You wanna pull?

On a Saturday spring morning, in a small fenced-in backyard in San Marcos, 40 or so rather dangerous-looking men (and a few women and children) have gathered to celebrate arm wrestler Harold “the Rattlesnake” Ryden’s 35th birthday. For the past three years, Ryden’s birthday party has been an excuse for some of the country’s best arm wrestlers to fly into the area and celebrate a little and compete a lot. Story continues on page 24.
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Arm Wrestling Nation here in San Diego.
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Where the Pain Is

What’s the difference between National City and Rancho Santa Fe? Well — er, uh — money comes to mind. Last year, median household income in National City was $44,130, according to figures provided by the San Diego Association of Governments. That was far under the county median of $68,388. But the median household income in Rancho Santa Fe last year was around $200,000.

Another difference is that 70 percent of the homes currently listed for sale in National City are in distress — that is, are in foreclosure or are so-called short sales. The corresponding percentage in Rancho Santa Fe is a mere 5.2 percent, according to figures provided by Brian Yui, chief executive of HouseRebate.com, a discount real estate broker. Yui’s firm has a comprehensive website providing information on total listings, short sales, and foreclosures in San Diego’s various markets.

So what’s the difference between a foreclosure and a short sale? In a foreclosure, a homeowner is unable or unwilling to make payments, and the lender takes back the house. A short sale is an attempt to avoid foreclosure. The lender agrees to take a discount on a loan balance that is due. Say, if the balance of the loan is $300,000, but the house can only be sold for $250,000, under a short sale the lender might take $250,000 as payment in full. Although the media talk all the time about foreclosures, short sales are more prevalent. Yui’s website shows that in many mar-

MARKET |
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Sources: HouseRebate.com; SANDAG

Neal Obermeyer
Let the Bank Cut the Lawn

By Dorian Hargrove

In the first quarter of this year, three times the number of San Diego County homeowners failed to pay their mortgages as during the first quarter of 2007. According to DataQuick Information Systems, a company that provides real estate data, 8,975 homeowners defaulted on their home loans, up from 3,931 last year. In the 91913 zip code, in the eastern part of Chula Vista, a high percentage of homes on the market are in foreclosure. For every 1,000 homes, an average of 12 to 15 are bank repossessions. Currently, 726 residences in the zip code have been bought back by the lender or are in default or up for auction, and an additional 3 to 4 more houses are added to the market every day.

In these developments went Chula Vista. As new houses in communities located in eastern San Diego County became popular, a coincidence that has resulted in the high number of foreclosures in Chula Vista. However, brand-new homes in planned communities weren’t the only houses affected by the market downturn. More-established neighborhoods have also witnessed a sharp increase in bank repossessions. The Saint Claire subdivision is one of them.

Saint Claire is a small subdivision at Otay Lakes Road and Saint Claire Drive, adjacent to EastLake. In late April, 21 homes in Saint Claire were in the early stages of foreclosure.

The Saint Claire subdivision is one of them.

EastLake, EastLake Greens, and Otay Ranch are among the many large planned communities located in eastern Chula Vista. As new houses in these developments went on the market, subprime loans were becoming popular, a coincidence that has resulted in the high number of foreclosures in Chula Vista. However, brand-new homes in planned communities weren’t the only houses affected by the market downturn. More-established neighborhoods have also witnessed a sharp increase in bank repossessions. The Saint Claire subdivision is one of them.

Saint Claire is a small subdivision at Otay Lakes Road and Saint Claire Drive, adjacent to EastLake. In late April, 21 homes in Saint Claire were in the early stages of foreclosure.

Across the street, in front of a large two-story house, a For Sale sign stands amid knee-high weeds. Two garbage cans on the side of the house are carelessly placed on a walkway being overtaken by long, bending blades of grass. Further down Marquette, three more houses have signs in their yards. The house at the end of Marquette appears to have been abandoned for months.

On Genevieve Avenue, a short cross street with ten houses, a moving truck is parked diagonally in a driveway. A ramp extends from the back of the truck pointing toward the house’s front door. Next to the ramp, an expressionless elderly Asian couple watch with their arms crossed while movers take furniture out of their house and up the ramp.

Two houses down, a For Sale sign is slanted into a nicely kept lawn. At the end of Genevieve, at the T-intersection with Chateau Court, another house is for sale. To the left, down Chateau, on the far side of the street are three For Sale signs. The sole For Rent sign at a house across the street looks out of place. A heavyset man mows his lawn on Chateau Court while his father watches. The man doesn’t want to give his name, but he responds in a thick Iraqi accent to a question as to why so many houses are for sale in his neighborhood. “Too many people buy houses when they have no money. We’ve never had this problem before, but now it’s all over. We’ve had this house almost 11 years, and most of these houses go for sale and they are bought within a month. Right now, it’s not as good. Nobody is buying because of the economy, you know. People are scared to buy a house now. Like that house,” he says as he points across the street to a house for sale. “He bought for $800,000. Now he sells for $500,000. How’s he going to pay to the bank?”

The Saint Claire subdivision was built in the mid-’90s. Homes range in size from 1,758-square-foot three-bedroom houses to 3,100-square-foot houses with five bedrooms. Houses that once sold for $700,000 are now going for $400,000.

“A lot of people are in the shit here,” says 23-year-old Ryan Swierk. His family rents a house on Chateau Court that’s currently for sale. “I know our house isn’t one of them [a foreclosure], but the owner is in trouble, just like a lot of the other people in this neighborhood. This guy across the street, his house has been on and off the market for months.”

Doug Leeper, a code enforcement manager for the City of Chula Vista, says that he can easily tell which houses are in foreclosure. “Some of these homes sit vacant for 7 months, at least a minimum of 4 months, and in some cases as long as 12 months of sitting vacant before the lender even takes them back. Grass dies, the lenders let it overgrow; the pool goes green, because the lenders say, ‘It’s not our property yet.’ We call it the lender’s black hole.”

Driving through the nine streets that make up Saint Claire subdivision, one sees many homes that appear as if they are about to enter the lender’s black hole. Lawns are overgrown or devoid of grass. While some houses with For Sales signs have well-kept lawns, numerous advertisements and notices hang on their front doorknobs, along with a lockbox, a clear sign of a distressed property.

Because of the high number of bank foreclosures, a feeling of indifference pervades the neighborhood. “This guy over here just cut his lawn,” says Swierk. “It had weeds everywhere — it’s still all brown and ugly looking — but I know...”
Where the pain is continued from page 6

years, but then ratcliffing higher. People were told that home prices always went up they could always refinance the mortgage to offset the higher interest rates. Ouch. Then there were the “ liar loans,” euphemistically called “stated income” loans, in which people said how much they made a year and didn’t have to provide documentation to prove it. Double ouch.

The county’s problems “are mostly where entry-level housing is,” says Yui. People buying their first home got a lower-priced house and also a mortgage that they wouldn’t be able to handle as soon as the refinance game ended. The deceptive mortgages “gave people the ability to get in with nothing down, with payments artificially lowered for the first 12 to 18 months,” says Carlos Aguilar, president of AXIA Real Estate, who specializes in foreclosures. “It was a house of cards that fell apart like a Ponzi scheme the minute [home price] appreciation stopped.”

The experts agree that new, so-called affordable housing developments attracted many buyers who subsequently couldn’t carry their mortgages. So homes in these developments have been dumped on the market. “With the new construction, developers were offering a lot of incentives, getting people in anyway they could,” says Dennis Smith of North County’s Taylor Place Real Estate. “Now, when one property goes into foreclosure, values in the whole area drop.” Distress sales also show up heavily among condos and condo conversions, says Smith.

There are many more short sales than foreclosures because homeowners want to “avoid the black mark of foreclosure on a credit report,” says Yui. The lenders, in turn, are willing to let the homeowner off the hook because they don’t want the hassle of trying to sell the home in this miserable market. Short sales involve more administrative headaches. “The banks are overloaded. Often, there are two lenders involved.”

“It is not unusual to see a short sale take two or three months to get clear and another 30 days to close,” says Aguilar. Often banks won’t accept the short sale proposal. Real estate agents, therefore, would rather sell a property in foreclosure. It’s faster and cleaner. The short sales pile up in inventory, while the foreclosures move quickly into escrow. That’s another reason there are so many more short sales than foreclosures on the market.

Lower-income areas featuring at least some relatively new developments have been hit the hardest. Lemon Grove median family incomes are a subpar $60,000. Prices have plummeted 33.6 percent in the last 12 months. Yui’s figures indicate 70 percent of Lemon Grove homes now listed for sale are short sales or foreclosures. Nearby Spring Valley has incomes around $70,000. Prices there have plunged 38.3 percent over the past year. A bit over 40 percent of homes on the market are short sales or foreclosures, about double the county average. “A lot of first-time buyers can’t afford La Mesa, so they go to Lemon Grove and Spring Valley,” says Arnie Levine of County Properties.

Chula Vista has been hit very hard. Median incomes on the west side, where many homes were built in the 1940s, are below $60,000. The east side of Chula Vista features planned communities such as Otay Ranch, EastLake, and the Woods. Household incomes are around $100,000. But 72.6 percent of homes on the market on the east side are foreclosures or short sales, compared with about 60 percent on the poorer west side of town. Aguilar says that Chula Vista was a haven of liar loans. “In Chula Vista, the higher-income areas are hurting more,” says Zulema Maldonado of Prudential Real Estate in EastLake. She agrees that excessive liar and teaser-rate loans have hurt. “They purchased big homes and started with loans that were interest-only” or some other type in which the interest rate adjusted upward. “Otay Ranch is hurting the most. In 2003, prices were $400,000. They went up to $800,000 and are now back to $500,000.”

In zip code 92057, the northeastern part of Ocean-side abutting Camp Pendleton, continued on page 10
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69 percent of homes on the market are short sales or foreclosures, according to Yui. This area includes Mesa Margarita, an older development. The area is crime-ridden, but family incomes at $71,046 are somewhat above the county median. “There were a lot of first-time homeowners there. It got into the feeding frenzy,” and people bit on the liar and teaser-rate loans, says Smith.

“Prices were enticing, and there was a lot of new construction.” Other low-income areas are having troubles. In the 92027 zip code in Escondido, the median price of homes has dropped from $500,000 to $350,000 in the last two years. Median incomes are a subpar $66,284. Of homes on the market, 72 percent are short sales or foreclosures. The Encanto area has incomes that are lower still: $63,865. Home prices are down 38.6 percent over the last year. Of Encanto homes for sale, 75 percent are short sales or foreclosures.

By contrast, Del Mar, with its median income of $113,407, has few homes in distress. Just 5 percent of homes on the market there are short sales or foreclosures — about the same as Tony Rancho Santa Fe.

The interest rates on many San Diegans’ mortgages will be reset in the next few years. “It will be painful, but it will be beneficial for those families losing their homes but a gift to San Diegans who can finally afford to buy one.”

Sloan of Keller Williams Realty in Escondido says the problems will go on for “the next year or even two.” Says Yui: “another 12 months.” This will be painful for those families losing their homes but a gift to San Diegans who can finally afford to buy one.

Where the pain is continued from page 8

Cut the lawn continued from page 7

he’s in trouble with his house too.”

Although the appearance of lawns might seem insignif-

icant, neglected houses affect property values in the rest of the neighborhood. “One home in that condition,” says Leeper, “with a dead lawn, obviously vacant and abandoned, can diminish marketability and property value—depending on the neighborhood and how many there are — anywhere from 1 to 10 percent of the value.”

