wrap.

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New, advanced nonsurgical technique. Enhances skin tone. Noticeable results after one application! Recommended 2 to 3 times a week for at least 3-4 weeks.

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Combines ultrasonic and electrical currents with skin products. Great for acne, coarse, sun-damaged and deep-congested skin. Includes glycolic acid peel.

Acupuncture

Acupuncture Face-lift Special \$85

- Eliminate fine lines, reduce deep wrinkles
- Tone muscles of face to lift drooping eyelids and lift and firm cheeks
- Tighten pores of skin
- Reduce or eliminate "smile lines"
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Leave each treatment feeling peaceful, refreshed and re-energized. Recommend 10 biweekly sessions.

Acupuncture to Rid Stress Special \$45
Have anxiety or worry about the holiday season? Acupuncture effectively and safely eliminates stress hormones from the body, leaving you feeling relaxed and able to enjoy the holiday season with no worries. Recommend 2-4 weekly sessions.

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Experience the ancient art of cupping to ease muscle tension and release toxins stored in the muscles. With full-body massage or mini-acupuncture treatment. Steam shower available.

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was a smoldering ash-white heap of abominable Benz essence. Then, I saw myself working my way down, down, down to the ravine's bottom, there to urinate over what was left of the Benz, chortling, now laughing, now beating my chest, now throwing my arms towards the sky, tearing my clothes off and dancing, buck naked, round and round Benz rubble.

Then I thought of simply leaving it in Tijuana, keys in ignition, cardboard sign taped to a passenger window saying, "Enjoy." But that would be a cruel thing to do to our neighbors, and by now I was certain that The Evil One would see to it that there would be legal complications with anything less than meticulous abandonment. I knew: the beast would find that one way in 10,000 to fuck me again, which, undoubtedly, would mean additional expenses and ongoing encounters with the criminal justice system.

And so, in the fullness of time I finally decided,

"Well, hell, there must be somebody else as stupid as I am. I'll take a modest 1/8th of a page ad out in the *Reader*, insert a flattering photo of the Benz grill, sit by the phone, sell it at any price to anyone." After an additional \$375 and a week's repairs, the Benz lurched out of another mechanic's shop and made it home. I placed an ad the same day.

It read:

A superior 1965 Mercedes Benz is offered to interested persons.

The bastard is going to explode any second. I can feel it building, this is it, this is the big one.

This vehicle presents a solid foundation for those who wish to entirely restore a luxury automobile. Or, it offers preeminent transportation for those who require a dependable motorcar immediately. This Mercedes comes with a newly installed six-cylinder engine that has less than 1000

miles clocked, plus a new transmission that is still under warranty. Its body is fit and trim, all the glass in place, as well as radio, tape player, power brakes, and so forth. Asking price is \$1300.

Call for an appointment.

It's true I did exaggerate. There was, perhaps, a fib here or there, by omission, mind you, but being beaten and whipped by a Nazi machine, particularly over long periods of time, can make a man lose perspective. Two days later the paper

HEALTH AND BEAUTY



Holiday Special

Eyelash Perm \$35	Eyelash Special Extensions \$99
--------------------------	--

For a more glamorous look. Increases length and volume.

Refresh Body Package \$150
Microdermabrasion, 1-hour therapeutic body massage, European facial, manicure and spa pedicure.

Royal Hand & Foot Spa \$60
90 minutes. After your manicure/pedi-spa, we will give you a mineral-rich sea salt combined with dried seaweed, aromatic oil and fruit enzymes to smooth and soften your skin, then a reflexology massage treatment and nourishing paraffin wax masque for your feet and hands.

Waxing Bikini & Brazilian available! Starting at \$25

Multi-Vitamin Power Treatment \$50 (1-hour session)
For the latest in vitamin repair and hydroxy acid exfoliation, try our newest treatment. Designed to treat environmentally damaged skin, this treatment includes a non-irritating vitamin-power exfoliation and a vitamin-recovery masque to noticeably improve skin elasticity, tone and texture.

Photo Facial \$99 (1 hour 15 minutes)
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Fall Sensation
Spa pedicure and manicure with one of the following:

- Full-body massage (1 hour) **\$75**
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- Figure wrap (lose 4"-15") **\$70**

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I agreed that would be a good idea. Yes indeed, a very good idea. I slowly replace phone to its cradle, feeling like a clever lad indeed.

12:41. Second call, guy tells me it's a good price, he'll think about it and get back.

12:52. Black male voice from Lemon Grove. "Is that price right? It could be \$13,000?"

"No, it's \$1300; the Benz is a '65." Man allows he may come out and see it this evening.

I hang up thinking, "Better hurry up, big guy."

Soothing-voiced guy arrives to view the Benz at 1:20 p.m. I get in driver's side, turn key, engine won't start, battery dead. Of course. Buyer has jumpers, moves his car in place, jury-rigs cables. After a dozen tries, Benz engine catches. An enormous dark cloud of pollution explodes from exhaust and more menacingly, from beneath the car body, seeping up both sides of the undercarriage, clinging to car doors, then billowing over the roof. I step

out from black smoke, offer, "It runs a little cold," and begin gushing about the solid foundation, the quiet, manly pleasures of restoration, how the clock works.

We lift hood, watch as engine throbs, real loud, like an International Harvester wheat reaper, entire engine bobs up and down on ancient motor mounts. One thinks, "It can't do that one

climate though. Can see he's too embarrassed to come to the point. He says he'll think about it, walks, with a suddenly exaggerated stoop, back to his car.

I've noticed the Benz has that effect on people. Get within spitting distance of it for a few minutes and one begins to feel a change of mood, sort of a black, all-encompassing "God-I-feel-

I step out from black smoke, offer, "It runs a little cold," and begin gushing about the solid foundation, the quiet, manly pleasures of restoration, how the clock works.

more time." I cluck over Kraut engineering, offer, "Why, that motor's probably good for a quarter million miles." We're talking man to man now. Buyer begins long riff about his wife in Pacific Beach; how he's the oldest guy in the apartment complex, 55, how things certainly have changed over the last 20 years, great

a-lot-older, I-will-die, my-back-hurts, I-don't-meet-the-women-I-used-to-never-will-again" feeling.

Return to apartment, guy calls from some attorney's office convinced it's a bait-and-switch ad. How could I possibly be selling a Benz for \$1300 with a new engine, new tranny? Where do I live, how long

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have I been here, how come this is so low? How come I have such a big ad, that ad isn't cheap, how can I run such a big ad?

I explain that he has too much time on his hands. Tell him an infallible sign that one has too much discretionary time is discovering that one is calling strangers during working hours. I urge him to find a real job. Promise that "You'll feel better if you do."

3:08. Young male voice wants to know if it's a 210. I have no idea. Wants to know the body type. I have no idea, tell him it has four doors and volunteer that the color is black. Said he would call back this weekend, perhaps Friday evening.

3:44. Lakeside resident, sounds like young white-trash male, used to own a Mercedes, wants to know if I'll trade for his '84 Toyota truck, his wife told him he couldn't get a car. I agree instantly. Male says he's going to talk to wife again.

3:51. White, 20s, female voice. "Calling about the Mercedes. Do you still have it?"

"I still have it."

"Why is it only \$1300?"

"I suppose I should charge more. I don't know, it's a '65, there's a break in the muffler so it runs loud, the interior is a bit ratty."

"Oh, is it? I wouldn't be interested."

"Hello."

Male black, adult. "Hi, calling about the Mercedes-Benz. Is that a misprint?"

"No, it's not, it's the asking price. It's a '65."

"Is that the one with the little fins?"

"Yeah."

"Where are you located?"

"Hello."

"Sorry to bother you again. Is that an automatic or a stick?"

"It's an automatic."

"Okay, thank you very much, that's good."

"Hello."

"Ah yes, I'm calling in regards to the Mercedes. What's the story there?"

"Well, I don't know; it's a '65 Mercedes, the body is in shape, the glass is in, new motor, new transmission, the muffler has a gap in it so it runs quite loud, interior is C-. That's the story."

"Where are you located?"

"Hello. I guess I'm a lit-

tle skeptical. Is the body intact?"

"Uh-huh."

"No gaping holes in the body?"

"No gaping holes in the body, all the glass is in, headlights work, turn indicator

works, windshield wipers work, radio works, clock works. It's a fine clock."

"We're talking not licensable though?"

"It's got license on it now."

"Hello."

"Calling about the Mercedes."

"Okay."

"Interesting ad you have here."

"Uh-huh. What would you like to know about the Mercedes?"

"What color is it?"

"It's black."

"Does it have any rust on it?"

"No rust, body is very good."

"I got this truck I'm trying to sell. A guy's coming

over, if he buys it I'm gonna give you a call back. It's a pretty cool car though, huh?"

"I like it." (Liar, liar, pants on fire.)

"Hello."

"Thirteen hundred dollars, is that right?"

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"Yes, that's the price."
"Really? Have you had
very many offers?"

"The first one here with
\$1300 wins."

"Wow, what a trip. Why
so cheap? I'm just curious,
I don't have \$1300."

"It's a long story."

"Hello."

"I just talked to you a
minute ago, I'd like to take
a look at your car."

"Okay, when would that
be?"

"I have tomorrow off."

"Okay, why don't you
come by at 10:00 a.m.?"

"Is there any type of
lineage on this?"

"No, it's a clean title, it's
in my name."

"Okay, is it good for a
test run?"

"You betcha."

"Hello."

"Calling about the '65
Mercedes. Can I get a little
information on it please?"

"Sure."

"Anything you think I
should know?"

"The engine has less
than 1000 miles on it, the
tranny less than 1000, it's
an automatic."

"Is the car presentable?"

"Oh yeah, the body's
fine, paint's fine."

At sundown an early30s,
tall, skinny, blond-haired
male arrives wearing a red
I-Am-a-Christian-Crusader
T-shirt. The Benz doesn't
start. Customer maneuvers
his black Bronco to the usual
place, finds his jumper cables.
I attempt to express sur-
prise. We go for test drive. I

The sounds are ugly, like
watching an old man shriv-
eled on a hospital bed drown-
ing in his own spittle and
saliva and drool. Christ, will
this ride ever end?

We made it! Thank
God! I get out, drenched in
nervous sweat. The man
hands me keys, says he
thought about buying it
because he buys and sells
Mercedes occasionally, knows

*That evening I leave all the Benz's
four doors unlocked, driver's window
rolled all the way down, keys
in the ignition.*

know, really know that any
moment, any, in fact, sec-
ond, the Benz is going to
explode: too many engine
parts gnash metal on metal.
Can hear the transmission
work-work-work, grinding
its way from first to second,
then holding onto second
until hitting 45, 50 mph,
then slamming into third,
and then lugging, chugging,
wheezing, heaving again.

something about cars, then
stops in midsentence, reaches
out, shakes my hand, tells
me he's very sorry.

I return to the apart-
ment, shuffling along with
a pronounced stoop.

"Hello."

"About the Mercedes.
My daughter has been look-
ing for a car and she's a Volvo
freak and I talked to her last
night and said, 'Hey, this

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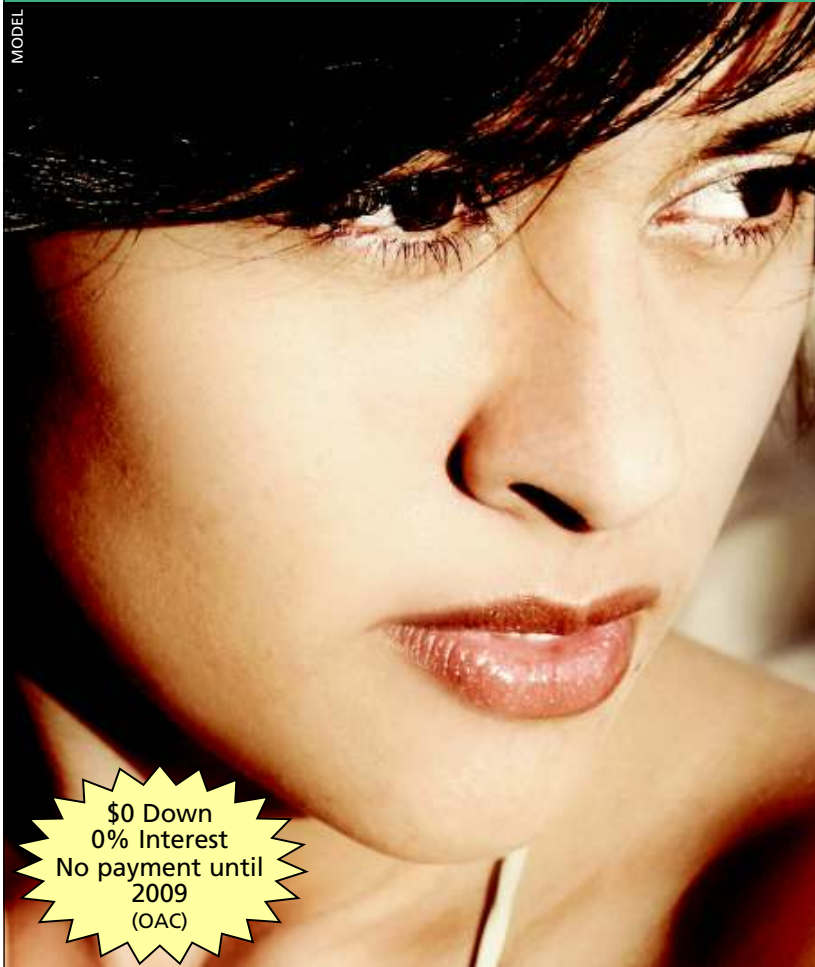
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Before



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After



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looks pretty good for \$1300, and it's a '65 Mercedes, and it's going to be as strong as a tank? Is it already gone?"

"There's been a lot of people looking at it..."

"Hello."

"Hi. I'm calling about the Mercedes."

"Uh-huh."

"What kind of condition is it in?"

"Tip-top."

"Completely drivable?"

"Oh yeah, sure."

"How dependable is it?"

"It's a Benz."

Noon. Day Two. Three-some arrive — one male, one Mexican woman, and her young daughter. The male, Anglo, brown-rodent mustache, methamphetamine torso, stands next to the Benz. I hand over keys. He gets behind wheel. Am astonished that the beast turns over and starts. I hear the roaring muffler. I see black and gray fumes billow from underneath the car frame, followed by a piercing series (three, four, five?) of loud explosions, which are so intimidating that the woman leaps up and away from the

vehicle while at the same time croaking two loud honk-squeals, then lands on her feet, hunches over, and begins to tremble and cower.

That evening I leave all the Benz's four doors unlocked, driver's window rolled all the way down, keys in the ignition.

Later, a woman calls, remarks about the ad, wants to know if I emigrated from England. I now lie at first hint of an invitation, immediately claim I'd lived in England, Limeyland's a terrific place, don't you know.

Noon, Saturday. I sit lonely by the phone, the calls have dwindled, nothing this morning, beginning to look like no prom date.

Big, burly man appears. He's an operating engineer, works at the dump. East County, has that pleasant dump look — blue shirt, greased-back hair, oil under his fingernails. Benz doesn't start, he jumps, we drive down to India Street then right and up the considerable hill on Washington. The car is stuck in first gear, engine winds, can feel the oil

pressure squeeze-squeeze-squeeze, can feel the pressure on the bearings push-push-push, the hood vibrates viciously from jumping-jack engine. Christ, the bastard is going to explode any second. I can feel it building, this is it, this is the big one. I begin to sweat, now in torrents, look out the window, try and calm down, my heart racing, barely hear the man who says something about wanting a car for his daughter when she comes home from college. He'd just bought an '83 Escort for \$300 but ran into mechanical problems so he was able to talk the guy into taking it back.

The vehicle shudders again, this time throughout its whole length. The man says his wife was upset, didn't want him to look at an old car. He rambles on. I can't hear him, am so fear-struck waiting for The Evil One to give it up and hand it over. I pray for a clean, non-injury accident. Man remarks that he once owned a Benz, what a wonderful piece of machinery it is. I

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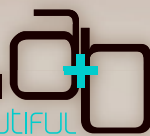
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gasp, I clunk, I marvel, I appreciate, I share, as one Benz owner to another. He asks me if it's a 12-volt system. I say, "Certainly," having no idea whether it is or not. Third gear doesn't take, I say, "Well, just punch it down to first." He moves shifter to first, doesn't engage. I say, "Ah, no problem, the engine's got to warm up. HA, HA, HA, HA, HA, HA, HA, HA!" Realize I'm laughing inappropriately, realize I sound quite insane. Slink deep into seat.

I can hear ancient muffler work itself loose. This test drive was by far the worst. The death wagon has now run for 96 hours, a new record; it's all moment-to-moment now. Every time out I hear new rattles and grinds. The Evil One only starts between 2 p.m. and 4 p.m., while the sun's healing rays are set to maximum. Don't know how many more three-mile rides I've got left. We arrive at my apartment, man gets out without a word, leaves me and the keys inside the vehicle, walks to his car, gets in, drives off.

It is sundown on Sunday.

They came in a small yellow car, a fastback Toyota, and parked across the street. I was reading *Lady Cop* and heard two honks of a very mezzo horn. Thinking that perhaps it was a buyer for the Mercedes and not wanting them to bother the landlord, who lives downstairs, I rushed to the window to see what it was. Thereupon I saw a young couple emerge from the car. He, from the driver's seat, wearing a dark-colored sports shirt, khaki trousers, and penny loafers; she, in a lovely white blouse with a pilgrim collar and dark pants. She had dark hair, he had dark hair. They got out, walked hand-in-hand, slowly, looks of anticipation shining on their faces, toward the Mercedes. They arrive next to the beast, drop hands, turn heads towards each other, and simultaneously begin to laugh. Then he puts his arm around her shoulder, they nuzzle their foreheads together, smile knowingly, softly, and with a beneficent look on their

now-serene faces, they stroll slowly back to their yellow car. She gets in, he gets in, and they leave.

And then silence.

No more calls for the Benz.

A month passes.

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— Patrick Daugherty

Originally published in the *Reader* on August 13, 1992.

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PHOTOGRAPH BY RANDY HOFFMAN

Stone Temple Pilots at Bodie's, 1993

The roots of the San Diego music scene run deep. Musicians who began gigging around town in the mid- to late 1980s later became the bedrock of the diverse early '90s scene, which included bands like Rocket From the Crypt, Drive Like Jehu, Inch, and Three Mile Pilot. The musicians of this generation emerged from a rough punk and hardcore climate to form more melodic, lyrically based bands that caught the attention of major labels when the frenzied buzz of grunge broke in Seattle. But the sounds of San Diego's early '90s bands were unique and could

hardly be termed grunge. Today the local scene is thriving again, unwilling to compromise itself for commercial play and continuing to define itself from the inside out, with new bands starting up, more venues opening, and more people going out to shows.

By the 1980s, punk rock had been established in the United States, with New York, Los Angeles, and San Francisco producing, respectively, the Ramones, Black Flag, and the Dead Kennedys. The rejection of institutionalized authority and a policy of self-destruction through violence, drugs, and hard living

were the staples of the punk-rock philosophy. As the scene began to change, hardcore was spawned, which was often more violent and aggressive than its predecessor. This harder form of punk has always been big in San Diego, with the local band Battalion of Saints leading the pack in the early 1980s.

Formed originally under the name the Nutrons in 1978 by George Anthony and guitarist Dave Astor (R.I.P.; father of former Locust/present Cattle Decapitation drum wizard Dave Astor Jr.), the Battalion of Saints were influential not only in San Diego

and on America's West Coast, but internationally as well, collaborating and touring with well-known British punk acts Discharge, Broken Bones, the U.K. Subs, and the Exploited. Battalion of Saints were real punks, playing true hardcore punk music: violent, loud, fast, and political, at a time when hardcore was still fresh and not a commercial product. Punk in the early '80s was an ideology, not just a fashion statement; individuals expressed themselves radically through their attitudes, their clothing, and their music. Battalion's songs railed against the government, big cor-

porations, televangelism, and police brutality. On a song titled "E/B," singer George Anthony screams, "The government controls all our lives / When they pump us full of lies / Large corporations are all the same / What do they think — we have no brains?" Nearly every song has a political or social message — commentary rarely, if ever, heard in commercial "punk" bands these days.

The punk-rock lifestyle was unforgiving for Battalion. Before the band's breakup in 1985, several of the many early members had died. Guitarist Chris Smith overdosed in a bathtub, Dave

Astor committed suicide, another member died of drug-related health problems, and a fourth died from AIDS. Though destruction was the banner of many early punk bands, Battalion set a precedent and laid the foundation of what was to come in San Diego for the rest of the decade, which included other hardcore bands and various incarnations of punk.

One incarnation was straight edge, a form of music and a scene that remained politically and socially motivated. Straight edge proposes abstinence from alcohol, tobacco, drugs, and oftentimes meat. It demands

Battalion's songs railed against the government, big corporations, televangelism, and police brutality.

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clean living and decries racial and social inequality. Though straight edge is a national scene, beginning largely in Washington, D.C., by bands like Minor Threat, its roots run deep in San Diego, with bands coming mainly out of Chula Vista. Amenity and Unbroken were two of the better-known bands that played at house parties, such as Del Mar's and Mitch's in Chula Vista, but who also crossed over to hall shows and backyard parties throughout San Diego.

At 180 degrees, another offshoot of San Diego's hardcore scene was the skinheads and other hostile groups who emerged in the '80s. At shows, violent groups became a big problem for bands, audiences, and the venues themselves. They came to start fights and act up, without caring about the music or much of anything else. Between 1981 and 1986, Casbah owner Tim Mays held punk shows at venues across town, in halls or theaters such as the North Park Lion's Club and Adams Avenue Theatre. The prevalence of skinheads created a troublesome and often violent climate. San Diego had a reputation for beating up bands and stealing their equipment. Though vandals weren't always skinheads, this group was outspoken and visible. Their antics also reflected the fast and aggressive music that Mays hosted. He threw shows with the Dead Kennedys, the Circle Jerks, and Black Flag. But for Mays, the continual violence became tiresome and the shows harder to put on. Because he had no core staff, a strict policy for dealing with problems was difficult to maintain. "You hired security, hired people to do a show at a hall, but they weren't really into getting with these skinheads. No one wanted to get beat up; they were really gnarly," Mays comments. By 1986, Mays had burnt out on the scene. He went in with some friends and opened a traditional bar called the Pink Panther that did not host any bands.

Going to punk shows in San Diego in the late '80s was fun; the edge of danger added excitement, if not anxiety. While bands wailed, audiences moshed: people threw their bodies against one another; they dove from the stage and swam through the

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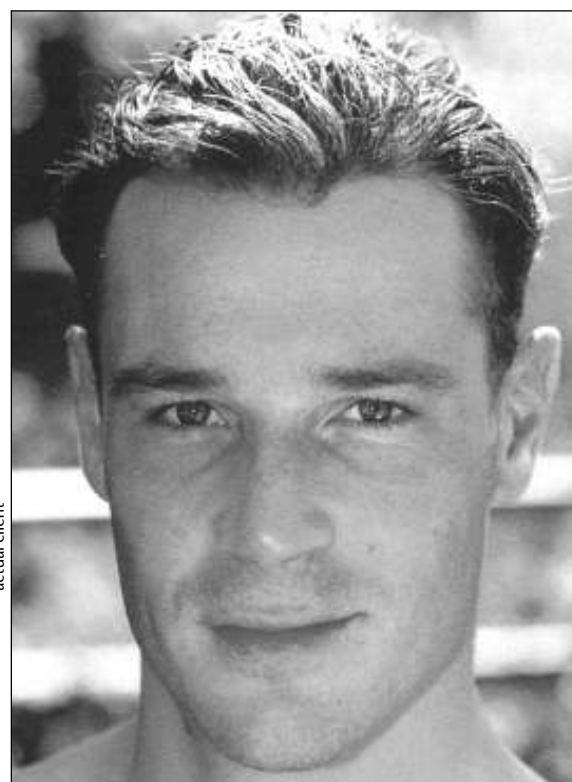
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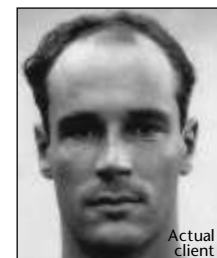
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crowd. You had to keep your head down and be careful of what you wore; new shoes and clean clothes were easy targets. Traci Weddle, a regular showgoer in the late '80s, comments that even girls were not immune to the violence. "I was standing there with my sister and there were a bunch of skinheads in the room going crazy, and it was such a small room and this guy's fist came out of nowhere and hit me on the side of the head and I got a complete concussion, got knocked out, had to be taken to the hospital...explain that to your mother!" Kids often came home bruised and battered, sometimes with bloodied feet from the stomping crowd.

While fast, loud punk ground away through the '80s, a steady resistance against the skinhead groups formed toward the end of the decade. Pall Jenkins of Three Mile Pilot and the Black Heart Procession remembers encountering a hostile group in 1988 at the Emerald Ballroom downtown. A Washington, D.C., band called Scream was performing for

a packed audience. Jenkins says, "And that was at a time when everyone was sick of getting pushed around by old punks and skinheads alike. Every show had to have violence. The kids were just getting old enough to fight back and we were starting a little bit to outnumber them." That night at the Emerald Ballroom, however, it was the band who fought back. Scream's bassist was a black man who throughout the show had been antagonized by audience members in the back. After a time, he jumped off the stage and attacked one of them, and the rest of the band followed. "I remember it was this interesting moment," Jenkins says. "All of us kids standing were watching this go on, thinking, finally someone's taking on the bullies — we would have gotten killed because we had to see them at every show." After the fight, the antagonists were thrown out and the band got back up to play. Particularly poignant was the next song Scream played, which followed the theme of hate and resistance.

Within this hostile climate a new sound began emerging at the end of the '80s, a sound later termed post-hardcore. John Reis of Rocket From the Crypt formed a band around 1985 called Conservative Itch, which was pretty rocking though still punk-influenced. When Conservative Itch broke up, Reis formed Pitchfork, which played with local bands Sub-Society, Funeral March, PG-13, and Socially Insecure. These bands were all hard and fast in the tradition of earlier hardcore punk, but as Matt Reese of Funeral March recalls, "When Pitchfork hit, everything broke open." It was the beginning of the musicianship that would form the basis of the early '90s scene. The songs were more emotional and melodic, just "a little nicer," Reese remarks. However, there was a backlash from the older, traditional punks. John Reis, using a pseudonym, wrote an article for the *Daily Impulse*, a local anarchist magazine, talking about what jerks there were in the scene and condemning the violence. The

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article was a sort of declaration ushering in a new generation of artists.

From about 1986/1987 on, the San Diego music scene diversified, branching off from punk. At a time when pop music ruled the airwaves and MTV broadcast Duran Duran and the Thompson Twins, those into the alternative scene had to seek it out — it wasn't spoon-fed to them as "alternative" music is these days. Also around this time, a lot of hall shows were put on across town: at the Pal-

isade Gardens roller rink and Wabash Hall in North Park, at the Ché Café at UCSD, at the Jackie Robinson YMCA, and at coffee shops like Chabalaba. The shows were organized by collectives or by the bands themselves and were promoted through flyers and word of mouth. National bands that later became big names — Bad Religion, Dag Nasty, and the Red Hot Chili Peppers — passed through San Diego's halls and theaters. Musicians in bands that would take hold in the early

'90s were busy learning their instruments. Sub-Society, PG-13, and Socially Insecure shared rhythm sections: Didier Suarez (Sub-Society, PG-13; later, the Furious IV), Sean Flynn (Socially Insecure, PG-13; later, Rocket From the Crypt), and Pete Reichert (Sub-Society, Socially Insecure, PG-13; later, Rocket From the Crypt). Also, Stimy of Sub-Society later formed Inch, and then Congress of the Cow; and Mitch Wilson of Socially Insecure, Sub-Society, and Funeral March heads up No Knife now. These musicians who began performing together in the late '80s still perform in various groups today, continuing to impact and influence the scene.

One of the wilder bands to emerge in the late 1980s was Fishwife, headed by Ryan Foxe. Foxe was a great performer who electrified his audiences with crazy stage antics. Matt Reese remembers one particular performance by the band. Fishwife was opening for the Pixies at a large, administration-run venue at UCSD, a campus known for its rigid, conservative policies. That night

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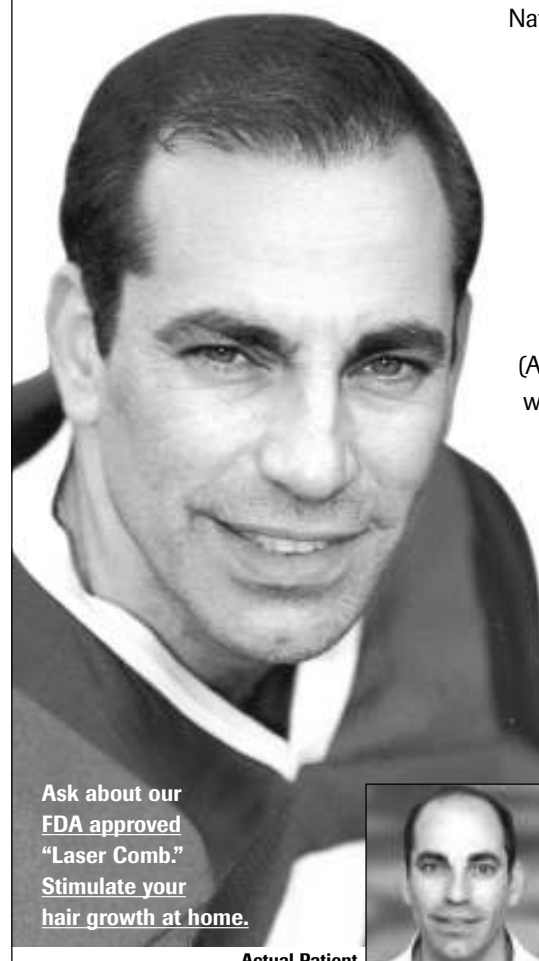
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the usual uptight crowd was in attendance when Foxe came out in a girl's cheerleader outfit. The show began with the singer running back and forth on the stage singing, shouting, cheering. After a short time he broke into cartwheels, though under his short skirt he wasn't wearing any underwear. Across the stage, Reese remarks, "Face, nuts, face, nuts — before you knew it he's playing nude," which was a fairly regular occurrence at Fishwife shows. After Foxe left the band in 1993, the remaining members — Gar Wood, Matt Ohlin, and Chris Prescott — formed the critically acclaimed Tanner. Prescott now plays drums in No Knife, while Wood pulls double duty as the bassist of the Hot Snakes and the guitarist in the buzz-group Beehive & the Barracudas.

Not a far departure from such antics were the things Crash Worship got up to at their shows. Crash Worship formed in 1987, the same time as Fishwife, but their music can't be considered punk or post-hardcore. It's more experimental and organic, featuring various instruments and, most predominantly, lots of drums. Their stage performances were a communal theatrical experience, often incorporating burning effigies, smoke, explosives, milk, and even naked women. Crash Worship was avant-garde, but it meshed well with other bands in the scene.

Once a year, beginning in the late '80s and running for several years after, was the Anarchy/Hardcore Picnic held in Balboa Park. The collectively organized event involved George from the *Daily Impulse* and brought together an eclectic assortment of punk rockers and activists, including members of Pitchfork and Crash Worship. As the event was free, it was about sharing ideas, not marketing or selling them. Another annual event that ran through the '90s was the May Day picnic, held in various San Diego parks and featuring Creedle, Lucy's Fur Coat, and fluf, a well-known North County band.

Such events illustrate the collectivity of the local music scene. San Diego bands maintain a tight relationship with one another, whether playing together, living together, or swapping drummers or gui-

tar licks. Bands were and still are out to support each other, not compete or sell each other out. Many people comment about a San Diego sound taking form in the late '80s and early '90s, but because of the diversity of groups, a common sound is difficult to pinpoint.

Perhaps there is something to it in that many of these musicians were playing together and developing musically while they were young and before their more mature works took form. Also, a lot of these bands — and I'm speaking of groups like Sub-

Society, Socially Insecure, Funeral March, and Pitchfork, who later became Rocket From the Crypt, Drive Like Jehu, Inch, and No Knife — had grown up sharing equipment and rhythm sections and listening to each others' record collections. If any one

guitar player can be credited with creating a San Diego "sound," it would be John Reis, as many guitar players who evolved from this scene logged hours in Reis's bedroom watching the man throw down his unique, wild style of guitar playing.

This collective attitude can also be seen in the record labels that put out local bands. Not only has Cargo Records/Headhunter been a strong local supporter, but so has Vinyl Communications. Bob Bereley created Vinyl Communications in 1986 when

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he pressed his own band's first album. He thought it unlikely that his band, Neighborhood Watch, could sell all of the 500 records the label pressed, but the demand was great enough to warrant six more pressings. Over the past decade and a half, the label has released more than 170 records, and though the company is on hiatus, it will most likely be putting more bands and albums out in the future. At his home in Chula Vista, Bereley built a recording studio as well as a stage for bands to play on, and his backyard parties were a staple of the late-'80s music scene. Not only did local bands—including the straight-edge group Amenity—play in his backyard, but also the occasional

touring band, the biggest of which was Operation Ivy, whose members later formed Rancid. Bereley describes his studio: "It was like our own little field of dreams. We built it and they came." Vinyl Communications has always been wary of hype and has never been out to exploit a band or pressure one into recording anything they wouldn't want to. From 1988 to 1989, Bereley had a Vinyl Communications store in Chula Vista, where patrons could buy independent music and hear local bands perform. "My main focus," Bereley remarks, "has always been keeping the control within the community that was creating the art."

In 1989, Tim Mays

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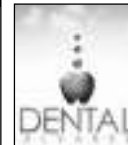
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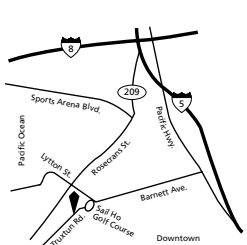
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returned to the local music scene and opened the first Casbah, located on Kettner Boulevard where the Pirate's Den is now. It was a small club with a legal capacity of 75 people, although that number often stretched above 100 when more popular bands, both local and national, played. Many years before, Mays had opened an all-age venue, the Skeleton Club, but it was short-lived, lasting only four or five months. It was shut down due to dance-licensing problems and its proximity to the police station. When he opened the Casbah, Mays had intended to host bands only a few nights a week, but he soon opened his doors every night. There were a few other venues in the city, including the Spirit Club, located where Brick by Brick is now, as well as SOMA, the Bacchanal, and Iguanas in Tijuana, but bands were more comfortable with a friendly show manager like Mays, a man known for his integrity and local support.

By 1992, a strong core of local bands had formed.

John Reis of Pitchfork started Rocket From the Crypt in 1990. Originally Rocket swore it would play only backyard parties, such as those at Bob Bereley's home studio, but after they released their first album, *Paint as a Fragrance*, the band's popularity was enough to bend their credo, and so they began playing larger hall shows and venues like the Casbah. In 1991, John Reis joined up with former Pitchfork bandmate Rick Froberg to form another pivotal San Diego band called Drive Like Jehu. Jehu produced a melodic, pounding rock with angst-laden, rounded vocals that sounded a bit like Pitchfork but with a manic edge. The band toured in the early '90s, which was great, because Jehu was a band that loved to perform, who knew that if they weren't having fun, then the audience wasn't either. Rick Froberg told *Fiz* magazine in 1994, "All the music is designed for maximum physical gratification. When we started the band, and we were in Pitchfork — this is just my point of view — but

we'd just play the song, and it would be a good song or whatever, but in Jehu, I think it's aimed at a lot more enjoyment — we're definitely more interested in getting our rocks off."

In terms of style, Drive Like Jehu was often considered an emotionally themed band. This is worth mentioning given that in the early 1990s, punk-based music had fully branched into several subgenres, including Goth, industrial, and even grunge. In the 1994 interview with *Fiz*, Froberg comments on the band's "emotional" tagging. "That's the one thing that everyone says — 'emotional,' and that's not necessarily the case. It's just loud or screaming or whatever. It's just a necessary thing with this band." It could be said that San Diego's 1980s punk and hardcore roots were emotional, but only in terms of cultural or social anger and outrage. In the early '90s, bands began venting feelings that didn't necessarily have to do with society.

A point worth discussing here is the word "emo," a

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catchword that within the past year has gone from being an underground term to a mainstream label. Deriving from the word “emotional,” “emo” is a problematic term that irritates most people in the scene, especially musicians, and bands rarely appropriate it. In the early 1990s, “emo” was often used to describe certain bands out of Washington, D.C.: Rites of Spring, Embrace, Gray Matter, and Dag Nasty. These bands had punk-rock roots, but they tended to sing about deeper personal issues, like loneliness, relationships, and even death. The music is anguished, fragile, and slow. By the mid-’90s, the term had come to represent popular indie bands like Sunny Day Real Estate, Strictly Ballroom, and Bedhead — three bands who sound nothing alike but are categorized sim-

ilarly because of similar themes. Even Jawbreaker is considered by some as punk-emo. In the past few years, the word “emo” has been thrown around so much and tagged onto just about any band that sounds the least bit emotionally driven that the word really has lost a lot of its original meaning. Occasionally on the radio or on MTV you’ll hear DJs discussing emo as a new genre of music. In July, a *New York Times* music reviewer called the Get Up Kids “one of the most popular emo bands.” The Get Up Kids, as well as Dashboard Confessional and Jimmy Eat World, may more appropriately fall into the pop-punk category — but then again, aren’t all categories problematic? And don’t all artists hate labels? Anyway, labels seem more useful to the media than to the musi-

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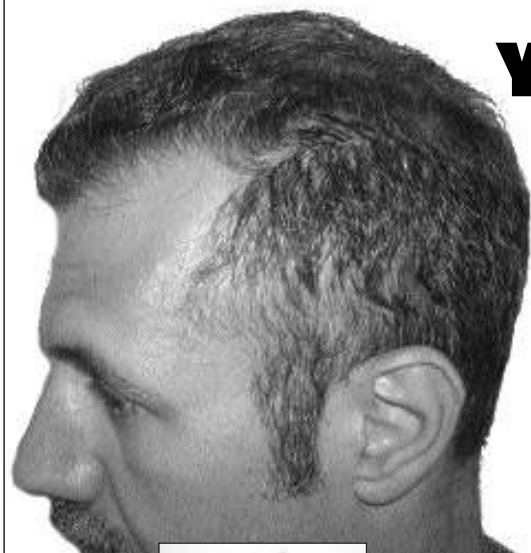


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cians themselves.

However, if any early 1990s San Diego band falls under the label “emo,” it’s Three Mile Pilot. Lead singer Pall Jenkins, like many of his late-’80s contemporaries, began in a sort of hardcore band — a cross between Bad Brains and Slayer — called Dark Sarcasm, a pretty hard band whose audiences often violently slammed each other at shows. In 1989, Jenkins formed his second band, Plum Daisy, with Lane Miller — later of Corrugated and the and/ors — and former Neighborhood Watch/future Pinback members Armistead “Zach” Smith, and Tom Zinser, who, incidentally, is the nephew of Bob Bereley. Plum Daisy was a major departure from hardcore; it was more melodic and a little funky. After three years, Lane Miller left the band, and in 1992 the remaining members formed Three Mile Pilot. Three Mile’s first album, *Ná Vuccá Dó Lupá*, featured only a bass, drums, and vocals, giving the band a deep, serious, and slow sound, a texture apart from

other bands. Jenkins comments, “We threw people for a bit of a loop — there was a lot of grunge music back then.” During the ’90s, the band released five albums, as well as an EP, the most recent album coming out in 1999. With the late addition of Tobias Nathaniel on organ and piano, the band’s later albums are spacious and resonate a deeper tone. Jenkins’s poetic lyrics often follow symbolic themes relating to water, horses, devils, ghosts, and things lost or forgotten. Jenkins says of his writing, “I always wanted to paint pictures in people’s minds, and the music was just melodic enough to go along with that.”

In 1991, Nirvana broke commercially with “Smells Like Teen Spirit” and “alternative” music was born. But in the 1980s, not only in San Diego but nationally, a huge indie underground scene in the vein of punk rock had already been established. Seminal bands Black Flag, FIREHOSE, Sonic Youth, Dinosaur Jr, Hüsker Dü, Fugazi, and the Butthole Surfers had been

playing to packed concert halls across the country for years. Such bands had enormous followings, and many had played in San Diego’s rented halls and theaters before any of it was termed “alternative.” “Alternative to what?” Matt Reese of Funeral March and the U.K. Wongs snaps. For musicians and showgoers thick in the scene, the sentiment truly was this, because this music had always been their primary source, alternative to nothing. Simply, this music was their lifestyle. But in commercial terms, it was alternative. It seemed as if MTV and the big record labels were shocked to learn that such a scene existed. They quickly swooped in to sign bands out of the hot Seattle music scene, bands like Pearl Jam and Soundgarden. To make things worse, in 1992 Cameron Crowe made the movie *Singles* about twentysomethings living in Seattle. Then came the term “Generation X” and the movie *Reality Bites* in 1994. Pretty soon, there was an alternative section in every Sam Goody in every mall across America,

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and kids were wearing flannels and goatees just like their favorite movies stars and new rock idols.

Just before all this broke, the San Diego music scene had begun to settle a bit, and with the Casbah's opening in 1989, the new venue marked a turn away from the violence of the 1980s hall shows. Tim Mays remarked that the Casbah was a "whole different set of people. Different bands and people were more into it for the music and music's sake. There weren't a bunch of people, you know, coming to the show to be punk rockers, plus the old Casbah held 75 people, so the people who came there were interested to see the bands. All of the peo-

ple in the bands were all friends. It was pretty tight-knit; it was a real music-community type thing — '90, '91, '92, you would see all the same people out, and it didn't matter who was playing — when good bands would come to town, the same people would come out to see them." The scene was supportive of new local music, and the question of commercial success didn't exist. Three Mile Pilot, Rocket From the Crypt, and Drive Like Jehu never even considered trying to sign with a major record label, and for a few years, San Diego remained an unknown hotbed for good, diverse local music.

Toward the end of 1993,

the *Los Angeles Times* published an article touting San Diego as "the next capital of alternative rock" and "the Next Big Thing." Headhunters for record labels began cruising San Diego's nightlife for the next Nirvana and snapped up local bands, many of whom probably weren't ready for commercial recording. Most of the bands were fairly young and inexperienced and had done limited touring. Also, a lot of bands signed deals they may not have understood, expensive deals that could end up costing them money. By 1994, Rocket From the Crypt and Drive Like Jehu had signed a package deal with Interscope; Three Mile Pilot had signed

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with Geffen; Lucy's Fur Coat had signed with Relativity Records; and Inch had signed with a subsidiary of Atlantic. Record labels were at first eager to promote the bands, dropping as much as \$2500 at a CD-release party, but when the records failed to sell like those of other top "alternative" bands, the labels lost interest and did little to promote their new talent. Some people call this the major-label blues. It's a vicious cycle in which labels demand a lot but do little to help out

the musicians.

Matt Reese of Funeral March and the U.K. Wongs remarks about the buzz, "I didn't care one way or the other. I was just glad to see my friends' bands in magazines, but at the same time I didn't understand it too much. It was like, well, why? Because so many of us are friends with so many people in Seattle — why do we have to be compared to another city? It was like San Diego might be the next big Seattle — well, what about everything that

happened before in San Diego? No one seemed to give a crap about that." This is when the feel of the San Diego music scene really began to change. Mitch Wilson of No Knife, which formed in 1994, comments, "Everybody started getting this weird head thing. Everybody started thinking they were cool. It turned into a really big 'who you know,' cliquey sort of thing." The close-knit, hometown feel of the scene became strained, and the influx of new bands

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who were out to get signed added more pressure and competition.

A lot more people began going to shows at the Casbah and Bodie's, people who probably wouldn't have been there if they hadn't heard the hype on the radio or TV or read it in the press. The buzz was big enough, and the reputation positive enough, that outside bands wanted to be included in it. This is where the controversy over Stone Temple Pilots arises. Local musicians knew what bands had firm roots in San Diego, and Stone Temple Pilots weren't one of these bands, though their record label proposed that they got their start here, "away from the glitz of the Sunset Strip." This irritated the local musicians, who didn't want outsiders jumping their bandwagon, and an

unrelenting smear campaign began that reached its climax when STP performed at Bodie's downtown. The following story, whether true or not, reflects the attitude of the San Diego scene, as the story has become popular mythology. Here's how the legend goes: Mark Gariss of the local band Radio Wendy had printed up black T-shirts that read, "STP ain't from SD." A group of his friends wore the shirts to the show at Bodie's, causing a bit of a stir. When the band began playing, Aaron Mancini of No Knife and Pete Reichert of Rocket From the Crypt were right up front by the stage. It was crowded, so the two guys were stuck there, which became a problem when Pete Reichert had to use the restroom. As the band continued, Reichert's prob-

lem became more demanding. Watching Stone Temple's guitarist take one big swig of beer after another, Mancini came up with a brilliant idea. He grabbed the bottle and handed it to Reichert, who carefully, so no one could see him, relieved himself and replaced the bottle. When Stone Temple's guitarist reached over and took a great big gulp of his refilled beer, he promptly spat it out on his amp and on a few people up front. The joke became that Stone Temple Pilots drank Rocket piss, which I guess is true if you believe the story.

It's hard to say if the frenzied buzz ever reached a peak, but it certainly reached a saturation point. There were too many bands for the size of the city, with musicians often playing in two or three bands at the same time, hop-

ing that one of them might be picked up. And as with all things, quantity doesn't always equal quality. The good musicians and bands are the ones that endure. Tessa Rondell, a longtime employee of Off the Record in Hillcrest, comments, "I think people got a little disillusioned when they realized that they couldn't play two or three shows and then immediately get picked up, sometimes not even by a local label." It was as if a certain expectation had come from the outside, and when this expectation wasn't fulfilled, the more peripheral people in the scene dropped out.

The bands who signed with the major labels ended up the most disillusioned. Geffen still owns one of Three Mile Pilot's albums, *The Chief Assassin to the Sinister*, which

it put out in limited release. And when Three Mile turned in another album to Geffen, the label rejected it because they didn't hear a radio hit. The band then released *Another Desert Another Sea* on Cargo/Headhunter Records. Pall Jenkins comments, "We never really accepted the fact that we were on a major label and potentially moving toward the direction of mainstream. We didn't look at our music like that. We were hoping we could just do what we do and sell some records. And I think that's what a lot of bands do. They just want to do their thing and not have somebody contemplate what they're doing and telling them what to do." This attitude is similar to that of other bands who signed at the time. Big-name acts Drive Like Jehu, Inch, and Lucy's Fur Coat ended up separating, par-

tially due to their big-label affiliations.

As the hype died down, the music picked up. From the mid-'90s to the present, with bands like the Locust and Tourette's Lautrec, punk rock has mutated and grown into different forms of hardcore and math rock. Here again, we have another category, but certain themes are prevalent that back up this term. Erratic and unpredictable, math rock is aggressive while at other times dropping a key to become more melodic and sometimes jazzy. Creedle, Thingy, the Drop Science, Tristeza, and Klikatat Ikatowi are a few of San Diego's best math rock bands. Though not all of these bands are currently active, their albums are available online or at stores like Off the Record in Hillcrest. And when these guys play live, it's the kind of music

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that confounds, amuses, and moves one on a visceral level. Speaking of visceral levels, few bands these days have the ability to get their audiences throwing themselves against each other like the Locust. Their hardcore music grinds like a swarm of insects, piercing hard and demanding a cult following. They were featured on a couple of tracks in the John Waters film *Cecil B. Demented*, which shows that this music still holds the commercial appeal that so many bands seem to disdain.

Though it began in the early '80s, hardcore still pulses through the veins of the city's underground. Groups like the Locust and other San Diego bands of recent years, like Run for Your Fucking Life, the Crimson Curse, and even more rock 'n' roll-oriented bands like the Tori Cobras, continue to wave the banner. While those bands are the harder-punk side of the current scene, other groups such as the and/or's; Counterfit; Vena Cava; Maquiladora; Ilya; Via Satellite; Rochelle, Rochelle; Champagne Kiss;

Like Millions; Buckfast Superbee; fluf; and Gogogo Airheart exemplify the complex and diverse talent of the various artists producing music in our hometown. Many of these bands sound nothing alike — some emotionally themed, others dreamy and spacey or hard rockin' — but they often share the same bill. And, of course, there are those further mutations of the earlier '90s bands. Just to name a few, the Hot Snakes featuring John Reis of Rocket From the Crypt, Congress of the Cow with Stimy of Inch, the Black Heart Procession with Pall Jenkins, the 21st Century Lepers with Ryan Foxe of Fishwife, and Beehive & the Barracudas with Gar Wood of Tanner are a few of the many who are staples of the San Diego scene. It would be difficult to outline in detail the incestuous and mutable relationships between all these bands, especially as the crossovers have been going on for a few decades now, but it is important to know that the scene here is tight, supportive, and always welcome to those with

a love of music.

And the best part is that the music is accessible, and not only to those over 21. Xanth in North Park, the Epicentre in Mira Mesa, the Scene in Clairemont, and the Ché Café at UCSD are underage clubs that feature many of these bands.

As the city grows, so does the number of people going out to shows, and a new wave of nightlife is washing over the city. One has only to check out the Casbah on a Friday night or drop by Scolari's Office or Buster Daly's in North Park or Brett Bodie's Ken Club in Kensington. All this may sound like I'm just name-dropping, but as you flip through the pages of the *Reader's* music section, these bands and venues should shine like diamonds in the black-and-white print, reminding you that there is something a little more real out there, an alternative to corporate labels and MTV pop. ■

— Daniel Ridge

Originally published in the *Reader* on October 9, 2002

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One of the reasons I've been able to pay my rent is a procedure called 'neck-angle reset,' says Bill Meyer. "That's removing the neck from the guitar and changing the angle that the neck is mounted on the body. The average cost is about \$400, but a lot of them run more than that." On Saturday, December 15, Meyer (a luthier — a person who makes and repairs stringed instruments) will host the grand-opening celebration of Tecolote Guitar Works, a guitar-repair shop and art gallery.

The most common issue Meyer has seen in his years of building and repairing

LOCAL EVENTS

guitars is "adjustment." "The typical complaint that you get is a person will walk in and say, 'This thing's really hard to play — it hurts my fingers, and I think the strings are too high off the fret board.' In guitar lingo, the amount you've got to press the string before it hits the fret is called the 'action.' If they've got a little bit of savvy, they might come in and say, 'I think I need my action adjusted.'"

According to Meyer, there are two parts involved in making an adjustment — the nut (a piece of bone or plastic into which grooves are made to hold strings) and the saddle (the part that stops the strings from vibrating). In most adjustments, Meyer says he sands material off the bottom of the saddle so that the saddle fits deeper into the bridge, which is a "wooden component that holds the saddle."

Meyer explains that among moderately priced guitars, it is "quite common for instruments to be shipped from the factory

with really bad setups, bad actions, and bad adjustments. Typically, if a new guitar costs less than 500 bucks, odds are it may need some close attention to get it adjusted properly. As the price point goes up, you really do get what you pay for." Regardless of price, the body of all wooden guitars, given enough time, will warp due to changes in humidity and temperature.

"Let's say you buy yourself a new Martin guitar and spend \$2000 on it — that's an average, middle- to upper-middle-range guitar. It comes from the factory with a nice playability; it's comfortable to play. That guitar will have adequate adjustability for probably 15 years, and at some point between 15 and 20 years it may need some structural repair [like a neck-angle reset] to regain its adjustability."

Meyer has noted patterns of damage among the types of repairs he's made. "Some of them are seasonal. Acoustic guitars can be extremely sensitive to changes in temperature. Typically, in early to mid-spring — the first couple of weekends where the weather is actually hot — you will see acoustic guitars that have been left in the trunk of somebody's car. They parked it at the mall or at their buddy's house, came back three hours later, and the excess heat that builds up in the car trunk will cause some of the glue joints in the wooden guitar to soften."

Certain playing styles are riskier than others. "For instance, the damage on rock-n-rollers' electric guitars — not just garage bands, but people who are gigging — the peghead [the part that holds the tuning knobs] of the guitar at some point either gets rammed into the floor or banged into a



mike stand. Another thing that is not unusual: there will literally be a collision between the bass player and other guitar players, causing the peghead of the guitar to break off," says Meyer. "It's a common rock-n-roller problem. The [peghead] can almost always be glued back on, but usually there will be some battle scars left."

Acoustic, "coffeehouse players" incur damage of a different sort. "The most common damage is not done while playing but in between sets, when the player will set the guitar down on the guitar stand and go have a cup of coffee or talk with friends. Something will happen, and that thing will fall off the stand. The wood is very thin; they were not made to bounce." Such accidents leave cracks in the body of the guitar, which Meyer fills with glue. "Something like that might not cost more than 30 or 40 bucks — the crack may be an inch long and isn't separated much. But it can go to \$500 for extensive cracks on the soundboard or all the way around the perimeter of the guitar."

The most expensive guitars Meyer has worked on belonged to wealthy middle-aged men. "It's a typical thing for baby boomers to have three or four \$5000 guitars around their house. Because these guitars are so beautiful, the people who own them want to be able to see them, so they violate Bill's first rule of taking care of your guitar: When you're not playing the sucker, put it back in its case. I make a noticeable percentage of my yearly income from dogs and kids knocking guitars off stands."

— Barbarella

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OUT & ABOUT

GIAN CARLO MENOTTI'S AMAHL AND THE NIGHT VISITORS

Stephen and Mary Birch North Park Theatre, December 14–23.

(SEE IN PERSON)



"Gala Navideña" — Christmas music played by Orchestra of Baja California at 8 p.m. on Thursday, December 13, at Centro Cultural Tijuana (Paseo de los Héroes and Mina Street, Zona Río). \$15 U.S. 011-52-664-687-9636. (TIJUANA)

Ballesteros in Concert, Friday, December 14, 9 p.m., at Tangeloo (on Boulevard Agua Caliente). 011-52-664-681-8091. (TIJUANA)

"La Campesinela," a Christmas story about people crossing the Mexican-American border, may be seen Saturday, December 15, 8 p.m., at Centro Cultural Tijuana (Paseo de los Héroes and Mina Street, in Zona Río). Tickets: \$12 U.S. 011-52-664-687-9636. (TIJUANA)

Governor's Marathon is Sunday, December 16, starting at 8 a.m. at Centro Civico (downtown). 011-52-664-215-9000. (MEXICALI)

Christmas Music performed by Sinfónica Juvenil de Tijuana, conducted by Pavel Getman, Sunday, December 16, 6 p.m., at Centro Cultural Tijuana (Paseo de los Héroes and Mina Street, in Zona

Río). \$8 U.S. 011-52-664-687-9636. (TIJUANA)

OUTDOORS

Cross-Country Skiers are in for a short-lived treat late this month through February if winter storms intense enough to drop several inches to two feet of snow hit San Diego County's higher mountains. As the clouds are clearing, you may be able to take advantage of good skiing conditions along Highway 79 through Cuyamaca Rancho State Park and along Sunrise Highway through the Laguna Mountain Recreation Area. More limited opportunities for cross-country skiing may briefly exist on Palomar Mountain. Farther north in Southern California and higher in elevation, the forested crests of the San Gabriel, San Bernardino, and San Jacinto Mountains offer more dependably good snow conditions.

Hike to San Diego County's High Places to take advantage of December's characteristically clear air. From spots such as Cuyamaca

Peak in Cuyamaca Rancho State Park, Wooded Hill in the Laguna Mountain Recreation Area, and Boucher Hill at Palomar Mountain State Park, vistas stretching a hundred miles across the Pacific Ocean sometimes occur at this time of year. Look for the dark profiles of Santa Catalina and San Clemente islands, lying northwest and west of San Diego, respectively.

Liquidambar Trees, or sweet gums, the colorfully deciduous trees gracing front yards, parks, and campuses throughout the San Diego area, have been putting on a good show for the past month. The maplelike leaves of some varieties have turned from green to purple to red; the leaves of other varieties have faded to a golden yellow. Other varieties will hold on to their leaves until the New Year. Most will regain their foliage by late February.

Poinsettias, a favorite of backyard gardeners, are now exhibiting their scarlet, petal-like bracts, just in time for the holidays. The onset of 14-hour-long nights triggers their behavior: In San Diego this condition is met just before the date of winter solstice — December 21.

It's Planting Time at San Diego River! Volunteers invited to help prepare ground, plant variety of California native plants along with Audubon Society volunteers, Saturday, December 15, 9 a.m.–noon. Wear work clothes; bring work gloves and weeding tools if you have them. Free. Directions: 858-273-5242, 619-682-7200. (MISSION BAY)

Trail Repair Work in Paso Picacho continues in Cuyamaca Rancho State Park on Saturday, December 15, 9 a.m. Bring work shoes, gloves, hat, water, snack. Group gathers at Paso Picacho campground maintenance area behind fire department building. Free. Registration: 858-566-7399. (CUYAMACA RANCHO STATE PARK)

Volunteer Tamarisk Bash at Black Mountain Park/Santa Luz on Saturday, December 15, 9 a.m.–1 p.m. Help eradicate tamarisk (an invasive shrub). Wear work boots, gloves. Meet at kiosk parking-staging area off San Dieguito Road (opposite Montien Road). Free. 858-342-8856. (SAN DIEGO)

Holly-Jolly Walk! See holly-leaf cherry, holly berry, and more during guided walks, Saturday, Sunday, Wednesday, December 15, 16, and 19, 9:30 a.m., in Mission Trails Regional Park (One Father Junípero Serra Trail). Free. 619-668-3281. (SAN CARLOS)

Discover Old Escondido East during walking tour led by Escondido Citizens Ecology Committee, Saturday, December 15, starting at 11 a.m. at southeast corner of Grand and Broadway. Free. 760-743-8207. (ESCONDIDO)

Golden Eagles, Bobcats, deer make their homes in 321-acre Goodan Ranch, the site for easy hike led by Canyoners on Sunday, December 16, 9 a.m. Free. 619-255-0203. (POWAY)

Explore San Diego Audubon Society's Silverwood Sanctuary during guided walks offered by reservation on Sundays, 10 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. Sanctuary is located at 13003 Wildcat Canyon Road (five miles from Ashwood-Mapleview turn). Free. 619-682-7200. (LAKESIDE)

Why Is It Called South Park? Find out during Walkabout jaunt, Sunday, December 16, starting at 11:30 a.m. at 2412 30th Street (be-

tween Laurel and Kalmia Streets). Free. 619-231-7463. (SOUTH PARK)

Mars Makes Close Approach to Earth — 55 million miles — and Mars Society and San Diego Astronomy Association host public telescope viewing, Tuesday, December 18, 6:30–9:30 p.m., near fountain outside Reuben H. Fleet Science Center in Balboa Park (weather and clouds permitting). Free. 619-723-3456. (BALBOA PARK)

Cowles Mountain Solstice Sunrise Hikes to Kumeyaay solstice site and summit of San Diego's highest peak planned by Mission Trails Regional Park trail guides on Thurs-

day and Saturday, December 20 and 22. Free hikes start at 6 a.m. at Cowles Mountain staging area (corner Navajo Road and Golfcrest Drive). 619-668-3281. (SAN CARLOS)

DANCE

Get Your Groove On! Latest dance steps taught by instructor/dancer Prince on Thursdays at Dancing Unlimited (4569 30th Street). Beginners at 7–8 p.m., intermediate/advanced 8–9 p.m. \$10 per class, \$35 for four. 858-635-1211. (NORTH PARK)

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Calendar

LOCAL EVENTS

Zydeco Dances with lessons are offered every Thursday at Tio Leo's (5302 Napa Street, between Morena Boulevard and Linda Vista Road). Beginning dance lessons at 7 p.m.; open dancing to recorded tunes from 8–10 p.m. \$5 (first visit free). 619-857-8409. (LINDA VISTA)

Calling All Jitterbugs! Meeshi and CafeSavoy Swing Productions host swing dancing, Thursday, December 13, 8 p.m., at Shaker Room Dance Lounge (528 F Street). Beginning swing dance lesson with Meeshi at 8 p.m., followed by '30s and '40s swing/jazz music by Zzymzzy Quartet (9 p.m.–midnight). "Dress code enforced, vintage attire recommended." Cover: \$10. 21 and up. 858-395-6060. (GASLAMP QUARTER)

Contradance to music by Jamie Laval, Ashley Boder, and Jeff Spero, calling by Steve Barlow on Friday, December 14, 8 p.m., at Trinity United Methodist Church (3030 Thorn Street). Beginners' dance workshop: 7:30 p.m. \$9. Wear soft-soled shoes. 619-283-8550. (NORTH PARK)

Nutty Time of Year! City Ballet of San Diego, under direction of Steven and Elizabeth Wistrich, plans *Nutcracker* performances through December 16 at Spreckels Theatre (121 Broadway). Production follows choreography by Russian choreographer Lev Ivanov, with Tchaikovsky's score performed by City Ballet Orchestra. Curtain rises at 7:30 p.m. on Friday and Saturday, with 2 p.m. matinees on Saturday and Sunday. Tickets: \$29–\$59. 858-272-8663. (DOWNTOWN)

Holiday Workshop in Modern Dance with renowned masters teacher Christopher Pilafian, Saturday and Sunday, December 15 and 16, at Jean Isaacs San Diego Dance Theater, at Dance Place San Diego in NTC Promenade (2650 Truxton Road). Technique, 10–11:30 a.m., repertory, 1–3 p.m. Fee: \$75 entire workshop, \$20 single class. Registration: 619-225-1803. (POINT LOMA)

Clara, the Sugarplum Fairy, Mice, and Toy Soldiers — California Ballet presents *The Nutcracker* with Tchaikovsky's score performed by San Diego Symphony at San Diego Civic Theatre (110 Third Avenue). Cast of 160 includes children 4–14 years old, professionals in the "starring" roles, all dancing to Maxine Mahon's choreography.

ROAM-ORAMA

A GUIDE TO UNEXPECTED SAN DIEGO AND BEYOND | BY JERRY SCHAD

Oak leaves fluttering in the sunlight, pine needles souging in the breeze, gray squirrels scurrying, and pungent-sweet fragrances in the air. These dependable pre-Cedar-fire experiences are now a work-in-progress. The rate and extent of postfire forest renewal in the coming years will depend largely on the amount of rainfall this winter and in future wet seasons.

The looping West Mesa route, almost never steep, sticks to old fire roads traversing the southeast flank of Cuyamaca Peak. If snow happens to fall at low elevations (down to 3000 or 4000 feet) — an event most likely in late December or January — the route can be perfect for an early-morning cross-country ski tour. That perfection, however, is marginal and short-lived, lasting for only a few hours after the snow falls and before the sun shines brightly.



Snow-dusted pine snag, West Mesa

To get to the starting point, follow Highway 79 12.8 miles south from Julian or 10.0 miles north from Interstate 8 at Descanso. Observe the stenciled highway mileage markers as you go. The trailhead parking area is on the east side of the road at mile 7.3.

From the parking area, cross to the other side of Highway 79. Head west around a gate and continue up West Mesa Fire Road through burned oaks and pines. After 0.5 mile you come to a junction

from where West Mesa Fire Road continues southwest toward Japacha Spring and the Fern Flat Fire Road branches right (northwest). Either direction you choose at the intersection is fine since this is a loop hike, but let's assume you're going counterclockwise. Head northwest and ascend through more burned pine forest. Staying left at the next two trail junctions (following West Mesa Trail), you level off at about the 5200-foot contour and continue around several small ravines carpeted with bracken fern and other shade-loving greenery. You're in the middle of the biggest block of state wilderness within the park.

The Burnt Pine Trail (a disused fire road), intersecting from the right, can be used to reach Cuyamaca Peak, but it's a long and tedious haul. Beyond this intersection, the West Mesa Trail starts a gentle descent across a bald spot on the mountain slope. A beautiful vista of swaying grasses, rolling hills, and distant mountain ridges lies before you.

The descent quickens and you soon come to the Arroyo Seco Trail (another former fire road) on the right. Stay left and continue along the top of Airplane Ridge. After 0.9 mile, round the hairpin turn (Monument Trail junction on the right) and notice the side trail on the left leading a short distance to the obscure Airplane Monument. It's worth the short side trip to see the vintage engine of an aircraft that fell from the sky in 1922.

Curtain rises at 2:30 and 8 p.m. on Saturday, December 15; 1 and 5:30 p.m. on Sunday, December 16; and 7 p.m. on Thursday, December 20 (as well as 7 p.m. on Friday, December 21, 2:30 and 8 p.m. on Saturday, December 22; and 1 and 5:30 p.m. on Sunday, December 23). Tickets: \$35–\$80 for adults, \$25 for those 12 and younger. 858-560-6741. (DOWNTOWN)

English Country Dancing, Janet calls and Kathleen plays for English country dancing, Sunday, Decem-

ber 16, 6–9 p.m., at Jean Hart Academy of Dance (Oak Knoll Plaza, 12227 Poway Road). Beginners' instruction at 6 p.m. \$6. 858-676-9731. (POWAY)

Leaping Cossacks! Legions of Rats! San Diego Ballet Company performs *The Nutcracker*, December 20–23, in Mandeville Auditorium at UCSD. Curtain rises at 7:30 p.m. Thursday–Saturday, with matinees at 2:30 p.m. on Saturday, 1 and 5 p.m. on Sunday. Tickets: \$36 general, \$18 children. 619-294-7311. (LA JOLLA)

Continue descending, into and around the shady canyon of Japacha Creek, and in 1.2 miles from the hairpin turn come to the junction of Japacha Fire Road. Japacha Spring is nearby, accessible via a short spur trail.

Continue northeast along the edge of the broad meadow at the foot of Arrowmakers Ridge, and retrace your earlier steps on the

West Mesa Fire Road back to your starting point.

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

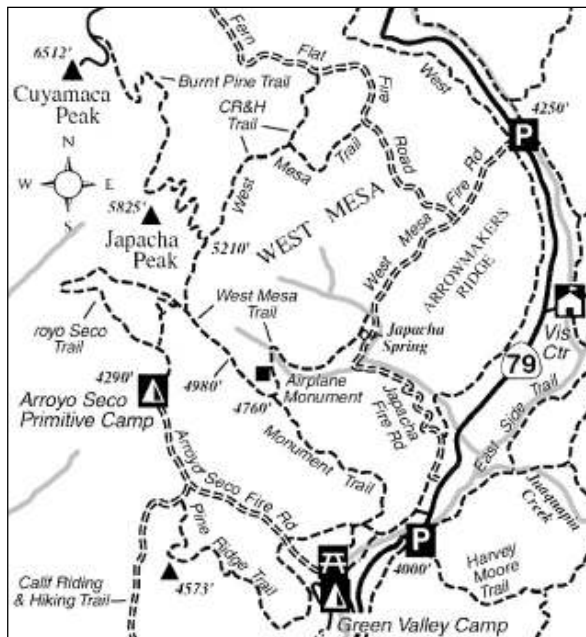
WEST MESA LOOP

Hike or ski-tour the West Mesa loop route in Cuyamaca Rancho State Park.

Distance from downtown San Diego: 48 miles

Hiking length: 7.2 miles

Difficulty: Moderately strenuous



Bellydance Showcase with Jasmina, Shalimar, Maisah, and Annamaria, live music by Middle-Earth Ensemble, Thursday, December 20, 8 p.m., Claire de Lune Coffee Lounge (2906 University Avenue). Donation: \$5. 619-688-9845. (NORTH PARK)

FILM

"TFM Student Film Festival," Thursday, December 13, 7 p.m., in Don Powell Theatre at San Diego

State University. Diverse program includes fiction, documentary, animation, music videos, experimental new works by television and film students. \$10 tickets include "veggie-friendly barbecue (while supplies last)," 5:30 p.m. 619-594-1375. (SDSU)

Fritz Lang's Classic *Metropolis* is showcased for fall film series, Thursday, December 13, 7 p.m., at Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego, La Jolla (700 Prospect Street). "*Metropolis* remains a mar-

vel of dystopian imagery, complete with a mad scientist, an idealist hero and his love interest, and a stunning female robot." \$7. 858-454-3541. (LA JOLLA)

Fausto Brizzi's 2005 Film *Notte Prima Deglis Esami* screens Friday, December 14, 7 p.m., at Italian Community Center (1669 Columbia Street). \$2. 619-237-0601. In Italian with English subtitles. (LITTLE ITALY)

Up for a "Complex Tapestry of Moral Threads"? See Ray Lawrence's 2006 film *Findabyne*, starring Gabriel Byrne and Laura Linney, when it's screened for Sunday Matinee on December 16, 2 p.m., at San Diego Public Library (820 E Street). Free. 619-236-5800. (DOWNTOWN)

Satoshi Kon's "Dream Fugue" of a film, *Paprika* (2006), is showcased during Film Forum at San Diego Public Library (820 E Street) on Monday, December 17, 6:30 p.m. In Japanese with English subtitles. Free. 619-236-5800. (DOWNTOWN)

Holiday Films spotlighted for ongoing film series hosted by Carlsbad Library, with *The Holiday* — starring Cameron Diaz, Kate Winslet, Jude Law, and Jack Black — on Wednesday, December 19, 6 p.m., in Schulman Auditorium (1775 Dove Lane). Free. 760-602-2026. (LA COSTA)

Reuben H. Fleet Science Center, currently screening in the IMAX theater: *Sea Monsters: A Prehistoric Adventure*, *Dinosaurs Alive*, *The Living Sea*. Ticket prices and showtimes: 619-238-1233. (BALBOA PARK)

LECTURES

"How to Keep Your New Year's Resolutions" explained by Walter Holtschi, Thursday, December 13, 6 p.m., at Sacred Pathway Bookstore (300 Carlsbad Village Drive, suite 103). Free. 760-729-2434. (CARLSBAD)

"The Unbearable Lightness of Being" presented by Kota Ezawa, an artist represented in "Animated Painting," for guest lecture series at San Diego Museum of Art on Friday, December 14, 10 a.m. \$12. 619-232-7931. (BALBOA PARK)

"Beyond Xeriscape — Gardening for Sustainability" is subject for Don Schultz, Saturday, December 15, 10 a.m., in Cuyamaca College's Water Conservation Garden (12122 Cuyamaca College Drive West). Fine-tune your approach to water-

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What's That You're Reading?

NAME: JOHN BOYER | **AGE:** 26 | **OCCUPATION:** MILITARY CAPTAIN/BUSINESS STUDENT
NEIGHBORHOOD: THE GASLAMP | **WHERE INTERVIEWED:** BORDERS IN THE GASLAMP



What are you currently reading?

"I mostly read textbooks because I'm a business student. I just finished *Never Eat Alone and Other Secrets to Success, One Relationship at a Time*, by Keith Ferrazzi.

Tell me about the book.

"The book is a networking tool. It tells how to create a network of friends and business contacts. I picked up the book because I was going to see Ferrazzi speak at USD and I wanted to know a bit more about him. I ended up reading the whole book in two days.

What do you make of the argument?

"It's sort of a biography of how Ferrazzi succeeded in business. It tells a lot of stories. I'm from Pennsylvania, and the first thing that struck me was that Ferrazzi is from rural Pennsylvania. I kept reading because of that connection with the author. Ferrazzi started out as the kid of either a steel worker or a coal worker, and he ended up making connections with a lot of families, which in turn led him to get into Yale and Harvard. At Harvard he went

into business, and from there, to Deloitte & Touche. He writes about how, by making friends and telling his story, he was able to get people to help him out.

"The book taught me that when you meet someone, instead of asking, 'What do you do? How long have you been doing it?' — the general conversational turn — you should try to talk about something that you are passionate about. Don't chit-chat — make a connection over something that matters to you. Now, when I meet someone, I talk about my background differently. Instead of just saying where I'm from, I talk about why it's important, how it's helped me. I come from Amish country, which is a lot different from downtown San Diego."

Tell me about the style.

"It's very easy to understand, very conversational. The author gives lots of

examples and personal stories."

Compare this with other books you've read.

"*The World Is Flat*, by Thomas Friedman, is an excellent book for understanding where business is going as far as globalization. China, India, and other growing and developing economies are not necessarily taking over, but they're expanding and assuming a more prominent role in the world's business. The book helped me to realize that we need to accept other cultures and how we need to compete in the future."

Do you have a favorite author?

"That would be Robert Greene, who wrote *The 48 Laws of Power*. He offers 48 concepts and why they are ways to make you a more powerful and memorable person. He relates stories from past leaders, people like Winston Churchill."

What magazines or newspapers do you read?

"I read *Fast Company*, *Men's Journal*, and *Triathlete*. I read *Fast Company* cover to cover. The other two, I'll read one or two articles, based on the captions on the front. I'm an ocean swimmer, so if there's something that relates to that, I'll pick it up.

Do you talk to your friends about reading?

"Yes, because they have similar interests. We talk about *Fast Company* — the entrepreneurial aspect. We talk about *Men's Journal* — the adventure aspect, things like backpacking in Eastern Europe. Or *People* magazine. I used to work for a general, and he read *People*. You can talk about anything in *People* because people can relate to it — and they like to talk about the success or failure of stars."

wise gardening. \$15 general. Reservations: 619-660-0614. (EL CAJON)

Comprehensive Bike-Maintenance Class planned on Saturday, December 15, 10:30 a.m.–4 p.m., at REI Encinitas (1590 Leucadia Boulevard). \$85 nonmembers. Registration: 760-944-9020. (ENCINITAS)

"Designing with Cacti and Succulents" presented by Michael Buckner, "the plant man," Saturday, December 15, 1 p.m., at

Cuyamaca College's Water Conservation Garden (12122 Cuyamaca College Drive West). Plant sale follows. \$15. Reservations: 619-660-0614. (EL CAJON)

"Independent Distribution: Are You Being Heard?" It's topic for workshop hosted by Buddha Frog Music Publishing, Saturday, December 15. Classes begin at 1 p.m. at College-Rolando Library (6600 Montezuma Road, 619-533-3902) and at 3:30 p.m. at Malcolm X Library (5148 Market

Street, 619-527-5456). Requested donation: \$5. (COLLEGE, SOUTHEAST SAN DIEGO)

"Gobi: The Other Desert" is topic for Anza-Borrego Desert State Park superintendent Mark Jorgensen when he addresses Anza-Borrego Institute, Saturday, December 15, 7:30 p.m., at Borrego Springs Performing Arts Center. How are rangers in remote parts of Mongolia working to protect Argali sheep and other

wildlife? Donation: \$5. 760-767-4063. (BORREGO SPRINGS)

Bay Leaf Wreath and rice pudding — what do they have in common? Karen England divulges how to make pudding and a fresh bay wreath, Sunday, December 16, 11:30 a.m., at Lavender Fields (12460 Keys Creek Road). \$50 fee includes materials, dessert tasting. Registration: 760-742-1489. (VALLEY CENTER)

Dog Safety Lecture, learn dog safety tips on dog toys, poisonous

food and plants, more, Wednesday, December 19, 6 p.m., at San Diego Humane Society and SPCA (5500 Gaines Street). Training accomplished through "kind, effective, and modern positive-reinforcement methods." \$35. Required advance registration: 619-299-7012 x2247. (LINDA VISTA)

Gallery Talk led by Dave Stevenson of Niki Charitable Art Foundation, in conjunction with "Niki de Saint Phalle: A Spiritual Path" exhibition, on Thursday, Decem-

ber 20, 2 p.m., at California Center for the Arts Museum, Escondido (340 North Escondido Boulevard). Included in museum admission. 760-839-4120. (ESCONDIDO)

IN PERSON

"A Christmas Carol" is presented by Kinney Productions, December 7–23, at Julian Town Hall (2129 Main Street). Curtain rises at 7:30 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays,

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with 1 p.m. matinee on Sunday, December 23. Tickets: \$10 general, \$6 for those 12 and younger. 760-765-1857, 760-765-1688. (JULIAN)

Local Thriller Author Caitlin Rother speaks about her new book, *Naked Addiction*, which is set in La Jolla and Pacific Beach, on Thursday, December 13, 7 p.m., at Barnes and Noble Bookstore, Grossmont Center (5500 Grossmont Center Drive). Free. 619-667-2870. (LA MESA)

Staged Reading of Jean Shepherd's Classic *Christmas Story* performed by Olive Tree Players of Mission Valley, December 13-16. Expect version of 1983 film in which Ralphie Parker devises a scheme to get a BB gun under the Christmas tree. Arrive early for Christmas carolers, hot apple cider. Performances begin at 7 p.m. Thursday-Saturday, 2 p.m. on Sunday. General admission: \$10 in advance, \$12 at door. 619-297-4366 x510. (MISSION VALLEY)

"The Grinch's Steal Christmas and Hanukkah" — Pioneers Club Players present original play by Summer Golden, "performed by a group of talented young adults with developmental challenges," Thursday, December 13, 7 p.m., at St. James community hall (625 South Nardo Avenue). \$8. 858-481-3998. (SOLANA BEACH)

"Thoroughly Modern Millie" presented by actors of San Diego School of Creative and Performing Arts. Curtain rises at 7 p.m. Thursday-Saturday, December 13-15 and Thursday and Friday, December 20 and 21; and 2 p.m. on Saturday, December 22. \$10 general. Find campus at 2425 Dusk Drive. 619-475-8556. (PARADISE HILLS)

Thriller Author Todd Buchholz signs, discusses *The Castro Gene*, Thursday, December 13, 7 p.m., at Del Mar Library (1309 Camino del Mar). Free. 858-755-1666. (DEL MAR)

Renowned Economist Paul Krugman visits Warwick's Book-

store (7812 Girard Avenue) on Thursday, December 13, 7:30 p.m., to discuss and sign *The Conscience of a Liberal*. Free. 858-454-0347. (LA JOLLA)

"The Latin Jazz Experience" is illuminated in concerts on Thursday and Friday, December 13 and 14, 7:30 p.m., in MiraCosta College Theatre (One Barnard Drive). Expect tribute to icons of Latin jazz, guest performers. \$10 general. 760-795-6815. (OCEANSIDE)

Contemporary and Classic Compositions on tap when Palomar Concert Band presents holiday concert, Thursday, December 13, 8 p.m., in Palomar College Performance Lab (room D-10 at 1140 West Mission Road). \$12 general. 760-744-1150 x2453. (SAN MARCOS)

"L.A. Women Who Rock Comedy" perform on Thursday, December 13, 8 p.m., at Handlery Hotel (950 Hotel Circle North). Entertainers include Tara Walden, Martha Marion, members of Comedy Under Construction sketch comedy group. Cover: \$5, plus two-item minimum. 858-550-8088. (MISSION VALLEY)

"Bethlehem Village" — re-creation of "First Century Bethlehem complete with census tables, Roman guards, nativity show, petting zoo, llama rides, kids' crafts and games, puppet shows, musical entertainment" presented Friday and Saturday, December 14 and 15, 6-9 p.m., at North City Presbyterian Church (11717 Poway Road). "Event is...tailored for families with young children, but all are welcome." Free. 858-748-4642. (POWAY)

Noted Asia Strategist William H. Overholt discusses his new book, *Asia, America, and the Transformation of Geopolitics*, Friday, December 14, 7 p.m., at D.G. Wills Books (7461 Girard Avenue). Free. 858-456-1800. (LA JOLLA)

"An Angel's Gift" — holiday production presented by Lindley Lopez Circus with students from Sophia Isadora Academy of Circus

OUT & ABOUT

"AN ANGEL'S GIFT"
by Lindley Lopez
Circus, Friday-Sunday,
December 14-16,
Saville Theater.

(SEE IN PERSON)



Arts, December 14-16, in Saville Theater, San Diego City College (14th and C Street). Curtain rises at 7:30 p.m. each night, with 3 p.m. matinees on Saturday and Sunday. \$15. 619 543-0911. (DOWNTOWN)

Gian Carlo Menotti's *Amahl and the Night Visitors* presented by Lyric Opera San Diego at Stephen and Mary Birch North Park Theatre (2891 University Avenue). Menotti's tale tells of journey of three kings and crippled boy who wants to bring a gift to Bethlehem; it was first performed December 24, 1951. Priti Gandhi has role of the mother, marking her professional debut as a soprano, as she has sung almost entirely in mezzo-soprano repertoire. Performances include festival of Christmas carols, visit from Santa Claus.

Curtain rises at 7:30 p.m. Friday, Saturday, and Thursday, December 14, 15, and 20; with 2:30 p.m. matinees on Sunday, December 16, and Saturday and Sunday, December 22 and 23. Tickets: \$30-\$50; half-price for those 5-17 (no children under five admitted). 619-239-8836. (NORTH PARK)

"A Christmas Carol" — the classic Dickens tale of Scrooge interpreted with "music, dancing, and holiday magic" by La Jolla Stage Company at Torrey Pines Christian Church (8320 La Jolla Scenic Drive North). Performances begin at 8 p.m. on Friday, December 14, 2 and 7 p.m. on Sunday, December 16. Tickets: \$15 children, \$20 adult. 858-454-7798 (LA JOLLA)

"Christmas Is Comin' Uptown" — musical loosely based on Charles Dickens' "Christmas Carol" continues through December 16 at World Beat Center (2100 Park Boulevard). Scrooge is a Harlem slumlord about to foreclose on a tenement house and a church who receives surprise visits from an old friend and some ghosts. Performances begin at 8 p.m. on Friday and Saturday, December 14 and 15; at 5 p.m. on Sunday, December 16. Tickets: \$20 general, \$10 students. 619-263-7911. (BALBOA PARK)

Noted South Carolina Poet Laurel Blossom reads from *Degrees of Latitude*, Saturday, December 15, 7 p.m., at D.G. Wills Books

(7461 Girard Avenue). Free. 858-456-1800. (LA JOLLA)

Dastgâh Jam with Dornob Collective, Saturday December 15, 7:30 p.m., at Pierre's (1404 Fifth Avenue). Guest artists with rhythm section. Free. 619-727-4700. Repeats Saturday, December 22. (DOWNTOWN)

Jim Kweskin and Geoff Muldaur perform for AcousticMusic-SanDiego, Saturday, December 15, 7:30 p.m., at Normal Heights United Methodist Church (4650 Mansfield Street). \$20. 619-303-8176. (NORMAL HEIGHTS)

"Bells and Brass," holiday concerts by Gay Men's Chorus of San Diego on December 15 and 16 in Sherwood Auditorium at Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego (700 Prospect Street). Program serves up "Christmas Is Delicious," "God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen," "Sleigh Ride," more. Concerts begin at 8 p.m. on Saturday, 2 p.m. on Sunday. Tickets: \$30-\$35. 619-574-6273. (LA JOLLA)

Art for Peace Festival hosted by Puppet Insurgency, Sunday, December 16, 10 a.m.-3 p.m., in parking lot of Al Davis Furniture (1601 University Avenue). *The Story of Ferdinand* puppet show, live music, handmade gifts, make your own art. Free. 619 265-1199. (HILLCREST)

The Christmas Musical *O Night Divine* presented Sunday, December 16, 11 a.m., at Pacific View Baptist Church (845 Santa Fe Drive). Free. 760-753-4937. (ENCINITAS)

"I'm Dreaming of a Celtic Christmas" — fiddler and singer Patric Petrie and Friends perform Sunday, December 16, 2 p.m., at

Cole Library (1250 Carlsbad Village Drive). Program includes traditional Irish and Scots ballads, winter tunes, dance favorites. Free. 760-602-2026. (CARLSBAD)

"2007 Southern California Wildfires: A Photographic Journal" presented by "a distinguished group of photojournalists" at Museum of Photographic Arts, Sunday, December 16, 3 p.m. Nelvin Cepeda (*San Diego Union-Tribune*), Sandy Huffaker (Getty Images), Wally Skalij (*Los Angeles Times*), Hayne Palmour (*North County Times*), and Chris Carlson (Associated Press) will each present a slide show, followed by question-and-answer period. \$5 donation benefits After-the-Fires Fund 2007. 619-238-7559. (BALBOA PARK)

Holiday Concert by Randi Driscoll with guests Lisa Sanders and Noah Heldman, Sunday December 16, 7 p.m., Chalice Unitarian Universalist Church (2324 Miller Avenue). Tickets: 760-737-0393. (ESCONDIDO)

Jazz, Latin, and Original compositions may be heard when Rob Thorsen Quartet performs Monday, December 17, 7:30 p.m., at All Souls' Episcopal Church (1475 Catalina Boulevard). Reception follows. Donation: \$5. 619-223-6394 x13. (POINT LOMA)

Ring in the Holidays! Community festival of music continues daily through Sunday, December 23, 7 p.m., at Latter-Day Saints Temple (7474 Charmant Drive). Bell choirs, Hispanic choirs, deaf choir, operatic and instrumental performances, harps, youth choirs, much more! Free. 858-277-7798. (UNIVERSITY CITY)



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Calendar

LOCAL EVENTS

SPORTS

Rides to Suit Every Rider! San Diego Bicycle Club's "world famous" Saturday rides start at 8:30 a.m. at 8715 Via La Jolla Drive (in parking lot at La Jolla Village Square). Fast rides, core training, and development rides offered. Helmets mandatory. Free. 619-522-0058. (LA JOLLA)

Interscholastic Surfing Federation Competition for high school surfers runs Saturday and Sunday, December 15 and 16, 7 a.m.–4 p.m., on south side of Oceanside Pier. Free for spectators. 760-931-1450. (OCEANSIDE)

Enjoy the Rolling Hills of El Cajon with Knickerbikers bicyclists on Saturday, December 15. The 40-mile ride starts at 9 a.m. in Lindo Lake Park parking lot (at Lake Shore and Pine). Bring snacks, water; bring money for

lunch near end of ride. 619-255-2890. (EL CAJON)

Mixed Martial Arts Cage Fighting with fighters using variety of combat styles for Total Combat, Saturday, December 15, 7 p.m., at 4th and B (345 B Street). Tickets: \$40, \$55, \$75. 619-392-4660. (DOWNTOWN)

Second Annual Senior Water Polo Classic hosted by San Diego County Aquatic Council and City of Coronado, Saturday, December 15, 7 p.m., at City of Coronado Aquatic Complex (1845 Strand Way). "High school senior standouts have been selected from Division I and Division II water polo teams to compete in this all-star game." Admission: \$7 general, \$5 for students, free for coaches. 619-691-5099. (CORONADO)

Visit Oceanside, Bonsall, and Escondido during 82-mile bicycle ride with Bicycle Touring Society riders on Sunday, December 16, starting at 8:45 a.m. in Doyle Park (8175 Regents Road). Free. 619-561-3846. (UNIVERSITY CITY)

San Diego Chargers host Detroit Lions in Qualcomm Stadium

on Sunday, December 16, 1:15 p.m. Game broadcast on Fox; listen on radio station KIOZ, Rock 105.3. Tickets: \$54–\$92, available through Ticketmaster (619-220-TIXS). (MISSION VALLEY)

SPECIAL

"With Gratitude...Selections from the Collection," exhibit of more than 20 paintings and prints by such artists as Dürer, Rembrandt, Goya, Bierstadt, Chagall that were gifts to fine art collection at University of San Diego continues through Friday, December 21, in Robert and Karen Hoehn Family Galleries of Founders Hall at University of San Diego (5998 Alcalá Park). Free. 619-260-4261. (LINDA VISTA)

Historic Navy North Chapel at Liberty Station was built in 1942 and has recently been restored. Tours and open house planned at North Chapel on Saturdays, December 1, 8, 15, 29, 9–11 a.m. The original Rogers pipe organ will be playing; chapel features stained-glass windows, ornate tile, hand-carved pews. Free. Find chapel at 2881 Roosevelt Drive; 619-573-9300. (POINT LOMA)

Skating by the Sea, outdoor ice-skating rink overlooking Pacific Ocean is open at Hotel del Coronado (1500 Orange Avenue) through Tuesday, January 1. Three-hour skating sessions begin at 2 and 6 p.m. daily, with 11 a.m. session on weekends. \$20 general, \$15 for kids; skate rental: \$5. 619-522-8041. (CORONADO)

Garden of Lights, 12th annual event boasts gardens decorated with 90,000-plus sparkling lights on plants and trees at Quail Botanical Gardens (230 Quail Gardens Drive). Holiday Garden of Lights can be enjoyed 5–9 p.m., Decem-

OUT & ABOUT

HANDEL'S "MESSIAH" by San Diego Chamber Orchestra, Sunday, December 16, California Center for the Arts, Escondido.

(SEE CLASSICAL MUSIC)



ber 13–23, and December 26–30. Holiday crafts, live entertainment, marshmallow roasting, children's activities, and food (for sale). Admission: \$10 general, \$3 for those 3–12, free for kids under 3. 760-436-3036. (ENCINITAS)

Sights + Sounds, radio station FM 94.9 plans party on Thursday, December 13, 7 p.m., at San Diego Museum of Art. Live music by band Film School; Halloran plays music in rotunda; DJ Jon DeRosa will play post-punk and indie rock music. \$12. Reservations: 619-232-7931. (BALBOA PARK)

Fiesta Navidad celebrated Friday and Saturday, December 14 and 15, 6–10 p.m., in Old Town San Diego State Historic Park (4002 Wallace Street). Park will be adorned with holiday decorations, lantern-lit museums, luminarias, holiday entertainment, music. Candlelight tours — including lantern-lit furnished rooms of 1830s La Casa del Machado y Silvas and La Casa de Estudillo — begin at 6 p.m., available every half hour. Tickets: \$10 general, \$5 for those 6–12, free under 5. Suggested reservations: 619-220-5422. (OLD TOWN STATE PARK)

Holiday Doggie Café hosted by San Diego Humane Society, Fri-

day, December 14, 6 p.m., at San Diego Humane Society and SPCA (5500 Gaines Street). Bring friendly, on-leash dogs to socialize with other canines. Trainers offer training tips on keeping dogs calm, civilized around distractions. Jazz by Forecast. Donation: \$10. Reservations: 619-299-7012 x2230. (LINDA VISTA)

Holiday Lavender Tea Party hosted by Karen England, Saturday, December 15, at Lavender Fields (12460 Keys Creek Road). \$12. Required reservations: 760-742-1489. (VALLEY CENTER)

San Diego Wildfire Blanket Project aims to "provide hand-made blankets to more than 1500 families who lost their homes in the wildfires." Knitted and crocheted squares have been donated from around world — those who knit and crochet (regardless of skill level) invited to help make blankets, Saturday, December 15, 9:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m., in Poway Library meeting room (13137 Poway Road). Materials provided. 619-757-4857. Free. (POWAY)

"Sea Turtles of the San Diego Bay," Margie Stinson for Tijuana Estuary Saturday Speaker Series, Saturday, December 15, 10 a.m.,

at Tijuana Estuary visitors' center (301 Caspian Way). "Did you know that the largest Eastern Pacific green sea turtle ever recorded has been known to spend time in San Diego Bay?" Free. 619-575-3613. (IMPERIAL BEACH)

Michel de Montaigne's Essays "Of Friendship" and "Of Solitude" pondered when Great Books Reading and Discussion Group meets, Saturday, December 15, 2 p.m., in third-floor conference room of San Diego Public Library (820 E Street). Newcomers welcome. Free. 619-440-5625. (DOWNTOWN)

See "Altered" Wooden Guitars decorated by local artists and musicians during grand opening festivities, Saturday, December 15, 4–7 p.m., in art gallery at Tecolote Guitar Works (1231 Morena Boulevard). Guitars decorated by Laurie Mika, Al and Josie Rodriquez, Jane LaFazio, Helen Shafer Garcia, Andrew Bernhardt (from the Swedish Models), Zach Goode (from Divided by Zero), Adam Gimbel (from Rookie Card), more. Free. 619-276-1677. (SAN DIEGO)

New Abstract Work showcased during "Fresh Ginga Art Show," Saturday, December 15, 6 p.m.–1 a.m., at the Rosary Room (947 E Street). Proceeds benefit victims of recent wildfires. No cover. Drinks. 21 and up. 858-204-9747. (DOWNTOWN)

"Yo Ho Ho... A Pirate's Christmas" is theme for 36th annual San Diego Bay Parade of Lights, Sunday, December 16, 5:30–9:30 p.m. For those viewing on land, north and south ends of Embarcadero as well as pathway along Coronado are good spots. Free. 619-224-2240. (SAN DIEGO BAY)

"Snapshot of an Era: Uncovering Our New Deal Past" — exhibition exploring the genesis of the university campus and development of San Diego during the New Deal continues through May 2008, in Special Collections Reading Room, University Archives, and Donor Hall of San Diego State University's Love Library (5500 Campanile Drive). Exhibit uses archival photographs, institutional records, memorabilia, other primary resources to highlight impact of various New Deal programs on the physical campus environment, student life during the 1930s. Free. 619-594-6791. (SDSU)

Skating by the Sea, outdoor ice-skating rink overlooking Pacific Ocean is open at Hotel del Coronado (1500 Orange Avenue) through Tuesday, January 1. Three-hour skating sessions begin at 11 a.m., 2, and 6 p.m. daily. \$20 general, \$15 for kids; skate rental: \$5. 619-522-8041. (DOWNTOWN)

"Demons, Golems, and Dybbuks: Monsters of the Jewish Imagination" is theme for "Let's Talk About It: Jewish

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Literature" reading, discussion series at La Jolla Library (7555 Draper Avenue). Focus on Cynthia Ozick's *Puttermesser Papers* on Wednesday, December 19, 6:30 p.m. Free. Registration: 619-236-5817. (LA JOLLA)

Multi-faith Community Sing-Along, Wednesday, December 19, 7 p.m., at Vision Center for Spiritual Living (11260 Clairemont Mesa Boulevard). Offering. 619-303-6609. (TIERRASANTA)

Holiday of Lights at Del Mar Fairgrounds is showcase of seasonal festive lights, with more than 350 holiday-themed displays on view through Tuesday, January 1. Visitors drive cars through fairgrounds to view displays.

Hours: 5:30-10 p.m. Sundays-Thursdays, 5:30 to 11 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays. Admission: \$13 per vehicle (up to five people), \$18 per vehicle with six or more people. 858-793-5555. (DEL MAR)

FOR KIDS

Hand and Rod Puppets sing and dance in *Cinderella*, presented by Puppet Express and Weaver's Tales through Sunday, December 16, in Marie Hitchcock Puppet Theater. Next up: *Magical, Musical Holiday* by comic ventriloquist Lynne Trimble. Shows begin at 10 and 11:30 a.m. Wednesday-Friday and at 11 a.m., 1, and 2:30 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday. Find theater at 2130 Pan American Place. Admission: \$3 for children, \$4 seniors, \$5 general. 619-544-9203. (BALBOA PARK)

National Cocoa Day is celebrated with cups of cocoa and tales spun by storyteller Harlynn Geisler, Thursday, December 13, 3:30 p.m., at Valley Center Library (29200 Cole Grade Road). Free. 760-749-1305. (VALLEY CENTER)

The Bare Necessities! The musical *Disney's The Jungle Book Kids* presented by J*Company Youth Theatre through December 16 at David and Dorothea Garfield Theatre, Lawrence Family Jewish Community Center (4126 Executive Drive). Performances begin at 7 p.m. on Thursday and Saturday, 1 and 4 p.m. on Sunday. Tickets: \$12.50 children, \$16.50 adults. Reservations: 858-362-1348. (LA JOLLA)

"A Christmas Carol" is presented by Pacific Children's Theatre through December 15 at Mission Hills United Church of Christ (4070 Jackdaw Street). Performances begin at 7 p.m. on Friday; 2 p.m. on Saturday. Tickets: \$10 adults, \$7 kids. 619-920-2838. (MISSION HILLS)

"Babes in Toyland," it's Christmas in Mother Goose Land, and wicked villain Barnaby wants to marry Mary, Quite Contrary and take over the world, but Mary and her friends have other plans. San Diego Junior Theatre South Bay actors tackle play through December 23, at Theatre on Third (250 3rd Avenue). Piece is based on 1903 operetta by Victor Herbert and Glen MacDonough.

Performances begin at 7 p.m. on Fridays, 2 and 4 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays. Tickets: \$10 adults, \$5 youths. 619-239-8355. (CHULA VISTA)

"The Velveteen Rabbit" is current production for La Jolla San Diego Junior Theatre, continuing through December 16 at Firehouse YMCA Community Center (7877 Herschel Avenue). Performances begin at 7 p.m. on Friday, at 2 and 4 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday. \$10-\$15. 619-239-8355. For all ages. (LA JOLLA)

The Japanese "Tsuru" (or crane) is "the most famous

origami form" — fold hanging crane ornaments when instructor Lisa Koide Halverson leads "Oh Boy! Origami!" class for kids 5-12 years old, Saturday, December 15, 10 a.m., at Japanese Friendship Garden. \$3. Materials, registration: 619-232-2780. (BALBOA PARK)

"A Whale of a Time," touch real whale baleen and enjoy whale story times, "interactions with whale biofacts," and more during family day activities, Saturday, December 15, 11 a.m.-3 p.m., at Birch Aquarium at Scripps (2300 Expedition Way). Included in regular aquarium admission. 858-534-7336. (LA JOLLA)

"Snowflakes" provide topic when Reuben H. Fleet Science Center hosts family science day, Saturday, December 15, noon-3 p.m. Participants "make a free science experiment" to take home. Included in regular admission. 619-238-1233. (BALBOA PARK)

Hullabaloo in Concert, Saturday, December 15, 4-5 p.m., at Java Mama (8250 La Mesa Boulevard). Free. 619-337-0012. (LA MESA)

Animal Tales Told, and crafts and animals are part of fun on Sunday, December 16, 1 p.m., at San Diego Humane Society and SPCA (5500 Gaines Street). \$3 per child. Reservations: 619-243-3432. (LINDA VISTA)

MUSEUMS

Campo Railroad Museum, showcasing more than 130 years of American railroad history and technology through static and operating exhibits, the museum includes cabooses, steam and diesel locomotives, track motorcars,

1880s "Jim Crow" segregated passenger cars.

Interpretive 90-minute train rides offered each weekend (11 a.m., 2:30 p.m.) over portion of the San Diego and Arizona Eastern Railway. Find the depot on Highway 94 at Forrest Gate Road. 619-465-7776. (CAMPO)

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

Leo Carrillo Ranch Historic Park, old adobe buildings were once vacation retreat and working rancho of actor Leo Carrillo. Tours on Saturdays (11 a.m., 1 p.m.) and Sundays (noon, 2 p.m.). Find Rancho de los Quiotes at 6200 Flying LC Lane. 760-476-1042. (CARLSBAD)

Museum of San Diego History, "Place of Promise: Stories of San Diego" lets visitors "literally walk on San Diego"; a map of county extends from wall to wall across the floor. Also featured in ongoing exhibit are two large 1930s murals by artist Charles Reiffel and a 1910 San Diego streetcar. Stories of San Diego are interpreted through images, artifacts, oral histories from society's collection. The museum is located in the Casa de Balboa building; 619-232-6203. (BALBOA PARK)

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Dataline for Men Seeking Women & Women Seeking Men

They Endured

Several San Diego pictures feature sailors.
They were the outsiders.

D Scott Atkinson, the San Diego Museum of Art's chief curator, tells the story that in 1997, shortly after coming on the job, while going through the museum's holdings he came on "good pictures by an artist I'd never heard of before," whose career would become the basis of *Everett Gee Jackson/San Diego Modern, 1920-1955*, currently on view at the museum. Mr. Atkinson began

his study of Jackson's work not only because the artist was local, having taught at San Diego State for many years, but because his work represented certain tweaks in the history of modernism. The exhibition is a sampler or digest, not a comprehensive retrospective. Jackson continued working until his death in 1995, but the show focuses on the period when he almost single-handedly brought into a North American idiom discoveries made south of the border.

Jackson, a country boy born in 1900 in the small town of Mexia in rural east Texas, went on to study at the Art Institute of Chicago. Although the early pictures anticipated what would become recurrent motifs in his major work — Texas cotton-pickers, indigenous peoples, African Americans, Mexico village scenes — Jackson followed the tracks impressionism laid down decades earlier and applied techniques he'd learned in Chicago, using color to create light, relying on wiggly, hyphenated brushwork and a clotted impasto. The most striking early picture, from 1923, is a portrait of a young black girl that avoids stereotyping and sentimentality. He was really looking at what was before him and managed to suggest with considerable subtlety the character trait Jackson admired in certain cultures, one that Faulkner summed up in his "Appendix" entry on the maidservant Dilsey in *The Sound and the Fury*: "They endured."

The most critical turn in Jackson's career came during a stay in Mexico from 1923 till 1927 when, while still making French-style pictures, he was eating up what Diego Rivera, David Alfaro Siqueiros, José Clemente Orozco, and other Mexican muralists were doing. What changed him? The muralists' painterly boldness obtained by sharp drawing played against florid, rotund color;

the illustrational, wall-poster quality appropriate to the murals' historical content (mostly associated with the Revolution, the peasantry, and ancient Meso-American history and myth); a flagrant political immediacy that managed to

avoid the grosser simplicities of social realism. Jackson's encounter with this art caused him not so much to change course as to reinvent himself as a kind of Tex-Mex easel muralist. One canvas in this smartly edited exhibition shows the change to breathtaking effect. Jackson's 1925 painting of a chapel in Guanajuato is conventionally postimpressionist and dull, but on the verso is a drawing of a young Mexican male, Indian, broad-nosed, heavy-lipped, with thick straight black hair. Flipping from the A to B side is like watching a conversion experience.

The change in vision and technique was so dramatic that halfway through the show you might look back over your shoulder to be sure you're looking at the same artist. The acute draftsmanship of the paintings Jackson began making in the late 1920s and through the 1930s, whether of Texan, Mexican, or San Diegan motifs, have a more audacious presence than the earlier work. (Several San Diego pictures feature sailors. We see mostly the backs of their heads: *they* were the outsiders.) The scale becomes more daring and monumental, the figuration iconic and heraldic. The looseness of the earlier work resolves into tight columnar forms that bulk into space but are flattened to look like stage sets. Jackson's exposure to the muralists freed him to create inflated, beefed-up figures and landscapes that have an electrified, fine-honed clarity — every roof ridge, sombrero rim, and maguey frond looks like an edge you could cut your finger on. And he makes the canvas a theatrical zone, a stylized space where stylized events occur. *Spring in Coyoacán*, which depicts solemn *campesinos* surrounded by soldierly, prickly vegetation, is loaded with cultural information — pottery, flora, native costume — but the tubular structures of bodies, stalks, and tree trunks, the visual rhyming of the man's waist sash with three orange rings around a nearby tree, the brambly foregrounding of branches bearing frail pink blossoms, are the vi-

sion of someone who has wed Continental modernism to a homemade expressiveness.

Sometimes an unfortunate drip of sanctimony curdles the pictures, especially when scenes become too stiffly ceremonialized. One gets the uncomfortable sense of a culture observed too much for its exotic texture and air. And yet Jackson can also turn liability into strength in a picture like *Zapotecas*. A peasant father returns to wife and child; painted in muted, fanned-out gray and white and tan, the trio are statuesque like icons but suffused with sympathy (with no political grandstanding) for their arduous way of life. Considerably looser, and among my favorite things in the show, are the few drawings, lithographs, and gouaches. Working on paper released a refreshing buoyancy in him. His pencil drawing of a Mayan stele from the ancient settlement at Copan and a gouache of a T'ang Dynasty horse are two of the best things on view. To those I'd add a silky still life of a silver-white pitcher from 1955 that closes the exhibition and shows how Jackson continued to explore new forms and subjects.

* * *

If you're keen on animation of any kind, whether based on traditional drawing, digital imaging, or live-action drama (or if, like me, you've seen *A Scanner Darkly* three times), don't miss the San Diego Museum of Art's *Animated Painting*, which features 25 works-with-moving-parts by 14 international contemporaries such as William Kentridge, Julian Opie, Jeremy Blake, Sebastián Díaz Morales, and Kota Ezawa. There are as many different kinds of hybrid creations here as there are artists, and we're not talking about strip panels brought to life. Some of the effects on display



Spring in San Diego, 1931, Everett Gee Jackson

Everett Gee Jackson/San Diego Modern, 1920-1955
San Diego Museum of Art, 1450 El Prado, Balboa Park
Through Sunday, January 27, 2008. For additional information, call 619-232-7931.

Animated Painting is at the same museum till Sunday, January 13, 2008.

are dazzling. Jeremy Blake, for instance, streams mesmeric digital abstractions on a plasma screen that swell and wash and pulse in a kind of sine-curve rhythm — it's animated color field painting.

Animated Painting is ample, slightly nutty, and a rush — serious and fanciful. The two artists I want to single out are Opie, whose brisk LED film boxes of strolling people mounted outside the museum are as trendy as it gets (I don't mean that as derogatory), but they are also as traditional as Aristotle's notion that art imitates life; the difference is that we feel these walking figures are *among* us, a traffic-stopping riff on, say, the lions outside the portals of the Art Institute in Chicago (which this time of year must forebear bright Christmas wreaths yoked about their

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Sailor Take Care, 1934, Everett Gee Jackson

necks). Inside, there's a fat outline of a swaggering woman (*Suzanne Walking Forwards*) that Opie created with a computer drawing program — he usually blends photos of actual people with stock footage — installed so that just behind her, in the adjoining gallery of permanent holdings, we see a statue of the goddess Sri Devi from the museum's Indian collection. Religious significance aside, there's a direct line tying one to the other; they're sinuous, expressive of their age, and sensuous.

In the same room is a remarkable work, *Tide Table*, by William Kentridge, pieces of which I've seen elsewhere. Since 1989 he has been making a series of animated films called *Drawings for Projection*. He has devised his own medium for storytelling: he makes pencil drawings, videotapes them, then alters by erasing and redrawing the same images and shooting those, too: the result is an edited story where as yet unexplained episodes and scenes decompose then re-compose themselves, are shredded then reshaped, or, like the tide, encroach and

withdraw from our vision. It doesn't proceed with still frames strung into seamless continuous action. Kentridge's scenes in *Tide Table* — a self-confidant, fat-cat businessman with the fictional name Soho Eckstein leans on a balcony, sits on a beach reading a newspaper, cows appear, kids dig with sand shovels, the tide ebbs and flows — morph in unsettling, utterly unpredictable ways. Kentridge, born in South Africa in 1955 to a liberal family, enfolds political imagery (*Drawings for Projection* has been explosively political from the start) into his apparently serene story. Junta-type generals are seen on a balcony similar to the businessman's, and Kentridge's very methods seem to have a kind of corruption built into them. Talk is cheap, especially talk about how art sometimes seems like runoff from the dream life. Kentridge's moving (in every sense) pictures have their own enveloping, mysterious dream logic, though as storytelling *Tide Table* looks fragmented, incomplete, and vague. He makes an art of how events spill untidily through time. ■



Spring in Coyoacán, ca. 1926, Everett Gee Jackson

ART LISTINGS

Events that are underlined occur after December 20.

HOW TO SEND US YOUR LISTING: 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 **READER EVENTS**, Box 85803, San Diego CA 92186. Or fax to 619-881-2401. You may also submit information online at SanDiegoReader.com by clicking on the events section.

GALLERIES

"Personal Encounters" by Karen Rhiner is featured at San Diego Art Institute: Museum of the Living Artist through Sunday, January 13, along with "Outstanding Visual Artists" of the region selected

by Aida Mancillas, and youth art by Viejas Native American School students. Meet artists during reception, Friday, December 14, 6 p.m. 619-236-0011. (BALBOA PARK)

"The Antarctic Peninsula" and "Reflections" — imagery from two portfolios by Abe Ordovery may be viewed through Sunday, January 13, at Ordovery Gallery (444 South Cedros Avenue, studio 172). Reception slated for Thursday, December 20, 6 p.m. In addition, see

work by Lew Abulafia, Sharon Anthony, John D. Clark, Donna Cosentino, Peter Fay, Art Myers, Lisa Ross, Jennifer Saracino, Tom O Scott, Blake Shaw Lisa Smith. 858-720-1121. (SOLANA BEACH)

ART MUSEUMS

California Center for the Arts Museum, "Rituality" features contemporary works from ten local artists alongside traditional artifacts from Africa, Native North America, the Pacific Islands. Exhibition examines role of ritual in exploration of identity, creation of community, construction of power, as mediated and expressed through art.

"Niki de Saint Phalle: A Spiritual Path" offers a closer look at de Saint Phalle's spiritual journey, her interpretation of traditional tarot cards. "Is the tarot pack only a game of cards, or is there a philosophy behind it?"

Fifty-four individual paintings by Teresa Villegas are gathered in "La Lotería: An Exploration of Mexico." Artwork draws upon Mexican traditions, historical figures, food, popular culture.

"The Poetics of Myth" features a series of bas-relief terra-cotta panels by Brad Burkhart, focusing "on the creation of modern myths and archetypes."

Each of these exhibits continues through Sunday, January 27.

The museum is located at 340 North Escondido Boulevard; 760-839-4120. (ESCONDIDO)

Mingei International Museum — North County, "Paper Transformed," exhibition made up of "Crowning Glory — From Paper Bag Hats by Moses" and "Origami — The Art of Paper Folding" from Mingei's permanent collection continues through



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Calendar

ART

Saturday, December 29. For “Crowning Glory,” Moses created more than 250 hats from paper bags contributed by merchants in his Hawaiian neighborhood. “Origami” boasts nearly 100 examples of traditional and contemporary paper folding; exhibition honors acclaimed local paper folder, author, teacher Florence Temko. Find the museum at 155 West Grand Avenue. 760-735-3355. (ESCONDIDO)

Mingei International Museum, “Craft in America: Expanding Traditions” surveys more than 200 works, spanning a period of nearly 200 years. Handcrafted furniture, ceramics, fiber and textiles, basketry, glass, wood, jewelry, metalwork are showcased. Closes Sunday, January 27.

Also on view: “American Viewing Stones: Natural Art in an Asian Tradition.” Chinese connoisseurs began using large stones to decorate gardens, courtyards during the Han Dynasty (206 B.C.–A.D. 220); “Scholar’s Rocks” is English name most commonly used for these items. American viewing stone collecting began with first- and second-generation Japanese-Americans who continued traditions of bonsai and *suiseki*.

The “Chinese Woodblock Prints in the Style of the Ten Bamboo Studio” are likely from a 19th-Century edition of *Treatise on Calligraphy and Painting of the Ten Bamboo Studio*. Prints are noteworthy for technique of printing using multiple blocks. Both exhibits close on Sunday, December 30.

Masterworks from permanent collection are gathered in “The Beauty of Use — Mingei International Museum at 30,” showcasing significant objects from many cultures shown in relationships highlighting similarities and differences among them. Museum has formed a collection of *mingei* now comprising 17,000 objects from 141 countries such as collection of 19th-Century African tribal currency, group of masks including example of Amazonian feather work, ritual objects, selection of monumental containers. Closes Sunday, May 11. The Mingei is located on square with San Diego Museum of Art. 619-239-0003. (BALBOA PARK)

Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego, Downtown, “Robert Irwin: Primaries and Secondaries” is “the largest exhibition of renowned artist...Irwin’s work since 1993.” Exhibit features five new major installation works created specifically for MCASD’s galleries, is drawn almost exclusively of works from museum’s collection. Closes Sunday, April 13. Find the museum at 1001 and 1100 Kettner Boulevard (at Broadway), directly across from the Santa Fe Railroad Depot. 858-454-3541. (DOWNTOWN)

Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego, La Jolla, “Soundwaves: The Art of Sampling” examines “a specifically late 20th-Century manifestation of the conjunction of art and sound,” showcases works by artists including Tim Bavington, Helen Cohen, Sean Duffy, T. Kelly Mason, Alyce Santoro, others. Through Sunday, December 30.

“Cerca Series: Iana Quesnell,” also closing on December 30, “investigates nomadism and temporary living situations.” See several new large-scale drawings and an animation responding to artist’s binational life between San Diego and Tijuana.

Find the museum at 700 Prospect Street. 858-454-3541. (LA JOLLA)

Museum of Photographic Arts, “Picturing Eden,” continuing through Sunday, January 13, examines “many facets of paradise, from a place of contemplation and restoration to a site of loneliness and despair.” Exhibition includes work by more than 30 artists, including Michael Kenna, Sally Mann, Han Nguyen, and Doug and Mike Starn.

“Public Privacy: Wendy Richmond’s Surreptitious Cellphone” is said to explore “how 20th-Century Americans occupy personal spaces while going about their daily lives in the public eye.” Richmond allows viewers to observe people in mundane routines by shooting tiny movies on her cell-phone video camera. Closes Sunday, January 6.

Also on view through January 6, “New Light: Selections from MoPA’s Education Programs,” including photographic and multimedia pieces by more than 60 San Diego students.

Find the museum in the Casa de Balboa building, at 1649 El Prado. 619-238-7559. (BALBOA PARK)

San Diego Museum of Art, “Everett Gee Jackson/San Diego Modern, 1920-1955,” is retrospective of “San Diego’s most important Modernist artist.” Exhibit featuring more than 50 works

spanning most significant and productive decades of artist’s career “presents a representative range of Jackson’s multifaceted work, while contextualizing Jackson within the broader scope of mid-20th Century American modernism.” Closes Sunday, January 27.

“Animated Painting,” continuing through Sunday, January 13, boasts “25 cinematic works by 14 international contemporary artists who adapt traditional painting and drawing methods to the concepts and technologies of animation.” Participating artists include the Barnstormers, Sadie Benning, Jeremy Blake, Sebastián Díaz Morales, Kota Ezawa, Ruth Gómez, William Kentridge, Ann Lislegaard, Takeshi Murata, Serge Onnen, Julian Opie, Wit Pimkanchanapong, Qiu Anxiong, and Robin Rhode.

“Josef Albers and His Students: Theory and Practice,” opening Saturday, December 15, and closing Sunday, March 2, presents four prints by master artist, color theorist, teacher Josef Albers. Display features works by four of his American students — Richard Anuszkiewicz, Robert Birmelin, Robert Rauschenberg, Audrey Flack — with each work corresponding to one of Albers’ prints.

“Image Makers and Rule Breakers: French Art, 1860-1960,” continuing through Sunday, January 20, highlights museum’s depth in mid-19th- through mid-20th-Century French painting and sculpture. Exhibition “presents two parallel tracks of artistic experimentation: one following the landscape tradition and the other figurative art. It examines how these different paths both progressed towards abstraction.” Close to 30 works are on view, including Bouguereau’s *Young Shepherdess* and pieces by Monet, Toulouse-Lautrec, Renoir, Degas, others.

“Lyric Visions from Nezami’s *Quintet*” includes more than 20 paintings created for or inspired by Nezami’s texts, “among the most celebrated and influential poetic works in all of Persian literature.” Paintings range in date from 15th to 20th Centuries. Closes Sunday, December 16.

For further information, call 619-232-7931. (BALBOA PARK)

Timken Museum of Art, “Drawn to Rome: French Neoclassical Sketchbooks and Prints” explores sketches and prints by young French painters and architects who studied in Rome. Work by these artists “helped spark a revival in classical aesthetics that transformed 18th-Century French art.” Closes Sunday, January 13.

Permanent collection includes European old master paintings, 18th- and 19th-Century American paintings, and Russian icons. *Saint Bartholomew*, the only Rembrandt painting on public display in San Diego, is featured. 619-239-5548. (BALBOA PARK)

CLASSICAL LISTINGS

Events that are underlined occur after December 20.

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held (including neighborhood), a contact phone number, and a phone number (including area code) for public information to READER CLASSICAL MUSIC, Box 85803, San Diego CA 92186. Or fax to 619-881-2401. You may also submit information online at SanDiegoReader.com by clicking on the events section.

CLASSICAL

Gian Carlo Menotti’s *Amahl and the Night Visitors* presented by Lyric Opera San Diego at Stephen and Mary Birch North Park Theatre (2891 University Avenue). Menotti’s tale tells of journey of three kings and crippled boy who wants to bring a gift to Bethlehem; it was first performed December 24, 1951. Priti Gandhi has role of the mother, marking her professional debut as a soprano, as she has sung almost entirely in mezzo-soprano repertoire. Performances include festival of Christmas carols, visit from Santa Claus.

Curtain rises at 7:30 p.m. Friday, Saturday, and Thursday, December 14, 15, and 20; with 2:30 p.m. matinees on Sunday, December 16, and Saturday and Sunday, December 22 and 23. Tickets: \$30–\$50; half-price for those 5–17 (no children under five admitted). 619-239-8836. (NORTH PARK)

“Messiah (Part I) Sing-Along” promised Friday, December 14, 7:30 p.m., in Founders Chapel at University of San Diego (5998 Alcalá Park). USD Symphony uses Mozart’s orchestration on Handel’s masterwork. “Bring your own score, or borrow one at the door.” Donation. 619-260-4171. (LINDA VISTA)

“The Gospel Messiah” — Quincy Jones’s contemporary version of the 1741 oratorio performed, Friday, December 14, 7:30 p.m., at Community Bible Church (9770 Carroll Center Road). Tickets: 858-549-7729. (MIRA MESA)

“Antiphons, Lessons, and Carols — A Christmas Story” presented by combined choirs of Immaculate Conception Church and St. Mary Magdalene Church on December 15 and 16. Enjoy concerts on Saturday at Immaculate Conception (2540 San Diego Avenue) and on Sunday at St. Mary Magdalene Church (1945 Illion Street). Concerts begin at 3 p.m. Free. 619-276-1041. (OLD TOWN, BAY PARK)

“Candles Anew,” 31st annual “Candlelight Musical Meditation” concerts presented Saturday and Sunday, December 15 and 16, 7:30 p.m., at Mission Basilica San Diego de Alcalá (10818 San Diego Mission Road). Mission Basilica San Diego de Alcalá Choir and Classic Brass, soloists, readers, perform readings and music celebrating season. Offering. 619-283-7319. (MISSION GORGE)

“Christmas by Candlelight” presented by MiraCosta College’s Chamber Chorale, Camerata Singers, and Frequency Vocal Jazz Ensemble on Saturday, December 15, 7:30 p.m., in student center on MiraCosta College campus (One Barnard Drive). \$17 tickets include dessert. Suggested reservations: 760-795-6815. (OCEANSIDE)

“Classical Favorites and Holiday Moments” — MiraCosta

College’s North Coast Symphony Orchestra performs December 15 and 16 in MiraCosta College Theatre (One Barnard Drive). Concerts begin at 7:30 p.m. on Saturday, 2 p.m. on Sunday. \$10. 760-795-6815. (OCEANSIDE)

Vivaldi’s “Gloria” promised during concerts by Palomar Symphony Orchestra and Palomar Chorale, December 15 and 16, in Howard Brubeck Theatre at Palomar College (1140 West Mission Road). Concerts begin at 8 p.m. on Saturday, 2 p.m. on Sunday. \$12 general. 760-744-1150 x2453. (SAN MARCOS)

Organ Concert by civic organist Carol Williams in Spreckels Organ Pavilion, Sunday, December 16, 2 p.m. Free. 619-702-8138. (BALBOA PARK)

Hallelujah! Seasonal “Messiah” sing-along hosted by La Jolla Symphony and Chorus, Sunday, December 16, 4 p.m., at St. Elizabeth Seton Catholic Church (6628 Santa Isabel Street). \$15 general. Reservations: 858-534-4637. (LA COSTA)

Handel’s “Messiah” performed by San Diego Chamber Orchestra and conductor Jung-Ho Pak on Sunday, December 16, 4 p.m., at California Center for the Arts, Escondido (340 North Escondido Boulevard). Tickets: \$21–\$32. 800-988-4253. (ESCONDIDO)

Holiday Concert by Solana Intimate Ensemble, Sunday, December 16, at Californiae Foundation for International Global Arts (Galerie d’Art International, 320 South Cedros Avenue, suite 500). Eight vocal soloists accompanied by pianist Janie Prim tackle selections by Menotti, J.S. Bach, William Walton, Franz Tunder, others. Reception at 3:30 p.m., concert at 4 p.m., Christmas party at 5:30 p.m. Tickets: \$20 in advance, \$23 at door. Recommended reservations: 858-793-0316. (SOLANA BEACH)

Julian Community Choir presents its version of Handel’s “Messiah,” Sunday, December 16, 7 p.m., in Julian Town Hall (2129 Main Street). Free. 760-765-1857. (JULIAN)

Music by Broca, Mudarra, Milan, Narváez, and Sor may be heard when classical guitarist Robert Wetzel plays Monday, December 17, 6:30 p.m., at Mission Valley Library (2123 Fenton Parkway). Free. 858-573-5007. (MISSION VALLEY)

Holiday Pops! Enjoy the season musically when San Diego Symphony led by Matthew Garbutt is joined by Mariachi Champana Nevin, soprano Monica Abrego, San Diego Civic Youth Ballet, and San Diego Master Chorale for concerts, December 19–22. Program includes new Hanukkah piece composed by Marvin Hamlich. Concerts begin at 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday and Thursday; 8 p.m. on Friday; 2 and 8 p.m. on Saturday (\$20–\$80).

Family Festival Pops concert (with abbreviated program from the evening shows) and visit from Santa and Mrs. Claus, Sunday, December 23, 2 p.m. (\$15, \$25 general, \$10 for kids). All concerts take place in Copley Symphony Hall, 750 B Street. Reservations: 619-235-0804. (DOWNTOWN)

Jaden Needs Our Help



Jaden was born on June 25, 2007, as what we thought was a very healthy baby boy. At 3 months, Jaden was having difficulty with digesting his food. Upon taking him to his pediatrician, Jaden was thought to have Acid Reflux. It wasn’t until two months later that we found out that Jaden has a fatal disease called Krabbes.

Currently, Jaden is in North Carolina awaiting treatment at Duke University. However, Jaden can’t receive the medical treatment he needs without our help.

Jaden will need extensive medical treatments to help with the pain of this terrible disease. As we race forward with hope for a cure, help us keep baby Jaden at the forefront of the medical doctors who may be able to give him life.

Without your donations, we can’t help Jaden.

Savingjaden.com

Golf Tournament for Jaden:
Thursday, Dec. 13, 11 am
San Marcos Country Club

Calendar

MUSIC SCENE

The Reader offers \$25 for news tips published in *Blurt*. Call us at 619-235-3000, ext. 456, or e-mail your tip to blurt@sdreader.com

Back from the Dark Side “It’s cool if you’re a punk rocker and you have to walk with a cane, but if you’re just doing it for looks,

minutes struggling to “peel my leg off the pole” to get to the phone that was on the floor of the cab.

“My leg was like an accordion. It was broken in six different places. I had a compound fracture. My bone was coming out of the skin. I waited about an hour and a half. They couldn’t find the

the other direction. My girlfriend Hayley was told that I would probably not get out of surgery with my leg.... But a great surgeon happened

Too Much Passion The Escondido recording studio that played a role in the careers of New Found Glory, Unwritten Law, blink-182,



BLINK-182, WHEN THEY WERE YOUNGER

blurt

the inside track

like the Droogs from *Clockwork Orange*, it’s kind of played out.”

Shot Out Hoods front man Dave Hood has used a cane since an accident in the summer of 2006.

“I was towing [cars]. I fell asleep at the wheel. I was in a

address....

“It was the first time in my life I was in an accident that I wasn’t on drugs. The first person to greet me [in the wreckage] was a sheriff deputy. Here I am, laying there dying, and he says, ‘Here you go, dude. Blow in

to be working at four in the morning — Rina Jain, MD, saved my leg.”

Launched in 1995, the Shot Out Hoods have opened for the Dead Kennedys, the Dickies, the Exploited, Fear, and the Adolescents. The band played from 1995 to 2003. (“Until I had to go away for a while,” says Hood.) The band’s reputation for being composed of “devil-worshipping, satanic, heroin-addicted junkies” was due to Hood’s perspective and lyrics. His most famous stunt may have been when he doused a Bible with lighter fluid, lit it on fire, and threw it into the crowd at the Sports Arena.

“I liked the darker side. I switched over, but I still sing about the same stuff. I didn’t change my lyrics; you just can’t change your lyrics to the songs.”

He says the Shot Out Hoods reunion planned for next week is the first since 2004. They appear December 22 at Brick by Brick.

— Ken Leighton

and Ike Turner closed its doors last month.

In 1989, New Yorker Don Lithgow founded DML Studios in downtown Escondido. Seven years ago he moved DML to the industrial park near Highway 78 and I-15. Last month he packed up his equipment and moved everything to his home in Murrieta so he could be closer to his kids. He says he will still record bands.

“The landscape of the business has changed drastically in the last ten years,” says Lithgow, 47. “It’s very affordable now for musicians to record themselves. They can buy an MBox for \$500 and record their songs at home. Big studios that have cost millions and millions of dollars have gone by the wayside. The Hit Factory in New York closed down, and it’s condos now....

“In the ’80s and ’90s, the big issue was being able to find a room to record in. You couldn’t get a room because

there was such a demand. Today I see these studio guys at clubs, hitting up bands, trying to get business.”

Lithgow says he started working with blink-182 “...when they were still just known as blink. When they were still going to Poway High School.”

As the band’s sound man, Lithgow says he did dozens of lousy gigs in back yards and coffee shops. Eventually, manager Rick DeVoe entered the picture, and the band soon became successful.

“The best musician ever was Ike Turner. Tommy Lee beats up Pamela Anderson, and he sells a million records. Ike had a hard time after that movie [*What’s Love Got to Do with It?*]. The people are the losers here because they didn’t get to hear a lot of incredible music Ike had written.”

— Ken Leighton

Beach Club Blues

“Canes in San Diego’s Mission Beach is right on the boardwalk.” So begins the SD entry in a Band of Horses “Road Log” story in the last issue of *Filter* magazine. “It’s a fairly disgusting place on multiple levels, and during soundcheck, a bachelorette party comprising five huge women wearing Mardi Gras masks and clutching penis-shaped water bottles wanders through the room.... Things could get a little ugly.” Writer Pat McGuire found his fears justified during the July 6 gig.

“The San Diego crowd is not good. The place is packed, but I’d guess that

merely half of the people here have heard the band’s music before, and the room is filled with annoying chatter in between and even during the songs. The sound isn’t mixed well, and Ben [Birdwell, singer] is visibly irritated.

“After the requisite whistles and cell phone camera flashes during ‘Funeral,’ he goes on a little tirade about how the crowd is only here to ‘boost You Tube profiles’ and is ‘not even looking at the band.’ It’s not very professional, sure, but at the same time, I see where Ben’s coming from. In the dressing room before the encore, everyone is frustrated, complaining about the shittiness of it all.”



ALL MAKE ROOM FOR PRINCE

Before 3105 Ocean Front Walk in Mission Beach became ‘Canes, various local bands had lousy experiences at the venue.

Deadbolt played the club when it was known as Chillers in the mid-’90s. Annoyed with the crowd’s



PHOTOGRAPH BY DEREK PLANK

NOT SO SHOT OUT (THE HOODS)

rural part of Spring Valley. This pole went right through the engine compartment. It missed the engine and impaled my leg. I was bleeding to death.”

Hood says he spent 20

this Breathalyzer.’ When it came up negative, he says, ‘Okay, it’s negative.’ And then all the sheriffs drive off.”

Hood, 32, was taken to Grossmont Hospital.

“My foot was pointed in

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Calendar
MUSIC SCENEblurt
continued

indifference and drunken heckling, front man Harley Davidson shot back at one patron, "At least I didn't pay six dollars for a fuckin' Slurpee, asshole." (A reference to the club's signature slushy drinks.)

Earlier in the '90s, there was the time aMiniature opened up for the long-washed-up Bay City Rollers, the Scottish glam-pop band of the '70s; management hassled aMiniature for daring to cover Rollers music in their set.

In April of 1997, a year after new ownership changed the name to 'Canes, promoter Bill Silva held a Prince after-show charity event at the club, charging \$20 admission. (Silva had promoted Prince's show earlier that evening at UCSD's RIMAC arena.) Problem was, other patrons had already paid to see a different show Silva had booked there: Built to Spill, Modest Mouse, and Thingy (Rob Crow's pre-Pinback band).

The show started and ended early, with only Thingy playing a full set. People were herded out the door just after 10 p.m. Some were told by club personnel they could reenter for free if they lined up outside with everybody else — not true. The touring bands were furious. Crow was almost assaulted by bouncers when he lingered on the dance floor, gyrating in suggestive lambada moves, his shirt off, stroking his hairy nipples.

— David Stampone

Alpine to Rock? Liar's Club regulars and employees found the Mission Beach bar and restaurant closed on November 21. A liquor-license-suspension notice was posted on the front of the building. A state Alcohol Beverage Control board (ABC) spokesman says the suspension was mandated by the State Board of Equalization because of unpaid taxes.

"Basically they say, 'If you're not gonna pay us what you owe us, then we will make it so you can't make any money,'" says an ABC employee. He says that suspensions precipitated by unpaid taxes are not that unusual and about ten such suspensions are ordered in the county each year. The employee says the suspension is "indefinite" and in effect until the taxes are paid.

The Liar's Club's wide selection of microbrews and a popular jukebox have helped the bar thrive on Mission Boulevard for seven years. Attempts to reach owner Louis Mello were not successful.

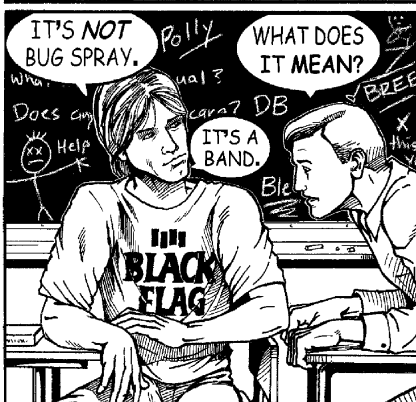
Al Guerra, host of the 91X local-music program *Loudspeaker*, has broadcast a number of his shows from the Liar's Club. Guerra says the recent news has no impact on his plans to open a bar/café/music venue in Alpine with Mello called the Liar's Club Tavern and Grill. Guerra, a resident of Alpine, says he plans to showcase many of the local bands he plays on his radio show.

He scoffs at skeptics who suggest an original-music venue would struggle in Alpine. "There's more places to play live music than just North Park. We are only a mile away from Viejas."