Last September, Leeper led the charge to pass an ordi-

nance in Chula Vista that holds lenders accountable for main-
taining their vacant properties. “The ordinance says that if you [a lender] have a property that goes into default, you must maintain it. If it is not occupied, you have to register it and start to maintain it to the neighborhood standard. If they don’t do it, we send a notice of violation, and we give them 30 days to bring it into compi-

lation. If nothing is done after that, then we start fining them. The fines range from $100 to $1000 a day, depending on how long it’s in violation and to what extent. Part of the requirement is to post con-
tact information for the lender on each foreclosed home so that the neighbors can contact them if there is any problem, because the City shouldn’t be responsible to be the multi-
national bank’s property manager, and the taxpayer shouldn’t be responsible either. So far we have over 400 homes registered.”

In the Saint Claire subdivision, many of the proper-
ties are neglected. Under the city ordinance, however, it is up to neighbors to notify the City of the problem. “The City can’t go around and search for these houses. We just don’t have the manpower to do that,” explains Leeper. “The people in the neighborhood need to inform us.”

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The King’s Criminal of the Week:

Man caught with gallons of marijuana for composting.

According to the AP, police in Iowa say a man caught with a large quantity of marijuana claimed all he had in mind was recycling. The 30-year-old man told police in Iowa City that he planned to turn several large bags of marijuana into compost. Officers report the bags he had when he was arrested early Saturday held a “gallon” or more of marijuana each. The complaint says officers didn’t buy the compost story.

If you are the criminal of the week,

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– Carmen S., Solana Beach

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LETTERS

We welcome letters pertaining to the contents of the Reader. Phone them in at 619-225-3000, ext. 466; address them to Letters to the Editor, Box 63803, San Diego CA 92166-3803; fax them to 619-231-0489; or use our web page at SDSReader.com/letters. Include your name, address, and telephone number. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

Profitable Police

I may not agree with everything in Staci Thrasher’s story about her daughter (“There’s Been an Accident,” Cover Story, June 5), but there is one thing that she is dead-on about, and that is the ineptitude of the San Diego County Sheriff’s Department. The sheriff’s department is a for-profit organization that is only concerned with enforcing laws that will generate revenue. Why should they care about vehicular manslaughter when there are cars to be impounded and traffic tickets to write? I’m honestly surprised that the Thrashers didn’t receive a bill for the accident in which Jadean was killed. The sheriff’s department needs to be restructured from the ground up, and I for one can’t wait until 2010 when we can vote out Bill Kolender and get someone in there who will shift the priorities from dollars and cents back to “To Serve and Protect.”

J. Edwards
via email

Little Rules Broken

I thought the story of Jadean (“There’s Been an Accident,” Cover Story, June 5) was wonderful in the way it honestly revealed just why it is not a good idea for children under the age of 18 to experiment with drugs and party with older young adults without parental supervision and permission. The heartbreaking lesson in this story is that children make seemingly little infractions on parents’ rules of checking in on the cell phone and leaving it at home so they can’t receive parental safety checks, and their breaking these seemingly minor safety rules can lead to children paying for the misstep with their lives.

The brutal honesty of the story revealed how the criminal justice system breaks its neck to enable criminal behavior to continue, and it revealed an interesting fact that this family could insure their truck, drive it legally, yet be found criminally responsible in the death of a minor, and not have the legal requirement to carry insurance while on the public roads or when driving with a passenger in their car on public roadways. This article was brutal, honest, and informative. It was missing no element for an interesting and informational retelling of the tragedies and pitfalls that can booby-trap everyone from kids, to their parents, their siblings, and grandparents. It shows the ways in which crime pays and the ways the rich of society abuse the poor of society. After the roller-coaster rides, I wish just one thing about that day would have been different so that Jadean would have lived. I came away from the article with love and respect for the family of Jadean and the courage with which they fight Jadean’s battle, since she has moved on to a better place. That is what our families are for.

I am so relieved that everyone can see how disgusting it is for older twenty-somethings to date children under the age of 18 without parental permission or knowledge, and the best part of the article is that this Doug person can no longer legally date children under the age of 18 without serious legal action being taken against him. So, for that, all children under the age of 18 can be grateful California has one less parentally sanctioned and supported predator in his neighborhood. That effort alone was a mountain most people can’t figure out how to move — a problem most of us can’t figure out how to get corrected. Good luck to Mrs. Thrasher with the defamation suit that the predator and his family have financed to file against her. This person needs to not have access to children. Thanks for us parents whose children want to go from 13 to 30. We need every bit of help we can get to see them safely into adulthood and steer them from humans who would do them harm and throw them away like garbage. Children, save your own good judgment when it comes to your personal safety, and don’t let older people put illegal substances into your hands. They know better. You don’t want to find out the hard way that drugs make you weak and vulnerable to predators in the first place.

Sunday Weiss
via email

Merriam Phooey
Webster Phooey

Duncan Shepherd quotes the Merriam-Webster dictionary affirming that he had correctly used “to beg the question” (Letters, June 5). The thing is, the Merriam-Webster dictionary is famous for including as an alternate pronunciation or meaning misapprehensions of illiterate people. “To beg the question” means the (a) definition: it means assuming an argument has already been made that hasn’t been presented, so you’re begging the question. It does not mean prompting a question or eliciting a question. That’s exactly not what it means, and unfortunately a lot of people have the misapprehension that it does, and so you hear improper usage of that all the time. And so Merriam-Webster’s philosophy is, if a lot of people do something wrong, it’s okay — now it’s right. Wrong is right.

Name Withheld

City Folk, Country Folk

I want to thank Joe Deegan for his excellent overview of the Sunrise Powerlink boodle (“Will These Keep the Lights On?” Cover Story, May 29). It clarified the whole business for me and impelled me to action. I know the folks in the backcountry directly in the path of this monstrosity have been fighting it, but it’s time we city folk joined the fray. If you don’t want to see your favorite hiking/camping spots blighted by giant transmission towers, I’m urging everyone in San Diego County to contact your local representatives, the PUC, and the governor. Together we can compel Sempra/SDG&E to produce solar energy locally at lower cost. Sorry, Sempra shareholders, don’t count your profits yet. Some of us in this little backwater are going to put up one hell of a fight.

Beth McCrindle
via email

Me Too!

Is Maggie Young really part of your staff (“Confessions of a Phony Navy Wife,” Cover Story, May 8)? Because I would have to congratulate her so much after reading her article. It made me so happy, as I was in the Navy and the same thing happened to me. She really is one of my heroes. I really wish I could talk to her and learn from her how she pulled through it so

continued on page 62
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Matt: When a hen lays an egg, which end comes out first? Settle our bet.

Hey, Matt: Ever seen a pregnant hen? There’s an even better question. With hens and all other birds, you’ve
got to look fast if you want to catch them in maternity clothes. So, say mama chicken is clucking
around the barnyard, when a follicle matures in her ovary. It pops out and heads for the oviduct,
a long tube that connects the hen’s insides to her outside. If she’s been feeling around with a
rooster, the ovum is fertilized at this point. But no rooster is required. If this hen is a little cog
in the vast machinery of the grocery-store-egg laying industry, the egg goes unfertilized. The
ovum keeps moving along the oviduct, where the albumen (the clear, gooey stuff around the
yolk) is deposited. Next the shell membrane and the shell are laid down. The shell hardens as
the egg moves toward its destination. About 24 hours after the whole process began, the egg
pops out, fat end first. Considering the physics of egg laying, it’s more efficient for the hen’s
muscles to push against the small end. Ouch.

Matt: I have had strawberry ice cream shakes that have a rich, delicious strawberry flavor. But when I eat
strawberries, they have a very little taste and don’t seem to be strawberry flavored at all. What gives?
— Jerry Dixon, Santee

How sad. We have two things going on here, both of which make Grandma cry. She’s old
each good enough to remember real food, and she really misses it. So, let’s look at your rich, delicious strawberry-
flavored milk shake. It might not contain any strawberries at all. It just contains enough of 59
specific chemicals that food-flavor experts have determined will fool us into thinking we’re
eating the real thing. (For example, acetyl acetate, acetyl butyrate, benzyl butyrate, ethyl
nitrinate, ethyl naphthyl ketone, ethyl heptanoate, 2-butanone, 4-methylacetophenone,
and oh, my gosh, mint essential oil, rose, and rum ether. Yum!) The more of this gob we drink
or eat, the more we use this fake taste as our benchmark for “rich, delicious strawberry flavor.”
It’s not. It’s rich, delicious chemical and sugar flavor that seems to approximate what we
remember as the real thing. Even if there are real strawberries in whatever you’re drinking,
odds are the flavor has been enhanced with the chemical mixture. Real strawberries just aren’t
strawberry enough to suit us. We want an intense, jolting taste experience.

The other thing that’s happening is on the strawberry’s end. Given the economics of fruit
protection, the best berry is one that grows big and red really fast. No time to waste letting flavor
develop. When we buy in the supermarket, we buy with our eyes, and fat and red are what we’re
looking for. Unfortunately, any fruit’s flavor develops as it sits quietly on the plant, basking in
the sun. What we often get in the grocery store are the corporate, gene-manipulated strawberries
that look good, ship well, have a longer shelf life, but have no taste. There’s a chance that some
kids have no idea what a real strawberry tastes like. Kid food is some of the most taste manipulated
by the corporate goons.

The industrial tastemakers do admit there are two flavors that so far have eluded them.
Cherry and grape. They have yet to come up with convincing substitutes. So, the swill that you
drink that’s labeled “cherry” or “grape” is very distant from the real fruit taste; but if we drink
a lot of it, then we begin to use the swill as our standard for real grape/cherry taste. Makes
Grandma yearn for the old days, when you could put a TV dinner in the oven and know you
were getting real flavors, not some cooked-up chemical cocktail.

Hey, Matt:
Is there such a thing as spontaneous human combustion? I saw a TV show about it, and it didn’t
really give a straight answer. I know you will.
— Willis, via email

There’s been a lot of weasel-wording about this subject. We even contributed to the pointless
debate a while ago. The research elves concluded there wasn’t any real evidence for the idea of
people bursting into flame and dying. But maybe it’s time to revisit the subject. Seems somebody
has set up an experiment that suggests people can catch on fire without a large heat source. Charred
bodies have been found in locations where nothing else in the room was burned.

The scientists rounded up a dead pig, since pig skin and human skin are very similar.
They wrapped it in cloth to simulate clothing. Then they set the pig on fire. It burned slowly
for many hours, and the charring pattern matched that of people thought to be victims of spontaneous human combustion. The experimenters had opined that human bodies can burn
slowly because of what they call the wick effect, similar to a candle. Except in the case of a
body, the fuel is fat. So, a smoker konks out, catches clothing on fire with a cigarette, and
smolders away. Glad the science guys finally settled the question.
Saving you time for whatever you’re into.

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U.S. Open Edition

Actually, I’m walking the golf course right now. Give me a call around 7:00 or 7:30 tonight.”

That’s Craig Barlow, professional golfer, scouting Torrey Pines GC, preparing for today’s U.S. Open. I found him by way of cellular telephone.

Since the top half-dozen PGA golfers get all the press, I decided to interview someone further down the food chain. I picked Barlow because he was born, raised, and lives in Henderson, Nevada, a town I’m familiar with. This year, according to ESPN, he’s 189th on the money list at $100,794. Not bad money for six months’ work.

I call back at 7:15, precisely. Some chit. Some chat. “Do you have a sense of how well you’re going to do this week?”

“I know I’m going to play well. I don’t know how I’m going to do.”

“You’ve been around for a long time.” Barlow is 35, turned pro in 1995.

“I’ve done okay,” Barlow says. “I’ve made a decent career out of it, for sure.”

I have his stats on the computer screen. “This year, you’ve made $100,000. A couple years back, 2006, you earned a million dollars. I didn’t realize it was so lucrative in the middle of the pack.”