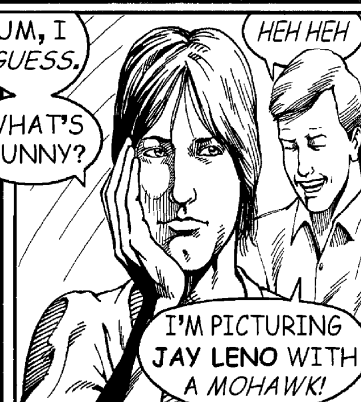
— Ken Leighton

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Instantly Almost Famous Hundreds of Placebo fans submitted video of themselves lip-synching to the band's cover of Kate



NOW THAT'S A VIDEO FACE (HOFER)

Bush's "Running Up That Hill." The band made a video consisting of fan-made clips. Local singer/songwriter Roberta Hofer's work was included among that of approximately a dozen videographers.

"It seemed pretty unlikely to actually make it into their video," she says. "I submitted quite a few versions. I wasn't sure what the directors were

looking for. Did they want us outside or inside, happy or sad? I tried out different locations.... I filmed cellar versions, river versions, and an inside version, too."

On the day the finished video debuted online, Hofer didn't know whether any of her clips had been chosen.

"I think it took until after midnight before the video was finally put on their MySpace page.... I was calling friends, telling my family, watching it again and again.... Right after it was online, a friend of mine who lives in South America texted me. She was, like, 'Gosh, it sounds weird, but I could swear it's you in there.' It was funny to get that reaction, just minutes after it was online, from thousands of miles away."

Hofer is recording an album under the working title *Bathroom Demos*. The video of "Running Up That Hill" — uploaded to YouTube and featuring a still of Hofer on the screencap — has been played over 482,000 times.

— Jay Allen Sanford

They Never Called Him Mello Jello Nearly 22 years ago — on 12/15/85, the Dead Kennedys played one of

their final shows with original singer Jello Biafra at downtown's California Theatre. As the set wrapped up, fans tore up the seats and pulled curtains down from walls, causing police to call out a riot squad, though officers stayed outside the building until the crowd

a show promoted by future Casbah owner Tim Mays (tickets: \$5). Outside the venue, Mexican police arrested several San Diegans "for no apparent reason," according to newspaper columnist George Varga.

After the Dead Kennedys, the California Theatre



...AND THEN A RIOT BEGAN? SHOCKING! (BIAFRA)

dispersed on its own. The 15-song set included tunes off their newest album *Frankenchrist*, as well as "Triumph of the Swill," "Police Truck," and the encore, "Holiday in Cambodia."

The next night, the band performed at Tijuana's Teatro Casa de la Cultura, in

banned punk shows. After the Tijuana concert, the band with Biafra played three more times before calling it quits.

— Jay Allen Sanford

CONTRIBUTORS

William Crain, Dave Good, Larry Harmon, Michael Hemmingson, Ken Leighton, Ryan Loyko, Bart Mendoza, Derek Plank, Eric Rife, Jay Allen Sanford, David Stampone

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This Week In Music

Thursday 13

When guitarist Billy Zoom retired from L.A. punk pioneers X, John Doe and Exene Cervenka enlisted Dave Alvin of the Blasters. Alvin brought roots rock to a punk-rock affair, and the **Knitters** were born. Primarily a live act, the Knitters have been weaving rockabilly and cowpunk for 25 years, though you wouldn't know it to look at the catalogue of two discs, both of which are eclectic collections of covers — everything from acoustic X to country standards (with a dash of overdrive). Catch up with the all-star act tonight at Belly Up.... Seattle flannel jammers the **Melvins** close out a two-night stop at Casbah tonight. King Buzzo, Dale, and cohorts **Big Business** promise fan fave *Houdini* (1993) in its entirety. They covered a KISS song on that one.... Continuing their LLLove Campaign, the alliterative **Long Live Logos** get their game on at San Diego Sports Club, with **Frantic Romantic** and the **Predicates**.... Sweat and estrogen fly at Bar Pink

Elephant where **Squiddo** will rock their Joan Jett vibe and



THE KNITTERS AT BELLY UP

Wild Weekend retool the Zeros.... Couple three more mentionables: **Mannheim Steamroller** roll holiday rock through the Sports Arena (have fun, Mom).... Aussie singer/songwriter **Ben Lee** and opens the **Cary Brothers** (L.A.) drop pop on House of Blues.... And reggae dub daddy **Earl Zero** hits the beach, where Jah rules 'Canes. **Roots Covenant** and **Dash Eye** will open.

Friday 14

Fabulous Thunderbird **Kim Wilson** rocks his harmonica at Winston's in O.B. The bluesman blows harder than anybody hitting 300-plus dates a year. And dude can sing a song.... SD's indie-rock cream

of the crop **Vision of a Dying World** and the **Sess** pair up at Tower Bar. Both bands'll have new e.p.s under their arms. Don't be shy.... Over at Ken Club, it's a psych-pop affair. **Red Pony Clock** touts debut *God Made Dirt*, on which the ten-piece wraps indie



IMPERIAL TEEN AT CASBAH

pop in brassy tropicalia. They'll split the bill with psych-folk faves the **Donkeys**.... **Throw Rag** wanders in from Salton City to visit hardcore on a Casbah crowd. Is that a Jew's harp on "Swingset Superman"? **Hitchhikers** and **Screamin' Yeehaws** open up.... L.A. blues beauty **Janiva Magness** graces Anthology. Her '06 debut, *Do I Move You?*, rocked the blues world, garnering Magness Best Contemporary Female Artist and nominations for Best Album of the Year and Best Contemporary Blues Album of the Year. Go to her website and read her backstory, you'll see why baby sings the blues.... *Welcome to oblivion!* Pride of Poway **Unwritten Law** checks in at House of Blues. Law's latest was a "best of" deal called *The Hit List*.

Saturday 15

Imperial Teen brings *The Hair the TV the Baby & the Band* to Casbah Saturday night, when the Bay Area quartet lays out its latest collection of quirk pop. The Teens' debut *Seasick* (1996) remains their high waterboy, er, watermark. Never see that one in the remainders bin. These could be the sets of the week with Los Angelino acts **Midnight Movies** and **Loverlee** in support.... Check out the rock 'n' roll smorgasbord at RIMAC: **Queens of the Stone Age**, **Pinback**, **Louis XIV**, and **Rogue Wave**. All four food groups.... In 2005, San Diego alt-rock band **My American Heart** won the Ernie Ball Battle of the Bands, securing the five-piece a spot on '05's Warped Tour and a record deal with Warcon. This year, the Hearts released follow-up *Hiding inside the Horrible Weather*. They'll finish up their "Love California" tour Saturday night at Mira Mesa's all-age Epicentre with **A Change of Pace**, **Everybody**

Else, and the **White Tie**.... Speaking of Epicentre, guitarist **Mike Keneally** will be up there playing a couple "Best of the '90s" afternoon sets Saturday and Sunday at 1p in support of the Paul Green School of Rock Music.... Fright-rock-ers **Deadbolt** and the **Nightmares** will expose Ken Club to the lighter side of goth.... While noiseniks **Hostile**

Combover debunk the Alibi with **Cabron** and **Tijuana Knife Fight**.... Looks like classic-rock guitarist **Dave Mason** sold out the main floor at Anthology. Upstairs tix still available.... And for all you guitar junkies, **Tecolote Guitar Works** on Morena opens a guitar art show Saturday that'll run through February 1. Go to the website ([tecoloteguitarworks](http://tecoloteguitarworks.com)) for a preview.

Sunday 16

Slim pickins Sunday, unless you're into the **Mar Dels'** doo-wop and dance thing. The party band will perform a Christmas show at Belly Up.... Local pianist **Mikan Zlatkovich** will play a free tribute to jazz-fusionist Joe Zawinul (Cannonball Adderley, Miles Davis, Weather Report) at Anthology.... L.A. three-piece **Heard** drive it down to Zombie Lounge for a preview of '08 alt-rock release *Have You Heard?*... There's always **Jose Sinatra's O.B.-o-ke** joint Sunday nights at Winston's. Fun runs from after football till last call.

Monday 17

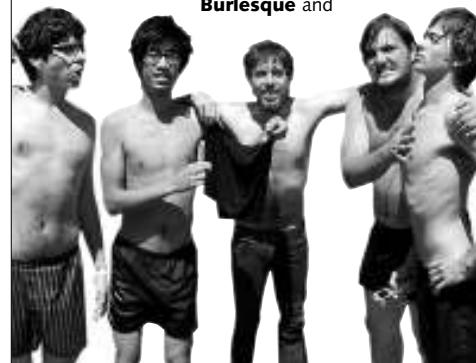
Bar Pink Elephant's staging a Monday nighter with **MEX** — that's the Mario Escovedo Experience. The ex-Dragon's propping borderland rock and blues for the two-step stomp set. Accordion solo!... Down at Casbah, the Anti-Monday League presents "Haunted Holiday" sets by the **Nightmares**, the **Satanic Puppeteer Orchestra**, and **Cankles**. The Satanic Puppeteers are Prof. B. Miller on all manner of electronica and his SPO-20 robot rocking the mike. Apparently their '07 debut is a four-CD box set. Check out their MySpace page for a taste of S.P.O.'s kitsch glitch.... Scolar's Office continues its **Trivia Night**. First and third Mondays, teams of five post a \$5 buy-in and winners take all. Categories, you ask? The usual: "Name that Mustache, *Simpsons* Trivia, Name that Monophonic Ringtone, Things You Should Have Learned in High School."

Tuesday 18

The folk joke fell flat in 1999, when '90s novelty act **Carnivorous Lunar Activity's** Steve Foth was murdered. But leave it to his band brothers Dennis Borlek and Sam Chammas to keep his memory alive. The remaining Lunars will rise over Casbah for their annual reunion gig. **Royal Campaign** also on the bill.... Supper club Anthology will host a benefit for victims of this year's wildfires called "Back to the Garden." The event features **Cactus Twang**, **Eve Selis**, **Berkley Hart**, **Peter Boland**, and **Tim Flannery** performing "a tribute to the music and era of Crosby, Stills, Nash, and Young."

Wednesday 19

This week it was locals the **Lanterns** that pricked up my ears. The frantic fuzz and sting of the quartet's post-core tunes smack of Les Savy Fav, which the band name checks on their MySpace page. None of the vocal theatrics of Tim Harrington, just good, clean noise-rock and canny vox. Catch 'em at the Ché Wednesday night, as it looks like they're heading north for a while. **Snuffalufagus**, **Brian Warren**, and **Moon Current** also on the bill.... Gary Shuffler's annual birthday circus is at Casbah, and he's pulling out his **Ziggy Shuffledust** stuff and getting positively Bowie. The former Honey Glaze frontman will be 87 this year. **Sultry Savage Burlesque** and



THE LANTERNS AT CHÉ CAFÉ

Tragic Tantrum share the stage, and **Bartender's Bible** will set up in the Atari Lounge.... Round North Park you got L.A. hard-beat nu-wavers **Funeral Party** at Beauty Bar and acousticat **Ryan Tennis** at the new U-31 club.

— Barnaby Monk

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Daily Rant

"I hope it's a long lunch, 'cause I have a long list of things to cover with Dubya."

When it comes to politics, sometimes I get a bit carried away," says singer/songwriter and activist Bill Farkas. "I started 'The Daily Rant,' my political blog, in September 2004. I added the Activists' Forum soon after. This is where all social and political causes can cross-pollinate their calls to action, like petition signing and fundraising."

Since November 2006, Farkas has provided message boards for political candidates to spread their message online. "We support things like global-warming awareness, campaigns for animal and human rights, and Juveniles for Justice, which is about kids in prison for life without parole."

Though billfarkas.com has been visited by four million people around the globe, he says political music can be a tough sell in his own back yard. "It's especially hard being a protest and antiwar singer-songwriter in a town that houses Camp Pendleton, Miramar, and one of the largest naval bases in the country," he says. "My commute to L.A. for gigs is getting old. And expensive!"

WHAT'S IN YOUR CD PLAYER?

1. Jason Farnham, *Barriers* ("He's a keyboardist and the hit of the techno dance crowd on Sunset in L.A., but his piano compositions are some of the best chill music you could ever hope to hear.")
2. The Cathryn Beeks Ordeal, *Desert Music* ("I'm glad it's getting airplay in San Diego, because no one has worked harder in promoting our local music scene than Cathryn.")
3. Pink Floyd, *Dark Side of the Moon* ("Best al-

bum ever recorded...I could listen to David Gilmour's sweet Strat wailing away for another 30 years.")

4. Rage Against the Machine, *Live at the Grand Olympic Auditorium* ("Outside of introducing the world to rock-and-rap crossover, they're one of the few true political bands to succeed in the last 15 years.")
5. Jimi Hendrix, "Hendrix Scratch Trax" ("This is a rare studio outtake with Buddy Miles, where they just let the tape roll.")

DESERT-ISLAND DVDs?

1. *Caddyshack* ("The only movie I've seen a hundred times, and I still laugh my ass off every time.")
2. *V for Vendetta* ("If I ever feel restricted by my boundaries on that island and out of touch with what's going on in the civilized world, V will remind me that I'm the lucky one.")
- 3) *Sicko* ("If I start feeling sorry for myself that there's no doctor or hospital on the island, *Sicko* will remind me that a hundred million other people are in the same boat, if on a different island.")

MAGAZINE SUBSCRIPTIONS?

1. *Rolling Stone* ("More of an industry trade rag, but I find their political journalism to be well done.")
2. *Premier Guitar* ("I got hooked on their focus of abstract soloing techniques.")

BEATLES OR STONES?

"The Beatles. John Lennon was the single greatest influence on both my songwriting and my view of the world through peaceful eyes. Lennon



Bill Farkas

and McCartney were arguably the best songwriting tandem in music history. They changed the face of rock as the first stadium rock band, set fashion trends, ushered in the psychedelic era with *Sgt. Pepper*, and in one way or another influenced every musician that followed."

IF YOU COULD SPEND ONE HOUR WITH ANYONE?

"It'd be George Bush. I hope it's a long lunch, 'cause I have a long list of things to cover with Dubya. Mainly, I want to know if there are lights on in there...I'd love to find out if there's really anybody home."

LAST BOOK READ?

"*The Stranger* by Albert Camus. I've read it a number of times, but one can never get too much

existentialism in one's life...I'd like to think that the world has finally caught up to authors like Camus and Jean-Paul Sartre. We are indeed living in the theater of the absurd and in a time where logic seems to have no place."

BIGGEST POLITICAL CONCERN?

"I see our civil liberties becoming fewer every day, and I wonder how long people will continue to say, 'But it's the greatest nation in the world' and then go back to their own priorities, assuming others will do whatever it takes to keep that true."

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Calendar CONCERTS

Jill Scott: Copley Symphony Hall, Wednesday, February 13, 1245 Seventh Avenue, downtown. 619-235-0804.

The Editors and **Hot Hot Heat:** House of Blues, Wednesday, February 13, 1055 Fifth Avenue, Gaslamp. 619-299-2583.

Styx: House of Blues, Saturday, February 16, 1055 Fifth Avenue, Gaslamp. 619-299-2583.

Maceo Parker: Belly Up Tavern, Saturday, February 16, 143 South Cedros Avenue, Solana Beach. 858-481-8140.

Queensrÿche and **Don Dokken:** House of Blues, Thursday, February 21, 1055 Fifth Avenue, Gaslamp. 619-299-2583.

Siouxsie and the Banshees: 4th & B, Thursday, February 21, 345 B Street, San Diego. 619-231-4343.

Adrian Belew: Belly Up Tavern, Tuesday, February 26, 143 South Cedros Avenue, Solana Beach. 858-481-8140.

MARCH

Marcia Ball and **John Hammond:** Belly Up Tavern, Sunday, March 2, 143 South Cedros Avenue, Solana Beach. 858-481-8140.

Bad Religion: House of Blues, Friday, March 7, 1055 Fifth Avenue, Gaslamp. 619-299-2583.

The Blind Boys of Alabama: Belly Up Tavern, Sunday, March 9, 143 South Cedros Avenue, Solana Beach. 858-481-8140.

Janis Ian: AcousticMusicSanDiego, Thursday, March 27, 4650 Mansfield Street, Normal Heights. 619-303-8176.

APRIL

RBD: Coors Amphitheatre, Sunday, April 6, 2050 Entertainment Circle, Chula Vista. 619-671-3600.

Ministry: House of Blues, Monday, April 7, 1055 Fifth Avenue, Gaslamp. 619-299-2583.

Avril Lavigne and **Boys Like Girls:** Cox Arena, Wednesday, April 30, SDSU campus, College Area. 619-594-0429.

MAY

Nightwish: House of Blues, Friday, May 23, 1055 Fifth Avenue, Gaslamp. 619-299-2583.

JUNE

The Cure: Cox Arena, Tuesday, June 3, SDSU campus, College Area. 619-594-0429.

JULY

Richard Cheese and Lounge Against the Machine: House of Blues, Saturday, July 26, 1055 Fifth Avenue, Gaslamp. 619-299-2583.

Calendar CLUBS

DANCE

If you would like to include your DJ event, e-mail sellis@nethere.com or submit a listing online at SanDiegoReader.com by clicking on the music section. Deadline is 5 p.m. Friday, the week prior to publication. The listings are free.

Air Conditioned: Wednesdays, *Club Nigel*, Steve West and DJ SG spin the '80s. Thursdays, *Too Cool for School*, old-skool hip-hop, and '80s. Fridays, rare groove, funk, and disco. Saturdays, *Cocktail Party*, dance in your dazzling duds. Sundays, guest DJ night. Mondays, hip-hop, funk, and soul with DJ 1979. Tuesdays, *Big Sonic Chill*, dream pop bliss. 4673 30th Street, North Park. 619-501-9831.

Beauty Bar: Fridays, *Feel the Noise*, electronic dance rock beats. 4746 El

NOTE

BY DAVE GOOD

It's hard to talk to blues singer **Janiva Magness** and not bring up the rub board. "It's custom made," she says. "The patent is owned by a woman from New Orleans." Magness tells me where she bought it and that each one — a Madonna-esque metal chest plate with breast cones — is made to fit. Worn around the neck and played with a stick or a spoon, a rub board adds tinny grit to the mix. In the Delta in the '20s, urban musicians used a standard-issue laundry room rub board (sans cones) as a found rhythm instrument along with things like washtubs and broomsticks and glass jugs.

I like the vintage sounds that Mag-

ness brings to modern blues. I ask her if the album she is presently recording for her new label, Alligator, will follow along the same string bass and bumpy baritone sax path as her past two CDs. "Is it gonna be the same thing as *Do I Move You?*?" she says. "No. Is it gonna lean in a similar direction as in the Memphis soul kind of direction? Yeah. Absolutely. I love that stuff."

Part of Magness's life now is speaking to groups of children about the "gnarly shit that I went through." She is this year's spokesperson for National Foster Care Month. "I'm an alumni of foster care. I went through 12 foster homes in two years when I was a kid. I had a fairly rough comin' up." As she tells me her story her voice shifts, and I begin to hear where her blues comes from — not from the depths, but from the redemption. "I came out the other side. And the point is, that part of my life no longer defines me. I'm not



JANIVA MAGNESS

trapped there anymore. Do I have dark days? You bet I do. Does the music serve me? Thank God for the music. It totally serves me. It totally helps me with my healing process."

JANIVA MAGNESS, Anthology, Friday, December 14, 7:30 p.m. 619-595-0300. \$9 to \$27.

Cajon Boulevard, Talmadge. 619-516-4746.

Brass Rail: Third Thursday of the month, *Pussy Galore*, live bands with DJ Robin Roth spinning electro, indie, and '80s. Second Friday of the month, *Club Fashion Whore*, fashion show and discotheque. Fourth Friday of the month, *Sabbat*, old skool '80s, gothic, and industrial with DJs Atom, Liquid Grey, and guests. 3796 Fifth Avenue, Hillcrest. 619-298-2233.

Candelas: Thursdays, deep soulful house by DJ ALA and guests. 416 Third Avenue, downtown. 619-702-4455.

Club Rio: Wednesdays, *Hot Wednesdays*, dancehall, ragga, and R&B. 9 p.m. 1299 Camino del Rio South, Mission Valley. 619-843-7400.@bold:The Flame: Second Saturday of the month, *Sabbat*, gothic and industrial with DJs Robin Roth, Adam, and Diskdroid.

9 p.m. to 2 a.m.; 21 and up. 3780 Park Boulevard, Hillcrest. 619-295-4163.

Inferno Young Adult Nightclub: Fridays and Saturdays, DJ Kool T spins Top 40, techno, and '80s. 9 p.m. to 1:15 a.m., high school students and up. 775 Metcalf Street, Escondido. 760-741-1271.

Kadan: First Saturday of the month, *BrokenBeat Night*, live electronic, crunk, and glitch hop. 9 p.m. to 2 a.m.; 21 and up. No cover. 4696 30th Street, North Park. 619-640-2500.

The Kava Lounge: First Saturday of the month, *Ascension*, underground dance music with DJs Robin Roth and Tom King. Wednesdays, *Mixtape Sessions*, hip-hop, downtempo, and breakbeat with DJs Mada and Ricky Wrecks. No cover. 2812 Kettner Boulevard, Middletown. 619-543-0933.

Mission Valley Resort: Thursdays (18 and up) and Fridays (21 and up), *La Maraca*, merengue, cumbia, and reggaeton. 9 p.m. 875 Hotel Circle South, Mission Valley. 619-298-8281.

Moondoggies Pacific Beach: Saturdays, *What's Good* with DJs Enigma and Cisco. Hip-hop, R&B, and Top 40. 9 p.m. No cover. 832 Garnet Avenue, Pacific Beach. 858-483-6550.

Shooterz: Wednesdays, *Funk It Up*, elektro, indie, and nu-rave with DJ Flyxfx and guest. Thursdays, *Club '80s*, new wave, punk, and synth-pop with DJs Bryan Pollard, Sickboy, and Stern. First, third, and fifth Saturday of the month, *Therapy*, industrial, gothic, and elektronica. 9 p.m. to 2 a.m.; 21 and up. 3815 30th Street, North Park. 619-574-0744.

Static Lounge: First Friday of the month, *West Coast Mash Up*, drum 'n'

bass, jungle, and ragga. Fourth Friday of the month, *Club Pop Noir*, electro, '80s, and indie with DJ Groundfloor and Edgartronic. 634 Broadway (between Sixth and Seventh Avenue), downtown. 619-544-1609.

Tio Leo's: Thursdays, zydeco dance with DJ Gator Boy. 8 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. 5302 Napa Street, Morena District. 619-542-1462.

Whiskey Girl: Fridays and Saturdays, DJ Marc Thrasher mixes music videos. Sundays, *10 Spot Sundays*, DJ Famous Dave mixes video requests. Mondays, *Manic Mondays*, DJ Marc Thrasher mixes '80s and '90s videos. Tuesdays and Wednesdays, DJ Famous Dave mixes music videos. 9 p.m.; 21 and up. 600 Fifth Avenue, downtown. 619-236-1616.

The Whistle Stop: Second Friday of the month, *Pussy Galore Stripped*, live bands with DJ Robin Roth spinning

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Calendar

CLUBS

DANCE

(continued)

electro, indie, and '80s. First and third Saturday of the month, *Transport*, Brit rock, indie, and electroclash with DJ Gabe Vega and guests. Second and fifth Saturday, *One Nation*, electro, '80s, and hip-hop with DJs Blackstone and Atari. 2236 Fern Street (corner of 30th and Juniper), South Park. 619-284-6784.

LOCAL MUSIC

If you wish to submit a listing, call 619-235-3000, ext. 405, night or day by 5 p.m. Friday, the week prior to publication. To send weekly or monthly schedules, fax to 760-788-1309 or mail to Reader Music Scene, P.O. Box 85803, San Diego CA 92186-5803. You may also submit information online at SanDiegoReader.com by clicking on the music section.

BEACHES

Bahia Resort Hotel, 998 West Mission Bay Drive, Mission Beach. 858-488-0551. **Tangier Lounge:** Thursday, 8 p.m. to 11 p.m., Friday and Saturday, 9 p.m. to midnight, and Wednesday, 8 p.m. to 11 p.m., *John Cain*, international/jazz/blues/Latin/pop/stand ards.

Bar Leucadian, 1542 North Coast Highway 101, Leucadia. 760-753-2094. Friday and Saturday, live classic/pop rock.

Beaumont's, 5662 La Jolla Boulevard, La Jolla. 858-459-0474. Thursday, 7:30 p.m., Friday and Saturday, 8:30 p.m., live blues and classic rock.

The Calypso Cafe, 576 North Highway 101, Encinitas. 760-632-8252. Thursday, *Michael Tiernan*, acoustic. Friday, *Jeff Moore, Dean Smith, and Billy Thompson*, blues. Saturday, *Triple Shot*.

blues. Sunday, *Candye Kane*, blues.
Monday, *Cactus Twang*, roadhouse rock.
Tuesday, *Jack Tempchin*, folk.
Wednesday, *Tres Zapos*, Latin.

'Canes, 3105 Ocean Front Walk, Mission Beach. 858-488-1780. Thursday, 8 p.m., *Earl Zero*, *Roots Covenant*, and *Dash Eye*, reggae/dub. Wednesday, 8 p.m., *Motus*, *a Dull Science*, and *Two Word Name*, rock/alternative/punk.

Ché Café, UCSD Campus, 9500 Gilman Drive, Student Center B-0323C, La Jolla. 858-534-2311. Saturday, *Allegiance, Bitter End, Internal Affairs, Violation, Down Again*, and *Feed*, hardcore/punk.

Dreamstreet, 2228 Bacon Street, Ocean Beach. 619-222-8131. Thursday, *the Crashing Marbles, Twelve Twenty*, and *First Class Hero*, alternative/rock. Friday, *Dogsmile, Sandollar, Frontyard*, and *Steel Foundation*, indie/alternative/reggae/rock. Saturday, *Awaiting Samara, Empire State*, and *the Dateless Losers*, alternative rock. Sunday, *DJ Artistic* and *DJ Carlos Culture*, reggae. Wednesday, *Forever Days* and *Forgotten*, metal.

E Street Cafe, 128 E Street, Encinitas. 760-230-2038. Music is acoustic/folk unless otherwise noted. Thursday, 7:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m., *Joseph Angelastro*, jazz. Friday, 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m., *Justin Froese* and *Ivar Rodriguez*, 8 p.m. to 9:30 p.m., *Melissa Vaughan*. Friday, 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m., *Jerry McCann*, 8 p.m. to 9:30 p.m., *Pavla Nova*. Wednesday, 7:30 p.m., *Doug Strock*, jazz piano.

Hennessey's Tavern (PB), 4650
Mission Boulevard, Pacific Beach.
858-483-8847. Friday, *Ron's Garage*,
classic rock. Saturday, *Fiffin Market*, Irish
folk.

The Kraken, 2531 Old Highway 101, Cardiff. 760-436-6483. Thursday, *Frankie-Dee and the Funk-Natra Band*. Friday, *the Travel Agents*, alternative. Saturday, *Plato Soul*. Sunday, *the Blues Brokers*, blues. Wednesday, Wednesday, *Jeff Moore and the Witchdoctors*, blues.

La Valencia Hotel, 1132 Prospect Street, La Jolla. 858-454-0771. Friday and Saturday, 7:30 p.m. to 11 p.m., also, Sunday and Wednesday, 6:30 p.m., *Rick Ross*, piano/jazz.

OF NOTE

BY WILLIAM CRAIN

Back in the mid-'90s, **Imperial Teen** charmed critics and indie audiences with their simple, hook-filled songs and friendly stage presence. The band members, **Roddy Bottum**, **Will Schwartz**, **Lynn Perko**, and **Jone Stebbins**, traded instruments and turns at the microphone. Onstage they looked like good friends hanging out, and it was easy for the audiences to smile along with them.

But you know what happens to groups of friends. Someone moves out of town. Someone gets married. Everyone finds something that takes a lot of their time. And so Imperial Teen disappeared for more than five

The Lodge at Torrey Pines, 11480 N. Torrey Pines Road, La Jolla. 619-453-4420. Grill: Friday and Saturday, 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m., *Mike Nelson*, solo jazz guitar.

Manhattan Restaurant (at the Empress Hotel), 7766 Fay Avenue, La Jolla. 858-459-0700. Thursday, 8 p.m. to 10:30 p.m., *Tokeli and Friends*, jazz. Saturday, 9 p.m. to 11:30 p.m., *the Tokeli Jazz Quintet*.

710 Beach Club, 710 Garnet Avenue
Pacific Beach. 858-483-7844. Live
rock/reggae/blues/alternative.

Shooters Bar and Grill, Sheraton La Jolla, 3299 Holiday Court, La Jolla. 858-453-5500. Tuesday, 7 p.m. to 11 p.m., *John Cain*, international jazz/blues/Latin/pop/standards.

Tiki House, 1152 Garnet Avenue, Pacific Beach. 858-273-9734. Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, live rock and blues.

Turquoise Cafe, 873 Turquoise Street, Pacific Beach. 858-488-4200. Thursday, jazz trio. Friday, jazz quartet. Saturday, Latin jazz. Sunday, eclectic/world music. Monday, *Blue 44*. jazz. Tuesday, flamenco. Wednesday, blues.

Winstons, 1921 Bacon Street, Ocean Beach. 619-222-6822. Thursday, 9 p.m., *Tribal Seeds and Noiz*, roots/rock/reggae. Friday, 9 p.m., *Kim Wilson and Michele Lundeen and Bluestreak*, blues. Saturday, *Ishmael Maldonado, Jimmy Lewis, Delta Nove, and Ishmael the Peacemaker*, Latin/reggae/funk. Monday, 9 p.m., *the Electric Waste Band*, classic rock. Tuesday, 9 p.m., *Elephants in Mud and Sandollar*, reggae. Wednesday, 7 p.m. to

IMPERIAL TEEN

While she is getting ultrasound/ Measuring it by the pound/ I'm not done sleeping around." You can bet that neither Schwartz nor Bottom is the father. No, that's the point of view of a guy whose friends have moved on to other things.

**IMPERIAL TEEN, The Casbah, Saturday,
December 15, 8:30 p.m. 619-232-4355.
\$14.**

10 p.m., *Joe Wood and the Lonely Boys*, blues, acoustic rock/blues.

DOWNTOWN

Anthology, 1337 India Street, San Diego. 619-595-0300. Thursday, *the Anthology House Band*, jazz. Friday, 7:30 p.m., *Janiva Magness*, folk/blues, 9:30 p.m., *the Anthology House Band*. Saturday, 7:30 p.m., *Dave Mason*, classic rock, 9:30 p.m., *Ronnie Baker Brooks*, blues. Sunday, 7:30 p.m., *Mikan Zlatkovich*, jazz pianist. Tuesday, 7:30 p.m., *Cactus Twang*, *Eve Selis*, *Berkley Hart*, *Peter Bolland*, and *Tim Flannery*, acoustic rock/folk. Wednesday, *the Anthology House Band*.

Blarney Stone Pub, 502 Fifth Avenue, downtown. 619-233-8519. Friday and Saturday, *Steve Brewer*, classic rock.

Borders Books and Music (Gaslamp), 668 Sixth Avenue, San Diego. 619-702-4200. Saturday, 8 p.m., *Melissa Vaughan*, folk.

The Casbah, 2501 Kettner Boulevard, midtown. 619-232-HELL. Thursday, *the Melvins*, grunge/metal rock. Friday, *Throw Rag*, *the Hitchhikers*, and *the Screamin'* Yeehaws, hard rock/punk. Saturday, *Imperial Teen*, *Midnight Movies*, and *Lovelee*, alternative rock. Monday, *the Nightmares*, *the Satanic Puppeteer Orchestra*, and *the Cunkles*, punk. Tuesday, *C.L.A.* and *Royal Campaign*, rock/alternative/pop. Wednesday, *Ziggy Shuffledust*, *Sultry Burlesque*, *Tragic Tantrum*, and *Bartender's Bible*, alternative/indie/rock.

Croce's Jazz Bar, 802 Fifth Avenue, downtown. 619-233-4355. All music is jazz unless otherwise noted. Thursday, *Warren Lovell*. Friday, *Yavez*. Saturday,



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 DECEMBER 22, 23* @ 2PM 

Matthew Garbutt, conductor / Mariachi Champaña Névin
 San Diego Civic Youth Ballet / San Diego Master Chorale

*Family Festival version

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STOOPID**

thursday dec 27



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PRESENTS
Metal Snake



friday dec 28

pato banton

with the **LOVE and GROOVE BAND**
and **DJ CARLOS CULTURE**



saturday dec 29

CRACKER
and
CAMPER
VAN BEETHOVEN

sunday dec 30

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YOUNG DUBLINERS
XMAS SHOW



THE DROWNING MEN

Sat 12/15 • 9:00 PM

THE MAR DELS
CHRISTMAS SHOW



Sun 12/16 • 6:00 PM

GARY "HO HO" HOEY'S
ROCKIN' CHRISTMAS
SHOW



BILL MAGEE BLUES BAND

Wed 12/19 • 8:00 PM

VENICE XMAS SHOW



MICHAEL TIERNAN

Thu 12/20 • 8:00 PM

THE GREYBOY
ALLSTARS



LEON MOBLEY & DA LION

Fri 12/21 • 9:00 PM


CASH'D OUT



THE DEERE JOHNS
DJ GONZO

Sat 12/22 • 9:00 PM

SIN CITY REVUE II



THE SIN CITY ALL STARS
MIKE STINSON
THE SLIDEWINDERS
EVE SELIS

Thu 1/3 • 8:00 PM

ELIJAH EMANUEL &
THE REVELATIONS



THE HI-LITES

Fri 1/4 • 9:00 PM

SALSA



THE HI-LITES

Sun 1/6 • 8:00 PM

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STANDING)



KENNY KANE
BOB MURPHY

Tue 1/8 • 8:00 PM

DAVID LINDLEY



JACK TEMPCHIN

Wed 1/9 • 8:00 PM


COMMON SENSE



IGLU & HARTLY

Fri 1/11 • 9:00 PM

ELECTRIC PRUNES



THE PRAYERS

Wed 1/16 • 8:00 PM

CROSS CANADIAN
RAGWEED



W/GUEST

Thu 1/17 • 9:00 PM

DILATED PEOPLES



LMNO

Fri 1/18 • 9:00 PM


DEAD MAN'S PARTY
OINGO BOINGO TRIBUTE



THE REAGANOMICS

Sat 1/19 • 9:00 PM

TODD SNIDER



JUST ADDED!

W/GUEST

Tue 1/22 • 8:00 PM

STEVE POLTZ
CD RELEASE PARTY!



TIM BLUM

Thu 1/24 • 9:00 PM

OZOMATLI



TWO NIGHTS!

W/GUEST

1/25 & 26 • 9:00 PM

JUST ADDED!

2/1 B-Side Players • 2/5 O₂ for Life - Rumba in the Rainforest
2/6 Super Furry Animals
2/19 Stan Ridgway presents Wall of Voodoo's Call of the Wild
2/22 The Blasters & The Hacienda Brothers • 3/4 Rufus Wainright On sale tomorrow at noon!

1/27 Mountain w/Shock N' Awe
2/7 Bedouin Soundclash
2/8 Marc Ford & Deadline
Friday

2/9 Groundation Bob Marley
Tribute Show
2/10 Rhett Miller
2/13 ALO
2/16 Maceo Parker
2/26 Adrian Belew
3/2 Marcia Ball & John Hammond
3/9 The Blind Boys of Alabama

3/13 Mad Professor
3/14 Tommy Castro Band
3/29 The Avett Brothers

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12/21 THE FABULOUS PELICANS
12/28 BILLY WATSON

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1/6 ORQUESTA PRIMO

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Calendar

CLUBS

DOWNTOWN

(continued)

Primo. Sunday, *the Archtones*. Monday, *Dave Scott*. Tuesday, *the Shep Meyers Quartet*. Wednesday, *Fuzzy and the Bluesmen* or *Sue Palmer*.

Dakota Grill and Spirits, 901 Fifth Avenue, downtown. 619-234-5554. Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, contemporary piano.

Dick's Last Resort, 345 Fourth Avenue, downtown. 619-231-9100. Thursday, 7 p.m. to 11 p.m., *the Scot Carter Duo*. Friday, live rock. Saturday, 8 p.m. to 1 a.m., *Straight Six*, rock. Tuesday, 7 p.m. to 11 p.m., *the Dregs of Sada*, rock. Wednesday, 7 p.m. to 11 p.m., *Private Domain*, unplugged, rock.

Dizzy's (Harbor Club Towers at Second and J Street), 200 Harbor Drive, San Diego. 858-270-7467. Sunday, 7 p.m., *Jamie Laval* and *Ashley Broder*, Celtic.

Dublin Square, 554 Fourth Avenue, Gaslamp. 619-239-5818. Traditional Irish folk music.

G5-Georges on Fifth, 835 Fifth Avenue (between E and F Streets), downtown. 619-702-0444. Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and Wednesday, *Tom Barabas*, pianist.

Henry's Pub, 618 Fifth Avenue, downtown. 619-238-2389. Thursday, *the Flock of 80's*. Friday and Saturday, *Good Times*, classic rock. Tuesday, *the Stiletto*, rockabilly. Wednesday, *Lady Dottie and the Diamonds*, blues.

Jimmy Love's, 672 Fifth Avenue (corner of Fifth and G), downtown. 619-595-0123. Thursday and Sunday, 6:30 p.m. to 11 p.m., *Masterpiece*. Friday, 9:45 p.m., *Pop Rocks*, '80s dance. Saturday, 9:45 p.m., *Superfunk Fantasy*, dance/pop/Top 40. Monday, 6:30 p.m. to 11 p.m., *Insight*, jazz. Tuesday, 6:30 p.m. to 11 p.m., *Mystique*, jazz/R&B.

Wednesday, November 28, 6:30 p.m. to 11 p.m., *the Soul Revue*, dance/Top 40.

Patrick's II, 428 F Street, downtown. 619-233-3077. Music is blues/soul unless otherwise noted. Thursday, *Bill Magee Blues*. Friday, *Soul Diego*. Saturday, *the 145th Street Deluxe Blues Band*. Sunday and Monday, *Ronnie Lane and the Texas Twisters*. Tuesday, *Blue Four*. Wednesday, *Shelle Blue*.

Rock Bottom, 401 G Street, Gaslamp. 619-231-7000. Friday and Saturday, live pop/rock/disco/dance.

Sevilla, 555 Fourth Avenue, downtown. 619-233-5979. Club Salsa: Thursday, *Trece de la Suerte*. Tuesday, *Walter II y Rumbaney*. Wednesday, *Ritmo Caliente*.

The Westgate Hotel, 1055 Second Avenue, downtown. 619-238-1818. The Plaza Bar: Monday through Friday, 5 p.m. to 7 p.m., *the Prince of Piano*, piano/pop.

Evening Entertainment: Thursday and Friday, 7 p.m. to 11 p.m., *Fran Loskota*, pop/jazz. Saturday, 8 p.m. to midnight, *Karen Giorgio*, cabaret. Sunday and Monday, 7 p.m. to 11 p.m., *Julio de la Huerta*, Latin. Tuesday and Wednesday, 7 p.m. to 11 p.m., *Faith Page*, international/standards.

Whiskey Girl, 600 Fifth Avenue, downtown. 619-236-1616. Thursday, *DaGroove*, rock hits, and *DJ Marc Thrasher*. Friday and Saturday, *DJ Marc Thrasher*. Sunday, *DJ Famous Dave*. Monday, *Manic Mondays* with *DJ Thrasher*. Tuesday, *DJ Famous Dave*. Wednesday, *the Stepping Feet*, a Dave Matthews Band tribute, pop/rock, and *DJ Famous Dave*.

SAN DIEGO

AcousticMusicSanDiego, 4650 Mansfield Street, San Diego. 619-303-8176. Saturday, *Jim Kveskin* and *Geoff Muldair*.

Albie's Beef Inn, 1201 Hotel Circle South, San Diego. 619-291-1103. Friday, 6:30 p.m., Saturday, 7 p.m., and Tuesday, 6:30 p.m., *David Timothy Smith*, piano bar.

American Legion Post 310, 465 47th Street, San Diego. 619-264-1919. Thursday, 7:30 p.m. to 10:30 p.m., *the*



>hometown CDs

BY OLLIE

Album: *What Say You* (2007)

Artist: Blue Sky Blonde

Label: Olive Drive Records

Where available/price: *CDBaby.com*,

myspace.com/blueskyblondeband for \$12. *iTunes* for 99 cents per downloaded song.

Songs: 1) Hell If I Know 2) Beside Myself 3) Solitude

4) Addicted to Love 5) One Step 6) The Same Old Story 7) Candice

8) Quality Time 9) Roll Call (The Voices Inside) 10) Tone Deaf

11) Deadly Nightshade 12) S.S.D.D.

Band: Chris Bogelln (vocals, bass), Damon Millard (guitar, vocals, bass, piano), Noby McArthur (drums, vocals), Dave Millard (violin, guitar)

Website: *myspace.com/blueskyblondeband*

Formerly Ten Mile Dive, “new” band Blue Sky Blonde offers a professional recording of what their press release deems “Alter Ego Rock.” Alter

Ego Rock, as far as I can tell, exists only in the minds of Blue Sky Blonde or the imagination of their record label's publicist. There are no references to Alter Ego Rock

anywhere.

What the band sounds like to me is a combination of accomplished musicians with a shaky, unsure lead vocal. Compositions range in time and beat and stand out as sophisticated slow rock, a little on the heavier, guitar-laden side.

Most notable performances are from bassists Bogelln and Millard. In the absence of a strong voice and a lack of catchy hooks, the short guitar solos and robust bass lines take on the extra responsibility of punching up the songs, and they do fairly well.

The problem? The album is uninteresting, with one exception: their send-up of Robert Palmer's pop classic, “Addicted to Love,” which the band has rocketed into a glam-pop whine-fest, reminiscent of a watered down



Blue Sky Blonde

Tsar...which is really great. The rest of the CD is a mild shade of every drudging near-metal rock band out there, from Adema to Taproot, and with record label funds and radio airplay focusing on indie rock with smarty-pants overtones and odd front man vocalists (Modest Mouse and the like), Blue Sky Blonde seems like a freefall ten-mile dive without a chute.

TO GET YOUR LOCAL CD REVIEWED, PLEASE MAIL IT TO:

Music Editor, Hometown CDs, San Diego *Reader*, P.O. Box 85803, San Diego, CA 92186-5803

Post 310 Blues Band. Sunday, 5 p.m. to 8 p.m., *Willovealot*, smooth jazz/funk.

Blarney Stone Pub, 5617 Balboa Avenue, Clairemont. 858-279-2033. Music is Irish/folk. Saturday, *Skelpin*. Tuesday, Irish jam session. Wednesday, *Robbie O'Reilly* or *Skelpin*.

Brick by Brick, 1130 Buenos Avenue, Bay Park. 619-275-LIVE. Music is rock/metal/indie/pop. Thursday, *Amongst the Lost* and *Livid*. Friday, *Media Lab*, Dante's Boneyard, *Onesidezero*, and an E for Effort.

Epicentre, 8450 Mira Mesa Boulevard, Mira Mesa. 858-271-4000. Music is

rock/alternative/indie. Saturday, 7 p.m., *My American Heart*, a *Change of Pace*, *Everybody Else*, and a *White Tie*. Sunday, 4 p.m., *Mike Keneally*.

The Gordon Biersch Brewery, 5010 Mission Center Road, San Diego. 619-688-1120. Friday, live rock and blues.

Humphrey's, Half Moon Inn, 2241 Shelter Island Drive, Shelter Island. 619-224-3577. Backstage Lounge: Thursday, 8 p.m. to midnight, *Blue Rockit*, R&B. Friday, 6 p.m. to 8 p.m., *Skelpin*, Celtic, 9:30 p.m. to 1:30 a.m., *Makai*, dance/disco. Saturday, 6 p.m. to

8 p.m., *Jamie Crawford*, 9:30 p.m. to 1:30 a.m., *the Detroit Underground*, Motown/dance. Sunday, two performances, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., and 8 p.m. to midnight, *Reggie Smith* and *Pressed for Time*, jazz. Monday, 7 p.m. to 11 p.m., *Chet Cannon*, blues. Tuesday, 7 p.m. to 11 p.m., *Trade Winds*, Jimmy Buffet tribute band. Wednesday, 8 p.m. to midnight, *the Soul Persuaders*, sweet soul.

The Imperial House, 505 Kalmia Street, San Diego. 619-234-3525. Friday and Saturday, 7:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m., *Rick Lyon*, pop standards/Top 40/variety.

JP's Pub, 10436 Clairemont Mesa Boulevard, Tierrasanta. 858-576-2509. Friday, classic rock.

Kadan's, 4696 30th Street, San Diego. 619-640-2500. Monday, *Mayhem Mondays*, punk rock.

The Kensington Club, 4079 Adams Avenue, Kensington. 619-284-2848. Saturday, *Deadbolt* and *the Nightmares*, hard rock.

Lestat's Coffee House, 3343 Adams Avenue, Normal Heights. 619-282-0437. Music is acoustic/folk/roots unless otherwise noted. Thursday, *Reeve Oliver* and *Spell Toronto*, alternative/rock.

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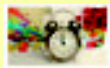
<div>Thursday, December 13 8 pm • Rhythm & Blues Blue Rockit</div>	<div>Friday, December 14 6 pm • Celtic Music Skelpin 9:30 pm • Dance & Disco Makai</div>	<div>Saturday, December 15 6 pm • Songwriter Jamie Crawford 9:30 pm • Motown & Dance Detroit Underground</div>
<div>Monday, December 17 7 pm • Blues Chet Cannon's Blue Monday Blues Party</div>	<div>Sunday, December 16 8 pm • Smooth Jazz Reggie Smith</div>	<div>Tuesday, December 18 7 pm • Jimmy Buffett Tribute Band Trade Winds</div>
<div>Wednesday, December 19 8 pm • Sweet Soul Music The Soul Persuaders</div>	<div>New Year's Eve 2007 Three Great Parties Detroit Underground In the Backstage Lounge Makai Under the Big Top T. Fox & the Fox City Band Featuring Reggie Smith & Darryl Williams An elegant affair in Humphrey's Dining Room Make Your Reservations Now!</div>	
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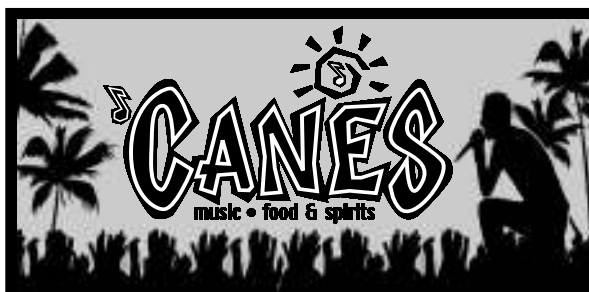
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THURSDAY, DECEMBER 13

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DASH EYE • REEFAH • LADY FYASTARTER**



WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 19



**MAGNOLIA BLACK
MOTUS • TWO WORD NAME
A DULL SCIENCE • LIVID**

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 20

Rockin' Johnny White presents
**BLUE SKY BLONDE • MOSQUITO HEAD
AGENT 22 • JEN KNIGHT**

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 21

KEMISTRY

featuring members from
Sprung Monkey



featuring members
from Mower

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 22

Rockhill & CANES present
**GROUCH & ELIGH
OF THE LIVING LEGENDS**



THURSDAY, DECEMBER 27

**Brazilian Pre-NYE Party
with
NaCalifia**

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 28



**40 OUNCES (Sublime
Tribute)**

**RUDE BOY ROOTS
A CONCRETE PROJECT**

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 29



(All-female tribute to Iron Maiden)

MONSTERS OF ROCK

MONDAY, DECEMBER 31 • NEW YEAR'S EVE

An Evening With

**Tainted Love (80's
Tribute)**



Reservations Highly Suggested

SATURDAY, JANUARY 5

**MYSTIC ROOTS
CARBINE • SHAKA BUKU
WYLDE BUNCH**

SATURDAY, JANUARY 12

**THE BLOODY HOLLIES
GET BACK LORETTA
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Calendar CLUBS

SAN DIEGO

(continued)

Friday, *Lisa Sanders* and *Patty Blee*.
Saturday, *Allison Lonsdale* and guest.
Sunday, *Cydney Robinson* and *the Donnis Trio*. Wednesday, *Allan Morphew*, *Tami Gosnell*, and *Molly Jensen*.

Little Italy Urban Bar and Restaurant, 1953 India Street, San Diego. 619-398-2974. Saturday, *the Pheromones*, rock. Saturday, *Viva Santana*, Latin rock.

Martini's Above Fourth, 3940 Fourth Avenue, San Diego. 619-293-0232. Saturday, 7 p.m. to 10:30 p.m., *Vintage Vegas*, jazz.

Miami Grille (UTC), 4545 La Jolla Village Drive, San Diego. 858-552-0668. Thursday and Sunday, 5 p.m. to 8 p.m., *Jeff Blum*, Cuban jazz.

O'Connell's Pub and Nightclub, 1310 Morena Boulevard, Bay Park. 619-276-5637. Friday, 9 p.m., *Beta Lion* and *Roxy Jones*, rock. Saturday, 9 p.m., *Tap Water* and *Brain Buckit*, rock/funk. Monday, 8 p.m., *Mystery Train*, blues. Tuesday, 9 p.m., *Summerset*, *Pigdog*, *Kit Cloudkicker*, and *the Sneaky Snakes*, rock/punk. Wednesday, 9 p.m., *the Band Relationship*, *Perfect Blue*, and *Calabria*, rock/alternative.

Padre Gold, 7245 Linda Vista Road, San Diego. 858-277-8681. Monday, 7:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m., *the Jazz Project Big Band*, big-band swing.

Pal Joey's, 5147 Waring Road, Allied Gardens. 619-286-7873. Friday and Saturday, live classic rock/blues/swing.

Ramada Inn, 5550 Kearny Mesa Road, San 619-596-9777. Proud Mary's Restaurant: Wednesday, 6 p.m. to 9 p.m., *Keith Jacobsen*, smooth jazz saxophone.

Red Fox Steakhouse, 2228 El Cajon Boulevard, North Park. 619-297-1313. Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, contemporary/jazz piano.

Rosie O'Grady's, 3402 Adams Avenue, Normal Heights. 619-284-7666. Friday and Saturday, live rock.

Scolari's Office, 3936 30th Street, San Diego. 619-296-3546. Friday, *Tarfuti*, experimental indie rock.

Second Wind, 8515 Navajo Road, San Carlos. 619-465-1730. Friday and Saturday, *Serious Guise*, classic rock.

South Park Bar and Grill, 1946 Fern Street, San Diego. 619-696-0096. Thursday, *J.J. Lim's Jazz Jam*. Friday, 7 p.m. to 9:30 p.m., *the John Kopecky Trio*. Saturday, blues jam session. Sunday, 6 p.m. to 9 p.m., *Tim Ninnink* and *Doug Walker*, modern jazz.

Tio Leo's, 10787 Camino Ruiz, Mira Mesa. 858-695-1461. Thursday, *Stars on the Water*, rock. Saturday, *the Hype*, indie/alternative.

The Tower Bar, 4757 University Avenue, San Diego. 619-284-0158. Friday, *a Vision of a Dying World*, *the Sess*, and *Red Feathers*, alternative/punk/indie. Saturday, *Tell Mama*, blues. Monday, *Lady Dottie* and *the Diamonds*, blues.

NORTH COUNTY

The Alley, 421 Grand Avenue, Carlsbad. 760-434-1173. Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, *the Love Rangers*, dance.

The Beach House, 2530 South Highway 101, Cardiff. 760-753-1321. Friday, 6 p.m. to 9 p.m., *Adrienne Nims* and *Spirit Wind*, global jazz.

Belly Up Tavern, 143 South Cedros Avenue, Solana Beach. 858-481-9022. Thursday, 8 p.m., *the Knitters*, *Dead Rock West*, and *the Cheap Leis*, punk. Saturday, 8 p.m., *the Young Dubliners* and *the Drowning Men*, rock/alternative. Sunday, 6 p.m., *the Mar Dels*, pop/dance. Wednesday, 8 p.m., *the Bill Magee Blues Band*.

Bistro 221, 221 Grand Avenue, Escondido. 760-737-7398. Friday and Saturday, *Donnie Finnell and Company East*, standards and light jazz.

The Book Works/Pannikin Cafe, Flower Hill Mall, I-5 at Via de la Valle, Del Mar. 858-755-3735. Friday, 8 p.m., *Martin Storrow*, acoustic.

as i hear it

BY BRIAN CARVER

Artist: **The Experiments**
Song: **"Smells like Christmas Spirit"** (from the EP *Smells like Christmas Spirit*)
Heard By: **Alex Chavez**, South Bay



Alex

It had a Social Distortion-type feel. The whole holiday thing made it seem just right for this time of the year. I dug it. It was cool. It has that punk feel to it, but it's a holiday song. The riff was pretty sweet. [The singer] was talking about getting toys for some kids or something. It was a little bit catchier than I expected; it was poppy and more radio-friendly. What did I dislike about it? Probably that it was too long for a Christmas punk-rock song — it should have been shorter. It was about two minutes long, but they could have tightened it, made it cleaner. It would be a good song for doing eggnog shots.

SAN DIEGO SONGS TAKE THE STREET TEST

Artist: **Fing**
Song: **"Rock the Hips"** (from the CD *Making Love with Fear*)
Heard By: **Robbie Butler**, Spring Valley



Robbie

In the beginning, it totally sounded like the Neptunes doing a No Doubt song. It had that feel where it was funky and guitar-driven. Then the vocals came in and he sounded like Isaac Brock singing Electric Six lyrics. It was like a radio rap song put to a pseudo-punk/disco beat. He was singing about getting on the dance floor and getting sweaty...bumpin' and grindin'. For the style that they played they were decent. It could have commercial potential, especially with the whole "dance craze" that's going on right now. I could see Shark Attack DJs playing that at the Beauty Bar.

Artist: **Alex Esther**
Song: **"Something Better"** (from the CD *The Neighbors are Listening*)
Heard By: **David Martin**, Sherman Heights



David

It had a good, positive message...you know what I mean? It was, "yesterday you can't do nothing about, and you've got to fight the battle again today." He might have been depressed, but he's got to get through some stuff again. I can't really compare them to anyone, but I guess the guitar reminds me of Garth Brooks or something like that. I don't really like guitar...I normally listen to hip-hop. It's something new; I've never really heard that kind of music before. It switched between a mellow beat and a fast beat. I'd listen to that song if I was working on my truck or drinking some beers.

TO GET YOUR LOCAL CD HEARD, PLEASE MAIL IT TO:
Music Editor, As I Hear It, San Diego *Reader*, P.O. Box 85803, San Diego, CA 92186-5803

Borders Books and Music (Carlsbad), 1905 Calle Barcelona, Carlsbad. 760-479-0242. Friday, 8 p.m.,

Joey Pearson, folk. Saturday, 8 p.m., *Chris Luessman*, acoustic pop.

Borders Books and Music (Carmel Mountain), 11160 Rancho Carmel Drive, Carmel Mountain. 858-618-1814. Friday, 8 p.m., *Marie*

Hadad, acoustic. Saturday, 8 p.m., *Brenda Pammeton*, folk. Tuesday, 7 p.m., *the Maldonado Quartet*, Christmas music.

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DECEMBER 22, 2007

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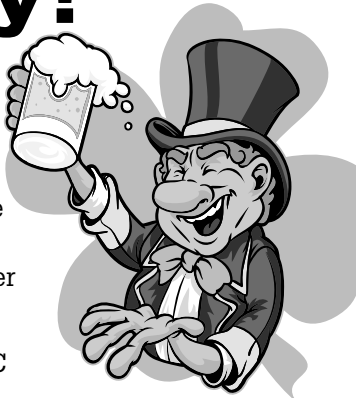
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Cheers, 2475 Main Street, Ramona.
760-789-0270. Friday and Saturday, *the Taylor Harvey Band*, acoustic rock.
Tuesday, 5 p.m. to 9 p.m., *Mike Gardner*,
acoustic rock/folk.

Chin's Palace, 2241 South El Camino Real, Oceanside. 760-439-3600. Sunday, 7 p.m. to 9 p.m., *Marc Logan*, jazz.

Coyote Bar and Grill, 300 Carlsbad Village Drive, Carlsbad, 760-729-4695. Thursday, 6 p.m. to 10 p.m., *the Rhythm Method*, classic rock. Friday, 6 p.m. to 10 p.m., *the Restless Natives*, rock/blues/reggae. Saturday, 3 p.m. to 5:30 p.m., *Peter Hall*, rock/blues, 6 p.m. to 10 p.m., *Len Rainey and the Midnight Players*, blues. Sunday, 2 p.m. to 4:30 p.m., *Johnny "B" Blues*, blues, 5 p.m. to 9 p.m., *Jerome Dawson*, jazz. Wednesday, 6 p.m. to 10 p.m., *Johnny "B" Blues*, blues.

Cuvee Restaurant, 2334 Carmel Valley Road, Del Mar. 858-259-5878. Monday, 6 p.m. to 9 p.m., *Sambajazz*, Brazilian and American jazz.

Epazote, 1555 Camino Del Mar (in the Del Mar Plaza), Del Mar. 858-259-9966. Thursday, 7 p.m. to 10:30 p.m., *Z-Bop*, jazz/swing/standards/blues.

The Flying Bridge, 1105 North Coast Highway, Oceanside. 760-722-1151. Sunday, 5:30 p.m. to 9 p.m., *Z-Bop*, jazz/swing/standards.

Hennessey's Tavern (Carlsbad),
2777 Roosevelt Street, Carlsbad.
760-729-6951. Thursday, *the Clay Colton*
Band, acoustic rock. Friday, *Lizard Fish*,
alternative rock. Saturday, *DJ Dam*, rock

Hennessey's, 224 Main Street, Vista. 760-643-1619. Wednesday, 9 p.m. to midnight, *the Bleeding Irish*, Irish/punk/folk.

Hensley's Flying Elephant Pub and Grill, 805 Tamarack Avenue, Carlsbad. 760-672-8305. Wednesday 7 p.m. to 10 p.m., *Joe Wood and the Lonely Ones*, acoustic rock/blues.

The Inn at Rancho Santa Fe, 5951
Linea del Cielo, Rancho Santa Fe.
858-756-1131. Thursday, Tuesday, and
Wednesday, 5:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m., *Jerry
Melnick*, jazz/variety piano.

J.J. Lander's Irish Pub, 125 Main Street, Fallbrook. 760-731-0839. Thursday, 9 p.m., *Ned Giblin and Paul Castellanos*. Friday, 8:30 p.m., *the Clay Colton Band*, acoustic rock/folk. Saturday, 8:30 p.m., *Raiz Muzik*, reggae. Tuesday, 8:30 p.m., *Tim Lee*, acoustic rock. Wednesday, 8:30 p.m., *Fear the Fat Guy*, acoustic rock.

La Costa Resort and Spa, 2100 Costa Del Mar Road, Carlsbad. 760-438-9111. Spa: Thursday, 6 p.m. to 10 p.m., *Mike Nelson*, jazz.

Mas Fina Cantina, 2780 State Street, Carlsbad. 760-434-3497. Wednesday, 8 p.m. to midnight, *Mike Gardner*, acoustic rock/folk.

McCabe's Beach Club, 1145 South Tremont Street, Oceanside. 760-439-6646. Friday, 4:30 p.m. to 9 p.m., *the California Rangers*, country.

Mille Fleurs, 6009 Paseo Delicias,
Rancho Santa Fe. 858-756-3085.
Wednesday through Saturday, *Tad Sissle*
and *Randy Beecher*, piano/lounge.

Molly Malone's, 1270 Main Street, Ramona. 760-789-9050. Friday, 9 p.m. to 1 a.m., *My Sister's Ghost*, classic rock.


North Bar Sports and Spirits, 200
West El Norte Parkway, Escondido.
760-480-8228. Thursday, 6 p.m. to
10 p.m., *Mike Gardner*, acoustic
rock/folk.

O'Ireland, 575 Grand Avenue, Carlsbad. 760-720-1500. Saturday, noon to 2 p.m., *the Bad Blokes*, Irish fiddle/mandolin/banjo/guitar.

Ocean House, 300 Carlsbad Village Drive, Carlsbad. 760-729-4131. Friday, 9 p.m. to midnight, *Idle Train*, classic rock. Saturday, *DJ Evan*, rock. Sunday, salsa. Tuesday, 6 p.m. to 9 p.m., *the Cradit Union*, swing.

R. O'Sullivan's, 118 East Grand Avenue, Escondido. 760-737-0954. Thursday, 8:30 p.m., *Fear the Fat Guy*, acoustic rock. Saturday, 9 p.m., *Tony Cummings*, Irish. Sunday, 5 p.m. to 8 p.m., and Tuesday, 8:30 p.m., *the Clachan Boys*, Irish folk. Wednesday, 8:30 p.m., *the Clay Colton Band*, acoustic rock/folk.

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Calendar CLUBS

NORTH COUNTY

(continued)

Friday, 5:30 p.m. to 10:30 p.m., and Saturday, 6 p.m. to 11 p.m., *Jerry Melnick* and *Tom Bishop*, jazz/variety.

Surf N'Saddle, 123 West Plaza Street (Lomas Santa Fe and Highway 101), Solana Beach. 858-755-9474. Friday *Chi*, rock. Saturday, *Bridge Crawl*, rock.

Tom Giblin's Irish Pub and Restaurant, 640 Grand Avenue, Carlsbad. 760-729-7234. Thursday, 9 p.m., *Tony Cummings*, Irish folk. Friday, 9 p.m., *Brehon Law*, Irish folk. Saturday, 8:30 p.m., *the Clay Colton Band*, acoustic rock/folk. Tuesday, 8:30 p.m., *Fear the Fat Guy*, acoustic rock. Wednesday, 8:30 p.m., *the Clachan Boys*, Irish folk.

SOUTH BAY/CORONADO

Buon Giorno Restaurant, 4110 Bonita Road, Bonita. 619-475-2660. Thursday, *Yvonne Flores*, piano/jazz. Saturday, *Madera* and *One Thousand Eyes*, jazz.

The Butcher Shop, 556 Broadway, Chula Vista. 619-420-9440. Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and Wednesday, 8 p.m., *Ray Correa*, standards/pop/Latin.

Galley at the Marina, 550 Marina Parkway, Chula Vista. 619-422-5714. Saturday, 6 p.m. to 10 p.m., *Fallguyz* and *Toni Valdez*, blues/swing.

Hotel del Coronado, 1550 Orange Avenue, Coronado. 619-435-6611. Babcock and Story: Thursday through Sunday, 4:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., *Tony Lasley*, Latin jazz. Friday and Saturday, 8:30 p.m., *Ray Briz*, pianist. Monday, 4:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., *Gonzo Gonzales*. Tuesday and Wednesday, *Jim Gibson*, guitarist.

1500 Ocean: Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, 9 p.m. to midnight, *Tony Lasley*, jazz guitar.

Crown Room: Sunday, 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., *Ray Briz*, pianist, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., *Ping Hu*, harpist.

Island Sports and Spirits, 104 Orange Avenue, Coronado. 619-435-3456. Friday, *Ron's Garage*, classic rock. Saturday, *Jones Revival*, rock.

McP's Irish Pub and Grill, 1107 Orange Avenue, Coronado. 619-435-5280. Music is acoustic/folk unless otherwise noted. Thursday, *the Fall Guys*. Friday, *Big City Shaman*, blues. Saturday, *4-Way Street*. Monday, *Gene Warren*. Tuesday, *David Hauser*. Wednesday, *Jackson* and *Jesus*.

EAST COUNTY

Borders Books and Music (El Cajon), 159 Parkway Plaza, El Cajon. 619-593-5119. Saturday, 7 p.m., *Monty McIntyre*, acoustic folk.

Dirk's Niteclub, 7662 Broadway, Lemon Grove. 619-469-6344. Friday and Saturday, *Nemesis*, classic rock.

Don's Cocktail Lounge, 13321 Business Highway 8, El Cajon. 619-443-2444. Friday and Saturday, *Benchmark*, country.

Fannie's Nightclub, 9143 Campo Road, Spring Valley. 619-698-2204. Friday and Saturday, live rock/metal/punk.

Renegade Inn, 14335 Old Highway 80 (half mile east from Lake Jennings turnoff), Flynn Springs. 619-561-8105. Friday and Saturday, *Southbound Johnny*, country.

Second Wind, 8528 Magnolia Avenue, Santee. 6019-596-8350. Thursday, 8 p.m., *West of 5*, classic rock. Friday and Saturday, *5 Miles High*, classic rock.

Thornton's Irish Pub and Grill, 1221 Broadway, El Cajon. 619-447-5665. Saturday, 8 p.m., *Hugh Gaskins* and *the G-String Daddies*, blues.

Tommy's Italian Restaurant, 1190 North Second Street, El Cajon. 619-440-2676. Friday, 6 p.m. to 10 p.m., *Franco Z*, standards/swing/jazz.

Calendar BANDS

ALTERNATIVE

Allegiance: Ché Café

My American Heart: Epicentre

Amongst the Lost: Brick By Brick

Awaiting Samsara: Dreamstreet

Bartender's Bible: The Casbah

Beta Lion: O'Connell's Pub and Nightclub

Bitter End: Ché Café

Calabria: O'Connell's Pub and Nightclub

A Change of Pace: Epicentre

C.L.A.: The Casbah

The Crashing Marbles: Dreamstreet

The Cunkles: The Casbah

Dante's Boneyard: Brick By Brick

The Dateless Losers: Dreamstreet

Dogsmile: Dreamstreet

Down Again: Ché Café

Empire State: Dreamstreet

Everybody Else: Epicentre

Feed: Ché Café

First Class Hero: Dreamstreet

The Hitchhikers: The Casbah

The Hype: Tio Leo's (Mira Mesa)

Imperial Teen: The Casbah

Internal Affairs: Ché Café

Kit Cloudkicker: O'Connell's Pub and Nightclub

The Nightmares: The Kensington Club, The Casbah

Onesidezero: Brick By Brick

Joey Perfect Blue: O'Connell's Pub and Nightclub

Pigdog: O'Connell's Pub and Nightclub

Red Feathers: Tower Bar

Reeve Oliver: Lestat's Coffee House

Royal Campaign: The Casbah

The Satanic Puppeteer Orchestra: The Casbah

The Sess: Tower Bar

The Sneaky Snakes: O'Connell's Pub and Nightclub

The Sreamin' Yeehaws: The Casbah

Sultry Burlesque: The Casbah

Throw Rag: The Casbah

Tragic Tantrum: The Casbah

The Travel Agents: The Kraken

Twelve Twenty: Dreamstreet

Violation: Ché Café

A Vision of a Dying World: Tower Bar

The White Tie: Epicentre

ROCK

Bad Science Fiction: Winstons

The Band Relationship: O'Connell's Pub and Nightclub

Brain Buckit: O'Connell's Pub and Nightclub

Steve Brewer: Blarney Stone Pub

Bridge Crawl: Surf N'Saddle

Cactus Twang: The Calypso Cafe, Anthology

The Scott Carter Duo: Dick's Last Resort

The Cheap Leis: Belly Up Tavern

Chi: Surf N'Saddle

The Clay Colton Band: Hennessey's Tavern (Carlsbad), Tom Giblin's Irish Pub and Restaurant, R. O'Sullivan's, J.J. Lander's Irish Pub

The Credit Union: Ocean House

Danyavaad and the Shimmy Sisters: Winstons

Dead Rock West: Belly Up Tavern

Deadbolt: The Kensington Club

Delta Nove: Winstons

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The Drowning Men: Belly Up Tavern

A Dull Science: 'Canes

An E for Effort: Brick By Brick

The Electric Waste Band: Winstons

The Fall Guys: McP's Irish Pub and Grill

Fear the Fat Guy: R. O'Sullivan's, Tom Giblin's Irish Pub and Restaurant

5 Miles High: Second Wind (Santee)

Forever Days: Dreamstreet

Forgotten: Dreamstreet

Mike Gardner: North Bar Sports and Spirits, Mas Fina Cantina, Cheers

Good Times: Henry's Pub

Peter Hall: Coyote Bar and Grill

The Hip Replacements: Winstons

The Ideas: Carvers

Idle Train: Ocean House

Roxy Jones: O'Connell's Pub and Nightclub

Jones Revival: Island Sports and Spirits

Mike Keneally: Epicentre

The Knitters: Belly Up Tavern

Jimmy Lewis: Winstons

Livid: Brick By Brick

Lizard Fish: Hennessey's Tavern (Carlsbad)

Lovelee: The Casbah

Dave Mason: Anthology

Media Lab: Brick By Brick

The Melvins: The Casbah

Midnight Movies: The Casbah

Motus: 'Canes

My Sister's Ghost: Molly Malone's

Nemesis: Dirk's Niteclub

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Sunday, December 16
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Calendar BANDS

ROCK

(continued)

Pheromones: Little Italy Urban Bar and Restaurant

The Restless Natives: Coyote Bar and Grill

The Rhythm Method: Coyote Bar and Grill

Ron's Garage: Hennessy's Tavern (PB), Island Sports and Spirits

Sandollar: Dreamstreet, Winstons

Serious Guise: Second Wind (San Carlos)

Ziggy Shuffledust: The Casbah

The Skunk Apes: Winstons

Sofa Kings: Winstons

Spell Toronto: Lestat's Coffee House

Stars on the Water: Tio Leo's (Mira Mesa)

The Stiletto's: Henry's Pub

Straight Six: Dick's Last Resort

Summerset: O'Connell's Pub and Nightclub

Tap Water: O'Connell's Pub and Nightclub

Tarfuti: Scolari's Office

Two Word Name: 'Canes

Viva Santana: Little Italy Urban Bar and Restaurant

West of 5: Second Wind (Santee)

The Young Dubliners: Belly Up Tavern

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The Love Rangers: The Alley

Rick Lyon: The Imperial House

Makai: Humphrey's

The Mar Dels: Belly Up Tavern

Pop Rocks: Jimmy Love's

David Timothy Smith: Albie's Beef Inn

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Trade Winds: Humphrey's

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Tom Bishop: Rancho Bernardo Inn

Jeff Blum: Miami Grille (UTC)

Ray Briz: Hotel del Coronado

Jerome Dawson: Coyote Bar and Grill

Donnie Finnell and Company East: Bistro 221

Yvonne Flores: Buon Giorni Restaurant

Jim Gibson: Hotel del Coronado

Insight: Jimmy Love's

Keith Jacobsen: Ramada Inn

The Jazz Project Big Band: Padre Gold

The John Kopecky Trio: South Park Bar and Grill

Fran Laskota: The Westgate Hotel

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SPARE A SMOKE?

by Josh Board

a couple weeks ago I missed several parties because I was sick. One guy called from Mira Mesa when he noticed his neighbor was having a party. Glad I missed that — there was a shooting.

A guy named Carlo, who used to work at 4th&B, told me his buddies were grilling steaks and got Joey Harris (former Beat Farmer) to perform. Sorry I missed that one.

A woman sent an invitation to the *Reader* about a kids' party for adults — root beer floats, cotton candy... All these parties fell on the weekend I was recovering.

The week before I got sick, I went to Ray at Night in North Park with some friends. I got wind of a party to be held at the loft of an artist.

As my friends and I were coming out of a gallery, we ran into someone we vaguely knew. He told us of a party nearby, which he said sounded amazing. We walked for miles looking for it and decided we'd just stick with the original artist's party.



Turned out that party was the one he was talking about.

As I walked in, I noticed a lot of movie posters and pop art. There was a guy with a scarf on, and he had long curly hair. I said to my friend, "Robert Plant called. He wants his look back." My friend

"Robert Plant called. He wants his look back."

responded, "Or Michael Bolton."

When another guy walked by who had a goatee, someone nearby said, "I'm not sure about the look of that guy



with his goofy hat." I responded, "If he has a motorcycle with a sidecar, that look is perfect for him. If he's just

an artist and thinks that look works..."

One of the women with me added, "Or a Vespa. I could see him riding one of those."

Another friend asked,



Top left: The author (left) and Andrew; Top right: An artist with one of her sculptures

"Are you going to spend the entire evening making fun of everyone?"

There was a table of food near the kitchen. A bowl in the middle of the table was filled with candy bars. I heard someone say, "I bet that's all leftovers from Halloween." I said, "Yeah, but there are granola bars in there. Those probably weren't for Halloween." My friend said, "I remember people giving those out for Halloween. I'd hand it back."

Someone else added, "Those are the people who get their houses toilet-papered." I said, "I thought that was reserved for people who didn't give out anything. I'd take granola bars, even if I wasn't going to eat them. You never know what you can trade." A guy named Andrew, who I see at many art-related events, said, "That's true. You can trade with that hyperglycemic neighbor kid, and he'd take two of those for a Hershey bar."

There was a jar of peanuts on the table, and someone said, "I really want some peanuts, but I'm afraid it's one of those gag things — if I open it, a snake's going to jump out."

Someone else said, "You don't eat snake? Hey, if you like peanuts enough, it's worth the risk. And besides, if you're expecting the snake, it shouldn't scare you."

I went out back to smoke a cigar and got into a discussion with my friends. When we were at Ray at Night, a few

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people had asked us for cigarettes. None of us had them, but I suggested that it seems odd to ask strangers for cigarettes — it's not like a cheap piece of gum.

This became funnier when a blond woman approached my friend Bonnie for a cigarette. Bonnie said, "We were just talking about people who don't have their own cigarettes." This woman didn't take that well. She walked away to talk with her friend and was pointing at Bonnie. I said, "I'll go over and ask her for a cigarette. Or another cigar." My friends objected, and I suggested, "How about you go over with those celery and carrot sticks. Tell her you don't have cigarettes but offer her one of these. They're healthier."

A couple was playing Ping-Pong in front of a cement wall where visuals were being displayed. Later in the evening, they showed the movie *The Man Who Fell to Earth* against that wall.

I was told this guy had a Rolling Stones-themed party — you had to dress like one of the Stones. I asked a blond woman with an "SD" hat that lit up which Stone she was. She said, "I don't know. I had long blond hair." I was trying to think if Ron Wood ever had blond hair, until she said, "I was one of the wives." I said, "Jerry Hall?" She said, "Bianca Jagger." I explained that Bianca was black, so it was probably Jerry Hall. Someone else at the party told me he thought she was Marianne Faithful.

When the homeowner walked by, I asked, "*Exile on Main Street* is the best Stones album, isn't it?" He smiled and said, "It sure is." He ended up showing me some of his Rolling Stones artwork upstairs.

I heard one woman tell her boyfriend, "I want one of those SD hats that light up." He said, "It doesn't stand for San Diego. It stands for sexual deviant." She said, "Now I really want one."

When I went back to talk with Andrew, I noticed he had sparkly glitter all over his shoes. He said, "Hey, you never know when bowling is going to break out." That's funny coming from him, since he looks like the Dude in *The Big Lebowski*.

One area of the loft is used as a dressing room whenever they film there. A few people tried on the various wigs.

When the movie started and things got quiet, I decided to split. Someone asked me, "How can you leave a party at such a cool place?"

"I've already been here over an hour," I said, "and we can't talk now that the movie's playing." A few people were heckling the movie, while others were saying, "Shhhh!"

I whispered, "If they didn't have those two

couches blocking that basketball hoop on the wall, I'd stay longer and maybe challenge someone to a game of horse." ■


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Truth Attack

"We didn't invite them," Dick barks, "they invited themselves!"

Kristianne Kurner's set previews *Off the Ground* before the actors arrive. It's Christmas Eve day at Grandpa Dick's Pennsylvania home, but you see nary a tree nor an ornament in his living room, and only one holiday card. A patina of dust covers drab furnishings, from the Frump Collection at Cheapo's for Less. Perched on a brick wall, a bowling pin oversees a floor strewn with unclipped Sunday paper coupons. The room looks lived in, if couch-potatoing qualifies as living.

REVIEW
JEFF SMITH

Amy Chini and Tom Zohar's world-premiere script's a behind-the-façade Christmas show, in which volatile, smarmy subtexts invade the chipper surface. Not that he'd care, but in Dick's family, every day must shine bright. Troubles do not exist. In fact, they wouldn't dare. That's why Joel's divorce, a year ago, cast such a negative reflection on a clan programmed to succeed. Rather than acknowledge the split, they've stayed away from each other for the last 12 months.

Joel and Dick, whose wife died four years ago, have been housemates for a while. Neither's in a festive mood. So when their extended family comes for Christmas ("We didn't invite them," Dick barks, "they invited themselves!"), all hell pretty much breaks loose.

We're talking scream-outs and hasty "well, humph!" exits and threats of divorce, as if the arrival of the tree and ornaments and well-meaning relatives injected everyone with Tourette's syn-

drome — or, with what Bob Dylan calls a "truth attack." The family that "pretends everything's fine" dismantles. Then, in a leap even red-nosed reindeers would not attempt when sober, they come back together and enjoy some late-evening holiday pie.

The leap's a whopper, especially since Act Two's full of soap operatics and then suddenly, at the end, we're in a comedy humming Christmas carols. The script is strongest in immediate exchanges. When actors stand toe-to-toe, the dialogue crackles. Problems arise getting into and back out of the bickering, however. The writing raises as many questions as it answers and needs stronger dramatic arcs and builds. For example, the first act, which introduces the family, just ends.

Joshua Everett Johnson, one of the best actors around, has directed the play for emotional truth. This gives his cast chances to cut loose (Wendy Waddell, with an impressively sustained, earth-shaking tirade), to ground their characters (Charlie Riendeau's understated, funny Gramps, grumpy with good reason), and feel deeply (Francis Gercke's divorced Joel, not spending Christmas with his daughter). But genuine emotions also expose gaps in the script's fuzzy motivations and abrupt vaultings over the edge, then bounding back up. If the family feels so deeply, how could they suddenly revert to their ostrich, "everything's peachy" lives?

The characters lack dimension. They're pretty much just their problems. It's unpleasant to say,



Off the Ground

Off the Ground, by Amy Chini and Tom Zohar
New Village Arts Theatre, 2787-B State Street, Carlsbad
Directed by Joshua Everett Johnson; cast: Charlie Riendeau, Francis Gercke, Wendy Waddell, Terry Scheidt, Sandra Ellis-Troy, Jack Missett, Amanda Morrow; scenic and costume design, Kristianne Kurner; lighting, Ashley Jenks; sound, Adam Brick
Playing through December 23; Thursday through Saturday at 8:00 p.m. Matinee Sunday at 2:00 p.m. 760-433-3245.

Christmas Is Comin' Uptown, lyrics by Peter Udell, music by Garry Sherman, book by Udell and Phillip Rose
Common Ground Theatre, WorldBeat Center, 2100 Park Boulevard, Balboa Park
Directed by Charles W. Patmon Jr.; cast: Warren Nolan Jr., John Paul Roberts Jr., Chondra Profit, Bryan Bargarin, Patrick Kelly, Deanne Cartwright, Loren Lott, Evie Pree, Manolito Lopez, Nicol Thomas, Dezmon Patmon, Andre, Onna Harper, Ida L. Rhem; scenic design, Ted Crittenden; lighting, Jennifer Zodrow; costumes, Joan Hanselman-Wong; sound, Alvin Green Lewis; choreography, Manolito Lopez; musicians, David B. Phillips, Russell Ramo, Justin Tinker, Charles Gooden.
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but an acting style that's a tad more whacko-dysfunctional might have alleviated some of the script's difficulties, and it might have made the family more likable.

Hear the word "Scrooge," and you think what? Bah, humbug? Miser? Frozen heart? Our first glimpse in *Christmas Is Comin' Uptown*, an African-American musical adaptation of Dickens's *Christmas Carol*, comes as a surprise: the guy's joyous! He loves the holiday season, he sings, while symbolically pickpocketing shoppers in 1970s Harlem. It's a perfect time for exploitation, he chortles: "Somebody's gotta be the heavy. Somebody's gotta be the snake."

And even though the thermometer just hit 30 below, he's foreclosing apartments, a rec center, and a church ("If they can't pay, they can't pray"), because his profit motive doesn't take days off. He's so greedy that even to stand near him is "de-po-RESS-ing." If he doesn't get an attitude adjustment soon, as a fiery trio sings, he'll land a "One-Way Ticket to Hell."

One could wish that the acoustics for Common Ground Theatre's show were sharper



Christmas Is Comin' Uptown

(sit close to the stage if you can) and that portions were tighter, but the production overall is hip, engaging, and fun. The familiar characters get new guises. Played by Manolito Lopez, for example, Jacob Marley becomes a Bob Marley look-alike, with white, flowing dreadlocks. As a statuesque Christmas Present and as Mary, Scrooge's ex-, versatile Chondra Profit depicts two different ways of being nonsense. The dynamic trio of singers — Deanne Cartwright, Loren Lott, and Evie Pree — should cut a record. And Warren Nolan Jr. makes for a terrific Scrooge, whose shift

from ebb to flow is both funny and moving.

'Tis the season, and local theater abounds with an amazing variety of holiday shows: you can have a white Christmas, literally, at Julian's Town Hall, or a turn-of-the-(19th)-century extravaganza at the Hotel del, or watch Tiny Tim become Scrooge-like at 6th@Penn. And if the season becomes too much and you hanker for quality, non-Yuletide productions, I heartily recommend Moxie Theatre's *Victoria Martin: Math Team Queen* and Mo'olelo's *Cowboy Versus Samurai*. Both must close this weekend. ■

THEATER LISTINGS

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

Amahl and the Night Visitors

Lyric Opera of San Diego presents Gian Carlo Menotti's holiday opera about the three kings, and the crippled boy who wants to bring a gift to Bethlehem.

STEPHEN AND MARY BIRCH NORTH PARK THEATRE, UNIVERSITY AVENUE AT 29TH STREET, NORTH PARK, FRIDAY, DECEMBER 14, THROUGH DECEMBER 23; FRIDAY, DECEMBER 14, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 15, AND THURSDAY, DECEMBER 20, AT 7:30 P.M. MATINEE SUNDAY, AND SATURDAY, DECEMBER 22, AT 2:30 P.M. 619-239-8836.

An American Christmas

Lamb's Players stages its historical reenactment of Christmas in 1907 at the Hotel del Coronado, which includes a cast of 30, songs, and a five-course meal. HOTEL DEL CORONADO, THROUGH DECEMBER 30, NIGHTLY AT 6:30 P.M. 619-437-0600.

An Angel's Gift

San Diego's Lindley Lopez Circus presents its second annual holiday production about a little lost angel adopted by a circus family. LYMAN SAVILLE THEATRE, SAN DIEGO CITY COLLEGE, C STREET AT 13TH, DOWNTOWN, FRIDAY, DECEMBER 14, THROUGH SUNDAY, DECEMBER 16, AT 7:30 P.M. MATINEE SATURDAY AND SUNDAY AT 3:00 P.M. 619-543-0911.

A Christmas Carol

Kinney Productions continues its "Julian holiday tradition" with Don Winslow's adaptation of Dickens's popular story. Scott Kinney directed.

JULIAN TOWN HALL, 2129 MAIN STREET, JULIAN, THROUGH DECEMBER 23; FRIDAY AND SATURDAY AT 7:30 P.M. MATINEE SUNDAY, DECEMBER 23, AT 1:00 P.M. 760-765-1688.

A Christmas Carol

North Coast Repertory Theatre presents a new version (by Jacqueline Pardue Goldfinger) of the popular Dickens story. Joe Powers directed.

NORTH COAST REPERTORY THEATRE, 987D LOMAS SANTA FE DRIVE, SOLANA BEACH, FRIDAY, DECEMBER 14, THROUGH DECEMBER 30. FRIDAY AT 7 P.M., SATURDAY AT 6 P.M., AND SUNDAY, DECEMBER 16, AT 6 P.M. MATINEES ON WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 19, AT 2 P.M.; THURSDAY, DECEMBER 20, AT NOON; THURSDAY, DECEMBER 27, PLUS FRIDAYS AND SATURDAYS, AT 2 P.M. (858) 481-1055 OR (888) 776-NCRT (6278).

A Christmas Carol: Not-So-Tiny Tim's Great Big Musical!

Vox Nova Theatre Company presents the world premiere of Ruff Yeager's holiday musical, in which Tiny Tim, now grown up, has three ghostly visitors. Susan Stratton directed.

6TH@PENN THEATRE, 3704 SIXTH AVENUE, HILLCREST, THROUGH DECEMBER 23; THURSDAY THROUGH SATURDAY AT 8:00 P.M. SUNDAY AT 7:00 P.M. MATINEE SUNDAY AT 2:00 P.M. 858-539-6251.

Christmas Is Comin' Uptown

Reviewed this issue. WORLDBEAT CULTURAL CENTER, 2100 PARK BOULEVARD, BALBOA PARK, THROUGH DECEMBER 16; FRIDAY AND SATURDAY AT 8:00 P.M. SUNDAY AT 5:00 P.M. 619-263-7911.

A Christmas Story

OnStage Playhouse presents a radio-style reading of the 1983 movie, based on Jean Shepherd's short stories and anecdotes. ONSTAGE PLAYHOUSE 291 THIRD AVENUE, CHULA VISTA, THROUGH DECEMBER 16; FRIDAY AND SATURDAY AT 8:00 P.M. MATINEE SUNDAY AT 2:00 P.M. 619-422-7787.

A Christmas Story

The Olive Tree players present a staged reading of Jean Shepherd's tale about Ralphie Parker, who schemes to get a genuine Red Ryder BB gun under the Christmas tree.

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Calendar THEATER

OLIVE TREE PLAYERS, FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF SAN DIEGO, LINDER HALL, 2111 CAMINO DEL RIO SOUTH, MISSION VALLEY, THURSDAY, DECEMBER 13, THROUGH DECEMBER 16; THURSDAY THROUGH SATURDAY AT 7:00 P.M. MATINEE SUNDAY, DECEMBER 16, AT 2:00 P.M. 619-297-4366 X510.

Cowboy Versus Samurai

"Speak for yourself, John." But what if John Alden, or in this case Travis, an English teacher, can't. Until Veronica arrived, he was one of only two Asian-Americans in Breakneck, a "two donkey" Wyoming town. She's Korean-American with a penchant for white men. And when she falls for Del, a hunky, none-too-bright P.E. teacher, Travis writes love letters to her and signs Del's name, à la Cyrano de Bergerac. Mo'olelo Performing Arts Company has earned a reputation for staging entertaining and thought-provoking theater. Michael Golamco's smart, funny *Cowboy Versus Samurai* is both a love story that poses tough, intricate questions about identity, race, and bias, without sounding like a lecture or opting for easy solutions (even the love story's in doubt). David F. Weiner's useful, multi-leveled set has five panels, on

which color slides (and Jeremy Siebert's first-rate sounds, especially wraparound winds) expand the space to Wyoming proportions. Except for a tendency to rush their lines, the four-person cast — Paul Morgan Stetler (Del), Volt Francisco (Travis, still running though convinced he's stopped), Eric "Pogi" Sumangil (radical, and racist, Chester), and Zandi De Jesus (NY-savvy Veronica) — all handle their assignments quite well. And remember the names. Each shows promise and is relatively new to local theater.

Worth a try.

MO'OLELO PERFORMING ARTS COMPANY, 10TH AVENUE THEATRE, 930 10TH AVENUE, DOWNTOWN, THROUGH DECEMBER 16; THURSDAY THROUGH SATURDAY AT 7:30 P.M. MATINEE SUNDAY AT 2:00 P.M. 619-342-7395.

Cry-Baby

This new musical, based on the John Waters movie (1990), is thinner than Waters's moustache. Buffed and Lysol'd, it's *Cry-Baby* watered-down. Baltimore in 1954 has two social groups: Squares, an entitled upper class, and Drapes, a gang of white kids in black leather. Hip-shaking, bebopping Cry-Baby (so called because he can't) is the "most popular loser in school." He falls for Allison, a Square who's good, "but I don't wanna be." The forces of repression — including a quartet of Squares (who sing like the Plaids of *Forever Plaid* and talk like Hitler Youth) — endeavor to

keep Cry-Baby and Allison apart. Most of the musical, the first act in particular, feels generic. The songs, rock and roll at the cusp of puberty (which came about the day Elvis sang "Hound Dog") are lively and familiar ("Do That Again" being a dead steal from Jerry Lee Lewis's "Great Balls of Fire"). The show entertains. Director Mark Brokaw (and Mark O'Donnell and Thomas Meehan's hilarious one-liners and Rob Ashford's excellent choreography see to it) keeps things moving even when the book, which extends many bits too long, doesn't. But since the villains speak their subtexts (as if to say "Hi, I'm a Nazi"), and the heroes are so heroic (James Snyder, an indefatigable young talent, plays Cry-Baby closer to Donny Osmond than to Johnny Depp's spit-curled movie version), the musical's so audience-friendly it plays like *Rebel with a Nice Cause*.

Worth a try.

LA JOLLA PLAYHOUSE, MANDELL WEISS THEATRE, 2910 LA JOLLA VILLAGE DRIVE, THROUGH DECEMBER 16; THURSDAY THROUGH SATURDAY AT 8:00 P.M. SUNDAY AT 7:00 P.M. MATINEE SATURDAY AND SUNDAY AT 2:00 P.M. 858-550-1010.

Giving Season

Write Out Loud's first holiday program features stories and award-winning live Foley sound artist, Scott Paulson. CYGNET THEATRE, 6663 EL CAJON BOULEVARD, COLLEGE AREA, SATUR-

DAY, DECEMBER 15, AT 2:00 P.M. 619-297-8953.

How the Grinch Stole Christmas

The Old Globe presents its holiday show, about the Green Meanie and hapless Whoville. The tenth anniversary production includes three new songs.

OLD GLOBE THEATRE, SIMON EDISON CENTRE FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS, BALBOA PARK, THROUGH DECEMBER 30; TUESDAY THROUGH SUNDAY AT 7:30 P.M. FOR MATINEE SCHEDULE, CALL 619-234-5623.

Irving Berlin's White Christmas

Welk Resort Theatre presents the San Diego premiere of a new musical based on the melodies of the 1954 movie, including "Blue Skies," "Happy Holidays," and the title song. Jon Engstrom directed and choreographed.

WELK RESORT THEATRE, THROUGH DECEMBER 30; TUESDAY, THURSDAY, AND SATURDAY AT 8:00 P.M. MATINEE TUESDAY THROUGH THURSDAY, SATURDAY AND SUNDAY AT 1:45 P.M. 760-749-3448.

It's a Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play

In Cygnet Theatre's holiday show, you not only watch the familiar story of George Bailey, you also watch how it's made in a 1947 radio studio: announcers, flashing applause signs, even a commercial for Lux soap. A change happens toward the end, however. The fiction

trumps the fact. As George undergoes an existentialist identity crisis, the actors become the characters, the story steps forward, and how it's being made disappears. Along the way, the show's a treat, especially Scott Paulson's inventive sounds — like a popped top hat for an opening parachute, or a flicked ice cream scoop for crickets. Directed by Sean Murray, wearing Jeanne Reith's wide-body, double-breasted suits and lighter-than-air dresses, the cast performs in the hyper-acting style of the period. As George, Tom Andrew has the antsy "shoot the works" style down pat. His performance recalls Jimmy Stewart's in the movie, true. But the bigger crime would be if it didn't. Melissa Fernandes, Veronica Murphy, and Brenda Dodge sing (and flash those cinemascopes, post-WWII smiles) beautifully. They do a spunky commercial for "Lux Toilet Cake" that's both spot on and a hoot.

Worth a try.

CYGNET THEATRE, 6663 EL CAJON BOULEVARD, COLLEGE AREA, THROUGH DECEMBER 30; THURSDAY THROUGH SATURDAY AT (AND WEDNESDAYS, AFTER DECEMBER 12) AT 8:00 P.M. SUNDAY AT 7:00 P.M. MATINEE SUNDAY AT 2:00 P.M. 619-337-1525.

Lamb's Players Festival of Christmas

Now in its 30th year, Lamb's Players' annual holiday show has a new script by Kerry Meads: a diverse group of stranded travelers cele-

brate the season with stories and songs.

LAMB'S PLAYERS THEATRE, 1142 ORANGE AVENUE, CORONADO, THROUGH DECEMBER 29; TUESDAY THROUGH THURSDAY AT 7:30 P.M. FRIDAY AND SATURDAY AT 8:00 P.M. SUNDAY AT 6:00 P.M. MATINEE SATURDAY AT 4:00 P.M. AND SUNDAY AT 2:00 P.M. 619-437-0600.

La Pastorela de la Raza

Teatro Mascara Magica stages its 17th annual (and very popular) Holiday show, in which Lucifer and his "nasty minions" try to stop shepherds from going to Bethlehem. William Virchis directed. LYCEUM THEATRE, 79 HORTON PLAZA, DOWNTOWN, TUESDAY, DECEMBER 18, THROUGH DECEMBER 30; THURSDAY THROUGH SATURDAY AT 7:30 P.M. MATINEE SATURDAY, DECEMBER 29, AND SUNDAY, DECEMBER 30, AT 2:00 P.M. 619-544-1000.

National Comedy Theatre

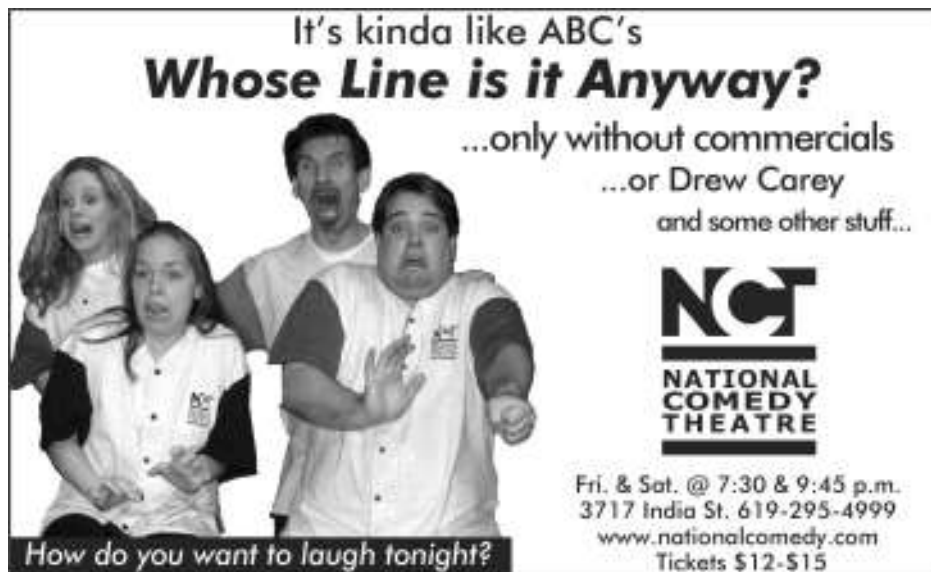
Improvisational comedy, making up funny stuff on the spot, is difficult enough. Years ago, however, Keith Johnstone thought it'd be more exciting if gone competitively. He got the idea from pro wrestling ("where Terrible Turks mangled defrocked priests while grannies waved their handbags"). National Comedy Theatre, an offshoot of Johnstone's TheatreSports (artistic director Gary Kramer says the two compare like "rugby and American football"), resembles an athletic event more than an improve. Teams wear uniforms and

"It's A Wonderful Life really is wonder-filled"
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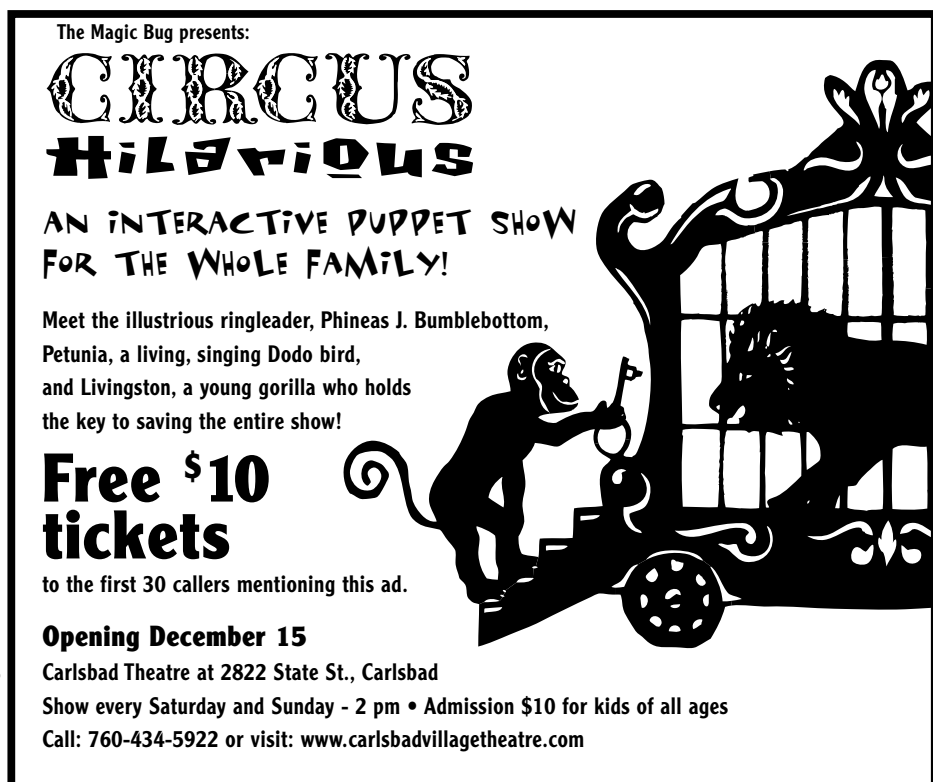
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compete on ActroTurf. Using suggestions from the audience, they play “Emotional Sympathy,” “Blind Line,” and “Freeze Tag,” with judges awarding points to the best scenes. Klunkers and groaners get booed; quick wit rewarded (one of the most refreshing parts of the contest: people acknowledge failure, abundantly, then forget it). It makes for a lively, often funny evening. And Gary Kramer is one talented comedian.

Worth a try.

MARQUIS THEATER, 3717 INDIA STREET. MISSION HILLS, OPEN-ENDED RUN; FRIDAY AND SATURDAY AT 7:30 P.M. AND 9:45 P.M. 619-295-4999.

Nuncrackers: The Nunsense Christmas Musical

The Broadway Theater stages the musical comedy, from the creators of *Nunsense*, about the little sisters of Hoboken. To raise money they’re staging *The Nutcracker*. THE BROADWAY THEATER, 340 EAST BROADWAY, SUITE B, VISTA, THROUGH DECEMBER 22; THURSDAY THROUGH SATURDAY AT 7:30 P.M. MATINEE SATURDAY AT 2:00 P.M. 760-806-7905.

Off the Ground

Reviewed this issue. NEW VILLAGE ARTS THEATRE, 2787B STATE STREET, CARLSBAD, THROUGH

DECEMBER 23; THURSDAY THROUGH SATURDAY AT 8:00 P.M. MATINEE SUNDAY AT 2:00 P.M. 760-433-3245.

Punks

Ion Theatre opens its promising new space with a warning: its take on Genet’s drama *The Maids* “contains full nudity, strong language, sexual situations, simulated drug use, and smoke.” It is also an intense 90-minute piece that plays lethal hide-and-seek with two young Latino hustlers. They perform dominance/submission rituals, in their NYC apartment, for Papin, a lech across the street. But when aren’t they performing? And who are they? Every time they drop a mask there’s another underneath. As in *The Maids* (Claudio Raygoza’s excellent writing keeps Genet ever in mind), Jesus and Cristobal (Markuz Rodriguez and Steven Lone, both riveting) dream of belonging in the world (as in *Waiting for Godot*, their play-acting helps them order, and gain partial release from, their lives). But they remain stuck in servitude, emblemized by the arrival of Papin (Robin Christ playing a man dressed as Marie Antoinette in a basketball-sized silver wig). The script, conceived and directed by Glenn Paris, shifts in styles, and the acting fol-

lows suit, leaping — often in a heartbeat — from the ornate and literary to drug culture desperation (the “tea” in Genet meant to poison Madame becomes street tea, heroin, in this version). Some of the stage business gets overextended, but overall *Punks* moves like a ticking bomb.

Worth a try.

ION THEATRE, ACADEMY OF PERFORMING ARTS, 4580-B ALVARADO CANYON ROAD, EAST MISSION VALLEY, THROUGH DECEMBER 15; THURSDAY THROUGH SATURDAY AT 8:00 P.M. 619-374-6894.

Sister’s Christmas Catechism: The Mystery of the Magi’s Gold

North Coast Repertory Theatre presents a brief return engagement of this popular sequel to Maripat Donovan’s *Late Nite Catechism*. Sister, a spare-not-the-rod old schooler, is substitute-teaching once again (gum-chewers beware; class clowns — don’t even think about it!). Her classroom’s the same, only the desk is piled with presents, and there’s a cheapo plastic representation of Joseph, Mary, and the baby Jesus on the floor. The first act’s a class on the Christmas story (people who give the right answer to Sister’s many ques-

tions receive gifts, of sorts). The second’s a party, which includes a “Living nativity” (audience members dress in “found” items like lampshades and shower curtains) and a mystery. According to Sister, everyone knows that “Mary used the frankincense and myrrh as a sort of potpourri — they were in a barn, after all” — but someone made off with the Magi’s gold. The class combines the Christmas story with a CSI investigation to identify the culprit. The second act is slowish (the nativity takes much time to prepare), but the evening’s always fun and, for those whose education had a stern Sister or two, guaranteed to evoke memories.

Worth a try.

NORTH COAST REPERTORY THEATRE, 987D LOMAS SANTA FE, SOLANA BEACH, MONDAY, DECEMBER 17, THROUGH WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 19, AT 7:30 P.M. 858-481-1055.

Sweet 15 (Quinceañera)

In Latino culture a *Quinceañera* is a coming-out party for 15-year-old girls, “like Christmas and birthdays and Miss America pageants rolled into one,” says a character in Rick Najera’s comedy. Much of the show’s success, each night, will depend on how much the audience wants to party, since *Sweet 15* has a

much better set-up than punchline. Sonora’s runaway, possibly organized-crime-linked father wants to give her a *Quinceañera* ten years after the fact. Will Sonora, who double-majored in women’s studies and Chicana studies at SDSU, agree to a ritual she now finds sexist, patriarchal, and patronizing? Act One has humor and tension (and bunches of San Diego references). Act Two begins with the *quince* planner having spent the cash and improvising but soon resembles watching air leave a balloon. The second act begs for strong, character-driven comedy and resolution. Instead, along with an almost endless, audience-participation dance, it becomes ad lib- and situation-driven. The script dwindles and ties loose ends with sitcom facility. The production offers lively performances by Fernando Vega, as a transgender lounge lizard, among

others, and by Alma Martinez as grandmother Chata Gomez. She always and adamantly knows what she wants, until she changes her mind.

SAN DIEGO REPERTORY THEATRE, LYCEUM THEATRE, 79 HORTON PLAZA, DOWNTOWN, THROUGH DECEMBER 16; THURSDAY THROUGH SATURDAY AT 8:00 P.M. SUNDAY AT 7:00 P.M. MATINEE SUNDAY AT 2:00 P.M. 619-544-1000.

Traditions of Christmas

For its 15th anniversary “holiday spectacular,” Christian Community Theater has added ten new musical numbers. EAST COUNTY PERFORMING ARTS CENTER, 210 EAST MAIN STREET, EL CAJON, THROUGH DECEMBER 23; THURSDAY THROUGH SATURDAY AT 7:00 P.M. SUNDAY AT 6:00 P.M. MATINEE SATURDAY AND SUNDAY AT 2:00 P.M. 619-588-0206.

Olive Tree Players presents a STAGED READING of

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Carlsbad Village Theatre

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www.carlsbadvillagetheatre.com

Centro Cultural De La Raza

2004 Park Blvd., Balboa Park
(619) 235-6135 www.centroraza.com

Christian Community Theater

1545 Pioneer Way, El Cajon
(619) 588-0206 www.expactive.com

Civic Theatre

3rd & B, Downtown
(858) 570-1100 www.sd civic.org

Clairemont Community Players

Holmes Elementary
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Soup as Good as Jazz

It was a dark and stormy night. (Well, it *was*.) And that night, as the rain streamed down and sideways onto Third Avenue, forming a shin-deep pond at the corner, we were sipping a soup that brought chills to my spine — chills, that is, of warmth, comfort, and joy. Chef Comer D. Smith's cream of porcini and chestnut masterpiece was intensely mushroomy (mushroomy multiplied), made from an assortment of fresh varieties (shiitake, maitake, cremini, etc.), as well as dried porcini. A back-of-the-palate nutty sweetness emerged from puréed chestnuts and a touch of Port reduction — as well as from a secret base of the corncob stock Smith uses instead of water in his broths. ("A lot of love goes into this soup," the chef later told me. We could taste it.) The bowl was garnished with poufs of chive-flecked tart goat cheese. As earthy and insinuating as a lover's caress, as comforting as a crackling hearth on an icy night, the soup seemed more like magic than mere pottage. "Maybe good jazz doesn't beat *all* food after all," I murmured. "This could be a contender."

The last thing I expected from Seasons was to be thrilled. A serious chef? Fresh and lively cooking? *There?* The new restaurant took over the rather divey premises of the former Brazil on the Hill (the latter's owners are its primary investors, although the chef has a small stake in it, too), and the decor has remained true to its original shabby non-chic. Although the window details (inherited from an earlier Italian restaurant) have an airy, Mediterranean look, the gloomy dark-red walls are hung with dark-and-stormy paintings. Still no carpet, just a dark floor, but at least the bar and huge TV (muted) have been moved from the entry area to an inner corner. The tables, widely spaced, have white linen cloths topped by brown butcher paper, with pinkish napkins tucked into goblets. The unpadded, un-ergonomic wooden chairs grow punishing over a long evening, but booths are in the works. Obviously, the feel is casual rather than snobby. Happily, Brazil's painful din has diminished to a lively conversational buzz (except when full), and service is now friendly, benign, and thoroughly competent.

Chef Comer, an energetic 33-year-old from Atlanta, is more than competent, and he's created a venturesome, ever-changing seasonal menu. There are, of course, the usual courses (appetizers, salads, entrées), but there's also a delightfully diverse separate page of "Global Tapas" drawn



PHOTOGRAPH BY JOE KLEIN

from entrée highlights, miniaturized and reduced to their vital elements. "Eat me!" they say. These plates are sized to be shared among three or four, and a convivial shared grazing dinner of tapas would run less than \$25 a person (food costs only).

Among the most daring of these tastes: ginger-chicken pot stickers in hot-and-sour soup. The pot-sticker skin is tender, plumply filled with well-seasoned, premium Jidori chicken meat. The broth is neither Szechuan Chinese nor Thai. It's rich, thick, and complex, and it took careful tasting to figure out why it seemed vaguely familiar: It was like Eastern European stuffed-cabbage gravy — as interpreted by a Southeast Asian chef. This tapa used to be a part (the best part) of a Jidori chicken "trilogy" entrée, but two is company, and the dish is now a duet featuring a breast and a spring roll. (The chef needed to simplify, given space, time, and staffing limits.)

Similarly, slow-roasted pork and corn pudding is an exile from the now-divorced duet-of-pork entrée. The tapa gives you chile-rubbed shoulder — the most flavorful of pork cuts (it's the one used in pulled pork, which this resembles), but you don't

see it in many "fine-dining" restaurants. I guess it's considered too low class and somewhat burdensome, because of the long, slow cooking required to melt down the sinews and fat.

Blue crab bites are sparky bright — small, battered orbs of crab plated over diced mango that — far from the standard salsa of lazy chefs — has been brined and poached in reduced rice vinegar with shallots, then mingled with a slightly sweet syrup, with spicy aioli on the side for dipping. The edge of the plate is rimmed with Japanese eel sauce — the same stuff you find on your Philly roll in a sushi bar, a bottled potion made from reduced eel-bone stock. I found I preferred these bites to the regular appetizer of Chef Comer's Famous Crab Cakes, which come with the same garnishes (plus a bacon "foam"). The bites taste crabbier, their filling moister, and their surface crisper.

We also enjoyed duck confit mini-tacos with pico de gallo sauce and puffs of feta cheese; the flavors were bright, fresh, and up-front. Fried butternut squash ravioli have rather chewy skins (from the frying, duh) encasing naturally sweet

REVIEW NAOMI WISE

Seasons 142
 ★★½ (Very Good to Excellent)

142 University Avenue (at Third Avenue), Hillcrest, 619-692-1919.

HOURS: Tuesday–Thursday and Sunday, 11:00 a.m.–9:00 p.m. Friday–Saturday noon–10:00 p.m. Closed Mondays.

PRICES: Global tapas, \$5–\$9; appetizers and salads, \$7–\$12.50; entrées, \$15.50–\$28; desserts, \$5.50–\$7.

CUISINE AND BEVERAGES: Generous portions of creative global fusion, surprising but sane, made with naturally raised meats, sustainable seafood, local sustainably raised produce. Wine list modest in size, but international, adventurous, and mainly affordable, with plenty by the glass. Full bar.

PICK HITS: Porcini mushroom and chestnut soup; ginger-chicken pot sticker in hot-sour soup (tapa); blue crab bites (tapa); slow-roasted pork (tapa); day-boat scallops with leeks; surf and turf; braised short ribs; strawberry tart.

NEED TO KNOW: Free/validated parking in small lot a few paces north on Third Avenue. Streetside patio tables in good weather. Menu changes frequently. One vegetarian pasta entrée, nothing vegan. Noisy when full. Casual atmosphere.

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

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purée, topped with slices of Reggiano cheese, candied walnuts, and another minimalist "foam." Goat cheese fritters are cute little things with microgreens and a rich balsamic reduction.

Among the regular appetizers, Wagyu ground beef tartare includes a white truffle and caper aioli and flakes of Parmesan Reggiano. One of the posse was worried about eating raw beef. "I don't think *E. coli* is an issue here," I reassured her. "I'm sure that any rancher raising Wagyu [Kobe] beef wouldn't risk his reputation with unsanitary crowding or sloppy slaughterhouse practices." Between the buttery beef and the rich, smooth

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aioli, the overall effect was of lush mildness—I found the caper and white truffle notes overly subtle. And beef this marbled really needs more “bite.” There was plenty left over, and next day I turned it into a rare-cooked “slider,” in which the truffle note came out of the closet to make a rarely fine burgerette. You can get a tapa of a Kobe avo-bacon slider at Seasons, but the meat is a lower grade than that used in the tartare.

A tuna appetizer offers a duet of ahi, starting with velvety raw sashimi with preserved lemon (a quiet presence) and shaved cucumber. Part II, which also recurs as a solo on the tapas menu, has thick rectangular satays of rare pan-fried ahi coated with sesame seeds and furikake, a smoky-tasting Japanese bottled-spice mix. For sweetness, there’s a charming, tart-apple salad with salty-sweet eel reduction (the Philly roll sauce again), and a dip of soy, rice wine vinegar, and orange juice.

With the entrées, the velvet curtain rises, the orchestra strikes up the overture, the spotlights come on, and the dishes come out singing and dancing, with an all-star cast strutting the stage.

Four pan-seared day-boat scallops, large and luscious, are set atop a buttered-leek fondue. Most chefs would automatically plate scallops atop a starch, but leeks offer full, complementary flavor with none of the carbs. Each scallop was topped with a sweet-tart swirl of “Moroccan tomato jam” and set over a red-wine reduction. For the carbs, if you want them, there’s a rather dry chorizo bread pudding that my tablemates and I found anticlimactic.

On a menu that changes with the weather, Sea Bass Dy-

namite has replaced the Scottish Salmon Dynamite of two weeks previous. I think I’d prefer the salmon with this treatment, a moister, more assertive species, better able to stand up to the aggressive seasoning. The “dynamite” isn’t the mayo-inflected béchamel of most sushi bars but a sharp, spicy glaze of mayo, hot pepper, and eel sauce. Two large pieces of fish (enough for two normal diners) sat on the plate, each surrounded by a pretty bull’s-eye of glazes, dribbles, and garnishes, including twin beds of garlicky edamame-and-corn succotash and a slick of scallion-infused oil.

Surf and Turf is a bold, far cry from steakhouse stuff. The “surf” is a seafood chile relleno, a large, gently spicy poblano cradling sizable chunks of lobster and shreds of crab in a cream sauce, with three cheeses and a complex blend of dried chiles—anchó, New Mexico, and guajillo, for a little *pica*. The “turf” is tender Kobe flat-iron steak, a deeply flavorful cut, rubbed with the same dried-chile mix and plated over a succulent hash of purple potatoes and a black-bean demi-glaze. There’s a small pool of spicy, acidic guajillo chile cream to dip your steak into. The combination is as brilliant as it sounds.

New to the menu at my second visit were Brandt natural short ribs braised in Syrah, then removed from the bone to serve in cubes decoratively plated next to orbs of sweet cipollini onions, all set atop a long pale streak of goat cheese-potato purée and sauced with an intense Syrah reduction. It is both beautiful and thoroughly appropriate winter fare. There’s a bit of white corn and a spoonful of sautéed spinach. This chef never rests.

Two entrées that were simplified in the space of a couple of weeks are the Jidori chicken and the pork tenderloin. The Jidori lost its ginger pot stickers, the pork its shoulder meat, along with a “sponge bread” cradle resembling a traditional Ozark sweet bread called Sally Lunn, or *Sol et Lune* in its original Canadian-Huguenot form. (Turns out that the chef, although Southern born, has never heard of Sally Lunn but reinvented it from scratch, inspired by Ethiopian injera.)

What remains of the poultry is soft breast meat slow-cooked *sous vide* (gently poached in a vacuum-sealed pouch), plus a spring roll stuffed with the braised thigh, over an avocado mousseline. It’s good, but of course I liked it better with the pot sticker and crazy soup. And a former heirloom pork duo is now an ancho-rubbed tenderloin that arrived thrillingly rare (about 130° F), the way they cook this cut in France—where they have fewer food fears and ingredient scares. Tender and juicy, the meat arrives with a pleasant corn pudding, a sauce of rum and molasses, and crispy fried plantain chips—not in the often ponderous Latin-American style, but thin-shaved to create crisp, greaseless rectangles.

With so many interesting sauces to sop, it’s too bad the table bread is third rate, an almost gummy rosemary bread. I don’t know who makes it, but Bread & Cie is a near neighbor and could provide much better.

Because the cooking is so interesting and the portions so large, it’s hard to manage dessert. Nonetheless, three of us enjoyed a shared Carlsbad strawberry tart. It wasn’t exactly light, but it was refreshing enough to reawaken our palates.

The strawberries, glazed with *frangipane* for shine, not excessive sweetness, maintained their tart, clean nature. They were topped with dense sweetened whipped cream (superfluous, to my mouth) and sat atop a smooth crème anglaise custard, with a thin layer of chocolate against the faintly sweet, crumbly, and rather heavy crust. On the plate were small concentric ovals of two glazes—a reduction of blood orange, with ancho chile and vanilla bean, surrounding a center of tart champagne-and-kiwi-juice glaze. What started out as a summery Normal Rockwell soda-shop dessert remained cheerful, but as you plunged deeper, its graces no longer seemed simple—it was art, sunny art, on a dark and stormy night.

ABOUT THE CHEF

“My grandmother was an excellent cook and I spent a lot of time in the kitchen watching her, and because of that I naturally gravitated to it,” says Comer D. Smith. “It started with summer jobs working in kitchens, peeling shrimp—the classic dishwasher story. I just really took to it. By the time I was 16, 17, I was working the line during the summer, and by the time I was 18, it was time to take a career because I had to support myself—I didn’t come from very much money. I got my first break working for a chef on a little island off the coast of Georgia, a little restaurant called Chelsea. It wasn’t super-high-end food but it was done right, with classical French techniques. All the stocks were done in-house. Fresh ingredients, proper technique. It just fascinated me, because the flavors were mind-blowing. I’ve always had a kind of advanced

palate, and this job gave me my first experience with tasting phenomenal food. From then on, I’ve never had any job outside of the kitchen.

“I went to Johnson and Wales Culinary School in Charleston, South Carolina. I worked and went to school at the same time—but school was a little bit easier for me because I’d already got it. A lot of the people who were in culinary school with me had never worked in restaurants and are out of the business by now.

“Out of school, I went to Vancouver and worked in Victoria at the Empress Hotel, until my father got sick with multiple sclerosis. I moved back to Georgia to be closer to home and worked in all the local restaurants. Atlanta is a great food town because there’s a lot of golf, which spawns good food at all the golf resorts in the area. I got my first sous-chef job at one of them, and then my first executive-chef job when I was about 25. I worked for some other great chefs in that area, and then I moved to San Diego.

“I was chef de cuisine at the Sky Room at La Valencia for 3½ years. I moved on to work for Deborah Scott at Indigo Grill, which was a totally different experience. I was mainly looking within the Cohn Restaurant Group to learn about the administrative side of things, dive into the dollars—they’re very successful in that way. But I wasn’t the right fit for that restaurant. Then I worked with Deborah Schneider at the Turf Club at the Del Mar racetrack. We really turned the food around this summer. She’s so down-to-earth, and she really got me excited about food again. She took an interest in me and has been trying to help me get

my name out there. She really promotes the younger chefs, nurtures them. I want to do that, too.

“The reason I moved here is, I’d been living on the East Coast for most of my life, and I wanted a new start. The time I spent out here, I always liked how so much great produce was so easily available. My menu changes often because I like to keep it fresh. I’ll make small changes two or three times a week to take advantage of ingredients coming into season—like now there are these fantastic Fuji persimmons. I like to take French and Asian and Latin and put them all together—I love Latin flavors, I think they’re phenomenal. When I got here, I realized that San Diego is not quite the culinary town that New York or San Francisco or Las Vegas is, but I really like being here because it’s making that step. I’m glad I stayed, because I think now we’re on that cusp of really being on the map culinarily.

“What I’m looking to do is cook fine-dining food without having the fine-dining atmosphere. I want people to be able to come in and relax. I’ll learn from anyone I can. If the dishwasher comes up with a good idea, I’ll use it... We’ve got a really small, sweaty kitchen, and we’re working all together, crammed back there. But I’m happy with the product we’re putting out. I get to put my hands on everything, because I work the line every day, lunch and dinner, six days a week, 14 hours a day. We make everything in-house, so there’s a lot of challenge to it. I’m suffering for my art, but at the end of the day, it’s so much fun. I’m so lucky to be in a job where I get to do what I love every day. My philosophy is, do it fresh, do it right.” ■

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Kevin's bag is still sitting by the front door, between the building's bowling-alley side and the restaurant side. It's ten at night. The guy has just flown in from New York. Was back there for Martha Stewart, doing cooking pieces on Martha Stewart Living Radio. Now he's up at the bar, nattering with Tony and Christine.

I meet Tony 'cause he's seated on the next stool over. I'm waiting for my "Don't Mess with Texas" burger. Must be the only person in this barn drinking a cawfee. I must also be the only person who doesn't know that Kevin Roberts is, like, this famous chef who's nationally known as "the Food Dude," appears on Fox TV and 93.3 radio, and has cooked for Snoop Dogg. He's the spokesman for Frank's RedHot sauce. He's also the owner of this big, rowdy, way-cool, multiscreen sports bar that's half drink, half food, half bowling alley. Plus, he's written one book called *Munchies*, about food and dorm-life (he says it paid for this place), and another called *Kissing in the Kitchen*, about cooking and dating. The guy's on a roll.

I came in here because, well, it's late. And here's a place that feels welcoming this time of night. Food, drink, a couple of dozen sports TVs yakkin' around the brick walls, the clunk of balls and cheers of bowlers and rattle of falling pins. Plus, it's another of those great old warehouses that someone's saved and not wrecked inside.

I popped onto a tall chair at the bottom of a long U-shaped bar and ordered that, uh, coffee, and asked for the menu. Noticed a few snorts from the Leisure Classes, but what can you do. I've got more work tonight. Jamie, the gal on my left, was slurping up an angel-hair pasta that Jamie the server gal — really — brought to her in a big deep white plate. And guess what? It looked and

smelled, as they say in the movies, divine, the last thing you'd expect at your normal buffalo-wing-nachos sports bar. Jamie's friend Melissa had a Caprese panini, a toasted-cheese sandwich, far as I could tell. And Tony here on my right was talking up the Cubano panini. "Such a rich flavor," he said. "I've been having it since I started coming in here."

Which couldn't be that long. Place has only been going, what? Four months? But the space: this has been here forever. I took time to admire the double-arched roof

support overhead, which has to go back to the early 1900s, before I went headdown into the menu.

I knew I wanted a burger. They had the house specialty, a "Tavern Burger," a half-pounder slathered in "secret sauce" and onions (\$7.75; comes with fries, onion rings, or side salad), a basic chiliburger, and a "Don't Mess with Texas" burger, also a half-pounder but with BBQ sauce. I decided to mess with Texas. And onion rings.

So that's what I'm waiting on as Kevin comes up.

"Rich!" says Kevin, and he's not talkin' money. He's looking at Rich Grady, his chief cook (along with Josh Hernandez). Together, says Kevin, they spent three years planning this place. Rich is out here taking a break from the kitchen. This bar corner seems to be the "it" spot right now. I'm feeling kinda "in." "So, Rich," says Kevin, "if you had to go to a desert island and take only one thing from our menu to eat for the rest of your life, what would it be?"

"No question," says Rich. "Steak sliders. They're the most popular thing on the menu. The caramelized onions, the French Gorgonzola, the little New York strip steaks, the Hawaiian sweet bread — how can you beat that?"

"He's right," says Kevin. "He's always right." Steak sliders? Dang. I look at the menu. Never noticed the damned things, but here they are, three for \$8.50, with a side. A roar goes up. Somebody has slid home or scored a three-pointer. Depends what screen you're watching. "We've got 27 flat screens going in here," Kevin says. "We show everything from American football to Iraqi soccer."

Jamie brings my burger. Well, certainly looks attractive, with onion rings spilling out of the mouth of the angle-topped burger. It has a pot of BBQ sauce and token tomato and lettuce. It's a half-pounder, and the meat hasn't been grilled dry. It's nice and juicy. The BBQ sauce is fine, but...nothing exactly memorable here. Maybe it's hearing about those sliders.

And then I remember Carla. Why not get the sliders for her? Yeah! I ask for an order to go. Count out my shekels. Lord. That'll leave exactly enough for bus fare.

It's kind of hard to leave. That's a surprise. I mean, this mega bar scene's not totally my thing, but there's a lotta fun going on around here, what with the bowling, pool, and, miraculously for a barn like this, the feeling that they've created a not-so-little neighborhood pub for the downtown condoistas — and ballpark visitors — to come and hang out in.

"Last Charger game, orders in the kitchen were 30 tickets deep," says Kevin. Jamie says most of her customers are young urban professionals, like Tony. He's with an East Village (and we're talking *this* East Village, not the one in New York) software company that specializes in processing insurance claims.

An hour later, Carla says, "Oh, oh, incredible." She's chomped into one of the sliders. Must say



Josh

I agree. The sweetish caramelized onions, balancing out the heavy-flavored chunks of Gorgonzola, the general wet messiness of the edges, the tender slabs of steak. Dee-lish. Now we're talking food. I can see us going down to East Village. Couple of brewskis, plate each of these, then we'd head next door so I could whup her bowling.

"Dream on," says Carla. "Where was it they called you 'Gutter Balls'? But let's anyway. Anything to meet the Food Dude." ■

The Place: East Village Tavern and Bowl, 930 Market Street, 619-677-BOWL (2695)

Type of Food: American

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Double-Edged Sword

"You would be smarter to look to South America than to most parts of the United States."

Like so many of his illustrious predecessors in the wine-writing business, Paul Lukacs has a day job. But unlike, say, Gerald Asher or Kermit Lynch, Lukacs doesn't make a living selling wine, or importing it, or even teaching about it. Instead, he serves as chair of the English Department at Loyola College in Maryland. Which, as it happens, is how he got involved with wine in the first place. "I had a student in the mid-'80s who was doing an independent study that evolved into a reading group," recalls Lukacs. "Somebody had given him a book about wine, and he said, 'Why don't we learn about this?' This was right when wine was becoming more of a big deal in the States — you were sort of hearing about it more, and I think you sort of felt that you didn't know anything about it." It wasn't long before the reading group had become a drinking group, albeit one bent on understanding as well as pleasure.

For Lukacs, "It became a hobby, and then a passion. And it turned out to be a passion that was rough to do on a college professor's salary. Not that I wanted to be a great collector — I wanted to taste the stuff I was reading about. I wanted to taste more and learn more and know more." Happily, he found that the *Washington Times* was pulling wine stories off the wire and convinced them that a major wine market needed a local voice. Some 13

years later, he's still on the beat, and "through that, I have tasted lots of stuff."

A side career as a wine writer led to an article in *American Heritage* magazine on the emergence of American wine in the latter half of the 20th Century, and *that* led to a book contract for what would eventually become *American Vintage: The Rise of American Wine*. The book won just about every award a wine book can win, and people like Michael Apstein at the *Boston Globe* could write sentences that started, "Lukacs, who is rapidly becoming our leading expert on domestic wine..."

Book One, not surprisingly, set the stage for Book Two. "I would do interviews, and once you were done talking about the 19th Century and Prohibition and the Paris Tasting, people would say, 'Well, that's all really interesting, but what should we drink?'" (The American Drinking Public: Nothing If Not Practical.) "So I thought, 'Well, I'll tell you what to drink.' The second book — choosing 40 great wines — came out of that."

It's worth noting that Lukacs didn't say "choosing the 40 great wines," even though his second book was published as *The Great Wines of America: The Top 40 Vintners, Vineyards, and Vintages*. "There was never an attempt to say, 'These are the top 40 wines in America.' I resisted the 'the' in the title, but the publishers thought it would sell bet-

ter that way. You choose what battles you fight." Why the hesitation? "This is not an objective science, but if you were trying to say, 'What are the top rated, or top thought of, wines in the U.S.?' you would end up with 35 of them being Cabernet-based wines from the Napa Valley. I didn't want to write a book on 'What are the great wines of the Napa Valley?'"

Instead, "I wanted the wines I chose to be important in and of themselves, but also, to be representative of something else. That 'something else' might be a movement (the Rhone Rangers, embodied in Alban Vineyards Reva Syrah); might be a grape (Navarro Vineyards Gewürztraminer); might be a place (Dr. Frank's Riesling from New York's Finger Lakes Region); might be whatever (Mondavi Reserve Cabernet's value as a Brand Identity)." (Parentheses mine.) "I think every wine in the book is legitimately a great wine. Is every wine as significant in a global sense as some of the wines — say, from Napa — that were excluded? No. But are they significant in their own way? Sure. The hope was that you would paint 40 small portraits, but if you put the portraits together, it would — to mix metaphors — be sort of like a patchwork quilt. You would have a big picture of all the big issues in American wine at the time."

Incidentally, Lukacs, whose vantage point allows for statements about global significance, had this to offer about American wine vis-à-vis the rest of the world: "I think it's a double-edged sword. On the one hand, I think America has phenomenal influence — American consumers, and the American press speaking for American consumers. We are, in terms of fine wine, the biggest wine-consuming country in the world. There's no doubt in my mind that our perceived palate has an influence on wine styles in the rest of the world. On the other hand, I think that one of the greatest mistakes that American wineries and winemakers have made is, they've



Paul Lukacs

been able to sell virtually all of their wines domestically. They haven't gone to the trouble to grow international markets. I think it's difficult for American wine to be taken seriously as world-class stuff in Australia or Japan or France or Switzerland if you never see it. It's something nobody knows about," save perhaps for a few intrepid collectors. "Shouldn't there be some American wine on the list at the top restaurant in Geneva, or Sydney, or Tokyo? Maybe there's one bottle, and then there are 150 Bordeaux." Curious to think that others might be regarding us as rich art collectors who dabble in Sunday-afternoon watercolors, even as we think of ourselves as the great revolutionaries of the wine industry, bringing technological salvation to the global winemaking community, producing Pinot unlike any the world has ever seen, etc.

And while we're on the subject of global comparisons, it may also be worth noting that Lukacs did not include price in his assessment of great American wines. Some wines happened to be com-

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paratively inexpensive — the Stone Hill Norton has a suggested price of \$18, compared to \$235 for the Harlan Estate — but nothing was chosen as great because it offered remarkable quality at low expense. I suggested that America had largely ceded the field in the war of the fighting varietals, and Lukacs agreed. “I think if you want to spend under \$15 for a bottle of wine, you would be much smarter to look to South America than to look to most parts of the United States.”

The editor on Book Two was one Maria Guarnaschelli at W.W. Norton, who also happened to edit food writer James Oseland. When Oseland took over the editor-in-chief reins from Colman Andrews at the esteemed food magazine *Saveur* in late 2006, “They decided they wanted somebody on staff who really does wine. Colman Andrews...knew stuff about wine, so he made wine decisions. The new editorial team doesn’t pretend to have that level of wine knowledge. I think that, in large measure because of Guarnaschelli, Oseland got my name. I wrote a couple of things for them, and we got along, and then off we went.” Last spring, Lukacs took over as the magazine’s wine editor. “I write regularly for them about wine; I work with them on

other stories regarding wine, and I’m the voice of advocacy for wine at the magazine.”

He’s also the magazine’s public face in the wine world. Together with St. Supéry winemaker Michael Beaulac, he’ll be hosting *Saveur*’s Second Annual Best of the Med Wine Cruise, a ten-day idyll from Barcelona to Rome in May of ’08. And a couple of weeks ago, he hosted a panel on Zinfandel as the magazine’s representative at the San Diego Bay Wine & Food Festival. It went well enough, though Lukacs might have liked a little more controversy, and it had him thinking about future events, ones that might “look at real comparisons. Comparing Old World and New World wines, for example. Looking at different wines with different foods. That seems to be really true to the spirit of what *Saveur* is all about.” ■

RESTAURANT LISTINGS

The Reader’s Guide to Restaurants are recommended listings written by our reviewers (Ed Bedford, Barbara David, Ambrose Martin, Shari McCullough, Max Nash, Eleanor Widmer, Naomi Wise). Each issue contains only a fraction of over 500 reviews. A complete searchable list is available online at SanDiegoReader.com. Price estimates are based on the latest information available for a mid-range entrée. Inexpensive: below \$10; moderate: \$10 to \$19; expensive: \$20 to \$24; very expensive: more than \$25. Please call restaurants in advance for reservations.