“Yup,” says Barlow. “Since the Tiger Woods boom, the purses on the PGA Tour went up immensely. You’re going to have to make close to $800,000 to keep your job this year. The cut is the top 125 players.”

“The 125th guy makes $800,000 or more?”

“Yeah, that’s how you keep your job. If you don’t finish in the top 125, you have to go back to qualifying school.”

(Avoiding all details, even important ones, the PGA Tour Qualifying Tournament works like this: You play six rounds of golf against 160-plus survivors of prequalification, first-stage, and second-stage tournaments. Everyone playing in the final stage is great. You have to finish in the top 26 — the 2007 number — to get your card back at $800,000 to keep your job this year. The cut is the top 125 players.”

“Do you have a feeling where you would you place yourself in the field?”

“The 125th guy makes $800,000 or more!”

“Yeah, that’s how you keep your job. If you don’t finish in the top 125, you have to go back to qualifying school.”

“Playing the PGA Tour this year, how do you feel about your chances of advancement?”

“I’ve made a decent career out of it, for sure.”

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That’s Craig Barlow, professional golfer, scouting Torrey Pines GC, preparing for today’s U.S. Open. I found him by way of cellular telephone.

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That’s been frustrating. You’re not always going to have great things happen. Right now, I’m in my bump in the road.”

“Anything can happen,” I say. “A great showing at the Open changes everything.”

“That’s the beauty of golf — you’re always one tournament away from breaking through,” Barlow says. “There are a lot of good players, but to be at the top echelon, you have to set yourself apart, whether it’s desire or work ethic or positive attitude. There are a lot of great golfers who never make it.”

“Well, you’re good enough to work your way into the Open.” (Barlow shot 141 at the Open Sectional Qualifying Tournament in Daly City, the exact number needed to qualify for Torrey Pines. This will be his fourth Open.)

“Well, yeah,” Barlow says. “I’m taking care of the things. I need to do to get out of the slump. I’m starting to see good things happen to my golf game, I just haven’t quite got the results of it.”

And now, a metaphysical question: “What put you in a slump?”

Barlow says, “I can’t put a finger on it, but my guess is I got injured, after my injury had high expectations of picking up where I left off and didn’t achieve that. So, I started pressing and lost confidence and it’s just a snowball effect. There’s nothing wrong. I’m not a worse player now than I was two years ago, but you need to have the whole package working to play competitive golf, meaning your expectation levels have to be good, your attitude has to be good, your patience has to be good. If any of that stuff is off, things don’t churn as well.”

And now, an idiotic question: “It must be tempting to settle for 20th, 25th. How do you avoid shooting for 20th or 25th?”

“I’m shooting for it! It’s not that easy. The guys who finish in the top 20 or 25 are the best 25 in the world. The lowest I’ve been is 189th in the world. People aren’t interested in the 189th best player in the world. I want to be the 25th best player in the world.”

“I know I’m going to play well. I don’t know how I’m going to do.”

The Vegas Line can be found at SDReader.com
Under “Stories” in menu bar, click on “Sporting Box.”

By Patrick Daugherty

Under “Stories” in menu bar, click on “Sporting Box.”

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BACK WHEN

In the Reader

Thirty Years Ago
It grieves me that my first letter to the Reader should be in criticism of my favorite columnist, Eleanor Widmer. In writing about Sheldon's Restaurant, her comment about “aging waitresses in orthopedic white shoes and faces out of proletarian novels” was unkind and irrelevant. Perhaps if Widmer had to trade in her Halston Basic and Pucci slip to work in, rather than dine in restaurants, she too might soon be wearing orthopedic shoes and displaying an aging face out of proletarian novels!
—LETTERS “BABY, LOOK AT YOU NOW,”
Robert Raymond Shanks, San Diego, June 15, 1978

Twenty Years Ago
Circus performances and zoo cage exhibits, cartoons and children’s books have led us to think of exotic animals in anthropomorphized, benign images. To say “elephant” is to conjure the animal in a fringed parade dress marching to strains of John Philip Sousa; it is to remember plump Dumbo or the Gallic cosmopolite, the green-suited, gold-crowned Babar.
But life isn’t literature for an elephant.
—CITY LIGHTS “THE WHOLE DUNDA EPISODE,”
Judith Moore, June 16, 1988

Fifteen Years Ago
Shortly before Christmas 1990, a literary agent asked if I wanted to write a book about Betty Broderick. I had spent hours talking to Betty in the spring and summer of 1988, back when she was merely a wrathful divorcée. With reporter Paul Krueger, I had interviewed Dan Broderick and others involved in the Broderick melodrama. Eventually Krueger and I wrote an 8500-word chronicle of the Brodericks’ divorce. Then, shortly before the piece was scheduled to run, Dan Broderick informed us he would sue for invasion of privacy if the story were printed, his earlier cooperation notwithstanding. So we didn’t publish the article until after the morning Betty killed Dan and his second wife Linda.
—“WRITTEN TO DEATH,” Jeanette De Wyze,
June 17, 1993

Ten Years Ago
Deirdre and I went out alone for her birthday. Fin was left in the care of Danielle. Danielle was washing up after dinner when she heard the frightening silence of a baby about to do something bad. Then — clink, clink, CRASH! tinkle, tinkle. Unless one of us had forgotten to close it, Fin had forced the latch on the liquor cabinet, extracted two red wine glasses, tested them for tone, and then brought them together, cymbal-like, with spectacular results. She rushed into the room; Fin was holding the stems, happy, surrounded by shards of broken glass. He was unhurt. Danielle didn’t mention the event when I called from Rainwater’s to see how things were going.
—“DA ALWAYS WINS,” Matthew Lukens,
June 18, 1998

Five Years Ago
Blender magazine reports that Jewel, the “horse-riding poetess, has disappeared” and that she has been replaced by a corset-wearing “diva whose interests include cleavage, sweating, and ‘being served.’”

Jewel told Blender about her chronic kidney infection, recurring bouts of depression, and her famous snagle tooth, which she blames on not being able to afford good dentistry as a child.

Jewel’s new saucy look coincides with the techno sound of her new CD, 0,004. Gone is the yodeling Jewel that helped her move 11 million copies of her first CD, Pieces of You.
—KURT K. Leighton, June 12, 2003

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San Diego Reader, June 16, 1983

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North Coast Calvary Chapel
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Sermon: content · delivery ·
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Music: congregational · band ·
Snacks: ·
Architecture: ·
Friendliness: ·

Prior to satisfactory · (none)
Good: ·
Very good: ·
Excellent: ·
Extraordinary: ·

North Coast Calvary Chapel, founded as a home Bible study in Encinitas, was housed five years in a YMCA, then ten years in the Vulcan Center (now Encinitas City Hall). They had a brief stint in San Dieguito Academy before settling down in the early ‘90s at the edge of a shopping center in Carlsbad. But the thing kept growing. Now, a plethora of blue shade tents has transformed the front parking lot into a regular ministry bazaar, and the church is preparing to move into what one pastor termed “a brand-new Tuscan village location right up the road”—one that will provide a more permanent space for all those ministries.

Before the big move, “we’re going to have a kind of ‘sharing our story’ event,” continued the pastor. “Testimonies of, ‘What did God do at North Coast Calvary Chapel while we were here?’ If you have a story that’s been memorable to you, we want you to record that...celebrate your past.”

Inside and at the outset, the church played host to Vicky Beeching, a British import by way of Nashville, dressed in a snug denim band-leader’s jacket. She sang praise songs in her sharp, sometimes breathy voice and said her heart beat “for the revival of God’s people and the salvation of those who don’t know Him yet.” The congregation sang on the choruses, giving the proceedings a concert feel. “Thank you for the cross! Thank you for the cross! Thank you for the cross, my friend...”

“There was a time when the church was the pulsating center for the arts,” said pastor Mark Foreman. “But 100 years ago, fundamentalism, as a culture, made the decision to kind of back off from its involvement in the world. I think it was a very bad decision; it came from some bad theology; it created a kind of ‘us against them’ worldview, and the unfortunate thing is that the church stopped producing art. The church stopped being involved. I love the fact that the church here is getting involved in the arts!” Foreman had spent the previous day at the Switchfoot Bro-Am, a charity surf contest and concert festival founded by the band (two of whose members are his children).

There came the invitation to fulfill out information cards. “We’re just excited to have you here, and it really is our desire to help you grow in your faith in Jesus Christ... We feel like the best way to do that is through groups... You can see we have a lot going on. It’s how we can reach out to you... and see how you can participate in this great journey with us.” (Besides ministries for every possible age group, there were ministries for marriage and family, for women, for men, for missions, for military support...)

There came the invitation to consider the youth summer programs: “We don’t want to just put kids through a curriculum. We want to walk with them and you as parents with your children... that they might grow into maturity and lean on Jesus Christ and discover Him for themselves.”

The Offering: “We acknowledge that it’s really no longer we who live, but Christ who lives in us... We ask that you would use these gifts so that we could touch another person’s life.”

“Communion” “This is one of my favorite times,” said the speaker. “When we gather around what’s called the Lord’s Table, where God solemnly and loudly to us: ‘Whoever is thirsty, come; whoever is hungry, come and partake of the bread of life.’ As the Body of Christ gathered here today, we will partake one together... We thank You for the transforming power of your Holy Spirit within us...”

Foreman’s sermon tied all these threads together as it took up the last verses of Paul’s letter to the Galatians. “This is either the first or second epistle that Paul wrote, and we see the very early foundational principles that were germinating around the followers of Jesus: the centrality of the love of God, of the cross, and of faith in what Christ did for us... But, it seemed, not only what Christ did for us. Paul wrote, ‘Neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything; what counts is a new creation.’”

“Somewhere,” said Foreman, “particularly in the last 100 years, we forgot about this world. We became heaven-minded...and it seemed all we wanted to do was to get souls to heaven. But we forgot about the transformation, the rest of the message of Jesus: the reason you are forgiven is so that we could touch another person’s life.”

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BestBuys

We have a lot of college students who use the wake-up call service.

Hubby Patrick’s brother Kevin has been a small-time rock musician since he was 18. When he turned 38 this year and the band — Youth Movement — still hadn’t made it, he came to the realization that he needed more conventional employment. So now he’s in trade school learning medical billing. By June, Kevin should have his first 9 to 5. Patrick applauds his brother for going legit, but he’s afraid 20 years of staying up till three o clock in the morning and getting up after noon is going to be a hard habit to break, “I wouldn’t be surprised if Kevin overslept on his first day of work,” said Patrick.

“Why don’t you get him a wake-up service,” suggested my friend Bernice. Eve was on the case.

“The whole idea of automated wake-up calls being available to users anywhere hasn’t been around that long,” explained John Tadlock, president of Tavoca Inc., of which MyCalls.net is a division (800-385-9044). “Doctors and hospitals pay us to remind their patients to show up for appointments. And because of our expertise with automated dialing and our recognition that there was an opportunity to expand the wake-up-call services market, we added this service to take advantage of ideal time our servers. How does your wake-up service work?

“It is an online-managed account. The user simply signs up online using any major credit card, and their account is instantly available for use. They can schedule calls to themselves on a repeating weekly schedule or use a calendar to manage calls one day at a time, whichever is better for their particular situation. And they can schedule different times for different days and use various phone numbers if they are traveling.

“We have three plans: bronze, silver, and gold. Our bronze plan is a one wake-up call every day of the month if you want it, and it includes weekends if desired [$4.99 a month]. The silver plan is a one wake-up call plus one snooze call per day [$6.99 per month]. The gold plan is a wake-up call plus three snooze calls per day [$9.99 a month]. All of those plans offer an annual option: if you buy 11 months, you get the 12th month free. [The bronze is $49 a year, the silver is $77 a year, and the gold is $109 a year.]

“We also offer a one-time wake-up call [$1.49], and you get a wake-up call plus five snooze calls.

What type of clients do you have?

“Our client base is slightly skewed to be more female than male. “We have a lot of college students who use the wake-up call service. And a lot of people in the 25-to-50 age range use the service, typically folks who are working early or unusual shifts. They get up really early, or they get up in the middle of the afternoon. And then we have some retirees who just want to stay on a good schedule, and they like the ringing phone as opposed to the alarm clock scaring them to death.

“The majority of our clients do not have children. Those with children tend to be woken up by the children, at least that is what we have been told.”

David Batchelor, owner of Wake-UpLand (wakeupland.com; 888-399-9253), says a lot of parents use his service. “They are using it for their college students to make sure that their kids actually get up in the morning,” Batchelor said. “They sign up their kid’s phone number, and then that way they can be sure that their son or daughter gets up for class. We have a lot of people who are diabetics [using the wake-up calls], people that have a hard time waking up in the morning. And we have older people who use it for a medication reminder.

What does the recording say? “It’s a taped recording, and you can pick between a male and a female voice. ‘Good morning, this is your Wake-UpLand wake-up call, have a great day,’ something along those lines. And there are other options you can add, like a ‘weather report, where it tells you your daily local weather, daily news headlines, or joke of the day, things like that.”

Is there a suggested placement of the phone? “As far away from your reach as possible if you really want to get up, so you have to get out of bed to pick it up.”

“If the phone is not answered, the service will call up to four times. If you pick up the phone and you are all groggy, you have to verify that you’re awake by pressing the one key.

“The price for the monthly service is $4.99. If you buy a year in advance it is $44.99. And then if you just want a one-time wake-up call, it is $8.95.”

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1: David Batchelor

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Best Buys

Eve Kelly

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1: David Batchelor
Now it’s a MONTHLY neighborhood writing contest.

Last year the Reader held a writing contest. Topic? Your neighborhood. Over 600 San Diegans submitted entries, and the winners were printed in the September issues of the paper.

Starting in June 2008, the Reader will hold a monthly neighborhood writing contest, and at the end of each month the best entries will be awarded prizes.

Entries must be submitted through and will be published on the Neighborhood pages of the SDReader.com website.

If space allows, we will publish entries in the printed version of the Reader.

1st place.....$500
2nd place....$250
3rd place.....$100

Photos and YouTube links to videos are welcome but not necessary to win.

Go to SDReader.com/neighborhoods, find your neighborhood or campus, and follow the instructions to create a blog.

BLOG & WIN!
Legally Blind

by Barbarella

Men seldom make passes at girls who wear glasses. — Dorothy Parker

When I was six years old I had an imaginary friend named Jesus. Like most children, I attributed nearly everything that happened or didn’t happen to my make-believe buddy. When things didn’t go my way, I would become angry and wave my middle finger — the way I’d seen adults do it — at the sky because, like the Care Bears, my omnipotent friend lived in a cloud. When I wasn’t blaming my invisible friend for my daily disappointments, I was begging him to play the role of fairy godmother and make my dreams come true. And the thing I wanted most of all was to be afflicted with a visual impairment. People who needed glasses to see were different, and I’d been taught that different meant special. It was clear from the sizeable goggles on their faces that my father and my sister Heather were special, I wanted to be special too.

I was 12 when it finally occurred to me that my imaginary friend was just that. I gave up my dream of being special and focused my attention on being liked — which meant blending in rather than standing apart, a difficult task given my ever-increasing pudginess. It also didn’t help that I sat in the front row of every class, where I could best see the board. I did so through junior high, which was, not coincidentally, my straight-A phase.

I was in the ninth grade when my best friend Nancy’s mom, Mrs. Opfer, forever changed the way I viewed the world. We were watching a Steve Martin comedy, My Blue Heaven, on the television in Nancy’s living room. Mrs. Opfer sat in the chair closest to the tube, and I was next to Nancy on a couch about ten feet from the screen. Between scenes, narration would appear in the form of white text against a blue background. Each time the words came up, I’d ask Mrs. Opfer to read the text aloud. At first I think she assumed I was a slow reader. But by the third time, she said, “Can you not see those words?” I told her I could only make out blurry white lines and that her TV was too small for people to sit as far away as Nancy and I. “You should be able to see those words from there,” she said. Nancy nodded. Then, in her matter-of-fact Midwestern way, Mrs. Opfer voiced aloud the conspicuous truth that had been overlooked by my teachers, parents, sisters, and even me: “You need glasses.”

My mother was horrified — not because I needed glasses, but because she had failed to detect my need and because the same kind of thing had happened with my older sister. (It wasn’t until a free vision evaluation was offered at Heather’s elementary school that she learned not being able to read the time on the VCR without putting one’s nose against the machine wasn’t normal.) During my evaluation, I couldn’t tell the optometrist which direction the big E on the chart was facing, as I saw nothing more than a fuzzy rectangle. Normal vision is 20/20. Mine was 20/300.

When I collected my first pair of corrective lenses, it was as though I had been given a superhero power. No longer were trees composed of green cotton balls on a brown stalk — I could actually see individual leaves silhouetted against the azure sky. Objects were cartoonishly outlined. As Heather once put it, everything was so precise. The difference between pre- and post-glasses was so drastic that for the next month, I spent half the time lifting my specs up and down just to observe their effect — clear, not clear, clear, not clear, clear...

Disappointment set in when I became apparent that needing glasses did not make me special. Compounding my torment, it was around the same time I got my frames that my grades began to decline, dispelling the myth that people who wore glasses were smarter. When the novelty of 20/20 vision faded, I became self-conscious about looking nerdy and struggled neurotically to protect my lenses from scratches and dust. By the time I was a senior, my eyewear had gone from godsends to curse; for the first time in years I thought of my imaginary friend and how, like a mischievous leprechaun, he had been wily about giving me what I’d wished for.

In the name of vanity, I took to wearing contacts. A few years later, at a party in West Hollywood, my interest in eyewear was renewed. While I was chatting with a...
It was only after the party that my friend Stephanie explained that “dick-knee” was the nickname for DKNY — Donna Karan New York. “You just scored a pair of frames that would have cost you a month’s rent,” she said. I had my prescription installed the next day. Finally, my glasses lived up to their potential — they kept me from running into things while making me look cool. All I needed was to find the perfect pair. I stopped spending money on contacts and started collecting frames as if they were shoes.

My sister Heather underwent Lasik shortly after she graduated from college, as did a handful of my myopic friends. Despite the success of their optical adjustments and their happiness with the results, for me, laser eye surgery was always either too expensive or too risky. Eventually, it was no longer a matter of money or fear, but a matter of preference. Whereas in school they were uncool, in adulthood my glasses had become fashion statements. I knew people who wore clear, nonprescription lenses in stylish frames because they liked the way they looked.

Though sometimes I wish I didn’t have to scramble out of bed and find my glasses in order to see the bird chirping right outside my window, or that I could watch what’s happening on the ceiling-mounted TV while I sweat away on the elliptical at the gym, I don’t mind my minor handicap. Quite the contrary. David has told me that my glasses were a huge draw for him when we first started dating. Something about finding women in glasses more attractive and how funky frames make a bold statement about the woman behind them.

Looking back on my life with 20/20 hindsight, I now realize that I was one precocious six-year-old.

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Not every guy at Ryden’s party is particularly muscular, but they all seem tough. Not a metrosexual male in the crowd. Probably not even a single guy who knows what “metrosexual” means. Tattoos coil out from under the sleeves of muscle shirts. Hair isn’t brushed or combed. No one’s wearing any cologne. And though it isn’t particularly bright beneath the one leafy tree in Ryden’s yard, at least half of these men are wearing dark sunglasses. There might be enough testosterone here to fuel the international steroid business.

The Rydens have ordered six enormous pizzas to feed everyone, and multiple coolers are filled with soda and beer. A box is being passed around for contributions to cover Ryden’s present, a new iPhone.

But hardly anyone is eating, or even drinking. Instead, they’re all “pulling.”

“Ya wanna pull a little bit?”

“Yeah. Sure. You pull?”
Event in the sport of arm wrestling.

“Pulling” is arm-wrestling vernacular for "engaging in an arm-wrestling match." No fewer than seven arm-wrestling tables stand in Ryden’s yard. In the crowded little space, at least three or four matches are going on at any one time.

Finally, Ryden and another fellow don official black-and-white-striped referees’ shirts. “Everybody ready for the super-match?” Ryden calls out.

For the main attraction of this year’s party, the lightweight arm-wrestling world champion, Vazgen Soghoyan, from Armenia, has challenged the great Allen Fisher.

Soghoyan, 25, is very short and very broad. He seems almost as big across his chest as he is tall. “We call him Popeye,” says one man, pointing to Soghoyan’s right fore-arm. From wrist to elbow his arm is bulbous, like some kind of huge fish, so big that despite the size of his chest and shoulders it doesn’t seem to fit with the rest of him.

But what’s Soghoyan thinking? Why is he challenging Allen Fisher?
San Diego June 12, 2008

“Harold ask me to challenge him,” Soghoyan admits, in his thick Armenian accent. “And anyway, Harold don’t ask, I challenge him myself.”

And why is that?

“Because,” he says, “it always good to arm wrestle the best.”

Soghoyan and Fisher chalk their hands and elbows and line up across from each other, with an arm-wrestling table between them. Ryden and the other referee watch closely as the two men come to grips.

No one’s laughing, or even smiling. This is serious stuff.

Fisher doesn’t go crazy or anything, pounding on the table and yelling, not the way he might in a real competition, but he does have a severe and determined look on his face. The entire crowd of partygoers turns completely silent. One man calls out, “Come on, Fish,” using Fisher’s most common nickname.

Finally, the competitors have a grip that satisfies the referees. “Ready. Go!” And that’s it. In less time than it took for the ref to say, “Ready, go,” Fisher pins Soghoyan.

“Match!” the ref says.

“Nice hit, Allen,” yells one of the partygoers, with admiration. And then, someone else says, sarcastically, “You’ve got to work on your start, Allen,” and everyone laughs. Fisher’s start is devastating and flawless.

The two men line up again and come to grips again, and then, again, Fisher wins in less than one second. It’s almost ridiculous. What’s going on?

“Get in a hook,” someone calls out.

“Yeah, let him hook you,” says someone else. They’re calling for a third match, and they’re telling Fisher to let Soghoyan hook him.

So Fisher obliges.

They start a third match with their wrists bent into hooks. “Ready. Go!” And this time, it’s just about even. They pull back and forth for over 30 seconds. The crowd’s shouting and calling over their shoulders. But, ultimately, Fisher wins this one, too.

“How has Fisher made such short work of the lightweight world champion?” “I swept through him,” he says matter-of-factly, sipping a bottle of water. “And I wouldn’t let him have control.”

The Beginning

Flash back 32 years, to the back room of a North Hollywood Alpha Beta supermarket in 1976, where a scrawny, 20-year-old clerk’s helper and an older, brawny deliveryman have put their elbows on the opposite sides of a narrow table, leaned forward, and gripped each other hand-in-hand.

The supermarket manager had heard that the youngster thought he was pretty strong. “You want to arm wrestle, Al?” he’d asked.

Al, the deliveryman, outweighed him by 60 or 70 pounds, but the clerk’s helper was game. “Why not,” he’d answered. “Sure.” And at closing time one evening, just about everyone who worked at the Alpha Beta gathered in the back room to see who was stronger: big Al or the little clerk’s helper.

All of a sudden, right before the match, Al

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started to transform into a wild beast. He pounded his chest and rolled his eyes and yelled at the top of his lungs. “Whoa,” thought the younger man. “What’s with this guy?” And then the two of them went at it. They pulled. And pulled. And pulled. One minute, two minutes, till no one had any strength left. And nobody won. They had stood each other up.