NORTH COASTAL

The Armenian Cafe 3126 Carlsbad Boulevard (at Pine), Carlsbad, 760-720-2233. At this large cottage with a year-round heated sundeck overlooking Highway 101, the menu offers Armenian specialties cooked with a Lebanese accent as well as generic Middle Eastern crowd pleasers, including gyros made from scratch. Lamb shish kebab is the house specialty, a “loss leader” featuring tender premium lamb cubes with assertive seasonings, grilled over gas. Even better are distinctive dishes from the owner’s family recipes: his mom’s Lebanese *kibbe* (a large, glorified nut-filled lamb meatball) is outstanding, as is her *kashta lea* dessert — an exotic nutmeg sponge cake fragrant with rose-water syrup, topped with pistachios and thickened cream. Dinner platters constitute a full meal, including a great “Armenian salad” and a tasty dip for the meat, along with less-than-great egg-lemon soup, pilaf, and pita wedges. Wine list is dreary, but corkage fee is reasonable. Three meals daily. Live music and belly dancer Friday and Saturday night. Moderate to slightly expensive. — N.W.

Blanca Beachwalk Plaza, 437 South Highway 101, Solana Beach, 858-792-0072. The opening of sleek, sophisticated Blanca marks the arrival of our first 21st-century restaurant, highlighting perfect seasonal ingredients so radiantly and originally prepared that diners must rouse to rapt attention. Chef Wade Hageman, a protégé of renowned SF/Vegas chef Michael Mina, has imported a similarly complex, labor-intensive style of cooking that appeals as much to the mind as to the senses. He’s imported a major Mina strategem — showcasing an individual ingredient by presenting it in several different incarnations within the same dish, like musical variations on a theme. Blanca’s menu lists each item’s pedigree and primary garnishes, but those details don’t begin to describe the behind-the-scenes enhancements of marinades, brines, rubs, soaks, and infusions that play subtle roles in the multilayered flavors that come to the table. Appetizers are especially ad-

venturous, the wine list is exceptional (if mainly very pricey), and the restaurant’s decor is as modern and polished as the food. Dinner only. Reservations required. Very expensive. — N.W.

California Bistro 7100 Four Seasons Point, Four Seasons Resort Aviara, Carlsbad, 760-603-6868. This restaurant features fresh California cuisine in a beautiful, luxurious hotel dining room. Open 6:30 a.m. to 10 p.m. Sunday to Thursday (to 10:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday). Reserve for the Friday night seafood buffet (5:30 p.m. to 9 p.m.), which includes cooked seafood, sushi, and sashimi. Moderate to expensive. — E.W.

Juanita’s Taco Shop Estilo Tepatitlan 290 North Coast Highway 101, Encinitas, 760-943-9612; also in Vista at 248 Main, 760-758-4531. Enticing aromas of fresh tortillas and fragrant frijoles greet you as you enter this busy little *tagueria*, where the food’s cooked in the style of Tepatitlan, a small city near Guadalajara. Its local specialty is *carnitas* — which Juanita’s does up (by the plate or by the pound) as tender, non-greasy shreds, served with fresh, cilantro-laden mild tomato *salsita*. Standard wraps are fine, too, and the beans taste as good as they smell. Try a “Flying Saucer” — it really takes off, with shredded meat, onions, mild chiles, beans, sour cream, shredded orange cheese, and puréed guacamole riding high on an airy crisped flour tortilla. Open daily, three meals, until midnight. Inexpensive. — N.W.

Kealani’s 137 West D Street, Encinitas, 760-94-ALOHA. Tucked between a 7-Eleven and a pizzeria, with an exterior sign that says “Saimin” (for Hawaii’s version of Top Ramen), this island of the Islands prescribes “Living Da Aloha Spirit.” A ukulele player sometimes serenades the noonday crowd at the sidewalk tables, and at any hour the food is “plate lunch” — two scoops of short-grain rice, mild house-made macaroni salad, and a choice of authentic “grins.” Don’t miss the outstanding kalua pig, zesty, smoky shreds of *imu*-style roast pork, resembling a moister version of Southern “pulled pork.” The menu covers the whole panoply of island standards, from *malasadas* (Portuguese donuts) to *musubi* (Spam sushi), with a

Saturday special of a luau’s worth of “local food.” While you’re waiting, check out the droll Hawaiian vocabulary lessons under the glass tops of the tables. Open Monday through Saturday, lunch to early dinner. Inexpensive. — N.W.

Milton’s Deli Flower Hill Mall, 2660 Via de la Valle, Del Mar, 858-792-2225. This sprawling, family-friendly eatery started out as a non-kosher Jewish deli, but has come to embrace diner food, pub grub, and Italian and Mexican favorites, along with a full cast of Ashkenazi noshes. Sit down and stuff yourself with stuffed cabbage, overstuffed deli sandwiches, crisp-skinned fat cheese blintzes, *matzoh brei*, hot brisket with latkes — or chicken-fried steak, if that’s your bag. Or take out from the attached deli and bakery. The yummy chopped liver will remind you of the Bronx, the smoked whitefish and silky Nova will take you home to Flatbush, but the soft, cottony bagels — *oy!*, so *goy!* Seven days, three meals. Inexpensive to low moderate. — N.W.

The Original 101 Diner 552 First Street, Encinitas, 760-753-2123. This is where the caviar crowd from Rancho Santa Fe comes to remember their roots. It’s got all the deliberately down-home cooking you could want, including all-day breakfast ranging from really cheap biscuits and sausage gravy to a pretty cheap top sirloin steak and eggs. For lunch, the bacon-Cheddar burger with fruit is a good surprise combo. The turkey-cranberry salad sandwich is also good, and try the spinach salad, with bacon, feta cheese, olives, mushrooms, and chopped egg. Even though this 101’s vintage (1983) in no way compares with the Oceanside 101 Café’s (1928), it has become a genuine part of Encinitas life — lines on the weekends will tell you that. Open for breakfast and lunch daily. Inexpensive. — E.B.

Pamplemousse Grille 514 Via de la Valle, Solana Beach, 858-792-9090. The locals’ favorite French provincial restaurant offers exquisite, creative cooking. Favorites from an often-changing menu include white fish served any style, mushroom *cappucini* soup, and *tarte Tatin*. Serene atmosphere with excellent service. Dinner reservations urged. Din-

ner nightly, lunch Friday only. Dinners expensive. — E.W.

NORTH INLAND

Centre City Cafe 2680 S. Escondido Boulevard (frontage road along Centre City Parkway), Escondido, 760-489-6011. In the quiet little “motel row” just north of Lake Hodges, this cute, friendly café serves classic American diner food, including all-day breakfast. The chicken-fried steak is exemplary, with a crackly batter-crust and a smooth, peppery cream gravy. Several cuts of USDA Choice steaks are offered at rock-bottom prices, and early bird dinners and daily specials offer amazing bargains. You can eat inside, in a coffee-shop ambiance, or chow down on the dining terrace in front. Open daily, three meals. Huge portions, low prices. — N.W.

Fiore’s Harrah’s Rincon Casino, Valley Center, 877-777-2457. This is where Valley Center goes to celebrate special occasions. An island of serenity in the cacophonous casino, the restaurant offers fine certified-Angus grilled steaks and chops of various species. For a starter, the shrimp margarita is delicious. Choices include numerous seafood entrées, and for lighter eating there’s an Oyster Bar attached. The best attraction is the long, adventurous wine list, offering international bottles at bargain prices with by-the-glass choices galore. Half the fun is matching wines to foods. The beer list is sophisticated, too, as are well-priced cognacs and aged ports. Business-casual dress code. Kids allowed in casino restaurants, not in gambling area. Reservations advised for weekends. Open for dinner daily. Moderate at Oyster Bar; upper moderate to very expensive in restaurant. — N.W.

The Grill 10920 Roselle Street, Suite 104, Sorrento Valley, 858-587-7940. Sorrento Valley is where you commute to work, not to live, so forget warm neighborhood eateries. At first glance, the Grill is what you’d expect — standard strip mall, bare-bones furnishings, office-lunch oriented. But the Greek



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Hacienda de Vega 2608 S. Escondido Boulevard (frontage road along Centre City Parkway), Escondido, 760-738-9805. This is a Mexican restaurant with a difference — or two. The setting is a gorgeous restored Old California-style hacienda set on two acres, including a verdant courtyard (complete with fountain) for fair-weather dining. The menu is also a leap upward from standard fare. Señora Vega offers authentic Mexican cuisine cooked in the sophisticated manner of Mexico City, her hometown — not border-food compromises. You'll find an array of fresh and interesting appetizers along with a wide choice of serious entrées featuring complex, delicious sauces. Each dish is seasoned to the optimum spiciness for its overall flavor — this is not the land of the bland. The Sunday all-you-can-eat brunch offers a whole sampling of goodies brought to your table, with refills as desired. Five vegetarian entrées and a kiddie menu available; casual atmosphere. Full bar specializing in

margaritas, of course. Open daily, lunch (or brunch) and dinner. — N.W.

San Diego Artisan Bakers 1551 South Escondido Boulevard (at 15th), Escondido, 760-740-5963. This European-style bakery specializes in hearty, handcrafted, slow-fermented breads made from natural ingredients. Recipes of the 24 loaves are from France, Italy, Germany, and the U.S. These loaves have textures and depths of flavor you'll never find in supermarket-bakery breads. And for breakfast or a snack, there's nothing better than settling on the front porch with a cup of espresso and one of the moist and chewy scones. Open Monday through Saturday, morning to late afternoon. Inexpensive. — N.W.

LA JOLLA

Donovan's Steak and Chop House 4340 La Jolla Village Drive, Golden Triangle, 858-450-6666. At this excellent traditional steakhouse, the menu includes a variety of appetizers, among them a cocktail of giant shrimp with a spicy, tomatoey sauce and a large, lightly sautéed crab cake with house-made tartar sauce. The wet-aged prime beefsteaks are seasoned with sea salt and pepper and cooked on a gas grill precisely to your order. Bleu cheese, béarnaise, and peppercorn sauces are avail-

able at extra charge. Non-beef entrées include fish, seafood, veal chop, pork chop, or a delicate Australian rack of lamb. Unlike many steakhouses where your money buys only the meat, entrées are served with vegetables and potato. Additional à la carte sides include creamed spinach and sautéed mushrooms. Among the house-made desserts the highlights are a light, creamy cheesecake with fresh strawberry sauce and a traditional creme brûlée. The service is attentive, friendly, and knowledgeable, in a masculine setting with dark wood-paneled, dim lighting, and only a moderate noise level. Cigar room off the bar. Open Monday through Saturday. Very expensive. — N.W.

George's at the Cove 1250 Prospect Street, La Jolla, 858-454-4244. At George's dressy, comfortable downstairs fine-dining restaurant, California Modern Restaurant, chef Trey Foshee's superb California cuisine is based on prime ingredients, emphasizing local seafood and produce and cooked to highlight rather than mask the natural flavors. The menu changes seasonally, so don't miss such treats as squash soup, table-smoked salmon, Sea of Cortez scallops, or wine-braised prime short ribs when available. A long and serious (but costly) wine list at fair prices offers plenty by the glass or half-bottle, including rare dessert wines. Leisurely pace, attentive service — make a special evening of it. Reservations necessary. An informal Café is one flight up,

and on the rooftop is the wildly popular Terrace Bistro, with its fabulous seacoast views, sharing with the Café a more casual and affordable menu; reservations advised. Wheelchair-access by two elevators; front desk staff will guide you (if arriving alone, ask valet parkers to fetch a staffer). Men's restroom upstairs; disabled can use neighbor Pasquale's facilities. Downstairs dinner only; upstairs lunch and dinner daily. Downstairs expensive to very expensive; Café and Terrace moderate. — N.W.

Tapenade 7612 Fay Avenue, La Jolla, 858-551-7500. This is not only one of the finest restaurants in the county but in the country. Featuring sunny Provençal flavors, famed chef-owner Jean-Michel Diot offers superb seasonal ingredients treated with the consummate ease of a master chef. Among the special joys here are a sophisticated *foie gras torchon*, luscious free-range veal, and top-quality seafood, with garnishes that display an impressive balance of venturesome creativity and rigorous technique. Desserts are worth the calories, matching the style and flair of the earlier courses. And you don't even have to dress to the nines for your first-class dinner — the sixes will do in the easy bistro atmosphere. Serving lunch (including a moderate two-course prix fixe) weekdays, and dinner daily (including bargain-priced three-course prix fixe "sunset dinners" Sunday through Thurs-

day). Otherwise, expensive to very expensive, and worth it. — N.W.

Zenbu 7660 Fay Avenue (at Kline Street), La Jolla, 858-454-4540. It was a natural for fisherman-restaurateur Matt Rimel to open a sushi bar/fish house, featuring sparkling fresh catch, much of it from his own boats. Sashimi and the simpler sushi are better here than the big party rolls, which can be lunkish. Don't miss the sashimi of live local *uni* (sea urchin) served on its shell most weekends. Cooked fish entrées feature equally sparkling seafood, sometimes in almost goofily elaborate preparations. No reservations; 30-minute wait likely on weekends. Sushi bar is up a short staircase; dining room and patio tables are wheelchair accessible. Several vegetarian choices. Full bar, good sake list. Dinner nightly. Upper moderate to expensive. — N.W.

MISSION VALLEY & THE MESAS

China Max 4698 Convoy Street (at Engineer), Kearny Mesa, 858-650-3333. The decor is plain and bright, the sound level loud, but this is a major resource for authentic Hong Kong cooking — creative and multiregional, filtered through the refined wizardry of the genuine Cantonese style. The seafood aswim in the

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live tanks includes such delicacies as black cod (bony but wonderfully sweet), Dungeness crab, and (if you've got the money) abalone — but even inexpensive, homey dishes (e.g., wonton soup, crabmeat cakes) sing with flavor. Call ahead for reservations to avoid a wait at the door. A Pan-Asian community throngs here, for good reason. Lunch and dinner daily. Inexpensive to exorbitant but mainly moderate. — N.W.

IKEA Restaurant & Cafe 2149 Fenton Parkway, Mission Valley, 619-283-6166, ext.1200. Central shrine for San Diego's 10,000 Swedes, so they say. They come to taste open-faced sandwiches, salmon, shrimp, and meatballs

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Calendar

RESTAURANTS

again. This restaurant inside Sweden's wildly successful "home interiors" chain is a great intro to Swedish tastes. The food's more sensible than exciting, of course. But healthy—beef and pork for the meatballs are guaranteed hormone-free. You eat the meatballs with Swedish lingonberry (not cranberry) sauce. Seafood is big: the shrimp open-faced sandwich, the salmon plate with potatoes and broccoli, and the Gravad Lox Plate (cured salmon) are always on. And if you want to be disgustingly healthy, chew on their fresh vegetable plate (raw carrot sticks, cauliflower, garbanzo beans, and mushrooms). All for a song. The only health hazard: hordes of babies and kids romping in the restaurant's mother-friendly play area. Inexpensive. — E.B.

Lightnin' Jacks BBQ Clairemont Town Square, 4705-H Clairemont Drive (near movieplex), Clairemont, 858-270-8227. Clean, cute, and a little self-conscious, this barbecue has black-and-white Western pictures on the walls and some seating on barstools with metal "saddles" (more comfortable than they look). The barbecue mechanism is a Texas-style pit smoker burning sweet hickory. The meats that emerge from it aren't the smokiest, but they're tasty enough. Pork ribs are tender and moist, and beef brisket carries enough smoke flavor to pass muster in Texas; other meat choices are less successful. The tomatoey sauce is pleasant but ordinary. A fried catfish plate makes a flavorful alternative (but beware the cat sandwich, awash in hot sauce). Hush puppies and sweet potato fries are the most savory sides. Check your take-out bag to make sure you're getting what you ordered, as youthful staff is easily flustered. Kiddie plates available. Draft beer and wine available. Open daily, lunch and dinner. Inexpensive to moderate. — N.W.

Seoul B.B.Q. 4344 Convoy Street, Kearny Mesa, 858-505-8700. This Korean restaurant means sitting before a sizzling cast-iron grill, sipping hot sake,

the smell of grilled beef, grilled onions, and fresh garlic in the air. Try the "Korean B.B.Q." marinated short ribs (*tong galbi*) or thick marbled slices of sirloin (beef *gui*). You'll enjoy all the accompanying dishes that make the meal, like crunchy seaweed salads, radishes in garlicky tomato sauce, slow-cooked potatoes with soy sauce and jalapeño pepper. Feeling adventurous? Go for the goat meat hot pot or Korean steak tartare (*yukhwoe*). This is sensual, elemental, hairy-chested food. Lunch and dinner six days, closed Sunday. — M.N.

Tropical Star 6163 Balboa Avenue, Clairemont, 858-874-7827. A modest café and grocery offers Puerto Rican and Latin American food and groceries. Very modest surroundings; good authentic inexpensive food. Same menu all day Monday through Saturday; closed Sunday. Inexpensive. — E.W.

THE BEACHES

Hancock St. Cafe 3354 Hancock Street, Loma Portal, 619-296-2060. If you spot Marilyn, Elvis, and Lady Liberty waving at you from the sidewalk, you're here. They are life-size fiberglass look-alikes, but Mario is real, and his restaurant is a living shrine to jazz pianist Herbie Hancock. Mario has pianos, guitars, and drums inside—even a little stage where you're often welcome to perform. The food? Italian home cooking. Mario is from New York and knows his pasta. You can usually expect a good-value special, like spaghetti and meatballs. Sometimes he'll even throw in a bottle of red wine. Here among the little factories and auto shops of Loma Portal may be San Diego's most popping cultural phenomenon. Worth investigating, even if you just want to eat. Open daily, 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. Inexpensive. — E.B.

Lamont Street Grill 4445 Lamont Street (between Grand and Garnet), Pacific Beach, 858-270-3060. PB's most romantic restaurant serves California comfort food, punctuated by bold and sometimes strange Mexi/Asian/Cajun flavors, in a rambling converted residence with several rooms and levels. Dinners come with soup or salad, and

many entrées are served over marvelous house-made fresh pasta. Salmon over fettuccine in a delicate dill cream sauce is especially fine. The huge array of desserts is house made, too, with something for every palate. The most desirable tables (available first come, first served) are on a lovely fireplace-heated patio. Wheelchair ramp and parking in small lot behind restaurant (call ahead and they'll save you a spot). Homey atmosphere; can get loud. Affordable wine list, full bar. Open daily, dinner only. Moderate. — N.W.

Saska's 3768 Mission Boulevard, Mission Beach, 858-488-7311. Venerable, local steak-and-seafood joint that tries harder, from the broth-thin homemade teriyaki sauce (sweet up front, fading to bitter ginger) for the well-cooked (if mild-flavored) fish to the cut-on-the-premises aged beef. The interior's low wood-slat ceilings, driftwood beams, dim light, and red-leather booths combine with the stay-up-late kitchen to make the space feel like a cozy haven, a respite from the brighter buzz of Mission Beach. The wine list runs the gamut from Cook's sparkling wine to Cristal champagne, stopping along the way at an interesting (if expensive) collection of reserves. Next door is the restaurant's serviceable sushi bar (858-488-7255) and two-story patio dining. Lunch weekdays, brunch and lunch weekends; dinner seven days. Sushi bar open nightly, 5:30 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. Moderate. — A.M.

The Third Corner Wine Shop and Bistro 2265 Bacon Street, Ocean Beach, 619-223-2700. Ed Moore's casual, loosey-goosey spot is first of all a wine shop selling most global bottlings for just 20% over wholesale. It's \$5 to pop the cork there if you plunk down at a table among the racks to enjoy casual bistro-style food designed to go with wine. You can snack on goat cheese salad, smoked duck salad, a cheese plate or a pâté plate, or get serious with braised short ribs or duck confit surprisingly paired with spicy Nawlin's red beans and rice. No reservations accepted, so best to go at off-hours or you'll wait for a table. Comfortable lounge with fireplace for sipping. Full bar. No corkage charge after 11 p.m., when restaurant staffers drop

in for after-work noshing. Lunch and dinner until 1 a.m.; closed Monday. Low-moderate. — N.W.

Umi Sushi 2806 Shelter Island Drive (at Shafter, off Scott), Point Loma, 619-226-1135. An instant neighborhood success, this large, cheerful sushi bar and dinner house also offers Japanese and Korean entrées, including *teppanyaki* (cooked in the kitchen, not at the table), Korean ribs, and excellent beef teriyaki of gently grilled prime beef. Sushi highlights include lemony *ama ebi*, rich garlic tuna, and a "Crazy Boy" roll spicy enough to divert your palate from the presence of imitation crabmeat. Free parking lot (often full). Special kids' menu available. Lunch Monday through Saturday, dinner daily. Sushi prices lower than most; entrées inexpensive to moderate. — N.W.

CENTRAL SAN DIEGO

Big Kitchen 3003 Grape Street (between 30th Street and Fern Street), South Park, 619-234-5789. This isn't just a restaurant, it's the social center of the universe—and Judy "The Beauty" Forman is its queen. Blame her for the Fern Street Circus, for driving the Miss California beauty pageant out of town, and for disgustingly healthy dishes like Judy's Favorite (spinach, mushrooms, sherry, and eggs). Our favorite: the avocado, cream cheese, and chives omelet. Vegans' fave may be the "veggie option": sautéed spinach, mushrooms, onions, cilantro, brown rice, tofu, and roasted garlic. Her cooks make pretty much everything on the spot, including muffins, waffles, and pancakes. While you're waiting, they always have this "out there" eclectic crowd, plus walls filled with pictures and *bon mots* like "Will Be President For Food." Breakfast and lunch only; closes at 2 p.m. Inexpensive. — E.B.

Chicken Pie Shop of San Diego 2633 El Cajon Boulevard, North Park, 619-295-0156. How much do people love this place? Count the chickens lining the walls—ceramic, wood, beaded, painted, even feathered. Hundreds.

They're gifts from generations of customers. Now, as in the 1930s when it started up, the basic chicken pie comes filled with big chunks of chicken meat, doused with white gravy and accompanied by mashed potatoes, veggies, coleslaw, a roll, and dessert—like the delicious pineapple pie available Mondays—all for one really low price. The menu also offers fried chicken, burgers and steaks, but 90 percent of customers still order that same old chicken pie. Seven days. Cash only. Inexpensive. — E.B.

Huffman's Bar-B-Que 5039 Imperial Avenue (at Euclid), Chollas View, 619-264-3115. This café has a huge multigenerational following, some famous—check out their wall photos, in which Jesse Jackson and Muhammad Ali are just two—and some not so famous. The big draw is Huffman's fabulous Southern soul food. Try their gravy-smothered fried chicken served with collard greens, yellow peppers, red beans, rice, and white mopping-up bread, or their Louisiana Creole gumbo, thick with crab, shrimp, links, ham, and chicken. Other fine eats include the catfish sandwich and half-pound rib tips. Open daily, lunch and dinner, to 11 p.m. weekdays, 1 a.m. Friday and Saturday. Inexpensive. — E.B.

Krakatoa 1128 25th Street, Golden Hill, 619-230-0272. This used to be an abandoned property. Now the swamp-green clapboard house is the coolest, if (reportedly) ghost-ridden, coffee-eatery hang-outery in Golden Hill. Its garden is lush and tropical, and on its wooden deck laptops unfold, essays get written, relationships get worked out. The menu is light, the names heavy: the breakfast sandwich (scrambled eggs, cheese, fruit) is the Wonchi (an Ethiopian caldera); the roast turkey sandwich with ham, cream cheese, and cranberry sauce is the Ubehebe (a dormant volcano in Death Valley); the Amboy (a Mojave Desert volcano) is a peanut butter, honey, banana, cinnamon, and bacon sandwich. Open 6:30 a.m. to 8 p.m. (Sundays till 6 p.m.). Inexpensive. — E.B.

La Dona 1784 Newton (at Beardsley), Barrio Logan, 619-233-4939. This café is steeped in Mexican history, especially Barrio Logan history. You half expect to see several L.A. Zoot-suitors drift in as

you inspect the black-and-white shots of the late actress Maria Felix (Mexico's Marilyn Monroe) or the great photos of the Mexican Revolution that include Zapata and Pancho Villa. The place has been here for 63 years, and old-timers say it reminds them of long-ago cafés in Los Angeles, Modesto, or Madera. The food is home cooking, Mexican style, with meals like scrambled eggs and chorizo with rice and refried beans. Watch out for the pot o' salsa—it's a real jaw-slammer. Other dishes to sample include *chicharrones*, *menudo*, and *pozole*. Seven days, breakfast to late lunch. Inexpensive. — E.B.

The Linkery 3386 30th Street (at Upas), North Park, 619-255-8778. The artisanal "slow food" cuisine here features local ingredients and made-from-scratch preparations. Despite the name, there's a full menu that includes tasty grilled vegetable appetizers and some fine entrées. But the focus is on the side dishes of fresh sausages made daily on-premises. These vary not only in composition but in palatability. Good ones include chicken curry, *linguista*, Polynesian pork. Venturesome international wine list at low markups, plus international beers and Mexican Coca-Cola (better tasting than U.S. made). Small parking lot (enter by alley on Upas just east of Jack in the Box). Noisy even when nearly empty. No reservations. Dinner daily, until 11 p.m. Moderate. — N.W.

EAST COUNTY & COLLEGE AREA

Antonio's Hacienda 700 North Johnson Avenue, El Cajon, 619-442-9827. If the decor hasn't been updated from its original 1960s-fabulous Old California Spanish, it's because there's been no need. The enormous dark-wood chandeliers, the padded-leather wooden chairs, the chainsaw-weathered wood beams—all top-shelf and aging well. Families abound, reveling in the guitar trio and the exposed kitchen station—such atmosphere! And the flavors are user-friendly, sweetness muting the spice in the salsa and the Ranchero sauce. The Camarones Tequila

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is a little more exciting; the sweetness of its bacon-wrapped shrimp gets a fine counter from the bitter liqueur in the marinade. Excellent Enchiladas Suizas: pale, mush-tender shredded chicken wrapped in tortillas and doused with good, tangy green sauce. Lunch and dinner daily; Saturday and Sunday champagne brunch-buffet from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Inexpensive to low moderate. — A.M.

Geno's Barbecue 291 West Main Street, El Cajon, 619-444-3667. The original owner, Geno, was a real guy, a refugee from corporate America who turned this ex-Taco Bell joint into a surfing-themed BBQ place. He was a surfer, but serious. He'd won lots of prizes for his BBQ sauce, using a chili pepper he said nobody else had. Today, a new owner has continued the tradition. Try #5, pulled pork and slaw, or #9, shredded beef, melted jack, and sautéed onions. Sides like dirty rice and cornbread are good, but if you're light on pocket go for the "Ripcurl" hot dog, the best deal on the menu. Open 10:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. Monday through Saturday, closed Sunday. Inexpensive. — E.B.

Sala Thai 6161 El Cajon Boulevard (College Plaza), College Area, 619-229-9050. With purple cloth napkins, white tablecloths, green banquettes, butter-colored walls, and a portrait of King Chulalongkorn, Sala Thai has all the trappings of a class joint — except you're only paying six or eight bucks for main dishes. The food? A bit gentle on the spice front. *Tom yum kung*, the famous shrimp soup, should make your neck hairs stick straight out, but if that's what you want you'll have to ask the cooks to make it spicier. Chicken *mus-saman*, labeled "medium spicy," is pretty tame but still delicious with its authentic taste-boosters like kaffir lime leaves. Hottest curry: "chicken green." Health treat: *Som tum*, the famous papaya salad. Lunch, dinner daily; Sunday dinner only. Inexpensive. — E.B.

Toshi Sushi 5943 El Cajon Boulevard, College Area, 619-287-3536. Don't ask what's in the "dynamite" sauce (besides the obvious mayo and smelt roe) — it's a house secret, one the restaurant dangles before you in numerous contexts. Try it baked onto the rich, everything-goes Garbage Roll, where deep-fried shrimp, freshwater eel, and tuna add flavor to the creamy-crunchy interplay of sauce and vegetables. Rolls, both plain and elaborate, abound here. While some can be heavy on the rice and light on the fish, others are triumphs. The Toshi Tempura Special Roll takes battered whitefish and wraps it around the seaweed casing, which is then filled with just-cooked whitefish and a host of garnishes — an exotic-yet-homey fried-fish alternative. The Johnny Roll shows octopus at its most tender, but watch out for spotlight-hogging sweet cream cheese. The simpler sushi can vary — a brilliant, translucent slice of tuna offset by a blander, duller salmon. Japanese entrées are also available. Inexpensive to moderate. — A.M.

FAR EAST

Mediterraneo 1347 Tavern Road (Alpine Creek Shopping Center), Alpine, 619-445-9902. The vibe in this tasteful little trattoria (with adjoining bar) is young, and so is the chef, still slipping new dishes into a menu stuffed with local favorites. The pizzas are outstanding — such a lovely, airy, silken crust! Such wafer-thin rounds of pepperoni! Entrées change with the seasons. Desserts are big and sweet. When the weather's fine, dine on the patio and watch the sun drape light over the piney hills. Daily, lunch and dinner, plus Sunday brunch. Expensive. — A.M.

UPTOWN & OLD TOWN

Blue Water Seafood Market and Grill 3667 India Street (at Chalmers), midtown, 619-497-0914. This bright, clean charmer a half-block south of El Indio has a double identity: First, it's a retail fish market; aside from Whole Foods, this is the only restaurant-quality fresh raw seafood south of I-8 and west of City Heights. If you love oysters, don't miss the big, buttery bivalves here. Second, it serves simple, terrific seafood

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to eat in or out. Plates are plastic, but don't look for greasy fried stuff. Entrées are grilled gently until perfectly done, topped with your pick of flavors (the lemon-garlic butter is especially tasty) and come with rice and a huge salad with your choice of terrific house-made dressings. If indecisive, ask what's best that day. The overstuffed grilled fish tacos are messy and perfect, with just

the right proportions of ingredients. Reachable only by driving north on India. Metered street parking by day. Good choice of beers; a few affordable wines; \$5 corkage for BYOW. Open daily, lunch and dinner. Inexpensive to low moderate. — *N.W.*

Bombay Exotic Cuisine Of India 3975 Fifth Avenue (between University and Washington), Hillcrest, 619-298-3155. We're talking northern India here, right? That means lots of lamb, potatoes, creamy sauces, tandoor-baked breads, chicken, and less of the south's mouth-scalding heat. At least in its daily buffet, Bombay's a lot less spicy, (though their *sag paneer* — creamy,

cheesy spinach — delivered a surprising punch). The buffet includes tandoori chicken, assorted *pakoras* (lentil-batter fritters), mock duck, chicken *tikka*, and, if you hit the right day, an addictive mango soup. If you want meat or spicy food, best to order from the menu — say, a creamy *tikka masala* with lamb, or long kebabs of minced lamb (kebab curry), or the rich Bombay Coconut Malai. Tell them whether you want it mild, spicy or, for leather-mouths, *tikhi*. For a cheap, light meal, try a couple of lamb *samosas*. And be sure they bring the chutneys, India's real unexplored treasure. Lunch and dinner; buffet at lunch and Monday evenings only. Sister restaurant, Monsoon, 729 Fourth

Avenue, Gaslamp, 619-234-5555. Moderate. — *E.B.*

El Agave 2304 San Diego Avenue (at Old Town Avenue), Old Town, 619-220-0692. Reservations recommended. Wheelchair access difficult (steep ramp). You'll find upscale, unusual Mexican specialties in an intimate Spanish-style dining room or on a small heated balcony. The menu celebrates three great pre-Hispanic cuisines — Aztec, Mayan, Nahuatl — with discrete admixtures of France, Spain, and Italy. (It's the history of Mexico on a plate.) Among the highlights are the five different Oaxacan moles (plus a sixth from Chiapas), local sea bass in tangy jamaica (hibiscus) sauce, and a unique appetizer, *tlacogos cuiltacoche*, ovals of blue corn masa topped with a sort of "mushroom" that grows on corn ears. (In English it's called "corn smut," but it tastes much nicer than that sounds.) The bar stocks at least 1700 tequilas and makes a food-friendly on-the-rocks margarita with fresh fruit juices. Open daily, lunch and dinner. Moderate. — *N.W.*

El Indio Mexican Restaurant 3695 India Street, midtown, 619-299-0333. El Indio, "the god of Mexican food," presides over this bustling (expect a line), airy restaurant in an atmosphere of pale blue 1940s solidity. The menu includes the usual suspects (burritos, tacos, etc.), plus slightly less common items (*machaca*, *chile rellenos*). Excellent house-made corn tortillas help the standard fare to better approximate the divine. So do the sublime core flavors of the meats — the chicken in the taco and the beef in the enchiladas. The *carne asada* sports a pleasant char, and the beans have a raw-beany intensity. Less heavenly: seasonings (especially paprika and salt) tend toward the heavy side. Open daily, breakfast through dinner. Inexpensive. — *A.M.*

El Zarape 4642 Park Boulevard, University Heights, 619-692-1652. This stylish little Mexican restaurant on a tony stretch of Park Boulevard is proof that not all taco shop food is equal. Try a shredded beef or chicken taco or tostada and you'll know what we mean, with their generous mounds of juicy, slow-cooked meat. Many enjoy their unusual scallop burritos, vegetarian

potato-filled burritos and rolled tacos, and well-prepared soups. We go for the stewed meat. El Zarape is dependable, serving Mexican with solid, homemade, handmade flavor. Three meals daily. Inexpensive. — *M.N.*

Hob Nob Hill 2271 First Avenue (at Juniper Street), Banker's Hill, 619-239-8176. It opened in 1944 as a 14-stool lunch counter. Now, you sweep in under the maroon canopy to shiny red booth seats, deep blue carpet, blond wood, paintings, and a half-wall of wine. You're thinking "business class," but don't be fooled. We're talking coffee-shop prices, especially with the all-day breakfasts and sandwiches, not to mention the burgers with a salad tossed in. It's across the street from a retirement condo complex and at dinner, says the owner, "We cater to seniors." While there are à la carte choices, affordable three-course prix fixe dinners (with a regular entrée for each day of the week, Mom style) are the order of the day — e.g., tasty barbecued pork on Saturday, roast lamb or pot roast Sunday. Open daily. Inexpensive to low moderate. — *E.B.*

Kous Kous Moroccan Bistro 3940 Fourth Avenue, Suite 110 (downstairs below street level), Hillcrest, 619-295-5560. This could be the ideal neighborhood restaurant — if you love exploring Middle Eastern cuisines. The Moroccan specialties at Kous Kous are delicious, authentic, and healthful, and the witty, entertaining staff treat you like guests at an informal dinner party. Unlike most Moroccan restaurants in the U.S., the menu is à la carte rather than prix fixe, and seating is at normal chairs and tables, not floor cushions, so you can focus on the food and not some *Arabian Nights* fantasy. Start with a lively Chutney Sampler appetizer plate of *mezze*, Moroccan style, and if *b'stilla* is on the menu, don't pass up this treat of minced chicken in a cinnamon-dusted filo crust. Entrée highlights include Lamb Tagine, slow-braised, greaseless fall-apart shanks with prunes, almonds, Moroccan seasonings and a touch of honey; and Chicken Mu'hammer, a tenderly braised half-chicken with quartered green olives and slivers of salty preserved lemons. All entrées come with

lively, flawless couscous. Kebabs (filet mignon, shrimp, etc.) also come with a mixed green salad served with refreshing, lemony dressing. For dessert, house-made choices include refreshing fresh berries with orange liqueur and rose-water and a creamy crème brûlée, plus pastries from Bread & Cie. Dinner nightly. Reservations urged for weekends. Restaurant is below street level, elevator is left of the staircase to Martini's. Moderate. — *N.W.*

Shakespeare Pub & Grille 3701 India Street (at Washington), South Mission Hills, 619-299-0230. Probably the most convincing English pub in town. The Bard's brew-house boasts bare-board floors, diamond lead-glass windows, and authentic Brits sitting around the bar quaffing ale from their own pewter mugs. Pub grub is bluff and plain-spoken. Shepherd's pie, bangers and mash, ploughman's plate (the pickled onions and cheese, Scotch egg, and Branstion pickle make it the real thing) — all are great with rich English beer, say, a Boddington's Pub Ale. Sunday's roast beef dinner is worth dragging yourself out of bed for, too. The pub includes a shop that sells British goods. Breakfast weekends, lunch weekdays, and dinner daily. Inexpensive. — *E.B.*

DOWNTOWN

Brickyard Coffee and Tea 675 West G Street, downtown, 619-696-7220. The problem, if you're rich enough to live in the Marina District, is the lack of café life. That is, until this modest little eatery and café settled in next to the tracks by the Seaport Village trolley stop. You sit under eleven poplar trees in a brick patio that has one unusual downtown advantage — except for the wind sifting through the poplars (or a trolley pulling in), it's completely silent here. Sipping coffee and reading your paper is the thing here, but you can fill up, too, with items like "Texas chili," or grilled cheese and tomato sandwich with a cup of chili, or spinach and mushroom quiche with a small Caesar salad, or *panini*. You can also order half a sandwich — turkey, ham, beef, or tuna



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pensable bistro opened? In a bright and
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specials keep the menu interesting, and
desserts are worth every calorie. Bever-
ages include divine lavender lemonade,
root beer choices, and an intelligent
wine list at modest markups, most avail-
able by the glass. Metered street-parking
daytime. No reservations except large
groups. Moderate. — N.W.

Chive 558 Fourth Avenue (near Is-
land), Gaslamp, 619-232-4483. Here
you'll find a new cuisine for the upscale
residential neighborhood rising around
the restaurant. Diners can choose an ad-
venturous meal or an evening of so-
phisticated comfort food. Urbane mul-
ticultural fusion dishes dance cheek to
cheek with remade American classics
and the occasional sleek French luxury
dish. A "grazing menu" features small
bites for folks on a diet or on the run.
The menu changes seasonally, but you
can trust the kitchen any time of year.
Very noisy. Full bar. Dinner nightly, un-
til 11:30 p.m. weekends. Full meals
expensive; "grazing" can be moderate.
— N.W.

Harbor House 831 West Harbor
Drive, Seaport Village, downtown,
619-232-1141. This two-story Mid-
westerner-friendly eatery caters mainly
to tourist families and conventioners,
but the upstairs Oyster Bar is a pretty
spot to chill out and watch the sailboats
over a good margarita and a plateful of
iced bivalves. Upstairs preparations tend
toward simple American coastal dishes;
the menu includes more appetizers and
the drinks include artisan beers. The
downstairs main dining room features
more old-fashioned "haute" prepara-
tions and has a longer wine list but no
view. All foods and drinks from both
venues are available by request on both
floors (but not all servers know this).
Parking free with validation for two
hours. Reservations strongly advised for
after 6:15 p.m. any evening. Accessible
via elevator from main dining room,
with entrance on the park (south) side
of the building. Lunch and dinner daily
upstairs; dinner only downstairs.
Moderate to expensive. — N.W.

House of Blues 1055 Fifth Avenue
(north of Broadway), downtown,
619-299-2583. HOB's dining rooms
(filled with vibrant folk art) are separate
from the nightclub, so you don't have to
attend a performance to eat there. High-
light of the week is the prix-fixe Sunday
"Gospel Brunch" in the basement (with
near-hidden elevator access), a gener-
ous buffet of mainly tasty mainstream
and Southern goodies, including extra-
ordinary smoked roast beef. Upstairs,
the regular menu mingles soul and Ca-
jun dishes with pub grub. The gumbo is
surprisingly successful (if not exactly
personal or eccentric) and the jambal-
aya is real. Oddly bittersweet Voodoo
Shrimp (aka "BBQ Shrimp") comes
with irresistible rosemary cornbread. A
sampler of grilled Louisiana sausages is
a hit. But some dishes denature regional
flavors — the amiable, Tennessee-style
baby back ribs are more Nashville sub-
urb than downtown Memphis, while the
humongous Cajun meatloaf and the
bronzed catfish boast all the right Cajun
spices but no Cajun flavor. Entrées come
with vegetables, but consider amending
them with tasty, inexpensive sides like
superb sweet potato fries with house-
made ketchup. Wine list is pitiful; have
a Hurricane. Lunch and dinner nightly
until 2 a.m. (except Sunday until mid-
night). "Lightning Lunch" prix fixe
weekdays. Call for Gospel Brunch tick-
ets. Dinner reservations essential; dinner
packages available with access to shows.
Moderate. — M.W.

Napa Valley Grille 502 Horton
Plaza, Gaslamp, 619-238-5440. This
restaurant at the top of Horton Plaza is
staffed by professionals and the food is
very good, including the excellent grilled
calamari. There is an elegant hominess
to Napa Valley Grille, a comforting, sat-
isfying dining experience. Moderate to
expensive. — M.N.



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Calendar RESTAURANTS

The Oceanaire Seafood Room 400 J Street (at Fourth Avenue), Gaslamp, 619-858-2277. Oceanaire serves all manner of fresh seafood, including some rare species, from simple preparations to complex dishes with international influences (France, Italy, Asia, Louisiana, fusion). Fusion-y appetizers range from crab cakes (among the best in town) and lively El Diablo fried squid to disappointing oysters "Gatesafellar" and laughable "Cajun-rubbed" prawns. ("Eh, Soileau! C'mere, let me rub these prawns on you!") Of a menu comprising some 30 entrées, the best dishes tend to be the least ambitious choices from the Simply Grilled and Broiled section. Or you can gamble on more elaborate but risky composed entrées — e.g., fire-roasted Mano de León scallops in an Asian-style treatment are earthy and delicious, but spiny lobster is buried under an overwhelming, incoherent sauce. Let K.I.S.S. be your guideline. Vegetables and side dishes, served family size at

extra charge, aren't wonderful. House-made desserts are pretty good and sized for groups. The Oyster Bar is a pleasant separate area for snacking or seasonal special dinners; in season, the Kumamotos are superb, other varieties less thrilling. Reservations urged, especially on weekends. Dinner daily. Happy hour at oyster bar moderate, dinner very expensive. — *N.W.*

Puerto la Boca 2060 India Street (at Hawthorn), Little Italy, 619-234-4900. Argentines love their beef and they love it lean and wholesome — free-range and grass fed. That's what you'll find at this uncompromisingly authentic outpost of Buenos Aires cuisine. The great national entrée is the mixed grill (*parillada*) for two or more — a massive meatarama featuring numerous grilled cuts of marinated beef, chicken, and sausages. Start with luscious beef or corn empanadas or, if you're feeling hungry and adventurous, *matambre* (rolled beef galantine). Not a steak lover? Try the shrimp "la boca." Don't eat meat? There are vegetarian pastas and pizzas. Gnocchi are served only on the 29th of each month. International, affordable choice of wines, plus Latin and U.S. beers. Full bar. Patio dining. Daily lunch and dinner hours, with

dinner menu all day Friday and Saturday. — *N.W.*

Sixth Avenue Bistro 1165 Sixth Avenue (at B Street), downtown, 619-239-4194. This charming, airy café offers some very credible New Orleans-style cooking at affordable prices. Among the sandwiches are an outstanding oyster po' boy (with big juicy oysters and good light batter) and a fine, fully-packed approximation of a *muffaletta*, albeit with a kaiser roll standing in for Central Grocery's big, round Italian bread. The jambalaya is tasty, too, even with the substitute for andouille. Wine and beer. No reservations. Breakfast to dinner (closes 9 p.m. Monday through Saturday, 4 p.m. Sunday). Inexpensive. — *N.W.*

SOUTH BAY & CORONADO

Crown Room Hotel Del Coronado, 1500 Orange Avenue, Coronado, 619-435-6611. Let's face it, this is one of the grandest entrances you'll make anywhere, into the enormous, gloomy, vaulted timber dining room where presidents, princes and Marilyn Monroe have chowed down. It's only open for Sunday brunch these days. The gigantic eat-till-you're-beat buffet feast ranges from omelets to salmon, crab legs, prime rib, dizzying desserts, and even a chocolate fountain for large par-

ties, available upon request. The downside? Monroe was here to shoot *Some Like It Hot*, but (apart from the chocolate) most food ain't. It's either cold (like the croissants, though the chocolate chunk ones are delicious) or lukewarm (like prime rib and eggs Benedict — and those eggs could do with a lot more Benedict). But this is an Edwardian-scale social occasion — see and be seen. The food isn't great, but the atmosphere is grand. Open Sunday from 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Expensive. — *E.B.*

L'Escale Coronado Marriott Island Resort, 2000 Second Street, Coronado, 619-435-3000. Probably the pink flamingos and bay views bring you here first. But L'Escale ("Port of Call" in French) delivers to the taste buds too. For "Northern Mediterranean cuisine with California flair," read lots of pasta, fish, salads, sandwiches. Try the grilled salmon *niçoise* salad with its richly sauced fish, crunchy green beans, red potatoes, strong olives, and rosemary-flavored bun. Entrées like grilled chicken and mushrooms in Parmesan cream with penne pasta are safe enough. Or bone-in filet mignon. But for sheer architecture, check out the tuna salad sandwich wrapped in lavosh: three vertical Armenian bread tubes, angle-sliced to reveal interiors of tuna and greenery. Eat on the pool and bay-surrounded patio if you can. Breakfast, lunch, dinner. Moderate to expensive. — *E.B.*

Spiro's Gyros Ferry Landing, 1201 First Street #4, Coronado, 619-435-1225. The food, the music, the view — are we outside Athens? Is this the Aegean? This inside-outside Greek café is located at the water's edge, and the heated patio has a spectacular view of San Diego, the bay, and the boat traffic. At sunset, sipping their excellent Greek wines (cheaper than their California), watch the sun set the city ablaze in gold. The prices keep Spiro's popular with the locals as well as tourists. Try the moussaka (eggplant casserole) or the souvlaki chicken, marinated in *tzatziki* sauce, served with tomatoes, onions, and pita bread. Open seven days until 8 p.m. Inexpensive. — *E.B.*

Tango Grille Argentine Steak House 635 Broadway, Chula Vista, 619-420-0384. Play *gaucha* and enjoy the most authentic Argentine *parillada* (mixed grill) in town at this charming, warmly decorated bistro about two minutes from the Chula Vista Shopping Center. Fine, smoky wood-grilled Colorado beef appears in several unusual cuts (including succulent steak-cut short-ribs). You can choose from two different mixed grills (sized for one or two), the first with conventional meats, the other — the more adventurous — includes organ meats and blood sausage. For starters, there are brilliantly seasoned mini-panadas of amazing lightness, as well as several interesting salads. Those not in a grilled-meat mood can opt for numerous pastas (including a big, meaty

lasagna) or the ubiquitous *milanesa* (breaded beef or chicken patties) of the pampas. Portions are more than generous, and so are the flavors. Open daily. Low moderate. — *N.W.*

Village Pizzeria 1206 Orange Avenue, Coronado, 619-522-0449. Mootime Creamery owner David Spatafore decided to set up what he's always wanted: A cheap, back-east Italian, red-and-white-tablecloth, dangling Chianti bottle eatery where local families and amateur sports teams can come in and pig out. He wisely didn't destroy what was half of the famous old Mexican Village. Instant atmosphere! Ancient murals of guys with guitars serenading señoritas, arches, illuminated clusters of red grapes. The bad news: You might have to handle pumped-up kids' sports teams cramming the booths around you. The good news: Great calzones and pizza by the slice. (Pizza-by-slice portions stop at 6 p.m.) Open lunch through dinner, seven days. Inexpensive. — *E.B.*

BAJA

From the United States use the prefix 011-52-664 when calling Tijuana; when calling in Tijuana use only the restaurant's seven-digit number.

Rica Torta Niños Héroes Avenida #890, between 2nd and 3rd Streets (opposite Dorian's department store), Tijuana, 685-8579. This café may have the best *tortas* (call them Mexican-style hamburgers) in Tijuana. Six-inch rashers of marinated *carne asada*, slices of ham, squares of cheese, chopped salad, tomato slices, fresh-scooped avocado...it's a double-wide, double-high burger. The menu has 16 different kinds of *tortas*, from chorizo with eggs to beefsteak ranchero, all served in huge, three-ribbed, crisp-toasted Mexican bread buns. There's other stuff, but to a burger buff, one of these is quite enough. Vegetarian upon request. Open seven days. Inexpensive. — *E.B.*

Vallarta Natural 1252 Boulevard Agua Caliente (just before El Toreo de Tijuana), 686-1560. Maybe the only smoke-free restaurant in Tijuana, this vegetarian haven was started in 1996 by health-conscious Doctor Georgina Vallarta de Alcántar. They make their own yogurt, soy hash, breads, rolls, sal-



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sas — and “meats” like a veal from their own wheat gluten — daily. You sit at wood tables and chairs next to blue-framed yellow walls splattered with Talavera ceramic suns. At breakfast, try the *tartaleta vallarta*, a mix of eggs, spinach, mushrooms, onions, and chile. For lunch (and it's usually busiest around three), their excellent soup, *caldo tlalpeno*, packed with cheese, rice, avocado, and chile, will fill you nicely. The soy *hamburguesa* is good, but go for the *torta*, which has that gluten *milanesa* along with cheese, avocado, and jalapeño. Good organic coffee. Wonderful juices, especially the cactus — if you need cleaning out. Open 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. daily. Inexpensive. — E.B.

MULTIPLE LOCATIONS

D'Lish Pizza and Pasta 386 East H Street, Suite 211, 619-585-1371; and Eastlake Village Center South, 2260 Otay Lakes Road, Suite 101, 619-216-3900; both in Chula Vista. This chain has always prided itself on its Italian/California pastas, pizzas, and salads. Now it has gone carnivorous, adding marinated flank steak and a rib eye to the “bistro entrées.” If you're ordering the flank, well-done is a no-no. That will toughen it. But a rare flank is, well, d'lish in its marination and especially its pesto-like *chimichurri* sauce. Also good: fire-roasted vegetables pizza, where the quick roasting makes for great-tasting, Technicolor-bright broccoli, zucchini, eggplant, and bell peppers. And “Mediterranean chicken salad” works well, partly thanks to the tang of pepperoni chips. Moderate. — E.B.

La Costa Azul Mariscos 1037 Broadway, Chula Vista, 619-691-9812. Great family-run hangout for traditional seafood from Sinaloa and Nayarit, Mexico's crackling-hot desert/coastal states. Their ancient Sinaloa dish *aguachile* (shrimp in spicy brine) is simple, mouth-sizzingly effective, *langostinos* are lush, but maybe most satisfying are whole-fish dishes like *pescado Veracruzano*. Truly traditional offerings come in giant three-legged *molcajetes*. Even their less-traditional signature dish, *Camarones Costa Azul* (crab and cheese-stuffed, bacon-wrapped shrimp) arrives in a burning hot *molcajete*. Also delicious: the sizzle-plate fajitas *mixtas*, with shrimp, beef, chicken. Many customers come around sunset, just to sit with a cool drink under palm fronds on the patio. Even if you're actually on Chula Vista's Broadway, it feels strangely like Cabo. Open daily, lunch and dinner. Moderate. — E.B.

Sammy's Woodfired Pizza It's not Italian or New York pizza, it's...San Diego pizza! The crusts are Californian: thick and slightly sweet. The toppings range from ordinary to exotic. The menu includes many salads and a handful of American-Italian entrées. Continuous service, same menu lunch and dinner. Open daily. Inexpensive. 702 Pearl Street, La Jolla, 858-456-5222; 770 Fourth Avenue, Gaslamp, 619-230-8888; 8650 Genesee Avenue, Costa Verde, 858-404-9898; 12925 El Camino Real, Del Mar, 858-259-6600; 1620 Camino de la Reina, Mission Valley, 619-298-8222. — N.W.

St. Tropez If you love continental breakfast, these bright cafés with indoor-outdoor seating offer scores of house-baked pastries (including brioche) and good coffee. Parisian-style brunch/lunch choices embrace *croque monsieur* and *croque madame* (grilled ham and cheese sandwiches, topped with either light cream sauce or an egg), crêpes, quiche, onion soup gratinée, or chicken-filled puff-pastry. Omelets are rather weighty. Some of the sandwiches offer Mediterranean flavors — try a *pan bagnat* (*salade nicoise* on a baguette) or one of the grilled *panini*. Desserts range from cookies on up to elaborate cakes. Beer and wine. Open daily, breakfast to early dinner. Inexpensive. Encinitas: 947 South Coast Highway 101, Lumberyard Shopping Center #103D, 760-633-0084; downtown: 926 Broadway Circle, 619-696-8695 and 600 West Broadway, 619-234-2560; Hillcrest: 3805 Fifth Avenue, 619-497-0297; Rancho Bernardo: 16625 Dove Canyon #109, 858-673-6824. — N.W.

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Reputations at Stake

The film builds, and it does so with proficiency, patience, and foresight.

Underfoot in the Christmas rush:

Margot at the Wedding is Noah Baumbach's somewhat disappointing follow-up to *The Squid and the Whale*, though maybe not so disappointing if proper heed had been taken of his slovenly visual style, the inexact camerawork, the mismatched shots,

the gray, murky, dingy color. But still somewhat disappointing, in the central characterizations, for the sacrifice of focus and clarity in favor of shiftiness and multiplicity. Everyone in the *dramatis personae* is an uncohesive bundle of neuroses, and the smaller bundles are simply the characters with the smaller parts. The bigger ones are handled by Nicole Kidman as a well-known writer ("to a very few people") who, while undergoing her own marital breakup, drags herself and her girlish teenage son to her pregnant sister's second wedding; by Jennifer Jason Leigh (Baumbach's wife off-screen) as the hitherto estranged sister, a counterculture free spirit and reckless seeker; and by Jack Black as the

groom-to-be, an unsuccessful and self-critical musician ("My scrotum is longer than my penis," "I have the emotional version of whatever bad feng shui would be," and so forth) who shaves off his nuptial mustache ("It's meant

to be funny") when no one gets the joke. The overall level of sophistication remains high, even by New York-ish

or *New Yorker*-ish standards; the hostile and rather sinister neighbors are good for a chuckle and a shudder; and the young folk (newcomer Zane Pais, Flora Cross, and the nice neglected girl from *The Squid and the Whale*, Halley Feiffer, Jules's daughter in real life) are so well drawn, in concord with those in his previous film, as to saddle Baumbach with an unshakable reputation. Nicole Kidman, of course, can do the tightly-wrapped thing without strain, and Jennifer Jason Leigh can do the loosey-goosey. Jack Black, who could certainly use the exercise, deserves credit for stretching if not for attaining.

Juno, by comparison, is Jason Reitman's not disappointing follow-up

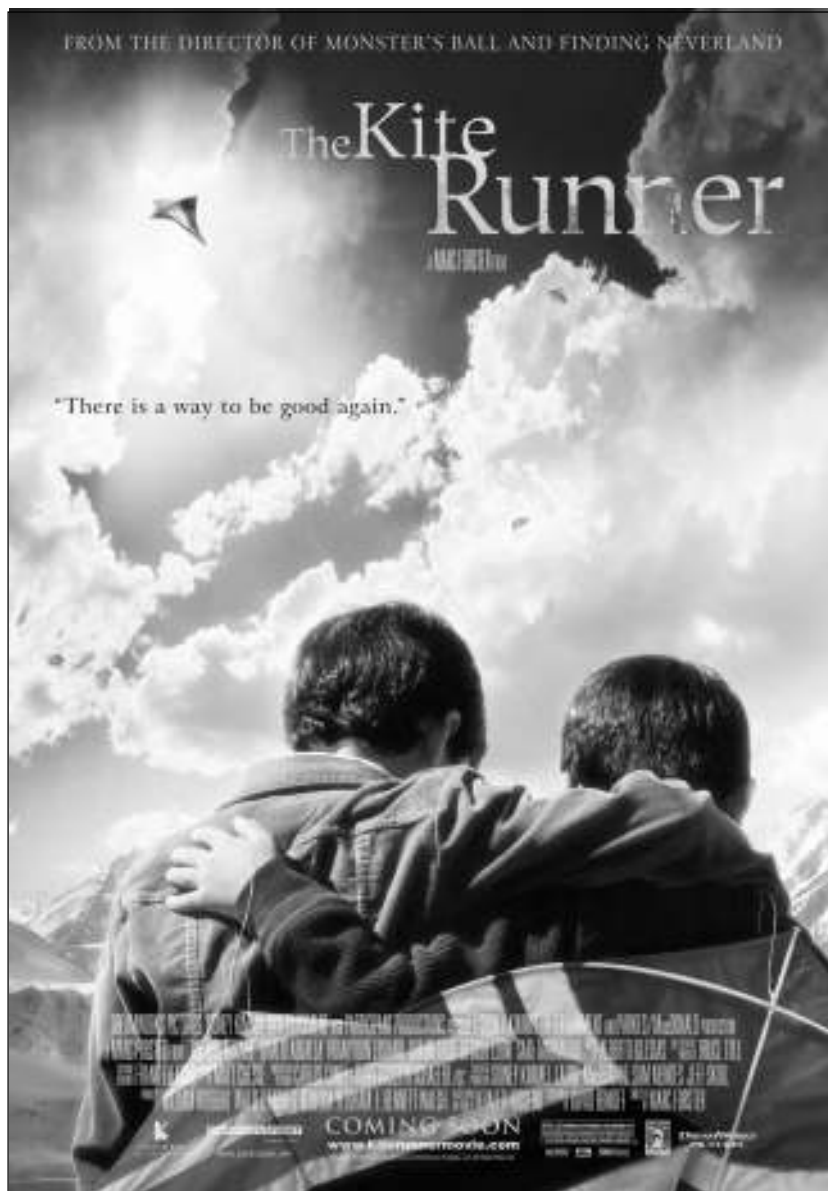


Juno

to *Thank You for Smoking*, though it doesn't necessarily start out that way. In the title role of a pregnant Minnesota high-schooler (named after the Roman goddess of marriage, fidelity, fertility), the dry flat sardonic line-delivery of Ellen Page, the angelic avenger of *Hard Candy*, is not easy to warm up to ("I'm just calling to procure a hasty abortion"), no matter how

much we might try to see it as an adolescent defense mechanism, or how much as humble emulation of Janeane Garofalo. And the garishly colorful dialogue, from first-time scripter and former stripper Diablo Cody, often tends to push too hard ("Being pregnant makes me pee like Seabiscuit"). The heroine, interested after due deliberation in simply find-

ing a good home for the baby, not in making a profit off it, finds a possible taker in the weekly *PennySaver* ("next to the exotic birds"), a neat-freaky suburban couple in the gated confines of Glacial Valley Estates. It's there that things really begin to get interesting. Our initial arrival at the housing development is alone sufficient to convince us of Reitman's directorial



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bona fides: a series of static shots of antiseptic House Beautiful after House Beautiful as the car passes across the screen, left to right, in front of each. And the prospective mother, Jennifer Garner (her piano-wire tautness put to good use), turns out to be the neater of the pair, someone who will studiously ponder “custard” versus “cheesecake” as the color for baby’s room, while the prospective father, Jason Bateman, proves to be the freakier, a stay-at-home composer of advertising ditties and a frustrated rock-and-roller. A curious, potentially dangerous after-school relationship blossoms between him and the heroine: he may be a commercial sell-out as a composer, but he’s a person who can talk music to a teenager, and he demonstrates “decent taste in slasher movies” (e.g., Herschell Gordon Lewis’s *The Wizard of Gore*, another impediment to our warming up to the heroine). Over time, the film builds, and it does so with proficiency, patience, and foresight. I must keep the particulars to myself, but I cite as an example of expert screencraft the mysterious note left on the doorstep on the back of a Jiffy Lube bill, and the when, the where, and the how of the disclosure of its contents. (Proficiency, patience, foresight — all there.) If the heroine is never wholly embraceable, the surrounding characters go far to compensate, specifically J.K. Simmons

as her droll laconic dad, Allison Janney as her worldly-wise, even-keeled mom, and above all, Michael Cera as her shunted-aside, unassertive, but ever-faithful boyfriend, the baby’s biological father, and a cooler dude than you’d ever guess from his track-team togs. (I gather that Cera had a major role in last summer’s *Superbad*. I didn’t see it. Maybe I should have.) And if the dialogue is unabatingly overcolored, at least the hues are spread around democratically.

Starting Out in the Evening, directed by Andrew Wagner, is a literary indie, not just in source material (a well-regarded novel by Brian Morton) or in talky, articulate, literate treatment, but also in subject matter: a stiff-necked New York Jewish intellectual (he wears a tie when home alone), a drinker at the well of Lionel Trilling, Alfred Kazin, Irving Kristol, et al., struggling to complete his fifth and final novel before his demise, parrying the time-consuming advances of an adoring, auburn-haired grad student who has selected him as the obscure topic of her master’s thesis, and who has set herself the difficult goal of getting him back in print. (Subplot: his unmarried daughter and her ticking biological clock.) This is a small, slow, serious film, not without humor, in spite of the straightness and narrowness (or *because* of the straightness and narrowness) of Frank Langella’s committed performance, his total avoidance of anything like comic loopiness and broadness. Lauren Ambrose and Lili Taylor give him plenty of credible trouble as the chief women in his life, new admirer and aging daughter

respectively.

Youth without Youth clocks in as Francis Ford Coppola’s first film in a decade (*The Rainmaker*, just to jog your memory), although in truth he hasn’t been a *force* since the decade of the Seventies. His comeback, or anyway his return to action, should secure his position in the margin: an English-language (variously accented) art film, replete with “painterly” light, monochrome flashbacks, experimental dream scenes *circa* 1925, upside-down and sideways images, mirror-multiplied images-within-images, doppelgänger dialogues, Nazi boogeymen, Eastern mysticism, decades of period settings. Inspired by a philosophical novella of Mircea Eliade, it revolves around a hoary old Romanian linguist (Tim Roth) who, when struck by lightning, miraculously reverses the aging process and runs into a dead ringer for the long lost love of his youth (Alexandra Maria Lara). It progresses from abstruseness to absurdity.

That last one is not scheduled to open till next week, but I am getting to it while I am able. The holidays will play hell with my deadlines, and I can’t guarantee the regularity of future transmissions. ■

MOVIE LISTINGS

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

Across the Universe — Two-and-a-quarter-hour promo for the Beatles without ever mentioning them by name. A generous, even overgenerous sampler of their songs (thirty-three of them, by the count in the press notes, leaving aside the numberless others that are quoted from or alluded to) has been re-recorded, or “covered” as they say in the business, by a fictitious cast of characters plunked down against the billowing backdrop of the Sixties: the war, the

draft, the protests, the drugs, the psychedelics, the Sexual Revolution, all that. To link the Beatles with the upheaval makes a certain sense. Unlike, say, the more enduring Rolling Stones or the going-nowhere Dave Clark Five, the Beatles were a group that really did evolve (or, as some would prefer, devolve) swiftly and dramatically, making them a useful weathercock for the winds of change. You are here reminded afresh of their range and their riches; and in new mouths, you hear the songs with new ears. (The tremulous, down-tempo rendition, for example, of “I Wanna Hold Your Hand” by an Asian-American high-school cheerleader, T.V. Carpio, brings the song a new, a renewed feeling, all by itself almost worth the price of admission.) By the second half, however, the inspiration irreversibly runs out of steam en route to a spluttering climax of “All You Need Is Love.” (Wearily, now: yeah, yeah, yeah.) Part of the problem is that, as the counterculture gains momentum in the sequence of events, there’s a visible increase in music-video vulgarity, ornamental surrealism, Fellini-esque fantasy, all the elements that go into director Julie Taymor’s fabled “vision.” Another part of the problem may be that the later songs, even though the playlist in the film does not observe a strict chronology, tend to be more turgid. Part, too, may simply be that two-and-a-quarter hours are too long for a promo. With Evan Rachel Wood, Jim Sturgess, Joe Anderson, Dana Fuchs, Martin Luther McCoy, and cameos by Bono, Eddie Izzard, Joe Cocker, Salma Hayek. 2007.

★★ (LA PALOMA)

Alvin and the Chipmunks — Live action plus computer animation, with Jason Lee, directed by Tim Hill. (CARMEL MOUNTAIN; CHULA VISTA 10; DEL MAR HIGHLANDS 8; ESCONDIDO 16; FASHION VALLEY 18; GROSSMONT CENTER; HORTON PLAZA 14; LA COSTA 6; LA JOLLA 12; MIRA MESA 18; MISSION MARKETPLACE 13; MISSION VALLEY 7; MISSION VALLEY 20; OCEANSIDE 16; OTAY RANCH 12; PALM PROMENADE 24; PARKWAY PLAZA 18; POWAY 10; RANCHO DEL REY 16; RANCHO SAN DIEGO 15; RIVER VILLAGE 6; SAN MARCOS 18; TOWN SQUARE 14; VISTA VILLAGE; FROM 12/14)

American Gangster — Formula underworld drama poured into an epic template. Like Jiffy-brand waffle batter spread over

an iron the size of a billiard table. “Based on a true story,” it traces, in separate intertwined storylines, the converging upward paths of criminal and cop: the former (Denzel Washington) starting out as the servile driver and bodyguard for the leg-endary Bumpy Johnson, a big fish in the small pond of Harlem into the late Sixties, then expanding the pond, upon his boss’s death, into an ocean; and the latter (Russell Crowe) working his way up as an under-cover narc in New Jersey, studying for the bar in his spare time. Their eventual meeting comes, and drags on, as something of an anticlimax, after an excitingly staged drug raid from which the ganglord is lucky to be absent. The opposing paths up to that point are smoothly graded and well greased; and director Ridley Scott, the epitome of slick (*Alien*, *Blade Runner*, *Thelma and Louise*, *Gladiator*, *Black Hawk Down*, and so on), moves things along at a tolerable pace, although there’s the distinct impression that even if he knew any shortcuts, he wouldn’t take them. His goal is epic, and he would gladly drag his feet to get there. At two and a half hours plus, he indeed does get there. Washington, to pay him a back-handed compliment, is never quite as credible as a through-and-through baddie, even though that seems to be the way to the Oscar (i.e., *Training Day*). Crowe on the other hand is a perfectly credible crusader, overcoming no greater obstacles on the road to respectability than his buoyant white sneakers and his unflattering, inexpensive period haircut, framing his face with folded wings. With Chiwetel Ejiofor, Josh Brolin, Lymari Nadal, and Ruby Dee. 2007.

★ (CARMEL MOUNTAIN; ESCONDIDO 16; FASHION VALLEY 18; FLOWER HILL 4; HORTON PLAZA 14; LA JOLLA 12; MIRA MESA 18; MISSION MARKETPLACE 13; MISSION VALLEY 7; MISSION VALLEY 20; OCEANSIDE 16; OTAY RANCH 12; PALM PROMENADE 24; PARKWAY PLAZA 18; POWAY 10; RANCHO DEL REY 16; RANCHO SAN DIEGO 15; SAN MARCOS 18; TOWN SQUARE 14)

Atonement — British, bookish period piece, from an Ian McEwan novel, about a young girl’s misreading of the amorous activities of her elders, and its tragic consequences. (A mole on the right cheek links the three different actresses who play the role, Saoirse Ronan in the Thirties, Romola Garai in wartime, and Vanessa Redgrave in modern day.) The movie starts rather sedately, despite some point-of-view tricks, in a commonplace country estate; and it then gets rather overblown in the war sequences, including a marathon Steadicam single take of the evacuation at Dunkirk. But all in all it’s well-mounted, well-dressed, well-acted, and, well, dull. With Keira Knightley, James McAvoy, Brenda Blethyn, and Harriet Walter; directed by Joe Wright. 2007.

★ (LA JOLLA VILLAGE; MISSION VALLEY 20)

August Rush — Mystical magical musical about the orphaned spawn of an unmarried rock-and-roller and classical cellist, all three reunited through music, under a full moon in Central Park, in the boy’s twelfth year. Too gooey to be true. And the synthesis of motley forms of music produces ear-strain on top of credulity-strain. With Freddie Highmore, Keri Russell, Jonathan Rhys Meyers, Terrence Howard, and (as a cowboy-hatted, soul-patched Fagin for underage street musicians) Robin Williams; directed by Kirsten Sheridan. 2007.

● (CARMEL MOUNTAIN; FASHION VALLEY 18; FLOWER HILL 4; GROSSMONT CENTER; HORTON PLAZA 14; LA COSTA 6; LA JOLLA 12; MIRA MESA 18; MISSION MARKETPLACE 13; MISSION VALLEY 20; OCEANSIDE 16; OTAY RANCH 12; PALM PROMENADE 24; PARKWAY PLAZA 18; POWAY 10; RANCHO DEL REY 16; RANCHO SAN DIEGO 15; RIVER VILLAGE 6; SAN MARCOS 18; TOWN SQUARE 14; VISTA VILLAGE)

Bee Movie — Cute name, even for an overhyped, presold, mega-budget money-making machine. (The return of Jerry Seinfeld! — as leading voice, co-writer, co-producer, and principal drum beater.) Cute is much more than you can say, however, for the spongy, marshmallowy computer-animated honeybees or for the premise that permits them to converse in English at equal volume with humans. The storyline of a rebel bee unready to settle down to his

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one and only Job-for-Life has its points of cleverness (e.g., the episode of getting stuck on a tennis ball, ultimately overelaborated), and toward the end of it there's a sententious lesson in ecology, more for grownups than for tots. With the voices of Renée Zellweger, Matthew Broderick, Chris Rock, Patrick Warburton; directed by Simon J. Smith and Steve Hickner. 2007.

★ (CARMEL MOUNTAIN; CHULA VISTA 10; ESCONDIDO 16; FASHION VALLEY 18; GASLAMP 15; MIRA MESA 18; MISSION MARKETPLACE 13; MISSION VALLEY 20; OCEANSIDE 16; OTAY RANCH 12; PALM PROMENADE 24; PARKWAY PLAZA 18; POWAY 10; RANCHO DEL REY 16; RANCHO SAN DIEGO 15; SAN MARCOS 18; TOWN SQUARE 14)

Before the Devil Knows You're Dead — Interesting attempt by the eighty-three-year-old Sidney Lumet to keep up with the Tarantinos, piloting a caper film of back-and-forth time jumps and alternating points of view. The caper itself, a jewelry store stickup, is strictly small-time. “We don’t want Tiffany’s,” the mastermind, a drug-dependent real estate accountant (Philip Seymour Hoffman), pitches the idea to his younger brother, a deadbeat dad (Ethan Hawke): “We want a mom-and-pop operation.” More specifically, the operation of their own mom and pop (Rosemary Harris and Albert Finney), squeezed between Claire’s and Foot Locker in a cookie-cutter Westchester shopping mall. The robbery goes very wrong very early, and the ensuing time scramble dispenses information and revelations on an unpredictable schedule. We meet “Grandma,” for example, at a school play *after* we have seen her shot in the holdup and *before* we find out she was not supposed to be at work that day. And we find out that the recruited younger brother is having an affair with his

sister-in-law, the mastermind’s wife (Marisa Tomei, more extensively attractive than ever), *before* we even know that the mastermind has any part in the plan. The totally botched robbery, leaving no prospect of success and profit, quickly eliminates much of the standard suspense in this sort of thing (cueing instead a brooding *Fargo*-esque musical score from *Fargo*’s actual composer, Carter Burwell), and it permits the focus to shift to the deeply jaundiced view of family life — family discord, family disloyalty, family dysfunction. That view, while it lets in a fair share of malicious humor, is not to be taken lightly. Lumet, whose long list of credits runs along the lines of *Twelve Angry Men*, *Long Day’s Journey into Night*, *Fail-Safe*, *The Pawnbroker*, *Serpico*, *Dog Day Afternoon*, *Network*, *The Verdict*, and the like, is by nature banished from lightness. 2007.

★★ (HORTON PLAZA 14; SAN MARCOS 18)

Beowulf — Computer-animated comic-book transcription of the unloved epic poem of the 8th Century. Director Robert Zemeckis goes even further with the motion-capture technique of *The Polar Express*, staking out the borderland between live action and cartoon, and throwing in 3-D to boot. Ray Winstone, voicing the dragon-slaying hero, has been prettified beyond recognition (unless you recognize him as Sean Bean), but Anthony Hopkins, if not his bare bum, is easily recognizable, as are John Malkovich, Brendan Gleeson, Robin Wright Penn, and Angelina “Fat Lips” Jolie. The novelty — motion capture plus 3-D — wears off eventually but not early. The visual effects are as liberated as any CGI, and are less apt to clash with their surroundings than the CGI in a live-action film. Still, we get plenty of clang and clank from the brutality, the gore, the coy nudity

(in places approaching the fig-leaf silliness of an Austin Powers spoof), and the sheer bombast. 2007.

★★ (CHULA VISTA 10; ESCONDIDO 16; FASHION VALLEY 18; GROSSMONT CENTER; HORTON PLAZA 14; MIRA MESA 18; MISSION MARKET-PLACE 13; MISSION VALLEY 7; MISSION VALLEY 20; OCEANSIDE 16; PALM PROMENADE 24; PARKWAY PLAZA 18; POWAY 10; RANCHO DEL REY 16; RANCHO SAN DIEGO 15; SAN MARCOS 18; TOWN SQUARE 14)

Blade Runner — Two of the more socially conscious of cinematic genres — science fiction and the detective story — have been mated to produce a future-generation Los Angeles (A.D. 2019) that looks like Tokyo or Hong Kong gone to seed. The detective work is somewhat scamped, except for a good scene (echoing Antonioni’s *Blow-Up*) involving a computerized photo scanner and enlarger. And several nostalgic throwbacks to Bogart’s heyday simply misfire: the hard-boiled, first-person narration (eliminated in the re-released “director’s cut”); the Venetian-blind shadows; the Joan Crawford hairdo and fashions on the female lead. The sci-fi elements are more fully elaborated, but aren’t always sure-fire either: the topography of the cityscapes often seems as flat and jumbled as a Cubist painting, and even the tightest of shots is apt to be busied up with reflections, moving lights, colored mist. With Harrison Ford, Rutger Hauer, and Sean Young; directed by Ridley Scott. 1982.

★ (KEN)

The Bourne Ultimatum — The *Bourne* absurdum. It isn’t just that Part III in the adventures of the amnesiac superspy adds more ridiculousness. It’s that, at these lengths, the ridiculousness multiplies exponentially. More ridiculousness, that is, and

more and more ridiculous. (The sentimental soft spots found in Parts I and II are here concentrated in a couple of female, motherly, protective, nurturing CIA agents who, alone among their heartless colleagues, are interested in keeping the hero alive.) Paul Greengrass’s frantic visual style — a hand-held camera in the grips of delirium tremens — fosters irritation where it intended excitement. With Matt Damon, Joan Allen, Julia Stiles, David Strathairn, Scott Glenn, and Albert Finney. 2007.

● (GASLAMP 15)

Dan in Real Life — Annual family gathering (parlor games, touch football, talent show), complicated by romantic rivalry: two brothers, a widower with three girls and a reformed womanizer, both smitten by a worldly Frenchwoman. A showcase for Steve Carell’s self-consciousness, somewhat more sympathetic than Dane Cook’s lugishness. Juliette Binoche looks as if she could do better. With John Mahoney, Diane Wiest, and Emily Blunt; directed by Peter Hedges. 2007.

● (LA JOLLA 12; OTAY RANCH 12)

The Darjeeling Limited — One thing to be said for a Wes Anderson film, and it’s so small thing, is that it bears an individual stamp. A stamp as flat as a postage stamp, as emphatic as a rubber stamp. (Whap, whap.) A well-known commodity after *Bottle Rocket*, *Rushmore*, *The Royal Tenenbaums*, *The Life Aquatic of Steve Zissou*, An-

derson favors fastidiously balanced, nailed-down compositions, the figures pinned to a shallow background like butterfly specimens. Stressing their separateness, he has no intention to hinge his shots together into a smooth and seamless line, but instead slots them into place as if on disconnected planes, setting up a clumping rhythm of starts and stops, glazing the screen with the deadeast of deadpans, and erecting an invisible wall (invulnerable even to the occasional uncharacteristic zoom) between the filmmaker and his characters, freakishly feckless people, abject puppets manipulated by a man with little regard for human diversity and volition. The effect — the unhumanness of these humanoids — is often amusing and always distancing. The danger in the director’s method is that it can be *too* distancing and therefore not amusing *enough*. (Since he always clamps a tasteful mute on the audience’s merriment, the standard laugh-meter is an unreliable measure.) If this outing seems a cut above all previous ones, it may be the benefit of a real, a tangible, a substantial background against which to display his specimens: three, thirty-something brothers who have not spoken to one another in the year since their father’s funeral, now heading out together on a “spiritual journey” in a first-class sleeper car across India, with the ultimate aim of tracking down their mother (a no-show at the funeral) in a convent at the foot of the Himalayas. In other words, a typical Wes Anderson operation, bringing

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SEEN ON DVD



Barton Fink

KIRSTEN ELMS

Screenwriter

As a writer on strike and having just seen *No Country for Old Men* — I’m drawn to another Coens’ film — *Barton Fink* — about a writer in Hollywood. I love the way they keep things happening offstage. They don’t over-explain.

I love the special features for Alfred Hitchcock’s *Rear Window* — behind the scenes of how they built the set, “Miss Torso” giving an interview, the screenwriter on adapting it. It’s a perfect movie. So simple. I use it as a model for great storytelling because it’s so contained. All the subplots come together well. They parallel the emotional ups and downs of the main storyline.

I am the biggest Peter Falk fan, and I love *Columbo: Season Four*. It has an episode with Gena Rowlands, which is interesting because of the great work Falk did with John Cassavetes. Plus, there’s an episode with Dick Van Dyke as a murderer. Fascinating!

BARTON FINK (USA) 1991, Twentieth Century Fox
List price: \$9.98

REAR WINDOW (USA) 1954, Universal
List price: \$19.98

COLUMBO: SEASON FOUR (USA) 1975–76, Universal
List price: \$39.98 (four discs)

about the insecure bonding of misaligned oddballs, but in an atypical exotic setting, the better to draw out their oddness. Owen Wilson, Adrien Brody, Jason Schwartzman, Amara Karan, Anjelica Huston, Bill Murray. 2007.

★★★ (HILLCREST CINEMAS, THROUGH 12/13; LA PALOMA, FROM 12/14)

Enchanted — In an overlong prologue, a generic fairy-tale princess, rendered in a pastiche of old-time Disney animation, is dispatched by a generic wicked witch to “a place where there are no happily-ever-afters,” namely modern-day Manhattan in live action, whither she’s soon followed by her betrothed prince, a CG chipmunk, and a witch’s minion. The slothful working-out of this inspiration should pass as sophisticated among grade-schoolers. And maybe once in a while among grown-ups. (With a



The Prestige

FARZAD NIKBAKHT

Education Coordinator, Media Arts Center San Diego

The success of *Infernal Affairs* in Hong Kong led to a prequel, sequel, and the timid yet acclaimed U.S. adaptation *The Departed*. *Infernal Affairs III*, the final installment of the trilogy, begins where the first leaves off. Through flash-forwards, flashbacks, and quotations from the first film, *Infernal Affairs III* effectively explores issues of memory and identity that will intrigue fans of the series. Yet, while it has an interesting narrative structure, it lacks the tension and creativity that made the first film a phenomenon.

The Prestige has an even more layered narrative structure as it moves back/forward in time and uses multiple narrators to tell the same story from varying perspectives. DVD extras such as *Tesla: The Man Who Invented the Twentieth Century* are not only enlightening, but also provide an informative context. Building on his earlier films (*Following*, *Memento*), Christopher Nolan continues to construct innovative narratives, exploring unique ways to use film as an effective storytelling medium.

INFERNAL AFFAIRS III (Hong Kong) 2003, Weinstein Company
List price: \$14.95

THE PRESTIGE (USA) 2006, Touchstone
List price: \$29.99

song, the princess rallies pigeons, sewer rats, and cockroaches to help with the domestic chores.) Amy Adams, far from the most plasticky actress, maintains a plucky air of innocence bordering on Blanche Du Bois delusion. With Patrick Dempsey, James Marsden, Timothy Spall, and Susan Sarandon; directed by Kevin Lima. 2007. ★ (CARMEL MOUNTAIN; CHULA VISTA 10; DEL MAR HIGHLANDS 8; ESCONDIDO 16; FASHION VALLEY 18; GASLAMP 15; GROSSMONT CENTER; LA COSTA 6; LA JOLLA 12; MIRA MESA 18; MISSION MARKETPLACE 13; MISSION VALLEY 7; MISSION VALLEY 20; OCEANSIDE 16; OTAY RANCH 12; PALM PROMENADE 24; PARKWAY PLAZA 18; POWAY 10; RANCHO DEL REY 16; RANCHO SAN DIEGO 15; RIVER VILLAGE 6; SAN MARCOS 18; TOWN SQUARE 14; VISTA VILLAGE)

The Golden Compass — Unstirring epic fantasy, set in a parallel universe where



Firefly: Season One

MICHELLE OSORIO

Director of the geek Web series, *./shutdown*, shutdowntv.com

If you haven’t watched the short-lived TV sensation *Firefly*, do it now. Find out why in only ten episodes (until Fox canned it), Joss Whedon’s “western in space” captured the hearts of fanboys and fangirls worldwide. Whedon, creator of *Buffy: The Vampire Slayer*, gives an amazing commentary. You’ll also find an Easter egg of Adam Baldwin singing *The Man They Call Jayne*.

Staying on the *Firefly* theme, *Serenity* is the critically acclaimed movie follow-up. It’s like a children’s Japanese cartoon...on drugs. Look for a great featurette on how the show attracted enough of a cult following to make the movie possible.

To finish off the trilogy, check out the fanmade documentary that screened at San Diego Comic-Con — *Done the Impossible*. It chronicles the rise and fall of the TV show and interviews fans about why the show’s so compelling. Proceeds go to Whedon’s favorite charity, Equality Now.

FIREFLY: SEASON ONE (USA) 2002, Twentieth Century Fox
List price: \$49.98 (four discs)

SERENITY (USA) 2005, Universal
List price: \$29.98

DONE THE IMPOSSIBLE (USA) www.donetheimpossible.com
2006
List price: \$16.95

people’s souls walk beside them in the form of talking animals, called “daemons.” In addition, there’s a whole glossary of made-up proper nouns, an obligatory oppressive, thought-policing Ruling Power, and a young girl singled out by destiny to be the Savior, aided by a good witch, a gypsy band, a dirigible-flying cowboy, a CG armored polar bear (cousin of the Coca-Cola polars), and the truth-telling gizmo of the title. A four-pronged last-minute rescue settles nothing, for this is but Part One of Philip Pullman’s “His Dark Materials” trilogy. With Dakota Blue Richards, Nicole Kidman, Daniel Craig, Eva Green, and Sam Elliott; directed by Chris Weitz. 2007.

★ (CARMEL MOUNTAIN; CHULA VISTA 10; DEL MAR HIGHLANDS 8; ESCONDIDO 16; FASHION VALLEY 18; GROSSMONT CENTER; HORTON PLAZA 14; LA COSTA 6; LA JOLLA 12; MIRA MESA 18; MISSION MARKETPLACE 13; MISSION

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Gone Baby Gone — Directing debut of Ben Affleck, who stays behind the camera and cedes the spotlight to his younger brother Casey, in the role of Patrick Kenzie, the Boston missing-persons private eye (“I find the people that started in the cracks and then fell through”), along with his “snooty” partner Angie Gennaro (Michelle Monaghan), featured in a series of detective novels by Dennis Lehane. The plot, starting sensibly enough with the vanished daughter of a drug-addicted and derelict single mom, proves in the long run to be preposterous. But Affleck, meaning Casey more than Ben, works wonders to humanize Lehane’s rather embarrassing literary creation, partly just by his youthful delicacy and his chip-on-the-shoulder defensiveness about it. A singularly unprepossessing hero, he gains stature by holding his ground, however suddenly, against some highly showy performances (Ed Harris, Amy Madigan, Amy Ryan, Morgan Freeman, among them). And the other Affleck, Ben, does some nice impressionistic detailing of his native Bean Town, and some candid thumbnailing of assorted lowlifes, before he succumbs to a muddying plot and a gagging resolution. 2007.

★ (GASLAMP 15)

Hitman — Video-game idiocy around a peerless assassin with a shaved head, a bar code tattooed on the back of it (assuring him the anonymity demanded of his job), and a voice mistakable for Clint Eastwood’s. The prevalent fog indoors is a symbol, a symptom, of a fog in the brain. With Timothy Olyphant, Dougray Scott, and Olga Kurylenko; directed by Xavier Gens. 2007. ● (CARMEL MOUNTAIN; CHULA VISTA 10; ESCONDIDO 16; FASHION VALLEY 18; HORTON PLAZA 14; MIRA MESA 18; MISSION MARKETPLACE 13; MISSION VALLEY 20; OCEANSIDE 16; PALM PROMENADE 24; PARKWAY PLAZA 18; POWAY 10; RANCHO DEL REY 16; RANCHO SAN DIEGO 15; SAN MARCOS 18; TOWN SQUARE 14)

How to Cook Your Life — A ninety-minute Buddhist retreat under the spiritual guidance of chef Edward Espe Brown, author of “the Bible of bread making.” Or in other words: the dharma made palatable, even delectable. The focal point of German filmmaker Doris Dörrie (*Enlightenment Guaranteed*) ripples outward from personal matters like anger and confusion to larger cultural matters like wealth and waste, the homeless, and organic farming. Essentially it’s a lecture film, but well photographed and sensitively edited, and it has a complex, charismatic central character and an unexpected emotional climax when he gets your attention by squeezing out a couple of tears before you have any idea why. 2007. ★★★ (HILLCREST CINEMAS, THROUGH 12/13)

I Am Legend — Third screen version of Richard Matheson’s futuristic vampire tale, starring Will Smith, directed by Francis Lawrence.

(CARMEL MOUNTAIN; CHULA VISTA 10; DEL MAR HIGHLANDS 8; ESCONDIDO 16; FASHION VALLEY 18; GROSSMONT CENTER; HORTON PLAZA 14; LA COSTA 6; LA JOLLA 12; MIRA MESA 18; MISSION MARKETPLACE 13; MISSION VALLEY 7; MISSION VALLEY 20; OCEANSIDE 16; OTAY RANCH 12; PALM PROMENADE 24; PARKWAY PLAZA 18; POWAY 10; RANCHO DEL REY 16; RANCHO SAN DIEGO 15; RIVER VILLAGE 6; SAN MARCOS 18; SANTEE DRIVE IN; TOWN SQUARE 14; VISTA VILLAGE; FROM 12/14)

I’m Not There — Todd Haynes blows another cloud of mist into the mystique of Bob Dylan. The filmmaker, who once enlisted Barbie dolls to tell the Karen Carpenter story, now borrows a gimmick used by Todd Solondz in *Palindromes*, employing a rotation of dissimilar actors to play a single role, a multiplication of a gimmick used by Luis Buñuel in *That Obscure Object of Desire*. (Not a gimmick, in other words, exclusive to filmmakers named Todd.) The fact that Bob Dylan is a real person and a public

figure, about whom we may have our own ideas, further complicates matters, and it is easy to lose track of the subject of the film when we are looking at a prepubescent black boy, Marcus Carl Franklin, hopping freight trains in Depression-period hobostyle, or looking at Richard Gere in granny glasses on horseback in the era of the model-T, and all the easier when they are masquerading under the aliases of Woody Guthrie and Billy the Kid, respectively. The songs in the film (sometimes sung by Dylan himself, sometimes by others) leave no doubt as to the protagonist’s identity, and no doubt as to his uniqueness, but between the half-dozen different faces and pseudonyms, the film seems to be not so much about the “many lives of Bob Dylan” as about a half-dozen different lives altogether. The elusiveness of the man, the multifacetedness of him, would presumably be The Point, but that point could have been made more subtly: the dissimilarity of Marcus Carl Franklin and Richard Gere amounts to gross overstatement. Adding to the confusion is a visual patchwork stitched together out of grainy black-and-white, glossy black-and-white, jaundiced color, and peachy color (Edward Lachman, cinematographer), not even counting the diverse cinematic allusions, catch them if you can, to Fellini, Godard, Peckinpah. With Christian Bale (who gets the speaking voice, the cadence, just right), Cate Blanchett (who additionally, cross-dressingly, gets the look just right), Ben Winslow, Heath Ledger, and Charlotte Gainsbourg. 2007.

★ (HILLCREST CINEMAS, THROUGH 12/13)

In the Valley of Elah — A more commendable writing and directing effort from Paul Haggis (writer only on *Million Dollar Baby* and *Flags of Our Fathers*, among others) than his hokey Oscar-winner, *Crash*. More focussed, more concentrated, more self-contained, more consistent: an uncompromisingly mournful murder mystery, and strangled antiwar cry, about a veteran of Operation Iraqi Freedom (remember when?) who goes missing upon his return to Fort Rudd, New Mexico, and who turns up on the outskirts of the base, stabbed, dismembered, and burned beyond recognition. Say what you will about the filmmaker’s political point-making, it never clogs up the unrushed flow of the narrative; and at the same time he shows a true cinematic eye for tacky Americana, the streets, the stores, the townscapes, etc., so that whenever we go anywhere on screen — an army barracks, a motel, a public restroom, a strip club, a coffee shop, a “drive-up” bar, a fast-food joint — we can feel we’ve really been there, really seen it. (The mood lighting of nauseous green and blanched white is a case of whatever would be the opposite of gilding the lily — wilting the weed, possibly — and equally unnecessary.) Tommy Lee Jones, as the victim’s father, a retired M. P. and current gravel hauler who presses the investigation forward when the military looks for an easy way out, has just the right amount of starch in his performance, touchingly repressed. Charlize Theron on the other hand, as the beleaguered civilian cop who eventually takes an interest, is perhaps more emotional than you want from a cop, but not more glamorous, with mannish attire, no makeup, and her hair parted in the middle and pulled back as severely as Emily Dickinson’s. The rest of the cast has been carefully chosen down to the smallest role, with special mention reserved for Susan Sarandon, Jason Patric, James Franco, Jake McLaughlin, Wes Chatham, Josh Brolin, Barry Corbin, and, nonchalantly topless in her mid-fifties, Frances Fisher. 2007. ★★★ (GASLAMP 15)

Into the Wild — Illustration, in a sketchy hand, of the Jon Krakauer nonfiction book on Christopher McCandless, a 1990 college graduate, on the doorstep of Harvard Law School, who gave away his tuition fund to Oxfam, obliterated his identity, renamed himself Alexander Supertramp, and swapped the evils of society for the purity of the northern wilderness (“No longer to be poisoned by civilization,” he carved into a wooden shingle at his encampment), where ultimately he starved to death in 1992. It may not sound like much of an idea for a film. It isn’t. A Seventies-style

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Town Square 14

4665 Clairemont Drive (858-274-1234)

Alvin and the Chipmunks (PG) Fri. (11:35, 1:00, 1:50, 3:15) 4:25, 5:30, 6:45, 7:45, 9:15, 9:50 Sat. (10:45, 11:35, 1:00, 1:50, 3:15) 4:25, 5:30, 6:45, 7:45, 9:15, 9:50 Sun. (10:45, 11:35, 1:00, 1:50, 3:15) 4:25, 5:30, 6:45, 7:45, 9:15; **American Gangster** (R) Fri.-Sun. (12:00) 4:10, 8:10; **August Rush** (PG) Fri. (1:40) 4:20, 6:55, 9:25 Sat.-Sun. (11:10, 1:40) 4:20, 6:55, 9:25; **Enchanted** (PG) Fri. (1:45) 4:35, 7:05, 9:40 Sat.-Sun. (11:00, 1:45) 4:35, 7:05, 9:40; **The Golden Compass** (PG-13) Fri. (11:30, 1:25, 2:25) 4:15, 5:00, 7:00, 7:35, 9:45, 10:20 Sat. (10:50, 11:30, 1:25, 2:25) 4:15, 5:00, 7:00, 7:35, 9:45, 10:20 Sun. (10:50, 11:30, 1:25, 2:25) 4:15, 5:00, 7:00, 7:35, 9:45; **I Am Legend** (No Rating) Fri.-Sat. (11:20, 12:10, 2:00, 2:45) 4:45, 5:15, 7:15, 8:00, 9:55, 10:30 Sun. (11:20, 12:10, 2:00, 2:45) 4:45, 5:15, 7:15, 8:00, 9:55; **Mr. Magorium's Wonder Emporium** (G) Fri.-Sun. (11:55, 2:30) 5:05, 7:40, 10:00; **No Country for Old Men** (R) Fri. (2:10) 4:50, 7:30, 10:15 Sat. (11:05, 2:10) 4:50, 7:30, 10:15 Sun. (11:05, 2:10) 4:50, 7:30, 10:10; **The Perfect Holiday** (PG) Fri.-Sun. (11:45, 2:15) 4:30, 6:50, 9:30; **This Christmas** (Not Rated) Fri.-Sat. (11:50, 2:35) 5:20, 7:50, 10:25 Sun. (11:50, 2:35) 5:20, 7:50, 10:10

DOWNTOWN

Gaslamp 15

701 Fifth Avenue (619-232-0400)

Call theater for program information

Horton Plaza 14

Horton Plaza (619-444-FILM)

Alvin and the Chipmunks (PG) Fri. (12:10, 12:40, 2:40, 3:10, 4:50, 5:20) 7:20, 7:50, 9:40, 10:10 Sat.-Sun. (12:10, 12:40, 2:40, 3:10) 4:50, 5:20, 7:20, 7:50, 9:40, 10:10; **American Gangster** (R) Fri.-Sun. (12:10, 3:30) 6:50, 10:15; **August Rush** (PG) Fri.-Sun. (12:05p.m.); **Before the Devil Knows You're Dead** (R) Fri.-Sun. (12:25, 3:15) 7:05, 9:55; **Beowulf: Digital 3D** (PG-13) Fri. (1:35, 4:10) 6:55, 10:05 Sat.-Sun. (1:35) 4:10, 6:55, 10:05; **The Golden Compass** (PG-13) Fri. (12:20, 12:50, 4:10, 4:40) 7:10, 7:40, 9:50, 10:20 Sat.-Sun. (12:20, 12:50) 4:10, 4:40, 7:10, 7:40, 9:50, 10:20; **Hitman** (R) Fri. (2:45, 5:05) 7:25, 9:45 Sat.-Sun. (2:45) 5:05, 7:25, 9:45; **I Am Legend** (No Rating) Fri. (12:00, 12:30, 1:30, 2:30, 3:00, 4:30, 5:00, 5:30) 7:00, 7:30, 8:00, 9:30, 10:00, 10:30 Sat. (12:30, 1:30, 2:30, 3:00) 4:30, 5:00, 5:30, 7:00, 7:30, 8:00, 9:30, 10:00, 10:30 Sun. (12:00, 12:30, 1:30, 2:30, 3:00) 4:30, 5:00, 5:30, 7:00, 7:30, 8:00, 9,; **Strength and Honor** (R) Fri.-Sun. (12:45, 3:35) 6:45, 9:15; **The Metropolitan Opera: Romeo et Juliette - NCM Event** () Sat. 10:00p.m.; **This Christmas** (Not Rated) Fri.-Sun. (12:35, 3:20) 6:40, 9:25; **What Would Jesus Buy?** (PG) Fri. (12:15, 2:35, 4:55) 7:15, 9:35 Sat.-Sun. (12:15, 2:35) 4:55, 7:15, 9:35

LA JOLLA

La Jolla 12

8657 Villa La Jolla Drive (858-558-2262)

Alvin and the Chipmunks (PG) Fri. 12:55, 3:10, 5:35, 8:05, 10:35 Sat. (10:30) 12:45, 3:10, 5:35, 8:05, 10:35 Sun. (10:30) 12:45, 3:10, 5:35, 8:05, 10:25; **American Gangster** (R) Fri. 12:40, 4:00, 7:25, 10:45 Sat.-Sun. 12:00, 3:20, 6:45, 10:10; **August Rush** (PG) Fri. 1:35, 4:20, 7:05, 9:50 Sat. (10:50) 1:35, 4:20, 7:05, 9:50 Sun. 1:35, 4:20, 7:05, 9:50; **Awake** (R) Fri. 12:50, 3:00, 5:20, 7:35, 9:40 Sat.-Sun. (10:35) 12:50, 3:00, 5:20, 7:35, 9:40; **Dan in Real Life** (PG-13) Fri.-Sun. 4:40, 7:10, 9:35; **Enchanted** (PG) Fri. 1:50, 4:35, 7:20, 10:00 Sat. (11:15) 1:50, 4:35, 7:20, 10:00 Sun. 1:50, 4:35, 7:20, 10:00; **The Golden Compass** (PG-13) Fri. 1:15, 2:15, 4:15, 5:00, 7:00, 7:45, 9:45, 10:30 Sat. (10:45) 1:30, 2:15, 4:15, 5:00, 7:00, 7:45, 9:45, 10:30 Sun. (10:40) 1:30, 4:15, 5:00, 7:00, 7:45, 9:45, 10:30; **I Am Legend** (No Rating) Fri. 1:25, 2:25, 4:30, 5:15, 7:15, 8:00, 9:55, 10:40 Sat. (10:55, 11:40) 1:40, 2:25, 4:30, 5:15, 7:15, 8:00, 9:55, 10:40 Sun. (10:55, 11:40) 1:40, 2:25, 4:30, 5:15, 7:15, 8:00, 9:55; **Juno** (PG-13) Fri. 12:30, 2:00, 2:55, 4:45, 5:30, 7:30, 8:15, 10:05, 10:50 Sat. (11:25) 12:15, 2:00, 2:45, 4:45, 5:30, 7:30, 8:15, 10:05, 10:50 Sun. 12:15, 2:00, 2:45, 4:45, 5:30, 7:30, 8:15, 10:05; **The Metropolitan Opera: Romeo et Juliette - NCM Event** (NR) Sat. (10:00a.m.); **The Metropolitan Opera: Romeo et Juliette Encore - NCM Event** (NR) Sun. 12:00p.m.

La Jolla Village

8879 Villa La Jolla Drive (619-819-0236)

Atonement (R) Fri. 2:00, 4:00, 5:00, 7:00, 8:00, 9:50 Sat.-Sun. 11:00, 1:00, 2:00, 4:00, 5:00, 7:00, 8:00, 9:50; **No Country for Old Men** (R) Fri.-Sun. 1:30, 4:20, 7:10, 10:05; **Starting Out in the Evening** (PG-13) Fri. 1:50, 4:40, 7:20, 9:55 Sat.-Sun. 11:15, 1:50, 4:40, 7:20, 9:55

MIRA MESA

Mira Mesa 18

10733 Westview Parkway (858-635-7700)

The Metropolitan Opera: Romeo et Juliette - NCM Event () Sat. 10:00p.m.
Call theater for program information

MISSION VALLEY

Fashion Valley 18

7037 Friars Road (858-558-2262)

I Am Legend (No Rating) Fri.-Sun. (10:45) 1:35, 4:25, 7:15, 10:05
Call theater for program information

Mission Valley 7

7510 Hazard Center Drive (619-685-2841)

Alvin and the Chipmunks (PG) Fri.-Sat. (10:00, 12:15, 2:45) 5:15, 7:45, 10:00 Sun. (10:00, 12:15, 2:45) 5:15, 7:45; **American Gangster** (R) Fri. (10:00, 1:15) 7:00 Sat.-Sun. (1:15) 7:00; **Beowulf: Digital 3D** (PG-13) Fri.-Sat. (10:30, 1:30) 4:15, 7:15, 10:15 Sun. (10:30, 1:30) 4:15, 7:15; **Enchanted** (PG) Fri.-Sat. (10:00, 12:30, 3:00) 5:30, 8:00, 10:30 Sun. (10:00, 12:30, 3:00) 5:30, 8:00; **The Golden Compass** (PG-13) Fri.-Sat. (10:00, 1:00, 4:00) 7:00, 10:00 Sun. (10:00, 1:00, 4:00) 7:00; **I Am Legend** (No Rating) Fri.-Sat. (10:15, 11:30, 12:45, 2:15, 3:15) 4:45, 5:45, 7:15, 8:15, 9:45, 10:45 Sun. (10:15, 11:30, 12:45, 2:15, 3:15) 4:45, 5:45, 7:15, 8:15; **The Santa Claus Brothers** (No Rating) Sat.-Sun. (10:30a.m.); **Strength and Honor** (R) Fri.-Sat. 4:30, 10:15 Sun. 4:30p.m.

Mission Valley 20

1640 Camino Del Rio North (858-558-2262)

Call theater for program information

STATE UNIVERSITY

Ken

4061 Adams Avenue (619-819-0236)

Blade Runner: The Final Cut () Fri. 4:15, 7:00, 9:35 Sat.-Sun. 1:30, 4:15, 7:00, 9:35

UPTOWN

Hillcrest Cinemas

3965 Fifth Avenue (619-819-0236)

Into the Wild (R) Fri.-Sun. 1:15, 4:45, 8:00; **Juno** (PG-13) Fri. 1:45, 2:15, 4:30, 5:00, 7:15, 7:45, 9:35, 10:05 Sat.-Sun. 11:00, 11:30, 1:45, 2:15, 4:30, 5:00, 7:15, 7:45, 9:35, 10:05; **Margot at the Wedding** (R) Fri. 2:45, 5:15, 7:30, 9:55 Sat.-Sun. 12:15, 2:45, 5:15, 7:30, 9:55; **No Country for Old Men** (R) Fri. 1:30, 4:15, 7:00, 9:45 Sat.-Sun. 10:45, 1:30, 4:15, 7:00, 9:45

Reuben H. Fleet Science Center

1875 El Prado, Balboa Park (619-238-1233)

Dinosaurs Alive! (NR) Fri.-Sat. 1:00, 4:00, 7:00 Sun. 1:00, 4:00; **The Living Sea** (Not Rated) Fri. 12:00, 3:00, 6:00 Sat.-Sun. 10:00, 12:00, 3:00, 6:00; **Sea Monsters: A Prehistoric Adventure** (No Rating) Fri. 2:00, 5:00, 8:00 Sat. 11:00, 2:00, 5:00, 8:00 Sun. 11:00, 2:00, 5:00

San Diego Natural History Museum

1788 El Prado, Balboa Park (619-232-3821)

Ocean Oasis (Not Rated) Fri. 10:10a.m. Sat.-Sun. 12:00, 4:00

EAST COUNTY

EL CAJON

Parkway Plaza 18

405 Parkway Plaza (619-401-3456)

Call theater for program information

LA MESA

Grossmont Center

Grossmont Center (619-465-7100)

Alvin and the Chipmunks (PG) Fri. (12:15, 2:35) 5:00, 7:25, 9:55 Sat. (12:00, 2:35) 5:00, 7:25, 9:55 Sun. (12:00, 2:35) 5:00, 7:25, 9:45; **August Rush** (PG) Fri.-Sat. (12:55, 3:55) 7:05, 10:05 Sun. (12:55, 3:55) 7:05, 9:55; **Bee Movie** (PG) Fri.-Sun. (12:45, 2:55); **Beowulf** (PG-13) Fri.-Sat. 5:10, 7:50, 10:25 Sun. 5:10, 7:50, 10:20; **Enchanted** (PG) Fri. (2:05) 4:35, 7:15, 9:40 Sat. (11:35, 2:05) 4:35, 7:15, 9:40 Sun. (11:35, 2:05) 4:35, 7:15, 9:35; **The Golden Compass** (PG-13) Fri. (2:00) 4:45, 7:35, 10:20 Sat. (11:15, 2:00) 4:45, 7:35, 10:20 Sun. (11:15, 2:00) 4:45, 7:35, 10:05; **I Am Legend** (No Rating) Fri. (12:25, 1:55, 3:00) 4:25, 5:30, 7:00, 8:00, 9:30, 10:30 Sat. (11:25, 12:25, 1:55, 3:00)

4:25, 5:30, 7:00, 8:00, 9:30, 10:30 Sun. (11:25, 12:25, 1:55, 3:00) 4:25, 5:30, 7:00, 8:00, 9:20, 10:25; **The Perfect Holiday** (PG) Fri.-Sat. (12:35, 3:10) 5:45, 8:15, 10:40 Sun. (12:35, 3:10) 5:45, 8:15, 10:30; **This Christmas** (Not Rated) Fri. (2:20) 4:55, 7:40, 10:15 Sat. (11:40, 2:20) 4:55, 7:40, 10:15 Sun. (11:40, 2:20) 4:55, 7:40, 10:15

RANCHO SAN DIEGO

Rancho San Diego 15

2951 Jamacha Road

Call theater for program information

SANTEE

Santee Drive In

10990 Woodside Avenue (619-448-7447)

The Golden Compass (PG-13) Fri.-Sun.; **I Am Legend** (No Rating) Fri.-Sun.

SOUTH BAY

CHULA VISTA

Chula Vista 10

Chula Vista between H and I (619-338-4214)

Alvin and the Chipmunks (PG) Fri.-Sun. (10:00, 11:30, 12:30, 1:45, 2:45, 4:00) 5:15, 6:15, 7:30, 8:30, 9:45, 10:45; **Bee Movie** (PG) Fri.-Sun. (10:15, 12:15, 3:00) 5:15; **Beowulf: Digital 3D** (PG-13) Fri.-Sun. 7:45, 10:30; **Enchanted** (PG) Fri.-Sun. (10:00, 12:30, 3:00) 5:30, 8:00, 10:30; **The Golden Compass** (PG-13) Fri.-Sun. (11:15, 2:00) 4:45, 7:30, 10:15; **Hitman** (R) Fri. (10:00, 12:15, 2:30) 7:45 Sat.-Sun. (12:15, 2:30) 7:45; **I Am Legend** (No Rating) Fri.-Sun. (10:15, 11:00, 12:45, 1:30, 3:15) 4:15, 5:45, 7:00, 8:15, 9:45, 10:45; **The Santa Claus Brothers** (No Rating) Sat.-Sun. (10:30a.m.); **Strength and Honor** (R) Fri.-Sun. 5:00, 10:15; **The Perfect Holiday** (PG) Fri.-Sun. (10:30, 1:00, 3:30) 6:00, 8:15, 10:45; **This Christmas** (Not Rated) Fri.-Sun. (10:30, 1:15) 4:30, 7:15, 10:00

Otay Ranch 12

Eastlake Parkway at Olympic (858-558-2262)

Alvin and the Chipmunks (PG); **American Gangster** (R); **August Rush** (PG); **Bee Movie** (PG); **Dan in Real Life** (PG-13); **Enchanted** (PG); **Fred Claus** (PG); **The Golden Compass** (PG-13); **I Am Legend** (No Rating); **This Christmas** (Not Rated)

Palm Promenade 24

770 Denney Road (858-558-2262)

Alvin and the Chipmunks (PG); **American Gangster** (R); **August Rush** (PG); **Awake** (R); **Bee Movie** (PG); **Beowulf** (PG-13); **Enchanted** (PG); **Fred Claus** (PG); **The Golden Compass** (PG-13); **Hitman** (R); **I Am Legend** (No Rating); **The Mist** (R); **No Country for Old Men** (R); **Strength and Honor** (R); **The Perfect Holiday** (PG); **This Christmas** (Not Rated)

Rancho Del Rey 16

East H Street (619-216-4707)

Call theater for program information

IMPERIAL BEACH

South Bay Drive-In

2170 Coronado Avenue (619-423-2727)

Call theater for program information

NORTH INLAND

CARMEL MOUNTAIN

Carmel Mountain

11620 Carmel Mountain Road (858-674-9770)

Alvin and the Chipmunks (PG) Fri.-Sat. (12:00, 2:20) 4:45, 7:10, 9:30 Sun. (12:00, 2:20) 4:45, 7:10; **August Rush** (PG) Fri.-Sat. (12:55, 3:45) 7:05, 9:50 Sun. (12:55, 3:45) 7:05; **Awake** (R) Fri.-Sat. (12:45, 3:00) 5:05, 7:50, 10:05 Sun. (12:45, 3:00) 5:05, 7:50; **Bee Movie** (PG) Fri.-Sat. (12:25, 2:35) 4:50, 7:05, 9:25 Sun. (12:25, 2:35) 4:50, 7:05; **Dan in Real Life** (PG-13) Fri.-Sat. (12:20, 2:40) 5:00, 7:25, 9:45 Sun. (12:20, 2:40) 5:00, 7:25; **Enchanted** (PG) Fri.-Sat. (12:15, 2:40) 5:10, 7:40, 10:10 Sun. (12:15, 2:40) 5:10, 7:40; **The Golden Compass** (PG-13) Fri.-Sat. (12:10, 1:00, 2:45, 3:50) 5:20, 7:15, 7:55, 10:00 Sun. (12:10, 1:00, 2:45, 3:50) 5:20, 7:15, 7:55; **I Am Legend** (No Rating) Fri.-Sat. (12:05, 12:50, 2:40, 3:30) 5:15, 7:00, 7:45, 9:35, 10:15 Sun. (12:05, 12:50, 2:40, 3:30) 5:15, 7:00, 7:45; **Mr. Magorium's Wonder Emporium** (G) Fri.-Sat. (12:30, 2:50) 5:05, 7:30, 9:50 Sun. (12:30, 2:50) 5:05, 7:30; **This Christmas** (Not Rated) Fri.-Sat. (1:05, 3:10) 7:15, 9:55 Sun. (1:05, 3:10) 7:15

ESCONDIDO

Escondido 16

350 W. Valley Parkway (760-291-0119)

Alvin and the Chipmunks (PG) Fri. (10:30, 12:05, 12:55, 2:30, 3:20, 4:55, 5:45) 7:20, 8:10, 9:45, 10:35 Sat.-Sun. (10:30, 12:05, 12:55, 2:30, 3:20) 4:55, 5:45, 7:20, 8:10, 9:45, 10:35; **American Gangster** (R) Fri.-Sun. (11:40, 3:05) 6:30, 10:00; **August Rush** (PG) Fri.-Sun. (11:50, 2:45) 7:25, 10:10; **Beowulf** (PG-13) Fri.-Sun. 6:40, 10:25; **Enchanted** (PG) Fri. (10:40, 1:25, 4:15) 6:55, 9:40 Sat.-Sun. (10:40, 1:25) 4:15, 6:55, 9:40; **The Golden Compass** (PG-13) Fri. (11:30, 12:45, 2:20, 3:45, 5:05) 7:10, 7:50, 9:55, 10:45 Sat.-Sun. (11:30, 12:45, 2:20, 3:45) 5:05, 7:10, 7:50, 9:55, 10:45; **Hitman** (R) Fri.-Sun. 7:55, 10:45, (2:55) 12:15; **I Am Legend** (No Rating) Fri. (10:45, 11:35, 12:30, 1:20, 2:10, 3:10, 4:00, 4:45) 7:00, 7:30, 8:00, 9:35, 10:05, 10:40 Sat.-Sun. (10:45, 11:35, 12:30, 1:20, 2:10, 3:10) 4:00, 4:45, 7:00, 7:30, 8:00, 9:35, 10:05, 10:40; **Mr. Magorium's Wonder Emporium** (G) Fri.-Sun. (11:00, 1:30, 3:55) 6:45, 9:30; **No Country for Old Men** (R) Fri.-Sun. (12:40, 3:40) 7:35, 10:30; **The Perfect Holiday** (PG) Fri. (11:15, 2:40, 5:15) 7:45, 10:15 Sat.-Sun. (11:15, 2:40) 5:15, 7:45, 10:15; **This Christmas** (Not Rated) Fri.-Sun. (12:35, 3:35) 6:50, 9:50

FALLBROOK

River Village

5256 S. Mission Road (760-945-8784)

Alvin and the Chipmunks (PG) Fri.-Sat. (11:00, 1:15, 3:30) 5:45, 8:00, 10:15 Sun. (11:00, 1:15, 3:30) 5:45, 8:00; **August Rush** (PG) Fri.-Sun. (11:45, 2:30) 5:30; **Enchanted** (PG) Fri.-Sat. (12:00, 2:45) 5:15, 7:45, 10:15 Sun. (12:00, 2:45) 5:15, 7:

road movie, redolent of Seventies-style disaffection, it has a strong element of travelogue, as our happy-go-lucky hobo rides his aging Datsun westward to South Dakota, abandons it at Lake Mead, kayaks down the Colorado River, drifts into Mexico, train-hops up to L.A., thumbs his way to the Salton Sea, Anza Borrego, and Alaska. In that final destination, the travelogue veers toward nature documentary. At nearly two and a half hours, the film feels very, very long, albeit short on relatable incident: the protagonist goes places, he meets people, and then he goes to a place where he won't meet people, where he will meet only his end, a martyr to something or other. Director Sean Penn unmistakably takes himself very seriously, and takes his protagonist almost reverently, painting him as something of a holy fool (a reader of Tolstoi, even though an eater of meat when he can get it), and offering up this speculative reenactment as nothing less than an endorsement. At the top, he sets the tone with a high-flown epigraph from Lord Byron: "I love not man the less, but Nature more" — that one. The kid sister periodically supplies some explanatory narration ("I understand what he was doing"), and Pearl Jam's Eddie Vedder chimes in with a half-dozen or so acoustic songs in sympathy and support. Of the real protagonist's earnestness and conviction, the film can tell us next to nothing. Of the filmmaker's, it can tell us much. And then it can tell us again. And again. With Emile Hirsch, Marcia Gay Harden, William Hurt, Jena Malone, Vince Vaughn, and Hal Holbrook. 2007. ★ (HILLCREST CINEMAS)

Junio — Reviewed this issue. With Ellen Page, Michael Cera, Jennifer Garner, and Jason Bateman; directed by Jason Reitman. ★★ (HILLCREST CINEMAS; LA JOLLA 12; FROM 12/14)

The Kingdom — A remedial history lesson on U.S. -Saudi relations, behind the opening credits, introduces a hypothetical massacre of a hundred-plus American citizens at an oil-company picnic, the handiwork of an "Osama wannabe." Speedily onto the scene — where were they on 9/11? — comes an FBI response team (Jamie Foxx, the take-charge family man; Jennifer Garner, the token superwoman; Chris Cooper, the token good actor; Jason Bateman, the obligatory wiseacre), to take names and kick ass, but first to burn the ears of the local Saudi investigator with their salty Free Speech. (Ashraf Barhom, in the part, is as likable as he is expendable.)



Margot at the Wedding

Director Peter Berg's bob-and-weave camera, that cliché of immediacy and urgency, is a continual annoyance, and in the climactic action is worse than that. Our inability to follow what's happening can scarcely convince us it's actually happening. 2007. ● (GASLAMP 15)

Lions for Lambs — Topics on the table: the war on terror, the lack of a battle plan to wage it, the governmental policy of disinformation, the complicity of the press in all this, the general lowering of journalistic standards, the apathy of the younger generation, the ivory-towerism of academe, and (if that's not enough) the responsibility of each and every individual citizen to get involved, make a difference, act out a slogan. The action in the film, which is to say the talk, talk, talk, takes place in three arenas: the Capitol Hill office of a go-getter GOP senator, entertaining a veteran newshound in an hour-long one-on-one interview

("My honest effort to keep the press better informed"); a snowy Afghan mountaintop on which two old college buddies lie wounded and marooned; and the office of their former Poli-Sci professor at "a California university," where he now, conscience-stricken over his vain attempt to dissuade them from joining the military, fights for the soul of a disengaged student of bright promise and smart mouth. The shifting focus from one arena to another, for all its geographical scope, is scarcely cinematic at all, but more like a shifting spotlight on a stage, a pool of illumination that circulates between three distinct twosomes. Although a few flashbacks combat this effect, the staginess — the soapboxiness — never for a moment relents. The film, really more a forum than a film ("Here we are," the truest statement the senator makes, "having a high-minded debate"), collects commonplace talk on the issues of the day, things you could hear spoken all around you, and it crams them into the mouths of

tenuously connected, sketchily conceived fictional characters. Presented for the most part in a constricted face-shot style, and rather sickly in complexion for so eminent a cinematographer as Philippe Rousselot, it comes to us out of the evident conviction that we are at too critical a time in our history to be bothered with amenities such as art and artfulness, imagination and invention. (Still another indicator, like no shampoo on airplanes, that *the terrorists have won.*) And — despite an A-list cast of Tom Cruise, Meryl Streep, and Robert Redford, the last of whom also directed — it logs in at several ticks under ninety minutes, as if any greater elaboration would have dangerously delayed the delivery of the message. With Andrew Garfield, Derek Luke, Michael Peña. 2007. ● (GASLAMP 15)

Margot at the Wedding — Reviewed this issue. With Nicole Kidman, Jennifer Jason Leigh, Jack Black, and Zane Pais; writ-

ten and directed by Noah Baumbach. ★★ (HILLCREST CINEMAS)

Martian Child — Sci-fi writer (and widower) adopts a problem child who believes he's from another planet. The means of expression are hackneyed and mawkish, and John Cusack's emotional reserves run only puddle-deep, but the warm, clean, well-lit photography of Robert Yeoman (on whose talents Wes Anderson holds no monopoly) will give the sensitive viewer something to cozy up to, something constant. With Bobby Coleman, Amanda Peet, Joan Cusack, Oliver Platt, Sophie Okonedo, and Anjelica Huston; directed by Menno Meyjes. 2007. ★ (GASLAMP 15)

The Mist — The third Frank Darabont film to have been adapted from the works of Stephen King, although the first two, *The Shawshank Redemption* and *The Green Mile*, were not the sort of work for which that author is best known. (Darabont's intervening film, *The Majestic*, was truly horrible, horrific, horrid, but not in any way intended.) This one, adapted from a King "novella," is much more what we would expect: "Something in the mist! Something in the mist took John Lee!" Said mist has rolled down from the mountain on which there is ostensibly some type of missile-defense base, rolled across the lake, rolled into town, and what's in it — including the thing that took John Lee — is a menagerie of jumbo insects, reptiles, mollusks, God knows what. By and by, we get a throwaway science-fictional explanation for this — really more mythological than science-fictional, more Pandora's Box than Frankenstein's Monster — but the concern of the townsfolk barricaded inside the local supermarket, The Food House, is simply to survive to the end of the movie: "It appears we may have a problem of some magnitude here," announces the skeptical store manager after viewing the chopped-off tip of a tentacle, still thrashing, at the loading dock. The traditional voice against tampering with nature, though quite properly a religious one, is in this instance a stridently fire-and-brimstone one (Marcia Gay Harden's), going on about "the end of time," never mind the end of the movie; and there is no opposing voice more authoritative than Thomas Jane's, Toby Jones's, Jeffrey DeMunn's, Laurie Holden's, or Frances Sternhagen's (a no-star cast). The computer-generated creatures, very well-done, never overdone, are infinitely more congenial than this shrewish doom-sayer, and not even Darabont's slushy, slapdash direction (shallow focus, rack focus, lack of focus) can spoil the party. 2007. ★★ (FASHION VALLEY 18; MISSION MARKETPLACE 13; MISSION VALLEY 20; PALM PROMENADE 24)

Mr. Magorium's Wonder Emporium — The once proud Dustin Hoffman, with a prissy lisp, bushy eyebrows, shrubby hair, and ice-cream suits, as the centuries-old proprietor of a magic toyshop: crushed under a riot of color and a steamroller of whimsy. With Natalie Portman, Jason Bateman, and Zach Mills; written and directed by Zach Helm. 2007. ● (DEL MAR HIGHLANDS 8; GASLAMP 15; MISSION MARKETPLACE 13; POWAY 10)

No Country for Old Men — The Coen brothers' first literary adaptation, from a Cormac McCarthy original, an overflowingly bloody pulp thriller, plumped up with folksy first-person social commentary in italics, about a Texas good ole boy who stumbles upon the internecine scene of a drug deal gone bad, makes off with a satchel of cash, and tries to ditch the implacable hired killer (among others) on his trail. Sharing the writing credit as always and sharing the directing credit as they only began to do with *The Ladykillers*, the brothers were smart to cut down the social commentary — the Decline of Western Civilization as viewed by an aging third-generation lawman — to a single block of voice-over at the outset ("Some of the old-time sheriffs never even wore a gun"), and to sprinkle any additional such commentary lightly into the dialogue ("Once you quit hearing 'sir' and 'ma'am,' the rest is soon to follow"). With-



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out those repeated and repetitive interruptions, the simple pursuit narrative — the killer pursuing the filcher, the lawman pursuing both — unfolds as lean, linear, streamlined, and yet slow, steady, and long, never very deep. And on the Coens' part, never very inventive. They have followed McCarthy's blueprint scrupulously, even slavishly, and have bountifully harvested his lip-smacking dialogue; and the major unconventionalities in this mostly conventional thriller are all his. (For better or for worse.) To be sure, the Coens are meticulous technicians, supremely skillful, attentive to the minutest detail. And while the body count climbs numbingly high, the tension in individual set pieces is teased out to an exquisite agony, and with no artificial boost from any background music. (The Coens' regular composer, Carter Burwell, gets credited for the exit music.) Certainly a personal touch, a personal sense of humor, comes into the local-color cameos of gas-station attendant, motel clerk, hotel clerk, trailer-park manager, etc., etc. And perhaps a somewhat unseemly humor, or at least unseemly delight, comes into the characterization of the psychopathic killer, with his robotic delivery of lines, his torturous banter, his gimmicky weapon (a compressed-air tank for blowing locks out of doors and blowing holes in heads), and above all his Engelbert Humperdinck haircut *circa* 1972 (hair humor always being big with the Coens). Tommy Lee Jones, Javier Bardem, Josh Brolin, Kelly Macdonald, Woody Harrelson. 2007.

★★★★ (ESCONDIDO 16; FLOWER HILL 4; HILL-

CREST CINEMAS; LA JOLLA VILLAGE; MIRA MESA 18; OCEANSIDE 16; PALM PROMENADE 24; RANCHO DEL REY 16; RANCHO SAN DIEGO 15; SAN MARCOS 18; TOWN SQUARE 14; VISTA VILLAGE)

Romance and Cigarettes — John Turturro, in his director's hat, dips into lip-sync musical fantasy in the proletarian mode of *Pennies from Heaven* (or the more rarefied and bourgeois *Same Old Song* of Alain Resnais), with minor modifications: the people engage in raunchier talk, and instead of simply mouthing the words to old pop songs, they audibly sing along with the original recordings. The self-conscious jokiness, broadened perhaps by the blue-collar milieu, testifies to the filmmaker's discomfort with fantasy. Kate Winslet has some genuine fun as a hot-patootie redhead, and Elaine Stritch makes a big splash in a brief appearance ("Every breath is a victory," in response to a routine "How are you?"). With James Gandolfini, Susan Sarandon (fifteen years older than Gandolfini, as his wife), Mary-Louise Parker (three years younger than him, as his daughter), Aida Turturro (one year younger, as another daughter), Mandy Moore (a third daughter, the right age for it), Bobby Cannavale, Steve Buscemi, and Christopher Walken. 2007. ★ (LA JOLLA VILLAGE, THROUGH 12/13)

Starting Out in the Evening — Reviewed this issue. With Frank Langella, Lauren Ambrose, Lili Taylor, and Adrian Lester; directed by Andrew Wagner. ★★ (LA JOLLA VILLAGE, FROM 12/14)

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30 Days of Night — A tribe of subtitled vampires strategically targets the northernmost town in the U.S., Barrow, Alaska, hunkered down for a sunless month, free rein for nocturnal bloodsuckers. The majestic clouds and snowscapes on the last day of light ignite hope for a sense of style, but the superhuman strength and speed of the monsters soon prepare you for boredom and monotony, albeit *gory* boredom and monotony. A brief recurrence of majesty: the aerial view of slaughter, splashes of red on a field of snow, an action painting in motion. With Josh Hartnett, Melissa

George, Ben Foster, Danny Huston, and Mark Boone Junior; directed by David Slade. 2007. ● (GASLAMP 15)

What Would Jesus Buy? — Rob VanAlkemade's documentary on the commercialization of Christmas. (HORTON PLAZA 14, FROM 12/14)

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JACK MATHEWS, NEW YORK DAILY NEWS

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CLAUDIA PUIG, USA TODAY

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RICHARD ROEPER, AT THE MOVIES WITH EBERT & ROEPER

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THELMA ADAMS, US WEEKLY

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For consideration, attend our hiring event on:

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Please call:

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The San Diego Reader is looking for an Administrative Assistant with at least 3 years' experience. Must possess excellent customer service skills and be able to work comfortably with the public and coworkers. Multitasking skills are a plus. Responsibilities include functioning as an assistant to the sales, front office and accounting departments. Duties may include contacting advertisers by phone, data entry, plus miscellaneous organizational and administrative tasks. Work in a positive, casual environment for the nation's fourth-largest alternative newsweekly. **For Full-Time Employees:** Benefits include health coverage paid 100%, 401(k) with employer match, free parking at our Little Italy location in downtown and more.



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CORRECTIONAL DEPUTY PROBATION Officer I. County of San Diego Probation Department now hiring. Test Date: January 5, 2008. 8am, Montgomery Middle School, 2470 Ulric Street, San Diego 92111. Must be 21 years, good physical condition, no illicit drug usage. U.S. citizen or becoming a citizen. Pass criminal/personal background investigation. No felony convictions. High school diploma/GED. \$35,068-\$44,740/year. www.sdcounty.ca.gov/probation. Jobline: 858-514-8558.

CORRECTIONAL MONITOR. Volunteers of America, a faith-based social service nonprofit, is seeking qualified individuals with experience in security or related field and an interest in corrections to work with our parolee clients in our San Diego Stabilization Center located in downtown San Diego. Monitor the activities of clients, ensure the safety and security of the building, its residents and ensure normal operations. Requires HS/GED and related work experience (\$8-8.25/hour). Part-time evening and graveyard shifts available. Call: 619-228-2047; e-mail resume: hr@voa-swcal.org; fax: 619-282-8210; or mail: Volunteers of America, 3530 Camino Del Rio North, #300, San Diego, CA 92108. EEO/AAEP Employer.

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CUSTOMER SERVICE. Ticket Services Reps. Full-time positions for customer service oriented individuals with great computer skills, especially Tessitura. Flexible schedule includes days, evenings, weekends. Prior ticketing experience helpful. Apply to San Diego Symphony, Attention: HR, 1245 Seventh Avenue, San Diego, CA 92101 or fax 619-235-0005.

CUSTOMER SERVICE/DISPATCHER. ARS of San Diego is seeking a motivated multitasker with good communication and leadership skills for a fast-paced environment. Must be a team player with a minimum of 5 years experience. Kevin, 858-677-5444 x113. kkellington@ars.com, www.jobswithars.com. Drug-free work environment. License #ARS San Diego 791820.

CUSTOMER SERVICE: Immediate openings at door company, Service and Quote Department. Good communication and computer skills (MS Word, spreadsheet) required. Must have good attitude and attendance. Bilingual (English/Spanish) a plus. Fax resume to 619-671-2310. We will call you for an interview. 7565 Siempre Viva Road, San Diego, CA 92154 (near Otay Mesa border).

DATA ENTRY SPECIALIST for Alcohol and Drug Treatment Program. Volunteers of America, a faith-based social service nonprofit, is seeking a Data Entry Specialist to help us collect and enter data to determine the effectiveness of our A&D program. Requires A.A. degree or minimum of 60 credits towards degree and proven data-related experience. Position located at facility. (\$9-\$9.90/hour.) Call: 619-228-2047; e-mail resume: hr@voa-swcal.org; fax: 619-282-8210; or mail: Volunteers of America, 3530 Camino Del Rio North, #300, San Diego, CA 92108. EEO/AAEP Employer.

DEPUTY PROBATION OFFICER. County of San Diego Probation Department is now hiring. Test Dates: December 15, 2007 or January 26, 2008. Qualified appli-

cants will be notified by mail of the time and location of the test. Applications must be submitted no later than 15 days prior to exam date. Qualifications: Bachelor's degree with experience. Must be 21 years, good physical condition, no illicit drug usage. U.S. citizen or in process of becoming a citizen. Pass criminal/personal background investigation. No felony convictions. \$50,752-\$61,672/year. Safety Retirement-Sworn Officers 3% at age 50. Bilingual men/women encouraged to apply. Applications can be accessed online from the Job/Current Recruitment section of the County website at: <http://www.sdcounty.ca.gov>. Jobline: 858-514-8558.

DEPUTY SHERIFF and Deputy Sheriff Detentions/Courts. San Diego County Sheriff's Department. Hiring for two types of positions; take one exam, apply for either or both! Exam dates: Saturday, December 15, 2007, 7:30am arrival, Rancho Buena Vista High School, 1601 Longhorn Drive, Vista CA 92083 or Wednesday, December 19, 2007, 5:30pm arrival or Saturday, December 22, 2007, 7:30am arrival, Sheriff's Administrative Center, 9621 Ridgehaven Court, San Diego CA 92123. Registration by e-mail or phone is required for the Ridgehaven test ONLY at: recruit@sdsheriff.org. Detention/Courts: \$39,796-\$61,608 annual salary, plus benefits. 18-year-olds eligible to apply! Deputy Sheriff: \$49,704-\$71,099 current annual salary, plus benefits. U.S. citizen or applied for citizenship; 20-1/2 years old. High school graduate or G.E.D. required. Bring valid photo ID. Valid California Driver's License prior to appointment. Effective oral and written communication in English. EOE. Additional test dates: www.joinsdSHERIFF.net. 858-974-2000.

DISPATCHER. Experience preferred. Part time, 25-35 hours/week. Nights and weekends. Benefits. Old Town area. Apply in person: 3140 Moore Street, San Diego 92110. 619-778-3807. Email chrisortiz2@cox.net.

DISPATCHER/CUSTOMER SERVICE. ARS of San Diego is seeking a motivated multitasker with good communication and leadership skills for a fast-paced environment. Must be a team player with a minimum of 5 years experience. Kevin, 858-677-5444 x113. kkellington@ars.com, www.jobswithars.com. Drug-free work environment. License #ARS San Diego 791820.