Turns out Al the deliveryman was Al Raney, one of the top-ranked heavyweight arm wrestlers in the United States in 1976. And he couldn’t beat this little 150-pound clerk’s helper, this upstart kid by the name of Allen Fisher.

The Myth
Fast forward to the present day, and you could almost say that Allen Fisher of little Spring San Diego

---

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R E N T A L S

“Allen won first place, $5000, and that was our down payment for our first house.”

Valley, California, is to arm wrestling what Kobe Bryant is to basketball or Tom Brady is to football. He’s arguably the best. A 26-time world champion. Over 50 national titles.

“What makes Allen a champion is this,” says his wife Carolyn affectionately. “One, he’s got a heart of gold for the arm wrestlers. Two, his consistency. Three, his ability to draw up his energy from somewhere.” And then, four, his incredible speed and strength. And on top of all that, he’s 52, and he beats guys half his age who are on top of their game.

Fisher himself estimates that he’s won over 1300 professional matches, against maybe 40 or 50 losses. You might say, instead, that Kobe Bryant is the Allen Fisher of basketball, or Tom Brady is the Allen Fisher of the NFL.

“The thing about Allen is, he beats guys half his age and twice his weight,” says Jake Smith, a training partner. “And he doesn’t just beat them, he crushes them.”

How does Fisher do it? Technique? Strength? Experience?

“God’s blessing,” says Carolyn.

“Intimidation,” says Robert Campbell, another of Fisher’s training partners.

“It’s a combination of everything,” concludes Smith. “He’s got it all.”

Smith, Campbell, and the Fishers are chatting before the start of an evening session of arm-wrestling practice. They’re standing in a circle, talking about Allen Fisher as though he weren’t even there. Even Allen Fisher is talking about himself as if his

There’s always a split second in there where you can attack, and you have to know when that is and how to make it work.”

Does Fisher have any weaknesses?

“No,” says Carolyn decisively. “There aren’t any.”

But Allen’s thinking about the question.

“You know what his weakness is?” Smith asks rhetorically. “Overtraining. Most guys will take

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– Jay S.

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– Marisa K.
two weeks before a tournament and back it down. But Allen will be here a week before a major tournament, going just as hard.” Fisher smiles, but he looks as if he’s not sure he agrees with Smith. He’s still thinking about the question. “Having an off day,” he says, finally. The plan in Fisher’s mind is that he wants to retire in two years. He wants to go out on top, at the 2010 World Championships in Las Vegas, “Every guy there is going to want to beat Allen Fisher in his last tournament,” says Carolyn, “It’s like he’s been the king of the castle for so long. So, will he go out the same way? Or can somebody else take it from him? It’s going to be exciting.”

The Man
Allen Fisher may be ultra-competitive and even periodically insane (in a cultivated, arm-wrestler’s way), but he’s also deeply religious and doesn’t cuss. The man went to Bible college for two years.
How’s that for contrast? Brutally physical, yet sincerely spiritual. That contrast seems to pull the man taut. If you had to pick one word to describe Allen Fisher, the best choice might be “taut.” Fisher’s skin is pulled taut over his muscles, and his intensity pulls his personality taut over his character. He’ll never snap at you in conversation and seldom loses his temper, but he does seem like a kind of tension spring, ready to pounce. There’s nothing slack about him, nothing loose. There’s no give. But that isn’t to say that Fisher isn’t giving. In fact, his generosity within the sport of arm wrestling is a thing of renown.
People will fly to San Diego from all over the country — and even from other countries — just to train with Allen. And he and Carolyn often host these visitors to lunch or dinner.
“He’s the kind of guy who’d help you in any way he can,” says one acquaintance. “He’ll go out of his way to do you a favor.”
“He’s the nicest guy you’d ever meet,” says another. “Of course, all that changes when it’s time for competition.”
“The coolest thing about training with Allen,” Jake Smith acknowledges, “isn’t necessarily what I learn from him, although I’ve learned a lot. The coolest thing is all the respect I get just for training with him.”
Allen’s probably the most loved icon in the sport,” Carolyn Fisher says, “Because he’s a people’s people. He’s like the Roosevelt of arm wrestling. He’s there for everyone. You know, you see all these big guys with their heads this big and they’re all full of themselves, and then you’ll see Allen giving his time to some schmo who just wants to learn the basics. It’s in his heart. He’s very well respected. We had his 50th birthday party a couple of years ago, and 300 people showed up. Because they just like him.”

The Woman Behind the Man
Carolyn Fisher isn’t just the wife of world-champion arm wrestler Allen Fisher. Carolyn Fisher is, herself, a world-champion arm wrestler. “My first tournament ever, a friend of mine paid the $10 entry fee for me,” Carolyn says, “and they called my name, and I tripped going up the stairs. I carried my coat with me. I didn’t know what I was doing. And the first ten matches, they thought I was fouling, because it was so fast. It was just ‘Ready, Go!’ and they were down. And then that got me a free trip to the Canadian nationals, and I won lightweight, heavyweight, left arm, and right arm. And that got me a ticket to the world championships, where I met Allen. So it was all kind of like it was meant to be. I was only 19 at that first tournament.”
She and Allen met at the world championships in 1985, corresponded for a year, and then met up again at the 1986 nationals. They got
engaged 11 days after that, and now they’ve been married for 22 years.

“He’s choleric,” Carolyn says of Allen. “There’s two ways of doing things. His way and the wrong way.”

“Freight-train mentality,” Allen adds, of himself. “Get on the train, or I’m leaving you behind.”

“And I’m a drama queen,” smiles Carolyn. “So we’ve got a very exciting household.”

Yet they’ve made it work for over two decades.

“We know where the low blows are, and we don’t go there,” Carolyn says. “We just respect it. We’d be hurt. And we have a lot in common. The arm wrestling. We love to travel. And we like our kids.”

The Fishers have two bright, energetic, and athletic children. Megan, 18, is a sophomore at Grossmont College, and Austin, 16, attends Heartland Christian private school.

Tonight, Carolyn has cooked a big, healthy dinner for her family. “And I’m a drama queen,” smiles Carolyn. “It’s behind.”

The arm wrestling. We’d be hurt. And we don’t go there,” Carolyn says.

“We know where the low blows are, and we don’t go there,” Allen adds. “Spread the milk. It’s behind.”

The Fishers seem like a happy bunch, laughing a lot, telling stories, and ribbing each other good-naturedly.

“And I’m a drama queen,” smiles Carolyn. “It’s behind.”

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The Fishers seem like a happy bunch, laughing a lot, telling stories, and ribbing each other good-naturedly.

“I was a soccer mom,” says Carolyn, putting her dinner fork down as she tells the story. “But I couldn’t just rest on the sidelines. I had to be the assistant coach, even though I’d never played a day of soccer in my life. But then, come game-time, Megan would run around the field and get distracted by butterflies. And when the ball would come to Austin, instead of kicking it, he’d make his fingers into guns and pretend to shoot at it.”

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The whole family laughs together, remembering these stories. “So both of them busted my chops,” Carolyn concludes. “One of them by being Type B and the other by being… Type…W.”

But it must be awfully tough for Austin and Megan, having two parents who are world champions.

“It’s always been a challenge for me,” says Austin, over a hearty bowl of his mom’s salad, “because I always have to win. No matter if it’s computer games, video games, outside with friends: I always have to win.”

Why does he have to win? If he loses, won’t his parents let him sleep in his own bed at night? He laughs. “No! No!” he says. “I won’t let myself sleep. It’s like they’re world champions, so why can’t I be that good? And that’s why I don’t get into arm wrestling. Everybody would expect me to be some prodigy child.”

Carolyn teaches physical education part-time at Heartland Christian School. And Allen was an architectural metal and glass worker for 22 years. Now both of them are in business with a company called National Safety Associates. They market and sell fruits and vegetables in capsules, in a product called Juice Plus+.

“The interesting thing is,” Carolyn is telling the story of how the two champions first went to arm-wrestling competitions together, “before we were married, I was going to tournaments by myself and doing my own thing, and he was, too. And when we got married, and we were going in the same hotel room for the first time, it was very weird. Because I pull right in quiet, and he gets all fired up. And we got into this weird thing, you know? Do we sit by each other? Do we not? So, after a while, we just let each other go, and then

Allen Fisher’s only 5’11” and 168 pounds.

National Safety Associates. They market and sell fruits and vegetables in capsules, in a product called Juice Plus+. “The interesting thing is,” Carolyn is telling the story of how the two champions first went to arm-wrestling competitions together, “before we were married, I was going to tournaments by myself and I’d bump into him and say, ‘Hey, how are you doing?’ But I do want him there when I’m setting up with a girl. I need him to help me get ready for a match. It’s almost like I hear his eyes.”

At the highest levels of arm wrestling, the women are just as much machines as the men are. “Those women from Belarus and Germany are

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The right hand of Allen Fisher is like a massive slab of beef.

of them is really trying to win, but it's apparent that neither of them wants to lose either. After a minute or so of this, they give each other a nice big hug. It's a beautiful moment, and it encapsulates their relationship perfectly: competing to a standstill on a leveled playing field and then hugging it out in the end.

The Movie
In 1986, Allen and Carolyn Fisher were both extras in the Sylvester Stallone arm-wrestling movie Over the Top.

The film centered around the largest arm-wrestling event of the time, which was held in Las Vegas. During the tournament, Allen Fisher never slept. He was too amped up. “I pinned the last guy at 6 a.m. the second day,” he says.

Adds Carolyn, “It was a long shoot. Like, 21 hours. And there were a thousand people there. They filmed it at a real tournament. And we’d pull while they were filming, and then they’d bring in some actors, and they’d film some more. Allen won first place, $5000, and that was our down payment for our first house.”

Over the Top shows one of Fisher’s matches in its entirety. He pins a guy in about two seconds flat, maybe less. If you pause your DVD and watch this two-second clip in super-slow motion, you’ll witness the full arm-wrestling
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transformation of Allen Fisher.

He had a thin beard back then, and a good deal more hair, but otherwise Fisher looks pretty much the same. Except for this: in the movie, Fisher’s face is fixed into an open-mouthed, jaw-jutting, nostril-flaring, wide-eyed, unblinking, shivering, shaking mask of sheer intensity. He looks terrifying.

Then he pins his man in a flash — even in super-slow motion — man in a flash — even in terrifying.

He lets his breath go and blinks, and his jaw releases its just a little. Allen Fisher’s game face and his regular face couldn’t be any more different if one were chiseled out of stone and the other molded out of clay.

“I asked Stallone which sport he liked more, boxing or arm wrestling,” Carolyn remembers. “And he said, ‘Arm wrestling is way harder.’”

The History
The history of arm wrestling dates back to ancient times. You can find stories of arm-wrestling matches to the death, or at least matches until grave injury occurs: scorpions or nails would be waiting on the table for the loser’s pinned hand.

Modern arm wrestling’s popularity can be traced to Charles Schultz’s Peanuts comic strip, believe it or not. In 1968, Schultz did 11 strips where Snoopy was traveling to Petaluma, California, to win the world’s wrist-wrestling championships. ABC’s Wide World of Sports followed suit, showing real matches from Petaluma for the next 16 years.

The longest match in modern arm-wrestling history lasted 27 minutes. It was between Steve Lusby and Earl Moffner. Their match was shown live on ABC, and they had to cut to commercial in the middle of it. When Lusby and Moffner were finished, they both fainted. Paramedics immediately attended to both men.

In the end, Snoopy was disqualified because you’re supposed to lock thumbs with your opponent, and Snoopy had no thumbs. And the sport of arm wrestling receded to sporadic late-night showings on ESPN.