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**December 19, 2007
5:30 pm Arrival**

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FRONT DESK COORDINATOR/Management. Aveda concept salon in La Mesa. 30+ hours weekly. Must have computer skills, be organized, outgoing able to multitask. Previous experience necessary. Contact Roz. 619-464-6066.

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HIRING EVENT! Ace Parking. Monday, December 17, 1:30pm-6:30pm, 2550 5th Avenue, Suite 105, San Diego 92103. Now hiring On-Call Valets and Cashiers (\$8/hour and up); Graveyard Valets (\$9.50/hour and up); Shift Managers and Customer Service Representative (3-month assignment). Available to work weekends and holidays including New

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HOSPITALITY. Manpower, in partnership with Cirque Du Soleil, has part-time, nights, and weekend openings: Ushers, Food & Beverage, Janitors, Costume Dressers, Chef, and many more! Earn extra money, see the show free! 1/11/08-2/17/08. Contact your local Manpower office: (Mission Valley) 2225 Camino Del Rio South, Suite E, San Diego (619-293-3606); (Mira Mesa) 7094 Miratech Drive, Suite 100, San Diego (858-635-5835); (San Marcos) 801 West San Marcos Blvd. (760-736-7080).

HOSPITALITY: Senior resort retirement community seeking: Full-time Lead Server, lunch and dinner plus weekends, up to \$9.50/hour, must have experience; and Activity Assistant to coordinate activities, etc. Apply: Wesley Palms, 2404 Loring Street, Pacific Beach 92109. Donna, 858-581-8569.

HOTEL STORE ROOM CLERK part time. The Handlery Hotel and Resort is hiring for service oriented positions. We have competitive pay and excellent benefits. Please apply to: 950 Hotel Circle North, San Diego, CA, 92108 or fax resume to: 619-298-3948.

HOTEL. Hyatt Regency Mission Bay Spa and Marina is seeking service-oriented individuals for: Restaurant Manager, Assistant Food and Beverage Manager, Director of Security, Shift Engineer, Bar-back, Intermediate Line Cook, Entry-Level Cook, Steward, Bartender, Server, Server Assistant, Houseperson, Security Officer, Graveyard Security Officer, Spa Host. 1441 Quivira Road, San Diego 92109. To apply, please visit www.missionbay.hyatt.com. 619-224-1234.

HOUSECLEANING. Weekly pay. Paid mileage. Merry Maids offers flexible hours. No nights, weekends, holidays. Work in teams. Insured car required. Must speak English. South Coast/all south areas only. 619-336-1612; 619-226-2621.

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JOB COACH/COMMUNITY Training Specialist. \$9.75/hour to start. Assist developmentally disabled adults in the community. 32.5 hours/week. Benefits. EOE. Apply Monday-Friday, 9am-4pm: Stein Education Center, 6145 Decena Drive, San Diego 92120. E-mail: steinjobs@vistahill.org. Fax: 619-281-0453. www.vistahill.org.

JOB COACHES. Community-oriented Center for Independent Achievement is seeking dependable individuals in East County. 1:4 group ratio maximum. \$8.50-\$9.50/hour. Annual raises. Bonuses for exceptional performance. Benefits with full-time. plicareer@yahoo.com. Fax 619-440-6864. 619-440-6802.

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LAW ENFORCEMENT. Deputy Sheriff and Deputy Sheriff Detentions/Courts. San Diego County Sheriff's Department. Hiring for two types of positions; take one exam, apply for either or both! Exam dates: Saturday, December 15, 2007, 7:30am arrival, Rancho Buena Vista High School, 1601 Longhorn Drive, Vista CA 92083 or Wednesday, December 19, 2007, 5:30pm arrival or Saturday, December 22, 2007, 7:30am arrival, Sheriff's Administrative Center, 9621 Ridgehaven Court, San Diego CA 92123. Registration by e-mail or phone is required for the Ridgehaven test ONLY at: recruit@sdsheriff.org. Detention/Courts: \$39,796-\$61,608 annual salary, plus benefits. 18-year-olds eligible to apply! Deputy Sheriff: \$49,704-\$71,099 current annual salary, plus benefits. U.S. citizen or applied for citizenship; 20-1/2 years old. High school graduate or G.E.D. required. Bring valid photo ID. Valid California Driver's License prior to appointment. Effective oral and written communication in English. EOE. Additional test dates: www.joinSDSHERIFF.net. 858-974-2000.

LEAD SETTERS. \$1500-\$3500 weekly. Looking for a fun job? Something with great earning potential that won't interfere with your winter fun? Well, here it is. Pacific Home Remodeling is hiring Lead Setters to canvass our install areas for a few hours each day. No sales. No experience necessary, training is provided. Up to \$40/hour plus bonus and commission. Call to schedule an interview: 858-866-0183. pacifichomere remodeling.com.

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PROBATION CAREERS. Correctional Deputy Probation Officer I. County of San Diego Probation Department now hiring. Test Date: January 5, 2008, 8am, Montgomery Middle School, 2470 Ulric Street, San Diego 92111. Must be 21 years, good physical condition, no illicit drug usage. U.S. citizen or becoming a citizen. Pass criminal/personal background investigation. No felony convictions. High school diploma/GED. \$35,069-\$44,741/year. www.sdcounty.ca.gov/probation. Jobline: 858-514-8558.

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RECEPTIONIST. Casa de las Campanas, a luxury retirement community in Rancho Bernardo, is searching for a part-time 20 hours/week Receptionist able to work flexible hours. Responsibilities: handling busy phone line, monitoring emergency panels, typing, and word processing. Great customer service skills required. Neat appearance and excellent organizational skills a must. Please apply in person: Human Resources Department, 8:30am-12:00 noon and 1:00pm-4:00pm, 18655 West Bernardo Drive, 92127, or

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RECREATION ASSISTANT for the Stein Education Center, a private special education school serving children with Autism and other disabilities. Candidates must possess 12 units of Early Childhood Education or 12 units in a related field and a valid California driver's license. Duties include supervising direct care, scheduling social and recreation activities. Computer knowledge preferred. Monday-Friday, 9:30am-6pm. Starting salary \$10.33/hour with benefits. Pre-employment screening (drug test, TB) and Background Check (FBI and Department of Justice). EOE. Apply in person, 6145 Decena Drive, San Diego 92120 or fax resume to 619-281-0453.

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Nicole Garcia
Waitress
Mission Valley

I never win anything. But my friend...she always does. It's crazy how much stuff she wins. She has won tickets to Coachella. She's won a stack of CDs from a radio station. In fact, she's won concert tickets from a lot of radio stations. I remember she won tickets to see the Smashing Pumpkins. I don't usually get to go to any of these things with her, though, because she takes her boyfriend.



Kevin Crandall
Student
Fashion Valley

My luck must not be so great. I don't usually win things. I've entered some contests over the years but never seem to win. My biggest win to date is a \$50 lottery ticket. That was pretty sweet.



Nikki Dimovski
Test Analyst
Indiana

Recently, I did. I won a football Rautographed by Brad Maynard, the punter for the Chicago Bears. He does a weekly radio show, and they had a contest where you had to text in a word he said. I kept texting it. Each time it would thank me, and it was filling up my phone. I finally got a response that said I was the winner. I was so excited. He went to Ball State, the same college as I did. I'm a big fan. But when I told everyone I worked with, nobody seemed to care or even know who he was.



Jeff Andersen
Photographer
El Cajon

I won a Nintendo from a raffle that McDonald's was having. It was an original Nintendo, not one of these Wii's that the kids have now. I was probably seven at the time. I was with my parents and filled out the raffle form, and a month later they called and told me I won. But, my older brother stole it and sold it, since he already had one. I didn't get any of the money either.



Arielle Levine
University Employee
Hawaii

I was eight years old, and I won a mini Persian rug. My parents were into rug auctions, and it was at one of those events. I was so excited by it. The thing was only 9" x 9". And, I think I had it up until the time I went to college. They probably still have it. It was my only quality possession. Besides scholarships, that's the only thing I've ever won.



Adrian Vargas
Waiter
Clairemont

I've won gift certificates in the past. But the best thing I ever won was probably a bicycle. That was back in elementary school where I grew up. I was in fifth grade, and I was the grand-prize winner for having perfect attendance.

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SALES. Outside Sales, eLiveLife.com—sell Salon & Spa certificates door-to-door and/or frin promotional trade show booths, must be outgoing, positive! Kiosk Sales, eLiveLife.com—Mission Valley. Inside Sales, American Satellite-Mission Valley, 2667 Camino del Rio South

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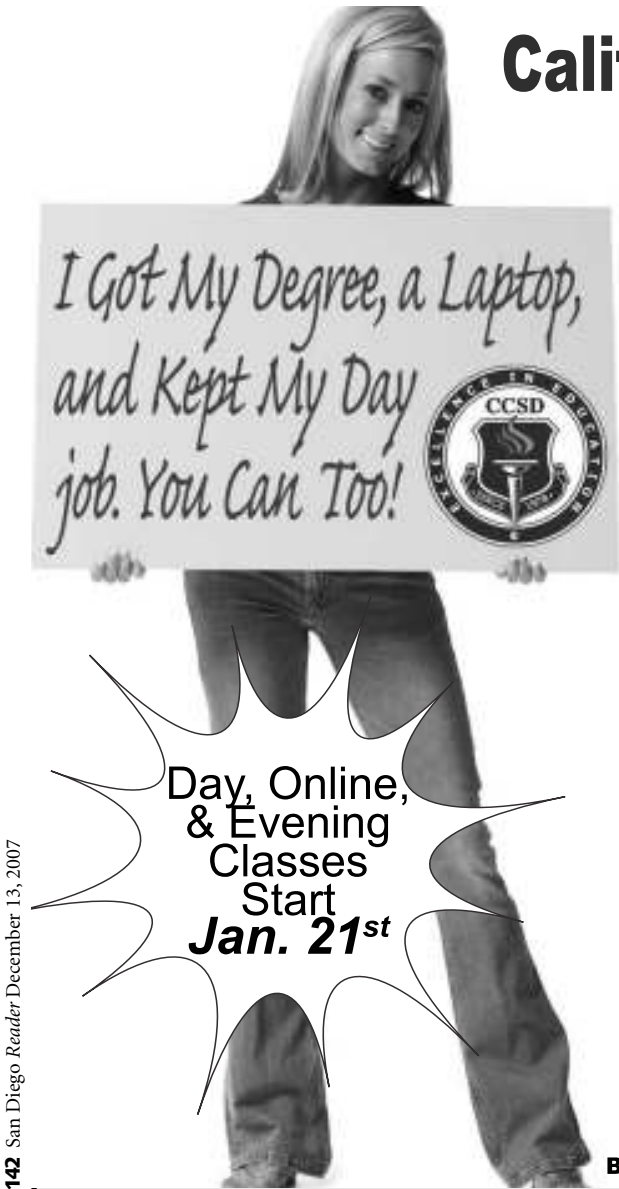
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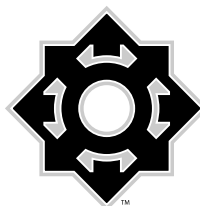
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THE READER PUZZLE

Across

- Prominent grocery chain
- First name on stage at Woodstock
- Sign of affection
- "I pity the fool" speaker
- "____ Story" (2007 Jenna Bush book)
- Woman with a degree
- What a bathroom scale measures whenever dad gets on it?
- Force
- Its last mission was #17
- Not duped by
- Allow
- Corpus _____, Texas
- Give a gratuity to a recent Nobel Peace Prize winner?
- "Bad!" sounds
- Medical research org.
- Yesterday: Sp.
- Eleanor's successor
- Autumn blooms
- A duo greatly admired by a pro-choice film buff?
- "Marvelous" Marvin of boxing
- Home of Iowa State University
- Ending with peek or bug
- It's no soft serve
- They can be hot or cold
- Derelict's harvesting yield?
- Its two orbiting satellites are nicknamed "Rock" and "Roll"
- "This _____ test"
- Writes on a cake
- Moon of Jupiter
- Soldier's headgear
- Exotic dancer ... or a hint to this puzzle's theme
- Do the Wright thing
- Ja's opposite
- Lao-_____
- Rip into
- HS exams
- Regular: Abbr.

Down

- Affect
- Sales meeting visual aids
- On the job
- Establishments with bars
- Expensive bar
- ____-jongg
- Analogist's words
- They're prickly
- Thrown for _____
- It may give punch punch

- Hired hand
- Villain, at times
- Certain preservers
- Wallach and Whitney
- Advanced degree
- Learning ctr.
- Madrid meower
- Designer Mizrahi
- "____ Movie" (2007 animated film)
- Go astray
- Drink suffix
- Yearbook div.
- "I" problem
- Voting group
- Ariz. neighbor
- Living area
- Cruel
- Galoot
- Twist
- Takes in
- Most edible, perhaps
- Did the Wright thing
- Ranch rope
- TV's Brady family, e.g.
- Kind of badge
- Remains to be seen?
- Figs. on blue cards
- Pirate's guffaw
- It's in the bag

RULES OF THE GAME

- The prize for solving the *Reader* Puzzle will be a *Reader* T-shirt.
- All entries in the *Reader* Puzzle contest must be received by the *Reader* by 9:00 a.m., Tuesday, five days following the issue date (Fax to 619-231-0489 or U.S. Mail to *Reader* Puzzle, P.O. Box 85803, San Diego, CA 92186-5803).
- All entries must be accompanied by your name and address.
- Employees of the *Reader* and their immediate families are not eligible.
- In the event of disputes or ties, decisions of the judges will be final and arbitrary. We've only got five prizes each week to give away, so if there are more than five winners, we'll have a lottery.
- All answers must be entered in the space allowed on the puzzle page. And please, no phone calls or trips to our office.
- One entry per person.

references. Lic-97005459. Jim, 619-523-1982; cell, 619-459-6872.

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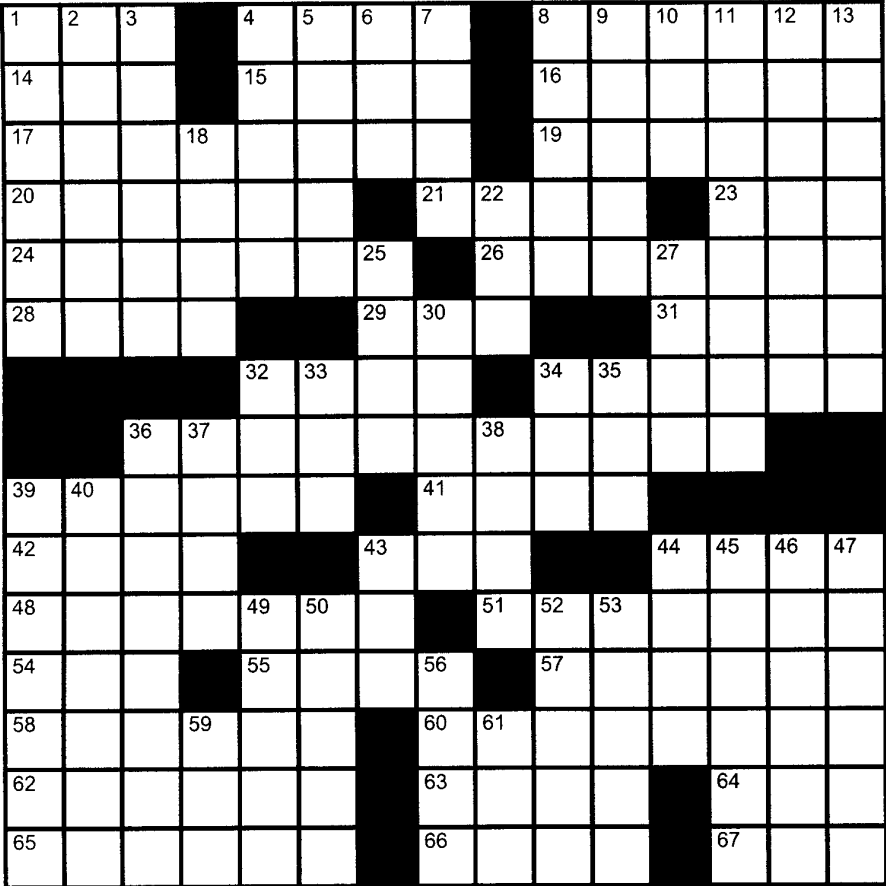
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Solution to and winners of the *Reader* Puzzle for 12/6/07.

There were 72 entrants. The winners are:

- Kyle Sleeth, *San Diego*
- Larry Hartpence, *Santee*
- Gene O. Dalton, *Escondido*
- Lexter Torres, *Carlsbad*
- Neil Marmor, *San Diego*

SAYAH GRASP COS
ECOLE RELEE UNH
CHOIR AZURE CEO
TOSPAMBROKAW
HELOISE HOLY
AXE CASPARPOOL
ZIT RIOTS
ETS SPAYMCA PAT
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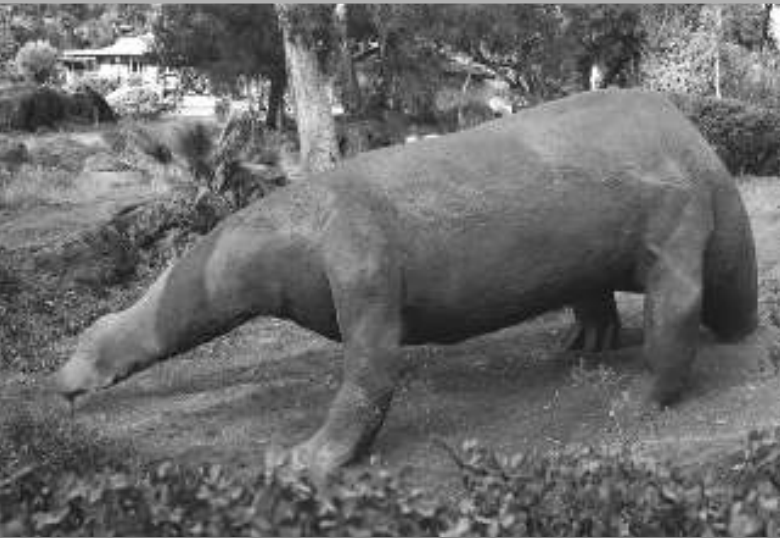
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Q: Last of our local mountain breed?

Describe this location, name the nearest cross-streets, and win a *Reader* T-shirt. E-mail to NameThisPlace@SanDiegoReader.com; fax to 619-231-0489; or mail to *Reader*, Name This Place, Box 85803, San Diego 92186 — include your name and address. (Deadline, Tuesday, 9 a.m. In case of ties, lottery will determine top five winners.)



Last week's place: (clue: Skate-ological remains?) Giant cones of dirt, piled where Roller Skate Land once stood at 9365 Mission Gorge Road, Santee. The venerable arena, owned by Noble ("Butch") and Carol Craver for three decades, will be replaced by a Henry's Farmers' Market. (Last week's winners: Craig Robinson, Ron Meyer, Brian Lawler, Beth Ashcraft, Emily Waters)

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TEACHERS FOR CHILDREN: Gymnastics, Cheerleading, Hip-hop, Theater, Ballet/ Tap, Flag Football, Basketball for ages 2-12, beginning levels. Experience required. Mobile gym program. Part time. North County. \$15-\$35/class. 760-917-4800.

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HEALTHY ADULTS: Inner Child healing and recovery work. Establish healthy boundaries. Heal wounds of dysfunctional family. Thought Field Therapy eliminates phobias and traumas. Counseling for individuals, couples' enrichment and family bonding. Sharon Goodlove, TFT Di-

SurfDIEGO

Joe Lodico

Lives: La Jolla/UTC

Surfing: Pump House, Pacific Beach

Last week's big swell reversed almost all aspects of the San Diego surfing scene; tourists and kooks fled the water and left the waves to the experienced. From Crystal Pier to Loring Street, where normally hundreds of people surf, only four men paddled out.

Joe Lodico hurriedly parked his white pickup and joined a small group of friends standing on Ocean Avenue at the end of Loring Street. Excited cell-phone calls between him and his crew helped them decide that Pump House would be the best break to ride.

"We got up this morning at about six and started calling each other. We all hit different spots and called. But it's really weird with this storm; the coves and cliffs were kind of bad, which is where everyone expected the biggest waves to be."

Surfline.com reported 15-foot swells that day for the Pacific Beach area.

"Tourmaline's holding itself, which is back-



wards," Joe said. "Usually Tourmaline's not that great. Even locals will tell you that, but today it's holding. From Old Man's past Tourmaline parking lot to the point is huge," he said, sweeping his hand toward the Pacific. Joe's plan for surfing

the unusually large waves? "Get in it and go hard." Joe considers himself an intermediate surfer and said a hobbyist of lesser skill could get hurt. "Oh, yeah. Someone will get hurt in the next two days. Every year

somebody's pulled out. There's already someone killed up in Northern California...either yesterday or the day before." See the video Go to SanDiegoReader.com Click on SurfDiego

agnostician; Glenn Goodlove, LCSW-1450. Goodlove Counseling Center, 858-569-8975. www.goodlove-online.com.

IN-HOME THERAPY for couples and families. Convenient, confidential, affordable. Evening and weekend appointments available. Inner Peace Counseling Services, Edward Thompson, MFT#41044. Call 858-232-4669.

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ADDICTED to Internet pornography/sex? Out of control? You are not alone. Call Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous, a 12-step fellowship. PO Box 3791, San Diego 92163 or 619-685-7211 or www.slaa-sandiego.org.

AL-ANON, Grupo paz mental. Sufre por el alcoholismo en su familia? Juntas sesionan Martes, 5:30pm-7pm, y Sabados, 1-2:30pm, 3450 Bonita Road, #207, Bonita, CA 91902.

ALANON-GRUPO REENCUENTRO. Hay problemas de alcoholismo en su familia? Sesiones Lunes y Jueves de 5:00-6:30pm, 3450 Bonita Road #207, Bonita, 91902. 619-470-6955.

ALCOHOLICOS ANONIMOS. Tiene problemas con la bebida? Llamenos 24 horas. Oficina Central Hispana, 3628 University Avenue, San Diego, 92105. 619-280-7224.

ALCOHOLICOS ANONIMOS. Problemas con el alcohol? Nosotros le ayudamos a vivir mejor. Sesiones Lunes-Viernes, 7am y 8pm. Sabados, 8am y 7pm. Domingo

8am y 5pm. Grupo Bonita Hispano, 3450 Bonita Road, #207. 619-280-7224.

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CANNABIS PATIENT(S) ACT. (Association Cannabis Therapeutics.) Nonprofit. Seeks caregiver/patients with questions about co-operatives, clones, medicine, growing guidelines. Proposition 215 local guidelines. Meth kills. 619-528-0907.

CODEPENDENT? Suffering from codependency? Codependents anonymous

12-step recovery program. The only requirement for membership is a desire for healthy and loving relationships. 619-222-1244 or www.sdcoda.org.

DACHSHUNDS-TIME for walkin' in a Wiener-Wonderland! Sunday, 12/23/07, 1pm-3pm. Meet by the large fountain in Balboa Park dressed in holiday attire. Everyone welcome! www.sddc.us.

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OBSESSIVE COMPULSIVE Anonymous 12-step meeting for people with OCD. Mondays, 6-7pm, Department of Health Services Complex, 3851 Rosecrans Street, Mission Room.

PATHWORK DISCUSSION. December 13. "Christ's Greatest Gift." 1323 Stratford Court, Del Mar, 7-9pm. Open meeting. No fee. Materials available. Please call for information, 858-259-1880.

PRIVATE COUNSELING. Your journey can be clearer, more peaceful; relationship issues, body image, self-esteem, anger. I can help. Work toward acceptance of yourself. Fee. 619-838-6817.

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RESEARCH STUDY. Women living with smoker needed for 9-day research study. Leave message or email TRDRPPDAStudy@projects.sdsu.edu, for more information.

ROSE PARADE, \$105, includes bus and excellent grand stand seats. ATT Telecom Pioneers. 619-281-1151.

SINGLES FOR JAZZ is a new not-for-profit club for singles interested in attending various concerts and clubs in the San Diego area. Membership is free. Call 760-445-5459.

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UCSD/VA, Research study seeks older adults 60+ with worry or anxiety. Study involves drug and counseling compared to placebo. Compensation provided. Call project coordinator 619-725-3530.

VA/UCSD RESEARCH STUDY, Seeks participants with chronic pain. Assessment and group treatment at no cost. Compensation provided. Please call the Project Coordinator at 858-552-8585 x2904.

VOLUNTEER CHILD BIRTH Assistants Needed. UCSD Medical Center's Doula Program needs women to help mothers during labor. Big commitment, lots of gratification! 619-543-6269.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED. Have you had odd experiences? Are your beliefs differ-

ent than others? Ages 18-35 participate in research study examining stress. Contact mjuan@alliant.edu.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED For insomnia study at VA/UCSD, ages 25-50, English speaking, nonsmoker, good health, trouble sleeping 3-4 nights/week for past 3 months. Compensation provided. 858-642-3579.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED For good sleeper study, VA/UCSD. Age 25-50, nonsmoker, good health, no difficulty falling or staying asleep for past 3 months. Compensation provided. 858-642-3579.

WRITERS (2) looking for "Chicken Soup" type pet stories for new book and toon series, with photos if possible. claudia@writersetc.com or piedpiper@newsblaze.com or 858-693-3939.

WRITERS WANTED. The Academy for Alternative Journalism, established by papers like this one to promote diversity in the alternative press, seeks talented journalists and students (college seniors and up) for a paid summer writing program at Northwestern University's Medill School of Journalism. The 8-week program (June 22-August 17, 2008) aims to recruit talented candidates from diverse backgrounds and train them in alt-weekly style feature writing. Ten participants will be chosen and paid \$3000 plus housing and travel allowances. For information and an application visit http://aaj.aan.org. You may also e-mail us at altacademy@northwestern.edu. Applications must be postmarked by February 8, 2008. Northwestern University is an equal opportunity educator and employer. (AAN CAN)

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I DON'T KNOW EXACTLY How, but Sarah and John will forever be a part of our lives. They seem to always visit us after hours!

IN THE CRACK, "The kid." Blah! Henry, write your will. I'll spread germs. For you. J. letters receivable.

MIA, PLEASE CONTACT Your brother, Jack W., at San Diego County Jail. His booking # is 774760.

SURFLINED, SUPERLINER, Coach, baggage maintenance, electrician, Point Conception, hurry up and jump in, adjust the controls, pull the lever, and let it throttle. Love that Amtrak!

WELL, I GUESS WE'RE NOT Flying then, since not being physically attached to the ground terrifies you. How are we getting to Guam? By kayaking?

WHAT DO THE FOUR SECTIONS Of layout in N scale, HO scale and O scale mean? And what in the world is a rolling stock?

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EXTENDED HOURS: Guitar Trader San Diego has extended its hours for the holidays to add to your shopping convenience. Starting Thursday, December 13, through Sunday, December 23. Open Christmas Eve till 5pm. Extended hours are: 10am-9pm Monday-Friday, 10am-7pm Saturday, and 12 noon-6pm Sunday. Guitar Trader, 7120 Clairemont Mesa Boulevard, San Diego, CA 92111. Toll-free: 877-687-4276. www.MusicPower.com.

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GUITARS AND AMPS. Epephone LP 56 Gold Top reissue \$399, Epiphone LP Standard \$450, Yamaha Bass BB404 \$399, Line 6 Flexitone III with FBV Short-board \$599, Fender Cyber Twin \$599, Larrivee LV-03 \$999, Kamaka Ukulele Koa baritone \$699, Kamaka Concert Koa \$699. At Mozeguitars.com, 619-698-1185.

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BASS/BARITONE. The La Jolla Renaissance Singers seek 2 experienced basses starting January 2008. Strong musicianship required. Rehearsals Wednesday, 7:45-9:45pm. Contact Bill, wpropp@ucsd.edu or 858-459-2019.

BASSIST sought by band into Latin, rock, funk, jazz, reggae, etc., for gigs, tour, record deal. Brian, 619-677-2574.

DRUMMER sought by indie/electro band Starcrossed. Play along with drum machine. Be experienced, professional, own equipment, transportation, practice twice week. www.myspace.com/starcrossedrock or 858-220-2243.

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DRUMMER WANTED. Irie Dingo, rock/funk/reggae band. Must have professional gear, team attitude, day job, experience. Some originals/covers. Rehearse twice/month. info@iriedingo.com; www.riedingo.com.

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Say What?



Chris Coggan | Age: 37 | Occupation: Business owner/artist/entrepreneur | Lives: University Heights

To “**rack**” is to steal stuff. Like, “did you rack that?” as in, you know...

“**Word**” means a lot of things; it means I understand, it means good, it means talk to you later. I think of the word “word”

as... Its synonym would be “**bula**,” a word in Fijian, which has alot of uses. It's a verb, it's a noun, it's kind of anything you can imagine.

“**Getting up**” is tagging [graffiti].

A “**biter**” or a “**toy**” are

people who basically don't have their own style; they're basically plagiarists.

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EL CAJON. Male preferred to share 2 bedroom apartment with male nonsmoker, no drugs/alcohol, and his pooch. Lawn and fireplace. \$440. bobhope@gmail.com; 619-440-4011; 619-368-3516.

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CLAIREMONT/BAY PARK. \$1795. 3 bedroom, 1-1/2 bath home with view of Mission Bay. 2-car garage. New carpet. Small pet negotiable. Open Saturday 2:30-3:30pm. 3586 Trenton. TPPM, 858-699-3851.

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LA MESA. 3 bedroom, 2 bath. 8805 Fabienne Way. Estimated 1125 square feet. \$1900/month. Great backyard with deck. Large driveway, fireplace, washer/dryer and dishwasher. Call 619-471-2201.

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SOLANA BEACH. \$1920. Large 2 bedroom, 2 bath house. 2-car garage. No pets. Fireplace. New carpet. Washer/dryer. Patios. Appliances. 103 Guerrero Court. Juno, 619-275-3455.

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SOUTH PARK. \$1800 rent plus \$1800 deposit. 2 bedroom, 1-1/2 bath house, hardwood floors, large deck, jacuzzi. 1645 Grove Street. 1000 square feet. Owner pays water. Nonsmoking. No pets. 619-640-7530. www.sdforrent.com.

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VALLEY CENTER. Woods Valley. \$4000. Over 4500 square feet. 4-car garage. On cul-de-sac. Brand new, move in anytime. Nonsmoking. No pets. Call for details, Top Notch Realty, Inc., 858-715-0688.

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BANKER'S HILL. Nice 1 bedroom, wood floors, second floor corner, small view, air conditioning, forced air heating, \$900. References. 2149 2nd Avenue. Also, 1 bedroom with deck \$915. 619-992-7791 or 619-992-0078.

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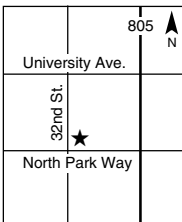
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BANKER'S HILL. \$2275. Extra nice 2 bedroom townhouse with den. Open and bright! Garage, fireplace, large storage. Cat OK. 2233 5th Avenue. Agent, 619-469-7790. www.westmanproperties.com.

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BANKER'S HILL. \$825. 1 bedroom apartment, laundry, close to all. Wood floors. 1915 4th Avenue #5. AMI Property Management. 619-697-6314.

BANKER'S HILL. \$795. Studio apartment, security building, laundry, large, close to all. 2117 Front Street #6. AMI Property Management, 619-697-6314.

BANKER'S HILL. \$995. 1 bedroom apartment, great location. Quiet, close to all. 1955 Front Street. AMI Property Management. 619-697-6314.

BANKER'S HILL. Studio, \$900. 1 bedroom, \$1050. Downstairs, facing pool, gated. Newly remodeled, all brand new. Cats/small dogs OK. Deposits \$600, pet \$300. 413 Olive Street. 619-291-5788.

BANKER'S HILL. \$995. Utilities included. 1 bedroom. Completely renovated. Ceramic tile throughout. Hardwood floors. \$700 deposit. Cat OK. 2105 Brant Street. OAC. 619-549-9726.

BANKER'S HILL. \$1395. Beautifully upgraded 2 bedroom, 1 bath apartment. Tile and hardwood floors, view from wooden deck. Holiday special: 1/2 of December free OAC! 310 West Hawthorn. Agent, 858-560-1178.

BAY PARK. \$1420. Deluxe 2 bedroom, 2 bath, panoramic sailboat views/your terrace! Dishwasher. Berber. Gated. Laundry. Parking. No stairs. Cat friendly! Beach/freeway. 2805 Morena. 858-459-1544.

BAY PARK. \$775. Lovely 1 bedroom, upstairs. Prime location. Quiet. Pool, off-street parking, laundry. Near Mission Bay. Available now. No pets. Lease. 2515 Chicago Street. 619-276-1468.

BAY PARK/CLAIREMONT. \$1175. Upgraded 2 bedroom, 1 bath. On-site laundry, parking, upper unit. 2537 Chicago Street #10. Agent, 858-560-1178.

CARDIFF. \$1495. 2 bedroom, 1 bath apartment across from Swami's beach. 1913 San Elijo. Close to shops and restaurants. 760-753-6575.

CARDIFF. \$1195-\$1395. 1 and 2 bedroom spacious apartments. No pets. Only 3 blocks from the beach. Easy access to I-5! 760-430-4444 x190. www.utopiamanagement.com.

CARDIFF/Park Place. \$1450. 2 bedroom, 1 bath condo. 925 square-feet, fireplace, hardwood/tile/carpet flooring. All appliances, washer/dryer. Water/trash included. Community pool, 2-parking spaces. No pets. Available 12/7. Credit check required, \$30 fee. 760-815-9522. iarnjennyyjenny@hotmail.com.

CARLSBAD, SOUTH. \$1600. 2 bedroom, 2 bath Alta Mira condo. Garage. Laundry facilities. 2-decks. Ocean view. Community pool, spa, tennis, putting green. Available now. 760-931-1720.

CARLSBAD. \$1375. 2 bedroom, 2 bath apartment, pet OK with deposit, parking included, pool, fitness center. Fee. Free search at www.westsiderentals.com. 619-367-3333.

CARLSBAD. \$1845. 2 bedrooms, 2-1/2 bath condo. Washer/dryer hookups. 1 car garage plus parking. Pool, spas. Open house 1/15/08, 10am-1pm. 812A Kalpati Circle. 858-581-2835.

CARLSBAD. Beautifully remodeled 1 and 2 bedroom from \$1100. Just a short walk to beach! Spacious floor plans. 2303 Ocean Street. Call Judy at 760-434.7721.

CARLSBAD. \$1050. Beautiful 1 bedroom. Bright and airy. Laundry, pool, dish-washer, parking. Easy access to freeway and shopping. Garages available. No pets. 1000 Chinquapin. 858-755-4721.

CARLSBAD/LA COSTA. \$1625. Large, luxury 3 bedroom, 2 bath in beautiful garden complex with views over La Costa golf course. Fireplace, washer/dryer, air conditioning, pool, spa, sauna. 2385 Caringa Way. Alicante Views. TPFM, 760-431-7575.

CARMEL MOUNTAIN RANCH. 2 bedroom, 2 bath condo. 1-car garage. Vaulted ceilings, washer/dryer, beige paint. 1-year lease. Available 12/28/07. \$1795. Peter, 858-663-5695.

CARMEL VALLEY. \$2199. Large 2 bedroom condo with loft. "The Lakes." Fireplace, washer/dryer, ceiling fans. Pool/spa. Pets OK. 1460 square feet. Lease. 858-204-6955.

CARMEL VALLEY. Looking for affordable luxury living? 1 and 2 bedrooms. Flexible leases; call for current rates. Near beaches, shopping, easy freeway access, great school district! Free tennis, swimming lessons! Washer/dryer. Parking. Fitness center. Pool. No pets. Club Torrey Pines, 12646 Torrey Bluff Drive, 1-866-354-2096. www.sdreader.com/rent/2106.

CARMEL VALLEY. \$1450. Large 1 bedroom condo. Large loft. Carport. No pets. Washer/dryer. Fireplace. Skylight. Pool. Dishwasher. 4049 Carmel View Road #76. Juno, 619-275-3455.

CASA DE ORO. Half off first month, OAC! \$1050, 2 bedroom. \$1300, 3 bedroom, 2 bath. Spacious. Laundry, balconies, pool. Military accepted. Espanol. 619-857-0365.

CHULA VISTA. \$855, including garage, large 1 bedroom apartments. Walk-in closets, laundry on site. Pool, jacuzzi, gas grill, park-like setting. 619-425-0670.

CHULA VISTA. \$825. 1 bedroom, 1 bath, "All Utilities Included." New carpet, paint, clean, quiet, secure and ready now. On-site laundry, pool, parking. Best deal in South Bay! 540 Flower Street. If you can find one better, rent it! Krista, 619-425-5451 or Rachael, 619-804-1044.

CHULA VISTA. \$895. Charming 1 bedroom, 1 bath cottage. Clean, quiet, secure, ready for move-in. On-site laundry. Garage available. Will not last! 215 Glover #A. Call Rachael 619-804-1044.

CHULA VISTA. Large 2 bedroom, 2 bath. Gated, central air/heat, dishwasher, balcony, laundry, off-street parking. Section 8 OK. No pets. \$1125. Deposit \$800. 619-425-6511.

CHULA VISTA. \$945. 2 bedroom, 1 bath. Beautiful garden courtyard. Controlled access. Very clean. Air conditioning. No pets. 540 Naples Street. TPFM, 619-422-5709.

CHULA VISTA. Large downstairs 2 bedroom, 1.5 bath. Jacuzzi, pool, laundry on-site. Lots of storage space. Patio, assigned gated parking. Near all. 212 Palomar #2. \$1150. 858-483-5111 x10 or apply online at www.melroyproperties.com.

CHULA VISTA. \$875. 1 bedroom in luxury property with central vacuum and air conditioning. Beautiful garden setting, con-

PICTURE STORY



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Corky Carroll at the 1966 World Surfing Championship contest in O.B. (Australia's Nat Young won.) In recognition of the contest, the mayor proclaimed it "World Surfing

Photograph from the San Diego Historical Society

Week," and the city council forked over \$1495 for a PA system.

—by Robert Mizrachi

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ping/downtown. Cats OK. Year lease. Susan, 619-980-6823.

CITY HEIGHTS. Two 2 bedroom/2 baths, 850 square feet, newly renovated, \$995. Two 1 bedroom, 1 baths, 600 square feet, \$750. Near SDSU. 4316 52nd Street. People Helping Others Property Management, 619-282-5400. www.peoplehelpingothers.com.

CITY HEIGHTS. \$895. 2 bedroom, 1 bath condo. Downstairs, new floor, canyon view, water/sewer/trash included. 2840 39th Street #10. People Helping Others Property Management, 619-282-5400. www.peoplehelpingothers.com.

CLAIREMONT/KEARNY MESA. Wexford Manor. Large 1 and 2 bedrooms in beautiful complex with pool, spa, laundry, air conditioning, dishwasher. Sorry, no pets. \$995-\$1295. Photos at www.WexfordLiving.com. 7870 Stalmer Street. 858-277-4843.

CLAIREMONT. \$1200. Utilities included. Pleasant 1 bedroom, 1 bath

apartment/cottage. Private patio. Lovely canyon view. Quiet cul-de-sac. Off-street parking. Laundry. Cat OK. Nonsmoking. 760-420-1411.

CLAIREMONT/MISSION BAY. Up to \$500 off! 1 bedroom, 1 bath from \$1085. 2 bedroom, 1 bath from \$1300. Dishwasher, microwave. Tennis, basketball. Movie theatre, pool, gym, yoga lessons. Pet with deposit. Available now. Monday-Saturday, 9am-6pm. Sunday, 10am-5pm. Coral Bay Park. 3309 Cowley Way. www.CoralBayCanyonAndParkApartments.com. Call: 1-877-585-1146. www.sdreader.com/rent/1070.

CLAIREMONT. \$985, 1 bedroom, 1 bath. Gated. Parking. Pool, spa. Workout room. Laundry. 5150 Balboa Arms Drive. Call 858-571-0104. www.kandrproperties.com.

CLAIREMONT. \$1275. Remodeled 2 bedroom, 1 bath condo with spacious floor plan. Gated community. 2 pools. \$750 deposit. 1 year lease. Available 1/3/08. Derek, 858-922-4205.

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ABANDONED AFTER THE FIRES! Rescued: 10 pot bellied pigs. Some pregnant, some old/crippled, some recovering from surgery, all in need of help. Desperate for food donations/vet care! Donations: Terry's

Hay & Grain, Valley Center, c/o Debi Toner's Pig Rescue. Vet care donations: Creekside Vet Service, c/o Dr. Bender, 8751 Old Castle Road, Escondido, 92026, 760-751-1020. These beautiful animals need good homes. Please help. Thanks, Debi.

AQUARIUM SALE at Octopus's Garden. 20H aquarium \$20; 29 for \$29; 40R \$40. Even a 60E is just \$60. Other tank specials also. Lots of healthy saltwater fish and beautiful corals. Protein skimmers. Lighting systems, pumps, decorations and supplies at low prices at Octopus's Garden. Noon-9pm, 7 days. Call 858-576-7449.

AQUARIUM. 65-gallon Tru-Vu, full set up, fish, pine cabinet, hood lights, etc., \$400/best. 65-gallon aquarium, miscellaneous parts, \$165/best. Encinitas, p.m. best. 760-753-8824.

AQUARIUMS AND PONDS! Freshwater/saltwater fish. Extensive reef animals. 9000

square feet. Low warehouse prices! Expertise not found in Southern California cookie-cutter stores! Aquatic Warehouse. 5466 Complex Street #204, San Diego. Behind Superior Courthouse, off Clairemont Mesa Boulevard. www.aquaticwarehouse.com. Daily, 10am-7pm. Saturday, 10am-6pm. Sunday, 11am-6pm. 858-467-9297.

BALL PYTHONS (2), healthy, good eaters, nice looking, with large aquarium, some accessories, all \$100. 619-222-3507.

BAN BACKYARD PUPPY MILLS. Please visit your local humane society and adopt one or more of the sweetest pets you'll ever love. They need you!

BENGAL KITTENS. Miniature leopard cats, superior show and pet quality. Must see. www.yinyangbengals.info. Both brown spotted and snow leopards. Male/female. Price negotiable. 858-272-2049; 858-414-8656.

BENGAL LEOPARD BABY. Take a walk on the mild side of wild. Drop dead gorgeous. TICA registered. Canaries also available. North County/Vista. 760-724-9316.

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CHIHUAHUA MIX, spayed female, tan with black muzzle, needs permanent safe home. No small kids. Very sweet, easy maintenance, 2 years old, \$100. 619-466-0426.

DACHSHUNDS-TIME for walkin' in a Wiener-Wonderland! Sunday, 12/23/07, 1pm-3pm. Meet by the large fountain in Balboa Park dressed in holiday attire. Everyone welcome! www.sddc.us.

DOGS. FOCAS is a trusted name in pet adoptions. Call for information on a variety of wonderful rescued pets. Always altered, microchipped, vaccinated. Most \$150 donation. 619-685-3536.

FREE TURTLE with equipment. 2 years old. Beautiful, playful, active, happy and healthy. Free to loving turtle and animal lover. Must be screened. 619-227-1894.

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CLAIREMONT. Free daily continental breakfast, HBO, concierge service, maid/linen service! No lease! Furnished studios from \$395/week; \$1195/month! Corporate housing available. Utilities included! Microwave. Mini-refrigerator. Laundry. Heated pool, spa. Central location. Garden surroundings. Parking. No pets. California Suites Hotel, 5415 Clairemont Mesa Boulevard. 1-888-475-7147. www.sdreader.com/rent/2035.

CLAIREMONT. \$1125, 2 bedroom with balcony. Upstairs. Pool. Laundry. New carpet. Off-street parking. No pets. Available now. 7322 Mesa College Drive. 858-560-6204.

CLAIREMONT. \$1395/month, plus deposit. 2 bedroom 1-1/2 bath condo. Granite countertops, surround sound, balcony. Pool, gym, on-site parking and laundry. 858-531-7133.

CLAIREMONT. \$900/month. Studio available for immediate move-in! Centrally located. Easy access to freeways, dining, beach, and much more! Lots of upgrades. 6 month lease available. 619-291-5555 x190. www.utopiamanagement.com.

CLAIREMONT. Bay Ho. \$1195. 1 bedroom. Remodeled. Parking. Pool. Laundry in complex. Close to freeways and beach. Available January 2008. No pets. 1-year lease. Call Coldwell Banker Property Management, 858-488-2228.

COLLEGE AREA. Remodeled 1 bedroom, 1 bath garden apartments. Ample off-street parking. Laundry facilities. Lots of light. Walking distance to SDSU and shopping. No pets. 619-287-9890; numeric page 619-407-1535.

COLLEGE AREA. \$1350. Extra large 3 bedroom, 1 bath, parking, laundry, close to all. Rent reduced for apartment management. Experienced, references, tools. No pets. 619-465-6588.

COLLEGE AREA. Remodeled studio. Upper unit/behind house. Separate entry, kitchen, bath. 350 square-feet. \$850/month includes utilities, cable, Internet. 6172 Mary Lane Drive. 760-603-0057; 619-871-6909.

COLLEGE AREA. \$750-\$775. 1 bedroom. Near shops. Laundry room. No pets. 6769 El Cajon Boulevard. Apartments in rear courtyard. 619-464-0901.

COLLEGE AREA/TALMADGE. \$735-\$900. Nice 1 bedroom, 2 bedroom apartments. Quiet building, downstairs, large rooms. Coin laundry, Cat OK. 4438 Menlo Avenue. Agent, 619-469-7790. www.westmanproperties.com.

COLLEGE AREA. From \$775. 1 bedroom. Sparkling pool, on-site laundry, barbe-

cue. Central location, near all. New carpet and accessories. No pets. 4333 College Avenue. 619-287-8380.

COLLEGE AREA. \$1325, 2 bedroom, 2 bath. Fireplace. Central heat/air. Microwave, dishwasher. Balcony. Gated. Intercom entry. 4828 Art Street. Agent, 619-298-7724.

COLLEGE AREA. 2 and 3 bedroom homes. Some with hardwood floors and yard. Several to choose from. Washer and dryer connections, garages and gardeners included. Apartment Finders. Free service! 619-296-2787.

COLLEGE AREA. \$1200. Large 2 bedroom, 2 bath condo in the attractive Sunrise Community, 1100 square feet, all kitchen appliances, balcony, outside storage, common garage parking, water paid. 5980 Dandridge Lane #238. People Helping Others Property Management, 619-282-5400. www.peoplehelpingothers.com.

COLLEGE AREA/TALMADGE. \$725 rent. \$600 deposit. OAC. Large 1 bedroom. New carpet. Parking. Laundry. No pets. At 4423 Menlo Avenue #12. 619-990-5021 or agent, 619-299-8515.

COLLEGE AREA. 2 bedroom, 2 bath condo \$1295. Upstairs, fireplace, washer/dryer, dishwasher, balcony, mirrored closet doors, tandem garage. No pets. 6055 Estelle. Agent, 619-296-3189.

COLLEGE AREA. \$750. Charming, lower 1 bedroom, 1 bath, new carpet, on-site laundry. 1 miles to SDSU. Cat OK. Section 8. 4644 Soria Drive. 619-804-3325.

COLLEGE/LA MESA. \$845. Remodeled 1 bedroom. Clean, secure. New carpet, paint. Close to everything. This is a beautiful apartment. On site laundry. Ready now. If you can find one better; rent it. 7240 El Cajon Boulevard #25. Rachael, 619-804-1044.

DEL MAR. Beautiful 1 and 2 bedrooms, some with ocean views! Heated pool, spa, fitness center, dishwasher, microwave. No pets. 526 Camino Del Mar. Agent, 858-755-4721.

DEL MAR. Ocean view 2 bedroom, 1995, 3 bedrooms, \$2495. Non-view 2 bedrooms, \$1695-\$1795, 3 bedrooms, \$2195. Block to ocean. 201 Fourth Street. Call for special! 858-481-9585; mikeatl@aol.com.

DEL MAR/SOLANA BEACH. Ask about our holiday specials! \$1175. Newly remodeled studio located close to Del Mar Beaches, Cedro's Design District. Perfect for the Southern California lifestyle. Balconies/patios. Pool. Parking. Electricity included. Medium dogs welcome! 858-755-1466. sandpiper.rasnyder.com.

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DOWNTOWN/EAST VILLAGE. December move-in special! Only \$613-\$736/month with 12 month lease! Utilities included! Office hours: daily 8am-6pm. Near Petco Park, bus/trolley. Fully furnished. Bay/ ballpark views. Underground parking. Air conditioning. Laundry. Internet. Clubhouse/library. Income qualify! Island Village. 1245 Market Street. For details, 1-800-351-0613. www.sdreader.com/rent/2070.

DOWNTOWN. Beautiful building, new furnished rooms. Refrigerator, microwave, TV, cable. Starting at \$175 weekly. 920 Beech Street. Call 619-234-1952.

DOWNTOWN. Studios with kitchen and bath, \$625-\$700. Single room with private bathroom, \$500-\$550. No smoking or pets. 10th and E Street. Hughes Management, 619-239-1639 x103.

DOWNTOWN. Comfortable rooms, \$450/ up. Studios, \$650/up. Near Gaslamp District. Very quiet and clean. Free cable TV, on-site laundry, vending machines, community kitchen, shared bathrooms. Near shopping, restaurants, movie theatres and Horton Plaza. No pets. Arlington Apartments, 701 7th Avenue. Hughes Management. 619-231-2385. www.sdreader.com/rent/2097.

DOWNTOWN. Cozy rooms, \$450-\$625, grab these little jewels today! Very comfortable, convenient location, historic building near C Street trolley. Choice of shared or private bathrooms. Free cable TV, on-site laundry, vending machines, modern elevator, no pets. Southern Hotel, 1159 6th Avenue at B, Hughes Management, 619-239-3808. www.sdreader.com/rent/2099.

DOWNTOWN. Economical furnished rooms, \$400-\$500, best price, save money. Conveniently located on C Street trolley line, near restaurants, free cable TV, shared bathrooms, on-site laundry facilities, vending machines, elevator service, no pets. 636 C Street (between 6th and 7th). C Street Inn, Hughes Management, 619-234-4165. www.sdreader.com/rent/2098.

DOWNTOWN. Gaslamp area. Move-in special, \$280. Community kitchen, shared bath, on-site laundry, vending machines, no pets, Star Hotel, 522 7th Avenue. 619-235-6068. Hughes Management.

DOWNTOWN. Outstanding furnished rooms, \$400-\$500. Heart of Gaslamp. Shared bathrooms. Community kitchen. Free cable TV. No pets. 843 4th Avenue. Windsor Hotel. 619-235-6068. Hughes Management.

DOWNTOWN. Attractive rooms. Shared bath. Utilities included! Near City College! \$400-\$595 per month. Weekly rates from \$125! 719 14th Street, Villa Victoria. Hughes Management, 619-231-2385.

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DOWNTOWN. Park Terrace, East Village. Ballpark and bay views. New, stylish, executive condo, 2 bedroom, 2 bath. Granite and cherry kitchen/baths. Stainless appliances. Washer/dryer. Balcony. Billards/recreation room, fitness center, rooftop deck, barbecue/lounge, underground parking/storage, secure building. Near Gaslamp and Old Town. 3 freeways within 1 mile. Must see. \$2350. Call for appointment, Blanco Investments, 714-434-1616.

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DOWNTOWN. Se renta 2 casitas. 1 recamara, 1 bano y 2 recamaras, 1 bano con opcion de comprar. Recien remodeladas. Listas 1/2/08. Franklin/31st. 916-501-2712.

DOWNTOWN. \$675. Studio, 1 bath apartment, great views, all utilities paid, near Petco Park, controlled access building. Fee. Free search at www.westsiderentals.com. 619-367-3333.

DOWNTOWN. \$775. 1 bedroom, 1 bath apartment, cat OK with deposit, hard-

wood floors, paid water/trash/gas. Fee. Free search at www.westsiderentals.com. 619-367-3333.

DOWNTOWN. \$1250. 2 bedrooms, 1 bath duplex, parking included, in-unit washer/dryer, 2007 wildfire victims get discount on deposit. Fee. Free search at www.westsiderentals.com. 619-367-3333.

DOWNTOWN. \$1750. 2 bedrooms, 2 baths apartment, pet OK, covered parking, barbecue/picnic area, business center, spa, fitness center. Fee. Free search at www.westsiderentals.com. 619-367-3333.

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DOWNTOWN/MARINA DISTRICT. Crown Bay, 2 split master bedrooms, 2 bath, 1100 square feet, 2 parking spaces, 2 balconies, hardwood floors. \$2300. Sam, 619-203-9204. Anthony 619-228-4426.

DOWNTOWN/LITTLE ITALY. Great location! 1 bedroom, 1-1/2 baths lofts \$1750. Banker's Hill, 2 bedroom with washer/dryer \$1650. Available now. Call 619-255-0526.

DOWNTOWN/GASLAMP. \$99 moves you in! Live/work lofts. Penthouse, 1546 square feet, \$2750. Loft, 1463 square feet, cement floor, \$2425. Loft, 1163 square feet, carpeted, \$1600. Pets OK, parking available, keyless entry system, laundry facility, high speed Internet capability, central air/heat, high ceilings. Penthouse extras: granite kitchen countertops, Brazilian cherry wood floors, stainless steel appliances, 9 French doors. 1014 Fifth Avenue. Toll free: 1-888-241-3523. www.sdreader.com/rent/2145.

DOWNTOWN/GOLDEN HILL. Large studio with full kitchen in very nice neighborhood. Hardwood floors. Close to bus stop. 942 23rd Street. \$695. 619-994-0449.

DOWNTOWN/CORTEZ HILL. Newer 2 bedroom, 2 bath. Available now. Parking, gated, fitness center and pool. Balcony and fireplace. Pets OK. 850 Beech Street. \$2150. 619-334-6781. www.poseidonproperty.com.

DOWNTOWN/GASLAMP. Las Flores Hotel. Small, quiet. \$120/week and up. Four-week minimum. Color TV with basic cable. Refrigerator in most rooms. Secure. 619-235-6820.

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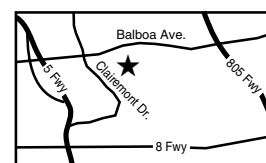
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EL CAJON. \$715. 1 bedroom. Just remodeled! Beautiful landscape with gated entry. No pets. 1018 East Lexington Avenue. TPPM, 619-838-8088. www.eastwindsapts.com.

EL CAJON. \$695. 1 bedroom. Fabulous pool/courtyard complex. Super clean apartments. No pets. Open Saturday, 11am-1pm. 314 Wisconsin Street. TPPM, 619-742-7600. www.palmestates.info.

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EL CAJON. 1 bedroom, \$700. Large 2 stories. Amenities. Pool, park-like grounds, parking. Near town, shops, bus. 743 South Magnolia Avenue. Call 619-579-0174. 619-464-1818.

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ESCONDIDO. Call for specials! Spacious 1 bedrooms from \$835, deposit \$400. 2 bedrooms from \$995, deposit \$500. Great floor plan. Pool, spa. Covered parking. Laundry. RV parking. Cats are welcome. 640 West Lincoln Street. 760-489-9869.

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FASHION VALLEY. \$1250 rent. \$600 deposit, OAC. Large 2 bedroom, 2 bath. Granite counters. 2 parking spots.

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FASHION VALLEY/USD. \$1250 rent. \$600 deposit, OAC. 2 bedroom, 2 bath. 2 open parking spaces. Laundry. No pets. At 1340 Eureka Street #24. 619-298-5820.

FASHION VALLEY/USD. \$1250. 2 bedroom, 1-1/2 bath upper unit with view of SeaWorld and the bay. Parking. Cat OK. 5946 Lauretta Street #7. Call CCPM, 619-296-6699.

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GOLDEN HILL/DOWNTOWN. Call for great move-in special! 1 bedrooms from \$1120. 2 bedrooms from \$1405. 2 bedrooms townhomes from \$1685. City views. Controlled access. Washer/dryer, microwave, central air/heat. Rooftop deck. Spa. Barbecue areas. Parking. Pet friendly! Golden Pacific, 1015 19th Street. 1-800-433-6156. www.pacificliving.com. www.sdreader.com/rent/2028.

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HILLCREST. \$850 studio. 2 bedroom, 2 bath, \$1550. Pool, canyon view. Close to all. Rec room. Cat OK. Sleepy Hollow Apartments, 4201 Sixth Aenue. 619-298-1059.

HILLCREST. \$895. 1 bedroom, upstairs. Remodeled. Stove, refrigerator. Dish-washer, microwave. Coin laundry. Great location. Cat OK with additional \$300 deposit. Available now. 3730 First. Del Sol Property Management, Broker. 858-270-2071. www.delsolpm.com.

HILLCREST. \$950. 1 bedroom, 1 bath (#3 & #6). Quite clean complex. Near shops and cafes. Available now. 4577 Park Boulevard #3 & #6. www.cethron.com. 619-295-1100.

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HILLCREST. Open house, Saturday, 12/15 10am-3pm. \$950. Great cottage. 1 bedroom, 1 bath. Breakfast nook. Carpet. Laundry room shared with tenants. Street parking. No pets. Available now. 1819 University Avenue, behind "The Crypt." Phillips Realty, 619-291-6686 or Pablo, 619-249-2770.

HILLCREST. Open house, Saturday, 12/15 10am-3pm. \$1150. Lovely 2 bedroom, 1 bath cottage. Carpet. Breakfast nook. New Kitchen. New bathroom. Fenced side yard. Street parking. Laundry room shared with tenants. No pets. Available now. 3819 Park Boulevard, behind "Numbers." Phillips Realty, 619-291-6686 or Pablo, 619-249-2770.

HILLCREST. Open house, Saturday, 12/15 10am-3pm. \$825. 1 bedroom, 1 bath. Downstairs. Carpet. One assigned parking space. Laundry room. No pets. Available now. 3820 Georgia Street between Robinson Avenue and University Avenue. Phillips Realty, 619-291-6686 or Pablo 619-249-2770.

HILLCREST. Open house, Saturday 12/15, 10am-3pm. \$650. Studio. Living area. New carpet. Full kitchen. New miniblinds. Full bathroom. Laundry room shared with tenants. No pets. 3843 Park Boulevard. Phillips Realty, 619-291-6686, or Pablo 619-249-2770.

HILLCREST. \$975. 2 bedroom, 1 bath. Immaculate apartment with off-street parking. Near Henry's Marketplace. No

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HILLCREST. Studio, \$835. Great location, quiet area. Off-street parking, laundry. Cat OK. 4166 4th Avenue. 619-298-7868. hilltopterrace.rasnyder.com.

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LA JOLLA/UCSD. \$1475. 2 bedroom, 1 bath. Near shops. Balcony. Garden window. Laundry. No pets. Available after 12/1. 8849 Villa La Jolla Drive. 858-457-4509.

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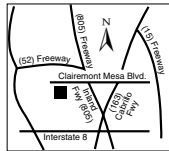
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LA JOLLA/WINDANSEA Beach. \$1850, 2 bedroom, 1 bath with fireplace and garage. One block to surf and sand. Garden courtyard. No pets. Open Saturday 1-2pm. 338 Palomar Avenue. TPPM, 858-699-3851.

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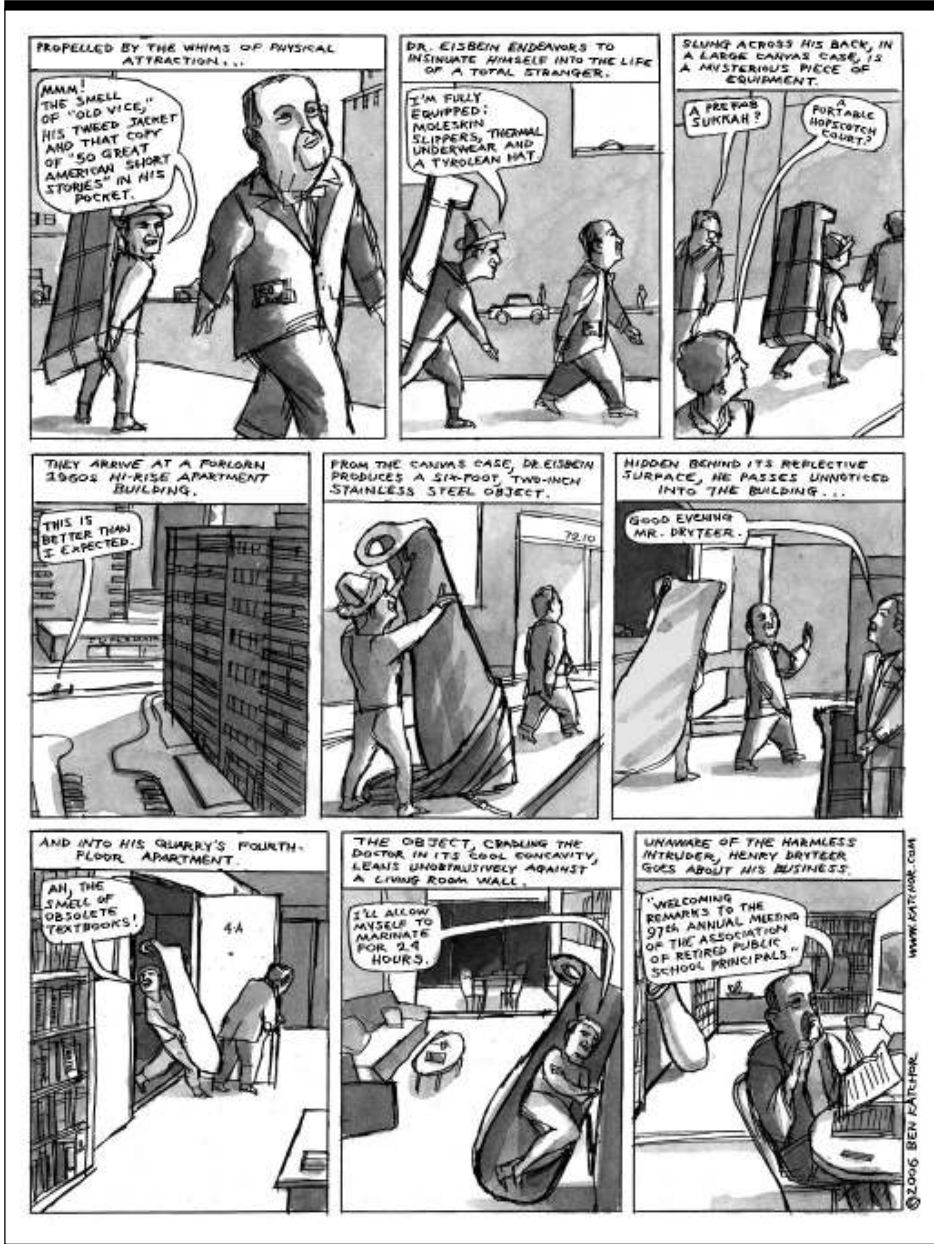
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Couch-Hopper

Let me tell you about my first roommate experience. I was 19 years old in the spring of 2004 and newly married. My husband and I decided that it was time to move out of my mom's house. Living in Encinitas (hell, anywhere in North County), however, is an expensive proposition. If we were going to stay close to anything familiar, we knew we couldn't make it with just the two of us. A glance at local listings confirmed our suspicion that the joint income of a barista and a library clerk wasn't going to cut it.

We talked it over with some friends one day outside our usual coffee shop. That's when our friend Preston suggested that we all move in together. Preston was a well-known couch-hopper among our North County clique, but he was also a close friend and a confidante from time to time. What harm could come from living with a friend?

Before the alliance with Preston, we'd been trying in vain to land a vacancy, waiting sometimes weeks for a response from one condescending apartment manager or another. With our newfound roomie in tow, it took all of one 15-minute interview to land us a two-bedroom apartment in Carlsbad Village. It was a steal at \$1300 a month, and we had a pool, brand-new laundry facility, dedicated parking space, and a view of the beach a block and a half away. Andrew and I agreed to pay two thirds and Preston would cover the rest, with utilities split likewise.

The first few months went off without a hitch. Like most of our neighbors, we drank, threw parties, and talked and smoked till all hours of the night. Beyond these social gatherings, though, Andrew and I didn't see much of Preston. He paid the rent on time (early, even, the first month), always had a smile and a dumb joke when he did show his face, and kept to his own turf. The kitchen, however, was a harbinger of conflict ahead. As an avid eater, Preston enjoyed making food (though I certainly wouldn't call it "cooking"). He'd use weird spices the way children use crayons and blacken food as if it had been carved from the flesh of the undead, and, most noticeably, manage to dirty every dish in the house in his effort to craft one single portion. The next day the smell would be everywhere.

But we dealt with it...and then Preston lost his job. We were three months into a one-year lease. We threw him a line — my husband and I had both received promotions

since we'd moved in and so it was possible for us to cover his share, and who doesn't want to lose a few pounds, anyway? He'd been fired on a technicality and assured us that he'd be back among the employed in no time.

It didn't take long, though, for Preston's version of ennui to set in. Apparently the knowledge that next month's rent was paid left him with little motivation. He never left the house, opting instead to play his Xbox obsessively. He drank our beer, smoked our cigarettes, and ate whatever food he came across. The only thing he conserved, in fact, was the water supply; daily showers had become discretionary. Soon, distinguishing our roommate from the mold on his dishes and laundry would require a PhD in microbiology.

It was February of the following year that Preston finally found a job at a gas station. He worked full-time at minimum wage, pulling down roughly \$1000 a month by our estimation. Still, he had trouble

coming up with his portion of the rent. When we'd bark at him about it, he'd grace us with a couple of Benjamins or buy the beer that weekend.

When the end finally came, there were no fights or epic Beverly Hills screaming matches. We barely nodded at him as he took the last of his boxes to his car. A year later, when I knew I wouldn't cry about the answer, I did the math: not counting the smokes, the drinks, and the food, he'd gotten away with about \$5000 worth of free lodging. And we couldn't even bitch about it to our friends, who'd known better since day one, that day outside the coffee shop.

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OCEANSIDE. \$1075. 2 bedroom, 1 bath triplex, 2-car garage parking, central air, central heat, in-unit washer/dryer. Fee. Free search at www.westsiderentals.com. 619-367-3333.

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OLD TOWN. \$650-\$695. Low \$150 deposit. Fully furnished studios-alcoves on excellent hillside location. Free basic cable. 1616 Guy Street. 619-298-6242.

OLD TOWN. 2 bedroom, 2 bath. 1912 San Diego Avenue #5. San Diego Bay view. Includes two-car garage. No pets. \$1250/month, deposit \$1250. www.timcassidy.com. Cassidy, Broker, 619-275-LIST.

OLD TOWN. \$875. 1 bedroom cottage. New paint, carpet, blinds. Very nice. Large storage area with unit. Behind 2051 San Diego Avenue. Manager, 619-820-2584.

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LEAD STORY

— Software engineers told *Fortune* magazine in November that they are constructing a filter to eliminate stupid messages to online forums and bulletin boards. Lead researcher Gabriel Ortiz said his team had compiled a database of idiotic comments and that the new software would detect unintelligible remarks and either alert the writer to fix them or divert the message to the recipient’s “junk mail.” Easy dumb messages to filter: those with the tacky, immature repetition of a closing consonant, e.g., “That thing is amaz- ingggggg!!!” More difficult: how to treat sarcasm and irony, in that smart writers sometimes deliberately use dumb statements to mock other writers.

Can’t Possibly Be True

— An Indonesian fisherman, Dede, age 35, is in reasonably good health except that his hands and feet resemble something out of the *Alien* movie series, with huge root-like growths that render his arms and legs useless, according to a November Discovery Channel TV program, “Half Man, Half Tree,” reported on by London’s *Daily Telegraph*. Dermatologist Anthony Gaspari of the University of Maryland flew to Indonesia and determined that Dede’s condition was caused by a genetic inability to restrain the growth of warts

(“cutaneous horns”) produced by the human papillomavirus. Gaspari prescribed a regimen of vitamin A, which he said should reduce the size of the warts enough so that, with surgery, Dede could eventually use his hands again.

— In October a police officer in Scranton, Pa., charged Dawn Herb with disorderly conduct after he passed her home and heard her, through an open window, cussing her toilet, which at the time was overflowing and leaking into the kitchen. Herb, and the American Civil Liberties Union, were incredulous.

News That Sounds Like a Joke

— (1) The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency made a special announcement in October that it is once again safe to eat squirrels in New Jersey. In January, the EPA had discovered lead in tissue samples from local squirrels but later said the lead might have come from defects in the sampling machine. (2) Karl Marx’s writings glorifying communism may well have reflected merely his alienation from society due to a life-long series of excruciatingly painful boils, according to a recent British *Journal of Dermatology* article. In an 1867 letter, Marx wrote, “The bourgeoisie will remember my carbuncles until their dying day.”

— As protesters gathered at colleges around the country to criticize federal budget cutbacks that would raise the price of subsidized birth control at student health services, one University of New Mexico student described the imminent horror to Albuquerque’s KFRQ-TV: “[Students should- n’t] have to make a choice between their birth control and their cell-phone bill or their birth control and their gym membership....”

Unclear on the Concept

— British Airways, via a high-profile advertising campaign, has bragged about its environmental awareness, but London’s *Daily Mail* revealed in November that the company had recently flown “dozens” of planes across the Atlantic Ocean empty, spewing thousands of tons of carbon dioxide, allegedly because it could not find enough crew members for the flights. Critics said the airline merely wanted to preserve its valuable use-them-or-lose-them landing spaces at England’s Heathrow and Gatwick airports, but the company denied that.

The District of Calamity (Continued)

— (1) In November, two mid-level bureaucrats in the District of Columbia tax office were charged with stealing \$16 million over three years (since

raised by investigators to more than \$20 million) by granting tax “refunds” to phony companies run by their friends and relatives. Authorities said six-figure refund checks were routinely issued to companies no one had ever heard of, yet the scam was not discovered by supervisors or auditors until an employee of a bank branch located in a grocery store got suspicious. (2) A November *Washington Post* investigation found an almost complete lack of oversight of the often-bountiful “activities funds” of D.C. public schools, which were looted by some administrators and teachers for personal travel, meals and even strip-club tabs.

Least Competent Criminals

— Paul Keith, 75, was arrested in Framingham, Mass., in November after he had allegedly driven aggressively into the car stopped in front of him waiting for a traffic light to change. Keith explained to police that the other driver had failed to move once the light turned green. “When the light turns green, you’re supposed to go.” Keith demolished the front end of his car.

Send your Weird News to Chuck Shepherd, San Diego Reader, P.O. Box 85803, San Diego, CA 92186 or to WeirdNewsTips@Yahoo.com

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- Inspect brake system

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PACIFIC BEACH/CROWN POINT. \$1450. 2 bedroom, 2 bath. Large, upstairs unit with new carpet, vaulted ceilings, stove, refrigerator, dishwasher, fireplace, coin laundry, garage. No pets. Available 12/15. 4122 Jewell. Del Sol Property Management, Broker, 858-270-2071; www.delsolpm.com.

PACIFIC BEACH, NORTH. \$1195. 1 bedroom, charming unit in 4-plex. Stove, refrigerator, large private fenced patio area. Nice shared lawn with white picket fence, garage. Cat OK with additional \$300 deposit. Available 12/8. 1011 Opal. Del Sol Property Management, Broker, 858-270-2071; www.delsolpm.com.

PACIFIC BEACH/CROWN POINT. \$1375. 2 bedroom, 1 bath cottage, on quiet 2 unit property. Stove, refrigerator, garage, nice front lawn, water/gardener paid. Cat OK with additional \$300 deposit. Easy freeway access. Available 12/21. 2145 Thomas. Del Sol Property Management, Broker, 858-270-2071; www.delsolpm.com.

PACIFIC BEACH/CROWN POINT. \$1195. 2 bedroom, 1 bath. Downstairs. Parking. Coin laundry. Easy freeway access. Cat OK with additional \$300 deposit. Available 1/22/08. 2152 Reed. Del Sol Property Management, Broker, 858-270-2071; www.delsolpm.com.

PACIFIC BEACH/CROWN POINT. \$1195. 1 bedroom. Detached unit on quiet 3-unit property. Stove, refrigerator. All utilities paid. Nice shared lawn area. Garage. Pet OK upon approval with additional deposit. Available 12/24. 1936 Reed Avenue. Del Sol Property Management, Broker, 858-270-2071; www.delsolpm.com.

PACIFIC BEACH, NORTH. \$3600. 4 bedroom, 3-1/2 bath, 3-story townhome. All appliances. Laundry. Tandem garage with opener. Balcony. Patio with small fenced yard area. Gas fireplace. Many upgrades, built in 2005. Available 1/1/08. 856 Felspar. Del Sol Property Management, Broker, 858-270-2071; www.delsolpm.com.

PACIFIC BEACH. \$875. Studio in quiet 3-plex. All utilities paid. Stove, refrigerator. Small private fenced yard area. Pet OK upon approval with extra deposit. Available 12/15. 1358 Pacific Beach Drive. Del Sol Property Management, Broker, 858-270-2071; www.delsolpm.com.

PACIFIC BEACH, NORTH. \$1475-\$1495. 2 bedroom, 1 bath. Downstairs. Large units. Stove, refrigerator. Open parking space or garage space. Coin laundry. Private patio. 2-1/2 blocks to ocean. Cat OK

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with additional \$300 deposit. Available 1/10/08. 945 Chalcedony. Del Sol Property Management, Broker, 858-270-2071; www.delsolpm.com.

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PACIFIC BEACH. 2 bedroom, 1 bath cottage. Close to bay. \$1250/month, \$1000/deposit. Parking, laundry facility, no pets. 4115 Ingraham Street. 858-270-4674.

PACIFIC BEACH. 2 bedroom, 1 bath townhouse. \$1275. New paint/carpet. Parking. 2017 Grand Avenue. Available now. Agent, 619-260-1368. View at [sevillemgmt.com](#).

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PACIFIC BEACH. Free December rent! Upstairs 2 bedroom, 1 bath. \$1500/monthly. Downtown views. 2-off-street parking. Free laundry! Available now. 2032 Thomas Avenue. Tod, 858-437-1794.

PACIFIC BEACH. \$1200. 1 bedroom, 1 bath apartment. Upper level. Off-street parking. Laundry on site. No pets. 4451 Haines Street. 858-270-4492 x203.

PACIFIC BEACH. \$900. Studio, 3 blocks to beach. Assigned off street parking. Laundry on-site. No pets. 1050 Hornblend. 858-270-4492 x203.

PACIFIC BEACH. \$1700. 2 bedroom, 1 bath. 3 blocks to beach. Assigned off-street parking. Laundry on-site. Available mid-December. No pets. 1050 Hornblend. 858-270-4492 x203.

PACIFIC BEACH. \$975. 1 bedroom, 1 bath apartment in a small quaint complex close to shops and the bay. Fee. Free search at [www.westsiderentals.com](#). 619-367-3333.

PACIFIC BEACH. \$700. Studio, 1/2 bath apartment, cat OK, month-to-month lease. Fee. Free search at [www.westsiderentals.com](#). 619-367-3333.

PACIFIC BEACH. \$1100. 2 bedroom apartment, 1-car parking, yard, shared front yard, close to I-5, bike to beach/bay. Fee. Free search at [www.westsiderentals.com](#). 619-367-3333.

PACIFIC BEACH. \$1350. 2 bedroom, 1 bath apartment, quiet neighborhood, stove, garden setting, barbecue area. Fee. Free search at [www.westsiderentals.com](#). 619-367-3333.

PACIFIC BEACH. \$1595. 3 bedroom, 2 bath duplex, will consider pet with deposit, 2-car parking included. Fee. Free search at [www.westsiderentals.com](#). 619-367-3333.

PACIFIC BEACH. \$875. Downstairs 1 bedroom, 1 bath apartment. On-site laundry and parking. No pets. 1965 Hornblend #1. Please call 619-698-1400 or 619-992-7754.

PACIFIC BEACH. 2 bedroom, 1-1/2 bath, downstairs, new paint, new carpet, with garage. Newly remodeled. No pets. Available now. 1663 Diamond Street #1. \$1650. 858-483-5111 x10 or apply online at [www.melroyproperties.com](#).

PACIFIC BEACH. \$975. 1 bedroom. Designer features. Updated appliances. Very well maintained complex. Walk to Vons. Must see! Open Saturday 11am-12pm. 2112 Garnet. TPPM, 858-699-3851.

PACIFIC BEACH/CROWN POINT. \$1495. 2 bedroom, 2 bath. Half block to Sail Bay. Great location! Partial bay view. Close to restaurants and shopping. Open Saturday, 11:30am-12:30pm. 3825 Riviera Drive #4. TPPM, 858-699-3851.

PACIFIC BEACH. \$1250-\$1650. Senior building (ages 62+). Open Saturday 10am-12pm. 2 bedroom, 2 bath in controlled access building. Immaculate, washer/dryer, fireplace, secured parking. 1625 Chalcedony Street. TPPM, 619-806-5760.

PACIFIC BEACH. \$1295. 2 bedroom, 1 bath. Cat OK with extra deposit. 1 park-

ing. 2112 Balboa Avenue #11. TPPM, 858-699-3851.

PACIFIC BEACH/CROWN POINT. \$975. Large 1 bedroom. New carpet, paint and blinds. Walk to Sail Bay. Open Saturday, 10-11am. 4015 Haines Street #6. TPPM, 858-699-3851.

PACIFIC BEACH. \$1395. 2 bedroom, 1-1/2 bath townhome in ultra clean garden property. Easy access location. Laundry, parking. No pets. Su Casa Apartments. 2155 Felspar Street. TPPM, 858-699-3851.

PACIFIC BEACH. 1 bedroom available now! Top floor, vaulted ceiling. End unit. \$975. New kitchen, ceiling fan, pool, parking, laundry. No pets. Hurry! 858-536-1900.

PACIFIC BEACH. \$1080-\$1140. Block/ocean. Sunny, quiet 1 bedroom rear duplex. Remodeled kitchen/bath. Ceramic tile, Berber carpet. Ceiling fan. \$200 rebate! 851 Diamond. 858-270-0214.

PACIFIC BEACH. 3 bedroom, 2.5 bath townhouse. New-built 2005! High end custom construction. Tiled kitchen/bath. Quality Berber carpet. Built-in closets. Nonsmoking. \$1950. 858-270-2576.

PARADISE HILLS. 3 bedroom, 2.5 bath, 3-story townhome built 2007. 1535 estimated square footage. 425 Meadowbrook #108. Community pool, Jacuzzi. 2-car garage, air conditioning, dishwasher, microwave. \$1900/month. Agent, 619-471-2201.

POINT LOMA. \$1300. Resort like setting! 2 bedroom, 1 bath top floor Pacific Isle condo. 2-parking spaces. Dishwasher. Pool/spa/tennis/gym. No pets. Available 1/1/08. 619-647-4332.

POINT LOMA. \$1150/month. 2 bedroom, 1 bath. Laundry room onsite, 1 parking space. 3033 Hugo Street. Open for viewing Saturday and Sunday, 10am-5pm. Call 619-846-1201.

POINT LOMA. No rent until January, 2008! Free iPhone! Expires 12/31/07, 13-18 month lease. Newly renovated 1 bedroom from \$1325! City and bay views! Caesar-Stone countertops. Stainless-steel appliances. Pool, spa, sauna. Sundeck. Fitness centers. Elevators. Air conditioning. Cat friendly. Gables Point Loma, 3811 Marquette Place. 619-223-6577. Gables.com. [www.sdreader.com/rent/1003](#).

POINT LOMA. \$895 rent. \$600 deposit, OAC. 1 bedroom. Laundry. Parking space. Pool. New carpet. No pets. At 2625 Camulos Street #13. 619-523-1453.

POINT LOMA. Studio and 1 bedroom, 1 bath apartments available, starting at \$945!*. Close to ocean, off-street parking. Spa area, on-site laundry. Cats/dogs 20 lbs OK. Water and trash included. *Limited offer on approved credit. See manager for details. 2449 Soto Street, apartment #102. 619-224-1973. Or visit us on our website at [www.sdrenting.com](#).

POINT LOMA. 1 bedroom luxury condo, patio, parking space. Gated. New paint/carpet. Roman tub. Washer/dryer. Pool, jacuzzi. Pet? 3098 Rue D'Orleans. \$1235. 619-602-4184.

POINT LOMA. 1 bedroom, 1 bath from \$1250. 2 bedroom, 2 bath from \$1550. Beautiful apartment homes. Pool, spa and view deck, fitness center, media room, gated parking, gorgeous gated community. 3950 Leland. 619-223-1390.

POINT LOMA. \$725-\$850. Downstairs studio with new carpet! Also 1 bedroom available. Located near Shelter Island and Liberty Station. No pets. 2809 Jarvis Street. Call 619-222-4836 x14 or [www.sunsetapacificrealty.com](#).

POINT LOMA. Studio, \$760. Bright, airy, upstairs unit, near Sports Arena. Beautifully landscaped, security gate, laundry. No pets. Available 1/3/08. 3191 Kemper, #11. 760-505-7736, [www.lomascenic.com](#).

POINT LOMA. \$1150 rent. \$600 deposit. OAC. 2 bedroom, 1 bath. Hardwood floors and new carpet in bedrooms. 1-car garage. Laundry. No pets. At 2839 Shelter Island Drive. Agent, 619-299-8515.

POINT LOMA/OCEAN BEACH. \$1550. 2 bedroom, 2 bath condo. Upper unit. Fireplace, washer/dryer. Cable and water included. Pool and spa. 619-954-1922 or 858-337-2117.

POWAY. \$1125. 2 bedroom, 1 bath apartments. Beautiful courtyard, pool, dishwasher, patio or balcony, parking, laundry. No pets. 12500 Oak Knoll. 858-679-1789.

POWAY. 1 bedroom from \$895. Laundry. Near shopping and more. No pets. 12529 Oak Knoll. 858-486-0109.

RANCHO PENASQUITOS. 2 bedroom, 1 bath, \$1250-\$1350/month. Low \$500 deposits! Newly remodeled. Air conditioning. Pool, spa. Carport. No pets. Rancho Villas Apartments. Call 858-484-0744.

RANCHO PENASQUITOS. \$1400. 2 bedroom, 2 bath Casablanca condo. Covered parking. Washer/dryer. Dishwasher. Refrigerator. Fireplace. Pat. Air conditioning. Community pools. Convenient to all. 503-650-3647.

RANCHO SAN DIEGO. \$2500. Beautiful home, 3 bedroom, 2-1/2 bath. Available 1/1/08. Private. Off street parking. Air conditioning/heat. References required. Cats/dogs OK. 619-750-2797.

RANCHO SAN DIEGO. 1 and 2 bedrooms. brand new resort-style community! \$1150-\$1500. Granite, tile, washer/dryer in unit, parking, pool, tennis, gym. Available 1/15. 619-279-0031.

SAN CARLOS. Super special! 2 bedroom townhouses. \$1375 and up. Stove, dishwasher, garage, large patio, pool, laundry facilities. Lakewood Villa Townhomes, 8492 San Carlos Drive, San Diego. 619-469-3585; 619-944-0671.

SAN DIEGO. \$579. 1 bedroom, 1 bath. Laundry and parking on site. 619-640-1712.

SANTEE. Free rent! 2 bedroom 1 bath, \$1125. Newly remodeled apartments with appointed features. Spacious floor plans. Courtyard setting. Sparkling pool. Call 619-596-0768, email [ikaria@cginc.com](#).

SANTEE. \$1395. 2 bedroom, 2 bath corner unit condo with wood floors and custom paint. Crown molding. Washer/dryer in unit. 1-car garage. 858-598-1111 x192. [utopiaingmt.com](#).

SANTEE. \$825. 2 bedroom, 1 bath. Also 1 bedroom, 1 bath for \$775. On-site laundry, off-street parking. No pets. 8527 Graves Avenue. 619-258-2584.

SCRIPPS RANCH. Monarch-5 star resort living! 2 bedroom, 2 bath. Top floor. 2-car garage. Fireplace. Washer/dryer. Gym/cafe. \$1995 includes water. 858-945-6517.

SERRA MESA. \$1395. 2 bedroom, 2 bath. Wood floors. Walk-in closet. Community pool. Weight room. Kids play area. Parking. Stackable washer and dryer. Tiled patio. 3571 Ruffin Road #144. Agent, 619-692-4121.

SOLANA BEACH. \$2295. 3 large bedrooms, 2-1/2 bath townhome. 2-car garage, ocean view, fenced patio, balcony, fireplace, refrigerator, dishwasher. Available now. No pets/smoke. 858-259-4483.

SOUTH PARK. \$975. Deposit \$700. 2 bedroom, 1 bath apartment. Laundry. Parking. Near Balboa Park. No pets. 1644 Grove Street #6. Section 8 ok. 619-584-5900.

SOUTHEAST SAN DIEGO. \$700. Cute 1 bedroom, half of duplex, gated. New bathroom. Hardwood floors, stove, refrigerator. Small yard. No pets. Available 1/1. Call 619-454-7549.

SPRING VALLEY. \$1250. Well maintained 2 bedroom, 2 bath ground floor unit. Appliances. Washer/dryer. Parking. Community amenities. The Rotsart Group, 619-401-3097.

SPRING VALLEY. 9924 Buena Vista Drive. 1 bedroom, 1 bath, \$795. 1/2 off first month. Section 8 OK. Won't last, clean and quiet. [reader@sdcprn.net](#). SDC-CPM. 619-220-4840.

SPRING VALLEY. \$2095. 3 bedroom, 2-1/2 bath. Half off. Great ocean views.

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Parts & labor. Includes torque converter.

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Radiator Flush \$24⁹⁵*

+ labor

Fuel Injector Cleaning \$39⁹⁵*

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Includes parts and labor. Most cars.

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and up

Catalytic Converter Special \$109⁹⁵*

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Most flywheels & crankgrinds available in 1 day or less.

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Plus \$8.25 for certificate. Most cars. Trucks, SUVs, vans, 1996 and newer cars extra.

Catalytic Converter Special \$109⁹⁵*

and up

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Install new lining. Resurface drums or rotors extra.

3D Technology Alignment & New Tires Available. Most Major Brands. Call for *Reader* Special.

Computerized Tune-Up \$29⁹⁵*

4-cyl.

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8-cyl. Install spark plugs and set timing. Diagnostic (scope hookup).

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90 Days Same As Cash!
(OAC)

155/80R13 **\$24⁹⁹**

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185/70R13 **\$30⁹⁹**

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With purchase of 4 tires. Adjustments and shim additional.



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- Check cooling system & hoses
- Check tire pressure & rotation

- Check lights
- Adjust hand brake
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- Inspect power steering system
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Clutch Job \$245*

4x4, twin cam extra. Up to '89 models.

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Call for details.

Intermediate Service \$95*
15K • 45K • 75K • 105K Call for details.

Oil & Filter Change \$17⁹⁵*

Up to 4 qts. Exp. 12/31/07. Some cars higher.

CV Boot \$49

BACK WHEN

In the Reader

Thirty Years Ago

Tom Gade stood up and told the assembly that he had voted against critical portions of Mayor Wilson's policy and then proceeded to point out the problems of such a growth strategy. According to one observer, he noted that the price of housing here is quickly approaching the \$70,000 mark... Supporters of the mayor tended to see Gade's repartee as bad form.

—CITY LIGHTS: **"MAYOR TAKES SPEECH IMPEDIMENT TO SAN FRANCISCO,"** Paul Krueger, December 15, 1977

Twenty-Five Years Ago

Why does criticism have such a bad name?

The Naive Critic

Sviatoslav Richter (yes, that's really his name!) gave a concert last night in Gorboduc Hall. The Russian pianist came in all dressed in a tuxedo, and there was wild applause before he even sat down.

Finally he sat down at the piano, raised his hands above the keys, and played. And how he played! His hands rolled up the keyboard and down the keyboard, white keys and black keys, sharps and flats, so that it really took your breath away. And to make things even

more amazing, he knew all those millions upon millions of notes by heart, and he never forgot a single one.

It was also very exciting to see how he used the pedals. He would push them down and — boom!

—**"YOU KNOW HOW CRITICS ARE,"** Jonathan Saville, December 16, 1982

Twenty Years Ago

As Texas gemologist John Fuhrbach tells it, an Amarillo woman was concerned because her new black diamond ring was burning her finger. Fuhrbach tested the stone with a variety of instruments, finally using a Geiger counter. The owner was horrified to learn that her 6.6-carat black diamond was actually a chunk of radioactive pitchblende from Great Bear Lake, Canada.

—**"A GEM,"** J.D. Applegate, December 17, 1987

Fifteen Years Ago

It occurred to me, at this juncture, that Susan [Sontag] was one of those people to whom no one had ever said the word no, as in, "No, Susan. Despite your having seemingly been raised by Cossacks, you must strive to behave in a civilized manner."

I must admit that my legal pad, with its

12 pages of notes and questions, lay untouched beside me for the duration of our trip. I did wanly wave my tape recorder at the back of Susan's head — she couldn't be bothered to turn and address me. Over the noise of traffic, I recorded her scathing remarks and belittling asides.

—**"HEART OF DARKNESS,"** Abe Opincar, December 17, 1992

Ten Years Ago

In 1986 Larry Lawrence personally presented [Helen] Copley with the Anti-Defamation League's "award for distinguished community service" at a lavish dinner and dance he hosted in her honor at his Hotel del Coronado. From then until his death last year, the hotel magazine and the publisher were fast friends. Last week the *U-T* went with a page-one piece featuring an ex-aide to former Democratic congressman Lionel Van Deerlin, a *U-T* columnist, who supported Lawrence's claim of service in the Merchant Marine. Hours later, the *New York Post* broke word of Lawrence's wartime registration at an Illinois junior college, debunking his tales of perilous sea duty.

—CITY LIGHTS: **"HOME SWEET HOME,"** Matt Potter, December 18, 1997



San Diego Reader, December 17, 1992

Five Years Ago

My 14-year-old brother, my only sibling, is a fan of Jennifer Lopez, also known as J-Lo. He has posters of her tacked up all over his bedroom, even on the ceiling. He buys all these magazines and reads everything about her. He goes on the Internet and reads about her there. He plays her music again and again. He keeps a diary of what she does, day by day, on his computer. At the dinner table he talks about her and what she's been doing just like it was a day in his own life.

Concerned UCSD Co-ed

—ASK AUNT TRUDY, December 12, 2002

Columns archived at SanDiegoReader.com

Wood floors. Large yard. Cozy fireplace. 858-598-1111 x192. utopiamgmt.com.

TALMADGE/KENSINGTON. Deluxe 2 bedroom 1 bath starting at \$1070! Large closets, built-in shelving, ceiling fans, separate dining room. Refrigerator, stove, dishwasher. Covered parking, courtyard, on-site laundry. Pool, spa with poolside WiFi. Outdoor billiards, barbecue lounge with WiFi. Fitness center, computer lab! Pet-friendly. Talmadge Point, 619-282-1191. www.pacificliving.com.

TIERRASANTA. \$2025. 3 bedroom, 1-1/2 bath townhome. Washer/dryer. 1600 square feet. Garage. Recently upgraded. Community pool. Edge Park Way. Agent, 619-692-4121.

TIERRASANTA. \$895. 1 bedroom, 1 bath. Senior complex. Gated, quiet complex, recreation room with activities, on-site laundry. Next to shopping, bank, pharmacy and more. Cat OK. Section 8 OK. 4906 La Cuesta Drive. 619-296-6699.

UNIVERSITY CITY/UTC. Avanti at Renaissance. \$2250. 2 bedroom, 2.5 bath townhouse. 2-car garage. Fireplace, hardwood floors, laundry. Available now. No pets. 1-year lease. Call Coldwell Banker Property Management, 858-488-2228.

UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS. \$1175. 2 bedroom, 2 bath apartment. Washer/dryer, dishwasher, air conditioning, gas fireplace, carpet/linoleum. Off-street parking. 8-unit complex. 4026 Alabama. 619-296-9557. 619-286-4320.

UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS \$845. 1 bedroom, upper. North of Adams west of 805.

Bright, faces south, parking laundry. Available 12/17. Owner managed. 619-280-8832. mchev08@yahoo.com.

UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS. \$1095. 2 bedroom, 1 bath. Charming Spanish style house. Hardwood floors. Washer/dryer included. A must see! Available 01/01/08. 4315 Maryland Street. www.cethron.com. 619-295-1100.

UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS. \$795. 1 bedroom, 1 bath. Small, quiet community. Fresh paint. New carpet. Laundry on site. Cat OK. 4470 Alabama Street. 619-692-0732, 619-857-1187.

UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS. 2 bedroom, 1 bath. \$1025. On wooded canyon hillside. Laundry onsite. 3948 Florida Street. Agent. Call 619-298-1057. View at sevillemgmt.com.

UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS. \$950. 1 bedroom, 1 bath, small patio, built-in book shelf, large closet, laundry on site, parking. No pets. 4613 Alabama Street. CCPM, 619-296-6699.

UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS. \$875. Large, corner 1 bedroom, 1 bath, lower, gated complex, appliances, built-ins, on-site laundry. No pets. Section 8. 4452 Louisiana Street. 619-804-3325.

UTC. \$1675-\$1695. 2 bedroom, 2 bath in the Verano complex. 2 units available! Great community amenities, including pool, spa, and fitness center. Washer and dryer included in unit. Close proximity to UCSD! Easy access to mall, freeways and more! 619-291-5555 x190. www.utopiamanagement.com.

UTC. 2 bedroom condo. 2-parking spaces. All appliances. Laundry. Hardwood floors. Patio. 4070 Porte la Paz, #16. I-5 south, exit 27. \$1995. info@diamondsands.com. 1-888-684-5263.

UTC. Move-in today to take advantage of 1/2 off first's rent! Spacious 1 bedroom, 1 bath condo. All appliances. Many upgrades. Great community amenities. Pet friendly unit only. \$1395 per month. Call for an appointment, 619-291-5555 x190. www.utopiamanagement.com.

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AMAZING! Room for everything! Almost 1 acre, newer home. 4 bedroom, 2 bath. Family room, fireplace, RV parking. Reduced by \$71,000! \$549,000. Agent Kelly, 619-562-6999.

BEAUTIFUL DUPLEX! Two units: each 2 bedroom, 1 bath. Excellent condition. Huge lot! Income producing! 7095/7097

Central, Lemon Grove. Agent, 619-788-2720.

BONSALL. Custom Tudor 3648 square foot 4 bedroom 3-1/2 bath, 4 acres. Granite countertops in kitchen, hardwood floors, upgraded carpeting, remodeled bathrooms. \$1,199,000/owner, 760-912-5200.

CHULA VISTA. Ranch-style 3 bedroom, 3 bath home on cul-de-sac street. Upgraded, spacious interior. Slate-tiled courtyard and brick patio. 2-car garage. \$515,000. Realtor, 619-403-0114.

CLAIREMONT. Rent to own, owner financed, stunning 5 bedroom 3 bath, 2000 square foot house. Flat lot, cul-de-sac, views, privacy, \$539,000. No agents please, 858-279-4487.

COLLEGE AREA, Spanish villa, 3 bedroom, 2 bath, historic neighborhood. Open house 12/16/07, 10-4pm. Modern kitchen, fireplace, balcony, hot tub, \$499,000/best, 4736 Rolando Boulevard. 619-521-6700.

DOWNTOWN. Foreclosure, 3 bedroom, 2 bath house. \$165,000 remaining on the mortgage. \$1,125 calculated monthly payments. We also have other availabilities in the area. 805-679-6840.

EL CAJON. Mobile home. Senior park. Pool. Reduced to \$21,000/best. 1+ bedroom 1 bath. Refurbished, carpet, air conditioning, washer/dryer. Low lot rent. Owner, 858-581-9151.

FREE. VIEW SAN DIEGO'S only real estate listings with exact addresses! Get comps, school information, maps, and more. Go to www.SanDiegoReader.com/realestate.

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Mountain and Snowbasin ski areas. One hour to Salt Lake International Airport. 877-SKI-POWDER. www.utahskihomes.com.

IMMACULATE, STUNNING 3 bedroom, 2 bath house. Completely remodeled. Dual-pane windows. Electrical upgraded. New heater/air conditioning. California room. Nice landscaping. \$419,800. Rob, 619-709-0759.

JAMUL. Almost 1.5 acres (2 separate parcels) all usable with seasonal creek and oak trees. 3 bedrooms, 1500+ square feet. Great room, fireplace, \$325,000. No Agents! Kelly Re/Max, 619-562-6999.

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Factory Service**
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\$14⁸⁸* Most cars.
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Includes filter.
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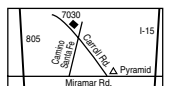
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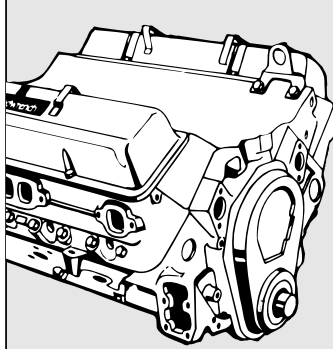
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OREGON/HERMISTON, Home-site, 8 acres with giant 22,000 square foot shop or storage. 64 10x20 bays, would make excellent car storage, 25' between bays, with office in center. Building tall and well constructed, 3 face power and single face power. New drilled well. Close to Columbia River recreation, zoned residential, \$265,000. Stuart Bonney 541-567-2833.

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ROOF RACK, Bell, \$25. Thermarest sleeping pad, \$25. New Bell bicycle helmet, \$10. Salomon ski bindings, \$10/pair. New bicycle tires, \$5-\$10 each. 760-942-5692.

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WHY I CAN'T FLY!

Flying in airplanes used to be one of my greatest delights.

Taking off and landing were my favorite parts (only later did I learn they were the most critical parts of the flight). I would sit in my favorite spot, a window seat, from where I could observe the plane taxiing to the runway, slowly taking gentle bends, and when it got to the runway, turning to align itself with the white markings on the runway. Then the best part, when the pilot says, "Cabin crew, take your seat!"

I can feel the burst of power from the engines as the flying beast begins to surge forward. My adrenaline pumps with excitement. The plane is accelerating, accelerating, accelerating — vroooooommmmm — everything is flying past (although, I must admit, I sometimes get the impression the plane is not moving fast enough to enable it to get airborne!), and then the nose gently tilts up and all becomes weightless. We are airborne — sweet!

I enjoyed it.

But that wasn't all. I also enjoyed the landing part. "Cabin crew, prepare for landing" the captain's voice would announce as we glimpsed the grasslands around the airport, a bit of approaching runway, and then the thud of the landing gear on the tarmac — gboom! Gbrooom — taxiing faasssttt...taxiing...breaking...and then normal speed, slowing, slowing, slowing... We have landed!

Flying used to be my one chance to be a child again each time I traveled, but not anymore. Now, I hate flying, and nothing can put me on a plane if I can help it. The last time I went from Africa to Europe, I had to be pumped full of medicines by my doctor in order to dare it. Even then, the medicines did

not work. Not only was I fully awake, the chemicals gave me a bad stomach, making the flight a double nightmare.

My entire year in Europe was occupied with thoughts of flying back. That was how I began to search for the "best" airline company, even going through the trouble of getting a transit visa in order to take a longer but "safer" route.

Again, on that occasion, doctors did their best with tranquilizers, but it did not work. My ideal situation would have been to sleep the entire flight away, aware of nothing until the air hostess woke me to disembark.

Unfortunately, I was fully awake, and so when the plane landed in Lagos, I told myself, *Well, that's it, no more!*

Why?

It began with a local flight from Abuja to Lagos in 2005. I had a terrible experience. As we settled into our seats, the air hostess announced to the passengers that our pilot/captain was Otumba XYZ. Otumba is a Yoruba traditional title here in Nigeria, meaning a local chief. I remember thinking

that any airline pilot who was so conscious of being addressed by his traditional title was probably suffering from some form of inferiority complex. My confidence in our captain was shaken from the start.

When the air hostess manually shut the door of the plane, I had the sensation of being locked up. Relax, man! And then we took off



okay.

Halfway between Abuja and Lagos, the plane began to dance in the air. It was not plunging head down, but it was falling down! It would fall fast for several seconds and then stop. It would weave to one side or the other, start falling again... My God! Everybody in the plane began to pray aloud. I could distinctly hear one woman

shouting to the plane, "Be still, in Jesus' name! Be still, in Jesus' name!" This lasted for a long time. Someone else would probably say it lasted just a minute, and I'd disagree.

So this is what it means to die? I *knew* I was going to die. Believe me, the sensation is not funny at all. *So this is how I will die*, I remember thinking. I remember saying out loud, "Jesus, Jesus,

Jesus..." and gripping my armrest and my neighbor on the left (who, by the way, was as calm as ice). My right-hand neighbor, a Muslim, was fiddling with his prayer beads and muttering his supplications.

It might just have been turbulence (a serious one, though),

but for me, the stupidest and most annoying part was that there was not a single word of communication from the Otumba pilot to the passengers. Not a word. Not before, during, or after. I was incensed. *You see*, I thought, *he's so busy being an Otumba that he forgot how to be a good captain.*

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ANTIQUES & COLLECTIBLES

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ANTIQUE SINGER SEWING, Machine, with carrying case and original 1947 sales slip. Excellent condition! \$300/cash. Antique fancy Lane cedar chest, bench style, dark wood, excellent condition \$300/cash, 619-465-0482.

CLOCKS. Westminster chiming, 38"x14", solid wood, beautiful detail, collector

quality, \$599. Antique mantel clock, \$100/. Best offers. 619-420-2619.

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LIVING ROOM, Paul Frank set, 6-strand rattan, from 1940s, 3-piece couch, 2 chairs, coffee table, 2 side tables, standing lamp, hanging lamp, \$6000. 360-941-7297; 760-754-1339.

MIRROR, art deco, old 1930s, 1/4" bevel, 32"Hx16-1/2"W, \$195. 619-296-7185.

NATIVITY COLLECTIBLES, Avon. Baby Jesus, Virgin Mary and Joseph. New York. Reduced to only \$35. Excellent Christmas gift. Yvonne, leave message, 619-283-1767.

STAMPS, SPECIALTY ITEMS. China, Olympic games, some single U.S. a few first day covers. Claire 858-581-8081.

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CLAIREMONT. Garage sale. Saturday, 12/15, 7:30-11:30am. Furniture, kitchen appliances, Christmas decorations, miscellaneous. 4398 Clayford Street.

HILLCREST. Garage sale. Saturday, 12/15, 8am-1pm. Office desks, glass

cocktail table, 1940s radio, kitchenware, furniture, pedestal oak dining table. 4343 Cleveland. 619-542-1948.

LA JOLLA. Moving sale. Saturday, 12/15, 9am. No early birds. Furniture, toys, games, piano, car, more. 561 Marine Street (between La Jolla Boulevard and Draper).

LINDA VISTA. Garage/yard sale. 6321 Caminito Luisito, Saturday, December 15, in Friars Village, 9am-2pm. Books, LPs, VCRs, camping equipment, sports equipment. 858-569-8884.

PACIFIC BEACH. Garage sale. Saturday, 8am-3pm. Lots of diving/surf gear. 9'6" epoxy surfboard (value \$1500), sell \$350. More surfboards, \$40/up. 1360 Law Street.

SAN DIEGO. Huge garage sale. Saturday, 12/15, 8am-2pm. Furniture, clothing, decorations, household items, miscellaneous. 8140 Laurelridge Road.

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REFRIGERATOR, Kenmore side by side, 3 years old, excellent condition, manuals included. \$400 cash or money order only. Call 858-483-3283.

REFRIGERATOR, 25 cubic feet, Whirlpool side by side, ice maker and water, white, \$200. 619-287-7278.

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SONY TV, 51" high definition TV. 1080P. Rear projection. \$500. 619-227-0842.

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TELEVISION, SONY TRINITRON, 27" with stand. Works great. \$75. 858-693-3251.

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FURNITURE

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BED \$100 ABSOLUTE BARGAIN! The Furniture Warehouse now open to the public. We sell warehouse direct. Come see our large showroom. We have over 70 sets in stock from \$89! 995 Bay Boulevard, Chula Vista, 91911. Open 11am-7pm daily. Closed Monday. Credit cards accepted. Legitimate warranties in writing! Fast delivery. 619-262-2727. www.fwarehouse.com.

BED \$169 A BARGAIN. A Ortho Pillow-top Queen, new in plastic with warranty, mattress/box. All sizes. Credit cards accepted. Can deliver. 800-464-6420. North County, 800-464-6490.

BED A DISCOUNT store. Mattress World in Hillcrest sells new beds at warehouse pricing lower than regular stores. Student specials, fast delivery or pickup, national brands. Member of the Better Business Bureau. Mattress World, 1601 University Avenue, 2 blocks west of Park Boulevard in Hillcrest. Check www.sandiegobeds.com or email to: info@davisworld.com. Call: 619-260-8000.

BED FRAME, metal. Fits different size beds. Can be easily taken apart to be transported in a car. \$20. 858-277-3065.

BED, new queen, Ikea Hemnes, white, with mattress, bought new in September, moving, must sell, perfect condition, no damage, great deal, \$200. 541-231-8740.

BED, QUEEN SIZE, Mattress and box springs, one year old, \$100, 619-540-9246.

BEDS. Waterbed, motionless, California king, \$200/best. Futon, queen, wood frame, \$100/best. Encinitas, p.m. best, 760-753-8824.

CHAIR and ottoman, overstuffed with feather, custom built, burgundy with blend cushion, 36"W, moving, must sell, \$125/best. UTC, 858-652-8738.

COFFEE TABLE, ship's wheel, made of brass, oak, and rope with good glass top, about 2' or 3' wide, perfect height, \$125. Oceanside, 760-754-1339.

COUCH, comfortable down filled with 5 toss pillows, large, 96Wx45Dx32H, paid \$1600, asking \$500 cash. Denise, 619-309-8195.

DAYBED/FUTON, Bunkbed/trundle-heavy duty, very universal, space saver, can separate, \$80/best/trade. 619-670-8356.

DINING SET, Thomasville, 3 months new, paid \$5400, sell \$1599. Bedroom, Ethan Allen, paid \$6000, sell \$2500. Leather 4-piece sofa set, Macy's, paid \$4000, sell \$1499. 619-347-2406.

DISPLAY CABINET, 1950s black lacquer and glass, beautiful, lots of storage, 4 doors, lighted case, 2 pieces, \$500/best. Will deliver if in area. 760-754-1339; 360-941-7297.

ELECTRIC BED, King size pillowtop, works \$50, 619-442-8725.

FURNITURE A DISCOUNT Factory Direct store. Lowest prices. Order from manufacturers' catalogues and save. Solid cherry, maple, oak or pine, American made Vermont craftsmanship or imported. San Diego's best home furnishings source since 1960. Member of the Better Business Bureau. Al Davis Furniture, 1601 University Avenue, 2 blocks west of Park Boulevard in Hillcrest. Check www.davisworld.com or email to info@davisworld.com. Call 619-296-1221.

HEADBOARD, 4' tall with mirrors and shelves and frame with drawers, \$40, heavy real wood, 619-442-8725.

HOUSEHOLD FURNITURE. Large teak display unit, shelves and cabinets, \$150. Extra-large bedroom dresser with shelves and drawers, \$100. 619-423-5916.

HOUSEHOLD FURNITURE. Dresser, not particle board, \$25. Double bed mattress and box spring, \$35. 619-575-0161.

LOVE SEAT, beautiful teal leather, excellent condition, \$445. Leave message, 858-780-8746.

MATTRESS A DISCOUNT store-Mattress World in Hillcrest sells new beds at warehouse pricing lower than regular stores. Student specials, legitimate warranties, fast delivery or pickup, name brands. Member of the Better Business Bureau. Authorized Sealy, Simmons, Spring Air, Aireloom dealer. Also Latex, chemical-free and Swedish style Visco-Memory! Mattress World, 1601 University Avenue, 2 blocks west of Park Boulevard in Hillcrest. Check: www.sandiegobeds.com or email to: info@davisworld.com. Call: 619-260-8000.

MATTRESS BOX PILLOWTOP SET. New in plastic with warranty. Queen \$169. King \$239. Credit cards accepted. Can deliver. Call 800-464-6420. North County, 800-464-6490.

MATTRESS, TWIN, box spring and frame with sheets and spread, very good condition, \$100. 858-597-0856 or 619-890-9624.

QUEEN BED, DRESSERS, Bookshelves, dining table, theatre sound system, entertainment units, radios, collectibles, artwork, ornaments, hurry! 619-888-2581.

STEREO CABINET with glass door and shelves, 19"W, can set small TV on top, dark walnut color, very good condition, \$40. 858-597-0856 or 619-890-9624.

VANITY CHAIR, Chrome and vinyl, excellent for a girl's dressing table or desk, excellent condition, \$9.95. 619-222-7290.

MISCELLANEOUS For Sale

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AIR COMPRESSOR, Sears Craftsman, 1/3hp, portable, tankless, with spray gun and hose, ideal for small projects, filling tires, etc., only \$35. 760-942-7447.

AIR RIFLE, RWS model 34, \$175, still in box. 619-574-7530.

ARTIST SUPPLIES. 2 handmade, stretched canvases, 36"x60"x2-1/2" and 48"x60"x2-1/2", sized with rabbit skin glue, clear poplar stretcher bars, \$75 each. Anthony, 619-543-0712.

AUTHENTIC PLATES with certificates, "The Christmas Story" in 6 plates, by W.L. George fine china, artist Hector Garrido, retail \$40 each, sell \$20/best each. 619-435-9970.

BEAUTIFUL CLOTHING MANNEQUINS For sale. Negotiable. Call 619-702-1649.

BEDS A PILLOWTOP MATTRESS Box Set. New in plastic with warranty. Queen \$169. King \$239. Credit cards accepted. Can deliver. 800-464-6420. North County, 800-464-6490.

BLAZER, red leather, designer, new, small-medium (original tags show \$200), asking \$45. Also, St. Johns, purses, jewelry, more. 760-753-6996.

BLENDERIZER And cutting/chopping unit, La Machine, excellent to make baby food, cabbage salads, juice, etc., \$9.95. Excellent condition. 619-222-7290.

BOOK STORE CREDIT at Blue Stocking Books in Hillcrest, \$145 credit, 100% transferable. You pay sales tax each purchase. Sell \$100. 619-295-2551.

CAMPO GREEN POWER JUICE extractor, used 3 times, excellent condition, retail \$379 plus tax, will sell for \$325/best offer. 619-435-9970.

CHRISTMAS TREE, artificial, \$10. Lights, ornaments. Violins, \$49 and \$99., Antique metronomes. 619-426-4360.

COOKIE JAR, Santa, Fitz & Floyd, lots of gold, \$45. Barbie, Special Edition, Winter Fantasy, 1996, in box, \$35. Men's all down vest, XL, \$10. 619-282-9561.

CORVETTE, radio controlled, unopened, transmitter/controller charger, 3 batteries, beautiful red, 15" long, 20mph long run time, new Bright, originally \$175, sell \$85. 619-295-2551.

DE BUYER FRENCH MANDOLINE, with pusher and owners manual, used once, in excellent condition, retail price \$139 plus tax, will sell for \$125/best. 619-435-9970.

DESK, CHAIR, 6 drawers, 38"Wx78"L, \$50. Wedding dress, hat, shoes, size 8, \$100 all. Off-road tires, 18" and 21", 2 each, \$5 each. Table, glass top, \$25. 858-277-7197.

DINNER CHINA SET, 10 piece, Harmony House, Patricia. Worth \$1000. Will sell for \$249.95, excellent condition. 619-222-7290.

DOLL HOUSE, 20"x9-1/2"x32"H, 4 levels, like townhouse, \$79. Call 858-274-6358.

DOLL, Indian girl, porcelain, 18", beaded buckskin clothes, with stand, \$45. 760-945-6813.

DRESSER, white, antique, \$100. Copper clotyes and hat rack, \$120. Office or living room armchairs (4), \$40 each. Extension ladder, \$50. Best offers. 619-582-0096.

ELECTRIC INVERTER, 1000 watts (new) Xantrex \$200. 858-538-5926, 619-977-3433.

GARDEN FOUNTAIN, 4-1/2"H, 3 piece, with pump, \$85. New electric lawn mower, \$85. Iron dumbbells, \$35. Garden swing, \$25. Surfboard, 7' Becker, \$65. 858-581-1869.

HOT-TUB/SPA NEW, Deluxe 2007 Model. Neck jets, therapy seat. Many jets. Never used! Warranty. Can deliver. Worth \$5950, sell \$1950. 858-530-0980.

HOUSEHOLD ITEMS. Double bed, sofa sleeper, dressers, recliner, chairs, radio, receiver, theater system, wall units, artwork, ornaments, and much more. Hurry! 619-888-2581.

ICE SKATES, men's 11-2/3. Leather jacket, ladies' large. Microwave oven. 619-420-1028.

LAWN MOWER, Honda, runs excellently, \$85. Tires, 31x10.5x15, good, \$45 all. Box of paintball gear, \$95. Tackle boxes full of fishing gear, \$35. Color TV, \$25. 858-581-6223.

MACADAMIA NUTS. Organic, in shell or shelled and roasted. Can mail order. In-shell orders, \$6/pound. Shelled, roasted,

unsalted, bagged, Small batches, \$10/pound. No chemicals. 619-788-2849.

MICKEY MOUSE OLD PHONE, Collector. New in box. Antique French lord statue 13" pewter, brass teddy bear, \$15. Brass hi-top hat and small one \$15-\$45. 702-334-2350.

MICKEY MOUSE OLD PHONE, Collector. Antique French lord statue 13" pewter, brass teddy bear, \$15. Brass hi-top hat and small one \$15, \$45. 702-334-2350.

MINERAL COLLECTION. Cabs, slabs, cutting rough, crystals, lots of quartz including Herkimer diamonds, unusual tumbled, much more. Knife collection, old Kershaws, Schrade IXLs, others. 619-260-8482.

MITER SAW, Universal gig, molding set and several 10" table saw blades, excellent condition, \$60 all. 858-278-6970.

MODEL AIRPLANE, B-29 bomber, 4 engines, RC \$95. Still in box, 619-574-7530.

MOVIES (4), VHS, audio Psalms Bible series narrated by Charlton Heston, unopened, excellent gift, \$40. 858-277-8544.

MOVING SALE Kenmore refrigerator, bar stools, glass kitchen table with 2 chairs, coffee table, loveseat, entertainment center, dresser and more. Call 619-944-9927.

PERSIMMONS, Hachiya (180) organic, 50 cents each. 619-284-8144.

PLANT POTS. Unique creations! 6 artistic shell-adorned 4" pots to show off your favorite home and garden plants at \$10 each. 619-477-2854.

PLUMBING, Cobra model #99018 cable drum machine for drain cleaning, \$125, still in box. 619-574-7530.

RC CAR, Red Ferrari, 1/10 scale, precise, fast \$95. Still in box. 619-574-7530.

RESTAURANT KITCHEN Exhaust, fire protection and replacement air components. Will comply with local and State fire codes, \$1000. 858-566-4231.

RING, .50 carat natural round brilliant diamond solitaire, S12, H color, not enhanced, size 7, white gold, never worn, appraised, gorgeous, \$1425. Call anytime, 760-889-1993.

SHOWER DOORS. Over the tub set of 2 framed glass doors, 29.5x57" each door, frames and runner included, ready to set up. \$50 set.

SLIDING DOORS, 2 white vinyl/wood. Anderson Low E, 96x80, \$700 each. 2 casement windows, 4'x2', Low E, \$50 each. 858-455-3742.

SPA HOT TUB, Caldera 500 gallon, 6-seat, 220 volt, needs minor repair, you haul it. \$200. Dennis 858-692-9247.

STEREO TAPE recorder, reel to reel, Aiwa 4 track, 2 channels, \$39. Nail gun, Sears, new, \$20. San Marcos, 760-740-0267.

TOILET, new, white, \$80. Sink, new, white ceramic drop in, \$30. Stove, woodburning pot belly, 30"H, \$50. 858-272-4812.

TOOLS. Drill kit, new Black & Decker Fire Storm with 12V charger and batteries, \$37. 858-274-6358.

TRAILER, 26', cozy, self-contained. Motorized wheelchair, desk, office chairs, computer table, 24" TV, TV stand, wicker furniture, closet and outside doors, fascia boards long, dolls. 858-270-0565.

WALL CLOCK. Airguide, battery, including humidity, temperature, etc. Keeps excellent time. Wood frame, antique, excellent condition, \$14.95. 619-222-7290.

WALL MURAL Print, lovely highrise city scene, lovely frame, 2'x5', \$9.95. 619-222-7290.

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SCOOTER, Pronto, used once, works perfectly, cost \$5500 new, sacrifice \$1500/best. 619-449-7755.

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Military discounts

TWO YEARS AGO, AROUND THIS TIME, I BUILT A TIME MACHINE from a Dynamo clothes dryer and sent an orange housecat to the past. To allay any of your concerns, the cat was not seriously harmed; however, my clothes hinted of pee from then on; the time machine was reconverted to a dryer, of course, because cat-transporting time machines pose a threat to the safety of every nation. Imagine if the terrorists got their paws on it.

The orange cat was named Higgins after Magnum PI's reluctant lover. On the Day of Interdimensional Feline Travel, informally named "Cat Time Travel Day," I outfitted Higgins with a wee pair of goggles, booties, and a flask of vodka around his neck. The flask was filled with vodka because I was convinced Higgins was Russian...at the very least, Polish.

When the Front Mid-Temperature Heat Exchange Core of the Dynamo Dryer Time Device reached a critical temperature, the cat slipped through the vortex and arrived at the Battle of Antietam. You see, the history books were wrong. Confederate general Robert E. Lee defeated the intrepid Union commander McClellan in the bloodiest battle of the Civil War, and the slaves remained in custody and the South succeeded in seceding. Until, that is, an orange cat named Higgins, from the future, distracted General Lee, allowing a Union sharpshooter opportunity to put a lead ball in the Confederate general's shoulder. Lee then retreated to a rearward triage tent where he couldn't effectively command.

Higgins quite possibly could've had to battle a version of himself through every generation of the vortex until arriving at Antietam because when he was released from the time machine/clothes dryer, his snout showed a thin trickle of blood and his tail was paralyzed. And his vodka was gone, indicating he had to bribe the authorities for safe passage. But from where? I wondered what horrors the heroic cat named after a television character had endured, but he wasn't talking. He's a cat.

If you're skeptical of the story of an orange cat named Higgins being transported back in time to sway crucial events particular to the outcome of the Civil War, then ask yourself these questions: did the Union win? Are all men free? Does Higgins the cat safely reside in a loft apartment in San Francisco? Do my clothes smell faintly of cat urine?

If the answers to those questions are yes, then there's all the proof you need.

WHAT I WILL AND WON'T WATCH THIS WEEK

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 13

STILL STANDING

FOX 11:00 A.M.

Since I was dumped a month ago, and since it's the primary duty of a girlfriend to keep my apartment clean, my place looks like a scene from an urban remake of *Lord of the Flies*. I wash my tighty whities in the toilet and dry them over an open trash fire in the kitchen. Sharpened bicycle spokes and coffee stirrers act as weapons, backscratchers, and cooking utensils. All waste is broken down to fit out the mail slot, and the mail is my only cleaning product. Bleak. My future remains bleak.

WOMEN'S COLLEGE VOLLEYBALL

ESPN2 6:00 P.M.

If you've got a bad hangover, do what I do. Float pornography into a kiddie pool of Gatorade. Don a snorkel filled with aspirin and play "Where am I hiding page 39?" No, it doesn't alleviate any of the symptoms, but it's distract-

ing enough so that you don't give a damn anymore.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 14

TWO AND A HALF MEN

CW 7:00 P.M.

Sure, dwarves prefer the term "little person," but did they ever think about what I prefer? To get along in this great big mixed-up world, we're going to have to consider each other's feelings and you little people are just being rude, I think. Also, I'm tired of giving you piggyback rides. I want my turn, so you better stiffen up your back and get those legs moving.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 15

CAKE

CBS 8:00 A.M.

On my last birthday, I bought a hundred cupcakes, a bag of balloons, and broke out my gargantuan ball of rubber bands. Before blowing

the balloons into animals, I put a little piece of cupcake inside so the balloon animals could be happy and have cake on my birthday. The rubber bands were what I shot the animals with — I was a year older and wanted to pop something with a bit of cupcake in its balloon-y stomach. There were candles, too, but let's not get too graphic. We'll just say it was the best party ever.

COPS

FOX 8:00 P.M.

You know, in every movie or TV show where a necklace is at stake, it can be pulled from the neck of the wearer with a quick snap. Have you ever tried that? It doesn't work. What you get is whiplash for the wearer and a rosy indentation roughly the width of the necklace and bone-deep around your fingers, but what you *do not* get is the necklace. The real scenario just doesn't work well for a movie script, except, maybe, a comedy because when yanked about like that, your friend with the necklace gives out a brief, "Gluyah!" Try it next time you're in a bar.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 16

AMERICA'S MOST SMARTEST MODEL

VH1 8:00 P.M.

Nobody else thinks Tyra Banks looks like a transsexual vampire? That's just me? I'm all alone in that one? Fine. But, I'll be the only one laughing when a closet full of emptied corpses and men's shoes dumps out into her dressing room and her makeup artist shrieks, "Eeeaaagh! Tyra's a big tranny vampire! Ollie was right!" Damn that's going to feel good. I'm going to giggle my toes off.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 17

FRASIER

FOX 5:00 P.M.

If I were a psychologist I'd answer the phone "Doctor Octopus." I'd scratch my beard thoughtfully, and I'd give my diagnosis over the phone until the patient said, "Wait. Did you answer the phone as Doctor Octopus?" and I'd scribble in my pad and say, "Okay. We're also dealing with hallucinations, Lucretia. I know your name is Caitlin. That's what I said. Man, you are one scrambled egg."



America's Most Smartest Model

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 18

CSI: CRIME SCENE INVESTIGATION

SPIKE 5:30 P.M.

There's a mystery stain on my bedspread. The color can only be called "oranurpleen" and it's texture described as "oily yet oddly granular." Which is too bad because today is a meeting of my Household Items Star Wars Fan Club, and I'm supposed to wear it as an Emperor Palpatine costume. Chewbacca will belittle me. Again. Chewbacca, you cruel Wookiee. Can't you feel empathy beneath that ragged remnant of shag carpet?

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 19

SPORTSCENTER

ESPN 9:00 P.M.

This isn't funny, but it's true. Ruth Bader Ginsberg set up an intramural hallway soccer league around the offices of the Supreme Court. Since there are nine judges, Chief Justice John Roberts acts as referee, but he's impartial. Rumor has it during the last game he was witnessed shouting, "SCALIA! SCALIA! SCALIA!" I mean, for the love of sweet molasses, you're not even trying to cover up your partisanship anymore. Damned Chief Justice John Roberts, always screwing things up. Such a jerk!

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 19

AL DIABLO CON LOS GUAPOS

TELEMUNDO 8:00 P.M.

Evel Knievel died last week, and if there were any justice in this filthy world he'd be strapped to a motorcycle, doused in bourbon, lit on fire, the throttle would be tied wide open, and his flaming hulk would be shot into the Snake River Canyon. And instead of mumbling, "Rest in Peace," everyone at the service would shout, "Rest in radness!" RIR, Evel. RIR!

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BMW 330ci, 2004, gray, manual, 32K miles, free maintenance and warranty until 2010 or 100K, excellent condition, private parties, \$31,000. eldirectorJJ@aim.com or 858-472-0499.

CHEVY CLASSIC, 2004. Silver, 4 door, 4-wheel drive, sedan, 4 speed automatic, 4 cylinders, 19,000 miles. \$7900. Stock #19. VIP Auto Sales, 9207 Mission Gorge Road, Santee 888-320-3640.

CHEVY CLASSIC, 2004. Silver, 4 door, 4-wheel drive, sedan, 4-speed automatic, 4 cylinders, 44,000 miles. \$6900. Stock #8. VIP Auto Sales, 9207 Mission Gorge Road, Santee 888-320-3640.

CHEVY COBALT LS, 2006. Blue, 4 door, 4-wheel drive, sedan, 4 cylinders. 22,000 miles. \$8900. Stock #20. VIP Auto Sales, 9207 Mission Gorge Road, Santee, 888-320-3640.

CHEVY COBALT LT, 2007. White, 4 door, 4-wheel drive, sedan, automatic, 4 cylinders. 18,000 miles. \$8900. Stock #11. VIP Auto Sales, 9207 Mission Gorge Road, Santee, 888-320-3640.

CHEVY CORVETTE, 2004, 34K miles, torch red, light oak leather, matching convertible top, pristine showroom condition, no defects, always garaged,

AUTOMOTIVE

\$34,900. Evenings, 760-942-0300; days, 760-268-0362.

CHEVY IMPALA LT, 2006. Dark blue, 4 door, 4-wheel drive, sedan, 4 speed automatic, 6 cylinders. 23,000 miles. \$11,900. Stock #14. VIP Auto Sales, 9207 Mission Gorge Road, Santee 888-320-3640.

CHEVY IMPALA, 2005. White, 4 door, 4-wheel drive, sedan, 4-speed auto, 6 cylinders, 23,000 miles. \$8900. Stock #10. VIP Auto Sales, 9207 Mission Gorge Road, Santee 888-320-3640.

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T.G.I.F.

“The secret police? What is this, California?”

By John Brizzolara

December in San Diego is, to me, both reassuring and bizarre.

On the 11th I will be or have turned 57 years old. This is something that only happens to other people, I figured. I was never meant to be 57 years old. I was supposed to be 25 forever; it just seemed implicit. Now I'm looking close at 60, if I make it — and there's a serious question there.

The days are cloudy lately and cool. The nights are downright cold. I suppose it's a matter of having retarded/impaired circulation — but still, everything seems colder. I am much like a little old lady shivering against her teacup and wondering what happened to the world that such apocalyptic climate changes have taken place in these final days and looking to the book of Revelation for answers — finding only references to pale horses and several crowned heads and retribution against vague, long-obsolete nations that seem to have nothing whatever I know of to do with me — but assuming it is supposed to.

When I first came to California in 1969 it was springtime: May. Annette Funicello was clearly just around the corner with Frankie Avalon. Now, almost 40 years later, the entire state seems to be a strange parody of the ideal. It now seems much in line with Woody Allen's zinger in *Sleeper* to the effect (and I must paraphrase) in response to Diane Keaton's line, more or less: “We've got to get you out of here; the secret police are looking for you!” Allen's response: “The secret

police? What is this, California?”

It is now like that. Recently, I had Emergency Medical Services come to my aid for cardiac problems. They were accompanied by cops, one of whom said, “We've got a couple of warrants out on you.” My reaction, of course, was, “For what?” I could think of no crime or summary probation violation I had committed, but I was in too much pain and out of breath to ask. Clearly, however, I have violated the laws of this state in some way or another. A criminal dirtbag to be referred to as “Homey, Motherf...” by sheriff's deputies in county jail or possibly doing three years in prison for God-knows-what. I will try to avoid tattoos if this is an eventuality, just in case I wish to convert to Judaism and would like to be buried in sacred Jewish ground.

My point, I suppose, is that were it for not this job I love and the fact that my son lives in San Marcos, I would be out of state so fast I would leave cartoon dust clouds in my immediate wake.

I used to love December in California. That was when it was a novelty, a warm and a funny curiosity — a lovely joke compared to winters in Chicago or New York. Now it can well be a nightmare of potential homelessness: being on the street out here in winter is absolutely humorless. And its threat looms constantly due to one law or another, one real-estate contingency or another, the San Diego economy...blah blah blah. The whim of the law here; as inscrutable as Revelation meets the carved stone tablets of Gilgamesh. It is that clear to me. Which is to say, inscrutable: far more sophisticatedly corrupt than either Chicago or areas of Mexico — both of which I have spent years in residence — I have come to hate California and San Diego in particular with the kind of muttering paranoia of the clinically insane.

I have written elegiac paragraphs about this place and will probably do so again at one point or another but at the moment...Lord; maybe it's just the cops here that I hate. I have never had any sort of love for law enforcement anywhere — it seems the police and I are on this planet for completely different reasons, though I am not a criminal — but here...ah, here, the surfer/Nazi personality grates in a way that rivals the most painful and hemorrhoidal. In Chicago, at least, the pigs resembled swine: here they are buff, handsome movie stars with the souls of blackened and corrupt avocado leavings.

I am raving. Very well, then, I am mad. I began life half mad in the first place. Here is an example of its fruition. The Friday night after Thanksgiving, the full moon frightened me so thoroughly that I would not even venture outside to empty trash. The moon was a glaring and malevolent cataract. It kept me inside my apartment, chain-smoking and drinking ice water as if they were talismans, rituals to keep me safe from that fierce, incandescent orb ruling Heaven and Earth. Actually, I had nothing else at the time anyway —



it's not as if I had a turkey to gnaw on. I was broke and had received no paychecks in weeks. But my point may be something to do with superstition and poverty. I'm not sure here.

The older I get, the less sure I am about anything. Things I suspect, I suspect are wrong. Things I know for sure are almost always reliably false. Experience is a confabulation of trumped-up crap. I *can* tell you this, however: nothing. Nothing whatever. You may as well ask a stunted palm tree for information.

Still, getting back to the point — if there was one — December and January fill my heart with fear in San Diego in a way they never did back East. Age, most likely, but there's something else. There is a meanness here that, while natural in New York or Detroit or Chicago, is contrived here in a venal, sadistic way; unnatural and inhuman, something foul and rampant that is allowed here under this sun. Nearly invisible, it is untanned and buffed but deadly as melanoma but certainly as inviting. Oh, yes.

It is in the real estate pages, it is prevalent in this town's city council, it is in almost every cop car and the mayor's office, on every other street corner, and the Minutemen along the border are its representatives.

Just in a bad mood, most likely. Have fun with the above.

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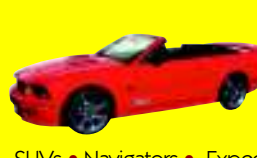
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