The Hand
It curls into a fist that’s over 13 inches around. The measurement from wrist to tip of the middle finger is 9 full inches. The width of the palm is 6 inches. The five fingers look like a collection of babies’ wrists.

The right hand of Allen Fisher is like a massive slab of beef. It’s bigger than his left. You might think you could beat this guy arm wrestling, until that hand engulfs yours.

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Do you have elevated blood pressure?

Dr. Robert Henry and his associates at the VA San Diego Healthcare System/UCSD are currently conducting a research study on Losartan Potassium compared to placebo and its effects on insulin sensitivity in people who are overweight and have elevated blood pressure.

You may qualify if you are:
- Male or female between the ages of 18-75
- Overweight
- Currently have mildly elevated to high blood pressure and are being treated with at most one high blood pressure medication
- Non-diabetic with Impaired Fasting Glucose (blood sugar)

Participants will receive a medical screening at no cost by board-certified physicians and have the option to enroll in a research study after screening. Compensation up to $800 will be provided to participants who qualify for the research study.

If you are interested please call:
(858) 552-8585 ext. 2884

Self-Conscious?


Confidential help is available. You may be eligible to receive free treatment with computerized therapy as part of a research program.

No medications! Call: 619-229-3740 or e-mail: SDSUUCUTA@hotmail.com http://nas.psy.sdsu.edu

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) Or visit: www.pearsoncenter.org

Schizophrenia
Bipolar Disorder
Major Depression

We may currently or in the future have inpatient and outpatient research studies involving investigational medications for the conditions listed above. Qualified participants will be compensated for time and transportation up to $50.00 per day for each overnight hospital stay and up to $100.00 for each outpatient scheduled visit. (Some restrictions may apply to screening visits, inpatient stabilization days, and/or hospital discharge day visits.)

For more information call: (858) 566-8222 The California Neuropsychopharmacology Clinical Research Institute, LLC “CNRI, LLC”
To qualify, you must:

- Have Type 2 Diabetes.
- Be between the ages of 18-70 years old.
- Taking only Metformin or controlling your diabetes with diet and exercise.
- (If female) post-menopausal or surgically sterile.

Profil Institute for Clinical Research is looking for volunteers for a clinical research study of an investigational medication for Type 2 diabetes.

**To qualify, you must:**

- Have Type 2 Diabetes.
- Be between the ages of 18-70 years old.
- Taking only Metformin or controlling your diabetes with diet and exercise.
- (If female) post-menopausal or surgically sterile.

You may be compensated up to $2,580 for your time and travel. Fourteen overnight stays will be required.
INSOMNIA

Do you or a loved-one have trouble sleeping?

If you or a loved one are between the ages of 18 and 64 and have had trouble sleeping for 3 months or more, you may qualify for a 7-week research study of an investigational new drug’s effects on sleep disturbances. Qualifying applicants will receive the study drug or placebo (sugar pill) and all study-related medical treatments at no cost, as well as compensation for time and travel.

Participants must:
• Be in good health
• Be between the ages of 18 and 64
• Have a history of primary insomnia for at least 3 months

For more information, please contact:
JoAnna Williams, CRC
Dr. Steven Drosman
619-260-0010

Female Research Volunteers Needed

The Reproductive Endocrinology division at USD is conducting a clinical study on hormonal differences in women with polycystic ovary syndrome and women with regular menstrual cycles. If you are not on hormonal birth control and are either:
• 18-35 years old with PCOS or regular menstrual cycles

Participants receive up to $650.

Please call for more information: 291-2321

Healthy Volunteers are needed for a vaccine research study. Call us to find out the details & to see if you qualify.

Patients receive up to $650

Volunteers needed for Down Syndrome study!

Eisai Inc. and Pfizer Inc. are currently sponsoring a clinical research study to find out whether an investigational study drug (donepezil HCL) will benefit children with cognitive impairment associated with Down Syndrome.

Do you know someone:
With Trisomy 21 Down Syndrome • Between the ages of 10 and 17 • Residing in the community with a caregiver and • Have no unstable health conditions

Qualified participants will receive all study-related care at no cost and may be reimbursed for reasonable travel expenses.

If someone you know meets the above criteria and they are interested in participating in this clinical research study, please contact:
UCSD Pediatric Research Center
7910 Frost Street #360, San Diego 92123
Aimee Canepa, RN,CPNP • 858-246-0010 • acanepa@ucsd.edu

Newly wed?

Opportunity to participate in a study of the marriage experiences of couples in their first year of marriage.

1. Must be at least 18 years of age.
2. Both partners in a couple must identify themselves as Mexican/Mexican American or European American (white).
3. Marriage partners must be willing to be interviewed (30 minutes) in their first and third years of marriage.

Compensation up to $140 per couple.

Please call or e-mail Dr. Donna Castañeda, San Diego State University.
1-888-835-5048
dcastane@sunstroke.sdsu.edu
Se habla español.

Allen Fisher trains at his Spring Valley home.
**Trouble Staying Asleep?**

Do you feel rested when you wake up?
If not, you may qualify to participate in a research study for adults who experience problems sleeping throughout the night.

**Qualified Participants Must Be:**
- between 18 and 65 years of age

**Qualified Participants Will Receive:**
- All study-related care, exams and study drug at no charge
- Compensation for time and effort

---

**PACIFIC SLEEP MEDICINE SERVICES**

For more information on these and other clinical studies:

**call (toll free)**

1.866.410.6767
or visit

[www.AvastraClinicalTrials.com](http://www.AvastraClinicalTrials.com)

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**Do You Experience the Pain That Follows Shingles?**

This pain is known as Post-Herpetic Neuralgia, or PHN.

If you have PHN and you're at least 18, you may want to participate in a research study of an investigational pain medication.

**Qualified Participants Must Be:**
- Be 18 and older
- Have had shingles in the past 5 years
- Have had PHN pain for at least the past 6 months

**Qualified Participants Receive:**
- Compensation up to $350 for time and travel
- Study-related care, exams and study drug at no charge

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**Alzheimer’s Disease**

FEELING HOPELESS? A new investigational medication is available as part of a research study.

**Are you or someone you love:**
- Suffering from mild to moderate Alzheimer’s Disease?
- Between 55 and 90 years of age?
- Not living in a nursing home?

**Affiliated Research Institute is conducting a research study on Alzheimer’s Disease.**

**Qualified participants will receive at no cost:**
- Study medication • Medical evaluation by a board-certified medical doctor • Laboratory tests • Supervised care by medical professionals as it relates to the study • Compensation for time and travel • Health insurance is not required

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

(619) 688-6565
See our website: www.ari-inc.com

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**Is your current Schizophrenia medication not working?**

**Are you:**
- Taking Aricept®, Exelon®, Razadyne®, or Reminyl® for the treatment of Alzheimer’s Disease?
- Between 18 and 65 years of age?
- Not sleeping?
- Between 18 and 64 years of age?
- In overall good health?

If you answered yes to all of these questions, you may be eligible for our investigational drug research study. If you qualify and choose to participate, you will receive study medication and you will receive physician consultations, study-related medical examinations, laboratory evaluations and follow-up visits at no charge. You may receive study medication to be used in addition to the Schizophrenia medication you are currently taking. Health insurance is not required and compensation for time and travel is provided.

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

(619) 688-6565
See our website: www.ari-inc.com

---

**Not sleeping?**

**Are you:**
- Having trouble falling asleep?
- Between 18 and 64 years of age?
- In overall good health?

If you answered yes to all of these questions, you may be eligible for our investigational drug research study. If you qualify and choose to participate, you may receive study medication and you will receive physician consultations, study-related medical examinations, laboratory evaluations and follow-up visits at no charge. Health insurance is not required and compensation for time and travel is provided.

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

(619) 688-6565
See our website: www.ari-inc.com

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Are you living in the shadow of bipolar depression?

We're working to bring future treatment options to light.

As a person with bipolar I, you know what it's like to live with the darkness of depression. So you may want to know about this clinical research study examining an investigational drug for bipolar depression compared to a placebo, an inactive substance, when used in combination with a mood stabilizer:
- You have been diagnosed with bipolar I and are currently experiencing a depressive episode
- You are at least 18 years old • You have a history of at least one bipolar manic or mixed episode
- You have been diagnosed with bipolar I and are currently experiencing a depressive episode
- You are at least 18 years old • You have a history of at least one bipolar manic or mixed episode
- You have been diagnosed with bipolar I and are currently experiencing a depressive episode

Participation may last up to 12 weeks, and includes study-related care and monitoring from specialists in bipolar I, access to a mood stabilizer, and potential access to investigational medication, all at no cost.

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

(619) 688-6565
See our website: www.ari-inc.com

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**Do you constantly worry? Every day?**

**Do you:**
- Feel nervous, tense or “on edge” most of the time?
- Have trouble sitting still or find it impossible to simply relax?
- Between 18 and 65 years of age? In overall good health?

If you answered yes to all of these questions, you may be eligible for our investigational drug research study. If you qualify and choose to participate, you will receive physician consultations, study-related medical examinations, laboratory evaluations and follow-up visits at no charge and you may receive study medication. Health insurance is not required and compensation for time and travel is provided.

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

(619) 688-6565
See our website: www.ari-inc.com
Tyson or Allen Fisher in a dark alley, I’d rather meet Mike Tyson. Because Allen just changes. It’s his professionalism, his ability to turn it on when he needs it and then turn it off.”

Says Allen, “You have to train your mental state all the time. It’s like how muscles have memory, and they know what you do. So you have to do things over and over until they become second nature. Well, your mind is the same thing. You have to train your mind to know your move, to not go into second thoughts, and to think like a champion. Mentally, you’ve got to be beyond everything. You’ve got to stay totally focused.”

The Match
An official arm-wrestling table looks like some kind of strange puzzle on four legs. It’s got pegs and circles on it, and pads, and if you saw one out of context, you might wonder what on earth it’s for.

Competitive arm wrestlers must stand on either side of one of these tables, grip the pegs, put their elbows in the pads, and have at least one foot on the floor. The other foot is often wrapped around one leg of the arm-wrestling table. Shorter competitors may wear boots or thick-soled shoes or even stand on a riser to counter a height disadvantage. The arm wrestlers will grasp each other’s hand, and they have up to a minute to straighten their wrists and achieve a grip that satisfies the referee, who then says, “Ready, go!” The match is over when one competitor’s hand is pinned against the table with the winner’s hand over the loser’s.

“IT COSTS $500 TO GET TO A TOURNAMENT, AND IT’S $500 FOR FIRST PLACE.”

Heavy drinkers not seeking treatment

Investigators at The Scripps Research Institute are currently seeking volunteers who consider themselves to be heavy drinkers and do not have any desire to stop drinking. The purpose of the research is to learn the most effective way of studying predictors of relapse or a return to drinking.

Earn compensation for completing 4 study visits that take place over 3 weeks.

This study does involve taking a medication or placebo for one week.

To find out if you qualify for study participation, please call Marni at 858-784-7867 or visit our website at www.pearsoncenter.org for more information.

Did you overdo it?
Lower back strain, sprain or back spasms?

We are conducting a clinical research trial with an investigational dose of a medication that has been prescribed by physicians for more than 40 years to treat these uncomfortable symptoms.

- 18-70 years of age
- Possibility of 4 visits within 14 days
- Qualified participants receive study-related care, study medication and may be compensated for time and travel

Next time you have low back pain/spasms, please call:
(must be within 3 days of 1st symptoms)

San Diego Sports Medicine and Family Health Center
619-229-3909

Infected wound research study

QualityCare Medical Center, Inc. is currently recruiting people with an infected wound to participate in a research study. This study will compare an investigational generic cream to an already-approved cream or placebo.

You may be eligible to participate if you:
- Are 6 years of age or older
- Have an infected wound
- Can visit our office 4 times over a 3-week period

Study participants will receive:
- Study cream or placebo
- Compensation for time and travel

For more information, please call:
760-477-2263 ext. 218

Dry eye sufferers
Are you tired of dealing with your dry, irritated eyes?

We are seeking qualified participants for an upcoming clinical research study that will last 8 weeks (6 office visits). If you have dry eyes, no current punctal occlusion and have not used Restasis® in the past 30 days, then you may qualify for this study.

Benefits of participation include: study-related exams for dry eyes performed by Robert Pendleton, M.D., financial compensation up to $300 for your time and travel. No medical insurance is required for participation in this study.

For more information about our clinical research study, please call site contact Patti Simpson at: (760) 758-2008; Pendleton Eye Center, 3998 Vista Way, Suite A, Oceanside, CA 92056
Do you have facial acne?

We are looking for volunteers to participate in a 12-week research study of an investigational topical medication for acne.

Those who qualify for the study will receive at no cost:
- Study-related medical evaluations by a dermatologist
- Study-related medication
- Reimbursement for time and travel may be provided
- Participants must be at least 12 years of age

To find out more about the study, please contact:
University Clinical Trials
619-202-0173 or univct.com

Healthy Male?

You may qualify to participate in a research study testing an investigational medication.

To qualify for this research study you must be:
- A healthy man
- Age 18 to 65
- A non-smoker for at least 6 months
- Willing to make overnight stays

Participants will receive all study-related exams at no cost and may receive up to $2,250 for time and participation.

Think you can help? Great! Then call 866-818-3253 or visit TestWithTheBest.com today. Please reference Study 7534-163

Did You Overdo It?

Lower Back Strain, Sprain or Back Spasms?

We are conducting a clinical research trial with an investigational dose of a medication that has been prescribed by physicians for more than 40 years to treat these uncomfortable symptoms.

18-70 years of age.
Possibility of 4 visits within 14 days.

Qualified participants receive study-related care, study medication and may be compensated for time and travel.

Next time you have low back pain/spasms (must be within 3 days of first symptoms), please call:
QualityCare Medical Center, Inc.
840 Townsite Drive, Vista, CA 92084
760-477-2263 ext. 218

Medical Center for Clinical Research
But, despite this quickness, Fisher has only been called for fouls a few times in his whole career.

“’There’s nothing worse than Allen getting called for a foul that he didn’t commit,’” Carolyn says. “’That gets him so mad. Then all the guys that are arm wrestling him afterwards get scared.’”

Robert Campbell laughs at this and says, “Yeah, I liked when you arm wrestled Cobra at Mohegan, and he thought you’d fouled, and he goes, ’Tell him you did it, Allen,’ and you were, like, ’Oh? You want to go again? Okay.’ And then you just beat him the same way again.”

**The Practice**

Two or three times a week, around dusk, they meet in a permanent tent that’s set up in the side yard of the Fisher household in Spring Valley. Muscular men in jeans and T-shirts who just got off work. They park their pickups in the weedy driveway beside the beige two-story house, and then, by the buzz of a single hanging shop light, they start.

Twenty-one arm curls with a 20-pound bar as fast as possible. That’s 21 curls in about seven or eight seconds.

“’Not fast enough!’” Allen Fisher barks good-naturedly. “’Blink. Blink again and again. You see? You’ve got fast-twitch muscles. Now do the curls that fast.’”

After a few fast curls, Fisher and his training partners warm up by locking into arm-wrestling postures and pushing at each other with graduating pressure. After a few minutes, they’re gasping and straining.

Tonight, Fisher’s working out with Jake Smith, 28, and Robert Campbell, 29. Fisher’s wife Carolyn is here, too.

“Both Robert and Jake have natural strength because of their employment,” Carolyn comments. Campbell is a contractor, and Smith delivers bottled water.

“Arm wrestlers are meat cutters and bricklayers and hay balers,” Carolyn says, only half facetiously. In *Over the Top*, most of the arm wrestlers were truck drivers.

Smith, Campbell, and Allen Fisher are alternating in a sort of arm-wrestling tango, with neither opponent trying to win. Instead, they’re pushing each other into vulnerable spots and then trying to fight out of those positions. Real arm-wrestling matches usually last a few seconds, but these warm-up tangos will often go on for over a minute.

“In a real tournament, there’s so much intensity in the stable starting position,” Campbell says. “’And then it’s Ready. Go! And then it’s done. It’s over with. But this is a totally different thing. We’re using all the same power...”
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<th>Procedure</th>
<th>Price</th>
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<tr>
<td>BOTOX®</td>
<td>$218</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wrinkle reduction</td>
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<td>Entire forehead,</td>
<td>Per area</td>
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<td>glabellar (1 area), crow’s feet (both sides), All 3 areas if injected same day are only $599.</td>
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Wrinkle Fillers
$349**

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<td>Juvéderm™</td>
<td>$349**</td>
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<td>For fuller lips &amp; deep wrinkles. Best wrinkle reduction treatment available today! First syringe $369</td>
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Restylane®
$349**

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<th>Product</th>
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IPL® Photofacial
$239*

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Masks and Peels

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<tr>
<td>Jessner's Peel - For treating acne and scarring</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cosmelan acne - To regulate oily and acneic skin</td>
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<td>Upper Back</td>
<td>$199*</td>
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Farzad Yaghouti, MD
Medical Director

1-866-BEST-LOOK
6950 Friars Road, Suite 100 • Across from Fashion Valley Mall
Se Habla Español • Promo code: RDR0612
and technique, but it's like it's in slow motion."

The difference between arm wrestling in a bar or in a workout and arm wrestling in a competition is even more marked than one might imagine. "People will brag, 'Oh, I beat Allen Fisher,' " says Carolyn. "And then you say, 'Oh! At a workout! Or in a competition!' Nobody beats Allen in a competition."

In a competition, Fisher wants to get through each match as quickly as possible, and for a good reason.

"When I got started in the sport, it was all inside moves. Hook and drag. Hook and press. We'd get set up inside and we'd both just turn in, and we'd sit there, and we'd hold each other. But I never went that route. People kept telling me that I was so strong inside, so why didn't I use that move? Well, I knew if I kept going inside, then I'd get locked up for a long time. But I'm looking ahead. I don't want to just win that match. I want first place. So I don't want to get locked up with anyone. My idea, instead, was to pull someone out of their power. So when I would pull, I would turn my body and start to pull away. And it kind of developed. I'd go over the top of his hand and turn my wrist, and it was so easy to hold people, even if the guy weighs 500 pounds."

Carolyn describes the classic Allen Fisher move like this. "He'll get popped out," she says, "and you'll see him look over at the other guy. And you can see him watching and waiting for him to move. And then he'll just lay in or roll out. It's classic. For him to be in a hook for a second and then to look at the other guy and wait for him to move — he waits for the transition — and then he just beats him to the spot and comes in or pulls out, but either way, he pins the guy, like, a split second after that."

Transitions are the important and minute changes in position that occur throughout an arm-wrestling match. It could be finger pressure, a pronating or supinating wrist, an opening of the bicep, elbow position, tricep pressure, positioning of the legs, and on and on. The thing is to feel where your opponent's pressure is coming from, and then, before he or she can change from one move to the next, to counterattack in precisely the best way. That's why Fisher counsels his charges to "keep the
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• Compare Our Results
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pressure, no matter what,” because if you let up at all through your transitions, you’re going to get beaten. “You never let your opponent have control,” he says. “You want control, no matter what. And no matter how he’s exerting pressure, you have to know there’s a weakness, and you have to attack that. Going high, out the back door, sweeping, cutting, pulling him apart, or just going sideways, if he’s not used to that kind of thing.”

After an hour or so of working out, Allen reflects on how his practices prepare him for tournaments. “In sports, you have to be there in the moment,” he says. “And not just in competition, but all the time. Because the thing is, muscles have memory. Like these guys, just now, they were forcing me into a hook, and then we were just pulling. But I would never do that a few weeks prior to a competition. Because I’ll get in competition, and my muscles will be saying, ‘This is what you’re going to do in competition.’ But that’s not what I want to do. I want to do my move.’

“It’s kind of like thinking negative thoughts,” adds Carolyn. “So if he comes to a tournament, he wants to be training in such a way that all he’s doing is his move. Over and over, just doing his move, so his muscles remember it. If he does end up in a hook, then he’ll cover that when he gets to it. But, chances are, he’s creating a 90 percent possibility he’s going to do his move.”

The Injuries
Two unusual injuries suffered by arm wrestlers are fat lips and bruised bellies. The belly bruises come from leaning in hard against the arm-wrestling table. Allen Fisher wears a towel wrapped in his waistband to guard against this. And fat lips can occur when an arm wrestler slips out of the grip of his opponent and then punches himself in the face.

“Those injuries have happened to just about everyone at some point or another,” says Carolyn. “But about the more serious arm-wrestling injuries — broken bones and torn ligaments — Allen Fisher says, ‘You’d rather give some ground than find yourself in a bad position. Better to lose, or have to come from a long way behind, than to break something or pull something.’

This is a lesson that many arm wrestlers will learn the hard way. Robert Campbell’s here at the Fishers’ place training, but just three months ago, he broke his humerus, which wasn’t very funny. He broke it arm wrestling. “Just using poor technique,” Campbell says. His boyish face creases into a sheepish grin.
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Jake Smith was there when Campbell’s arm broke. “He was just messing around after a tournament,” Smith says. “And I was right there. And I heard what sounded like a broomstick breaking.”

“And I was, like, ‘Uh-oh,'” says Campbell. “It broke, and my arm flew back, and this ref that was watching us arm wrestle said, ‘Ooh, you just broke your arm! Sit down! Sit down!’ And I was, like, ‘Oh, okay,’ And then I realized I could move my hand okay, but when I tried to lift my arm, it wasn’t happening.”

Spiral fractures of the humerus are just one of the common hazards of arm wrestling. You get your shoulder going one way and you push your hand in the other, and the strain across your arm bone can become too great.

“It only takes about 10 to 12 pounds of pressure to break a bone,” Carolyn says.

There can be an upside, however.

“A lot of times when you break a bone, you come back stronger,” she adds.

“That’s what the doctor told me,” agrees Campbell. “He said it will be 20 percent stronger once it heals.”

The Money (or Lack Thereof)

Within the coterie of arm wrestlers, Allen Fisher is a legend. But how is it that he isn’t rich, or more famous? Why isn’t he a household name?

“He’s never promoted himself,” Carolyn practically whispers, sounding incredulous. Then she adds, “He doesn’t know how to do that.”

There’s also the problem of nonunification within the sport. No strong central governing body promotes arm wrestling the way the NBA or NFL bring basketball and football into everyone’s living room. That’s probably the main reason why you haven’t heard of Fisher, or John Brzenk, or Steve Bye, or Dave Patton.

And what’s the prize money like in professional arm wrestling? “It’s nothing,” Carolyn says. “It costs you $500 to get to a tournament. And it’s $500 or $600 for first place.

Sometimes we drive somewhere, and we’ll go three weight classes each. We’ll clean up, and we’ll make $1500 or $2000. But that’s it.”

How would that work?

“I’d weigh in for lightweight,” Carolyn says. “Of course, this was when I weighed 140. And then I’d enter middleweight and heavyweight. Because you can go higher; you just can’t go down. So we’d both do the same thing, and we’d be, like, ‘How much did you get?’”

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Stephan’s deep, subdued tones, deliberate cadence, icy eyes, and furrowed forehead made it clear that this 59-year-old black man from Oakland was accustomed to tossing aside the short end of the stick to get what he needed. His lovely younger wife Tamara looked at me anxiously. It was exactly a week before the Thanksgiving holiday.

I cautiously but firmly pushed the area along the left posterior aspect of his neck, which made him grimace. He’d had excruciating knifelike pain in his left upper chest, left neck, and left arm for almost a week now. Two days before coming into the office, he’d had a temperature of almost 105 degrees. This was his first visit to me with this problem.

“What’s going on here,” I confirmed. I looked back and forth between their attentive faces. “But the problem’s in your neck, not your heart.” Stephan didn’t buy it initially, but after ten minutes of explaining why inadequate blood flow to the heart causes intermittent symptoms, without significant fever or focal tenderness, he understood that the problem was in his neck. I knew he was insured through a health maintenance organization. It would be difficult for me to get approval for a prompt MRI, because the next week would be cut short two days due to the holiday. They would, however, allow an urgent MRI to be ordered through the emergency department.

“It’s not my heart, so I’m not going to the hospital to wait for five hours in the emergency room,” he concluded. We wouldn’t be negotiating this any further, despite my contention that he might have a life-threatening cancer or infection affecting the area next to his spinal cord.

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<tr>
<th>Treatment</th>
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<td>Botox</td>
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hours, we found two facilities that would do the test. But each time, when we called the IPA for authorization, they informed us that, although each facility was on the approved list of providers, they could only do X-rays, ultrasounds, and CT scans for patients in the IPA. They were not covered for MRI scans. The only place we could get an authorized MRI scan turned out to be the one that was closing at 3:00 p.m.

Reggie finished explaining this to me at 2:40. I knew I had only one hope, and that was to call the radiologist at the local facility. “Jim,” I pleaded, after describing my patient, “I know you all want to go home, but sometimes we have to do what needs to be done, and you are the only person who can help him right now.”

“Can he get here in five minutes?” I knew Stephan was at a pharmacy just down the street. “Yes,” I said.

“Send him over.” Reggie called the IPA and got the authorization. Carol called Tamara. Ninety minutes later, Jim paged me. “He has an eight-centimeter abscess right next to the left side of his lower cervical and upper thoracic spinal cord,” Jim explained. “He needs immediate surgery.”

Jim then walked out to find our patient. He said, “There doesn’t appear to be anyone here.” Apparently, his staff was so determined to get out early that they’d all left the building and told Stephan to leave as well. I had Tamara’s cell phone number, so I thanked Jim and reassured him that I would locate Stephan. Tamara answered the phone driving home on the freeway. I told her what we had found and said, “You have to turn around and go back to the hospital,” which she did.

The neurosurgeon operated on Stephan the following morning, removing a section of bone from several consecutive vertebral bones (a laminectomy) and cleaning out the pus-filled abscess. When I went to see him later in his sixth-floor room with a sweeping view of San Francisco Bay and the Golden Gate Bridge, he was asleep, but Tamara met me in the hall, gave me a long bone-crushing hug, and thanked me. She had dark sleep-deprivation raccoon rings around her eyes but assured me she was okay. “I know I’m overdue for an appointment with you, but I’ll see you soon.”

The next day I found Stephan sitting upright in the company of friends and enjoying the view. He introduced me and said to his friends, “I have to give the doctor his props. He was the one guy who right from the beginning knew where the problem was. I gave him a bad time, but he was right.”

I asked Stephan how he felt. “The pain is almost gone,” he said. He pointed to his surgical wound, a vertical line down the back of his neck to shoulder level, with a gentle indentation in the space that the spinous processes of his vertebral bones had formerly occupied. “I can deal with this.”

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The sense of relief he projected exceeded mine, but not by much. I allowed myself a wide smile. “I’m so glad” was all I could say. A few days later, he stopped by the Berkeley office. Previously, he’d never shown us any face other than pride and anger. He shocked us all with hugs for everyone in the office, calling Carol his “angel” while weeping in gratitude, prompting her to pull me aside to confirm that “This is what makes all that we do worth it.”

Almost a month later, with Christmas just a few days away, Stephan came back for a follow-up appointment, during which he shook me firmly by the hand and informed me that he now was almost pain free without any medication and that he had full strength in his left arm and hand. He had even resumed lifting weights. While he was in the hospital, Stephan had opened discussions with his surgeon and with me about where the abscess had come from. “Shooters,” what physicians call people who use intravenous drugs, get spinal abscesses from the bacteria they unintentionally inject into their bloodstream, but these abscesses are otherwise rare. “The neurosurgeon said it probably came from some dental work I had done a month ago,” he’d told me when I came to see him in the hospital. Deep cleanings and procedures involving injury to the gums can cause some of the hordes of bacteria living in the mouth to disseminate into the bloodstream and cause infections in other parts of the body. The chances of an otherwise healthy person getting a spinal infection from a dental procedure, however, are similar to the probability of lightning striking one’s spinal cord. Perhaps the stab wound to his chest so many years ago had left some scar or pocket that the bacteria had invaded.

In any case, this was one of those “bad things happen for no good reason” scenarios that we see often in my line of work, and I was thrilled to see that he had made a complete recovery.

“I want to make you aware of something so you’re not caught off guard,” he began, and I sensed the end of the happy part of our conversation, “I have consulted three attorneys, and I just want to warn you that they want to see your records. They don’t want anything having to do with my colonoscopy or matters like that. They want any records that might show a delay in diagnosis so they can sue you. I want to sue the dentist, but the attorneys want to look over what you did also. I’ve told them, ‘I think that all you’ll find is that he was the guy who found the...
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San Diego Reader June 12, 2008 61
LETTERS
continued from page 12

easily, which I could not.
Toby Bailey
via email

Comments from Reader
Website
Comments are not edited for
spelling, punctuation, or
grammar.

Cover Story
Published June 5
Posted by dggirl on June 5, 9:50 a.m.
I just read this story and
I’m appalled. I would like
Staci and the entire Thrasher
family to know that they are
in the thoughts and prayers
of so many of us. Doug Gar-
cia’s family should be
ashamed of themselves. It’s
obvious that they taught
their son nothing as he has
shown no remorse and not
an ounce of respectability. I
would love to see a re-
response from them.
Posted by qqqqjijm on
June 5, 12:07 p.m.
What a tragic story. I
lost my beautiful daughter
eight months ago unex-
pectedly to an accident so
I certainly understand how
Staci feels. And I too am ap-
palled at the sorry excuse for
a justice system you were
put through. Doug Garcia
sounds like a total parasite
not unlike Seth Cravens.
Just remember Staci, ‘what
goes round comes round’. I’d
be interested to see where
this piece of trash ends up down the road.
God Bless You.
Staci, I go to the same
coffee shop every day and
I pass the reader every
Thursday and I don’t pick
it up. Today all I had to do
was read the headline and
my heart sunk. Oh how I
remember those words. My
sister Raina Bybee and her
best friend Tiffany Savage
were both killed in Poway
in 1999. We have so many
of the same ties to our
stories.
-Women killed at the
scene
-Witnesses say he had
been drinking all day
-Powell sheriff depart-
ment would not investigate
-28 year old man with
no remorse and tried to
blame the girls
-2 counts of Vehicular
manslaughter (misde-
means)
-9 months in jail but
with work furlo
-Raina’s funeral was also
at a Mormon church
-We handed out flyers
just as your family did
I feel like I read this story
for a reason. My mother
and I are very passionate
and still angry. We are very
active in the community.
Contact us if you wish to
talk. My heart mourns with
you.
Posted by spassociates on
June 5, 204 p.m.
I am so sorry that our so
called justice system put
Jadean’s family through ad-
ditional hell. It seems to me
that Doug Garcia’s family
have some kind of inside
connection with the police
and that he should have
been investigated from the
beginning. A 26 year old
man driving teenage girls
where one is killed is very
suspicious and the fact

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that he was not investigated for sexual misconduct is appalling. I am totally disgusted with the police, the court and most of all with Doug Garcia. I am not related to this family and never heard of them until I read this story and I too am angry. Doug Garcia needs to be held accountable. How can we trust our police if they allow such things to get away with sexually exploiting teenage girls and contributing to the death of a child. I guess if your family has enough money in our society you can get away with it.

Posted by soshimo on June 5, 2:33 p.m.

I’m disgusted by how the Sheriff’s dept handled, or mishandled as it were, this case. It screams of the kind of kick back or under the table dealings that are so prevalent in law enforcement today. It is certainly interesting that the perpetrator’s family paid his bail, in cash, the day he was arrested. I read this story and I too am angry. Doug Garcia would have to be an angel to make up for what he did, he serves the writer a restraining order on the anniversary of her daughter’s death. Very crass indeed.

Posted by floralturtle on June 6, 10:57 a.m.

I found this story to be a pathetic cry for pity. This woman clearly feels incredibly guilty for what happened to her daughter. I wanted to sympathize with Staci, I really did but, it was difficult to sympathize with a woman who starts the story talking about getting hammered. Her overall tone seemed whiny to me. She is trying to justify her ignorance regarding her daughter by persecuting this man.

Of course this man deserves no sympathy either but kids do stupid stuff, they experiment with drugs, they hang out with the wrong people, they go drop in the middle of nowhere and they don’t always wear
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After their seatbelts.

Although it saddens me that her daughter died at such an early age and that the death could have been prevented, you are responsible for yourself. Her daughter is as guilty as her mother.

Posted by Greta on June 7, 9:32 a.m.

I just finished reading this article and these comments. I feel so sorry for Staci and her family. I feel sorry that Staci needs help dealing with her loss and I agree with some of everyone’s comments. I have followed the legal system for decades and I believe it needs to be improved. But I don’t believe Staci is going about this in the right way. She goes on and on about all the yelling at different agencies and people and how the Judge was wrong, and this and that. It really detracted from the story. Judges don’t make the law, they follow a very specific set of rules and guidelines that were in place and created by legislation. If a Judge sways, and some do, then their decision usually gets challenged and you know the rest of the story… Usually the appeal over-rules a Judges decision that falls outside the sentencing guidelines. Staci is spending her time making posters and t-shirts attacking the Judge, when she should be channeling this negative energy to help herself and the rest of her family.

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energy to try to change legislation in Sacramento or at the national capital. And police and sheriff’s have to follow the rules too. I frankly was getting tired of all the references Staci made about her upper handed remarks and rude and insulting comments she made to everyone in the system who disagreed with her. Almost like she was keeping a score card. Our police don’t have to stand there and be yelled at, or insulted when they make an attempt to express their condolences, and they don’t have to return phone calls if they know all they are going to get is more of the same. I am a retired school teacher. I have dealt with parents every single day of my 29 years of teaching. The vast majority of the interactions was highly positive. Yet from time to time there were parents who simply were out of touch with what was going on in their child’s life, and with often tragic consequences. And there were those parents who expected the school system or police department to clean up their mess at home, or wave a magic wand and fix all the injustices.

I support our police and sheriff, but I don’t always agree with them and I am the first to support weeding out the bad ones. But I see nothing in her article to suggest there was anything the sheriff department could have done differently, and I am not convinced it was all at Staci’s account suggests it was. I don’t blame the detective Wells for not returning her phone calls if all Staci was going to do is be rude and insulting and creaming for something that could not be produced for her. I have to imagine the authorities would have loved to figure out a way to lock this person up and throw away the key!

I hope Staci can come to grips with her tragic loss and channel her energy for real changes.

City Light, by Dorian Har-grove
Published June 5
Posted by a girl in oceanside on June 4, 3:23 p.m.

Minorities should embrace JROTC. After all, it’s this country’s great military that allows the freedom that so many flock here to find.

Maybe they should start protesting wrestling next—since it trains students in the art of grappling and submission.

Posted by Fred Williams on June 4, 3:23 p.m.

Hi Girl in Oceanside,

I served in the military, completing two cruises with squadrons at Miramar. I was Sailor of the Month for my squadron and recommended for the academy by my commanding officer.

Since that time I’ve lived and worked not only here, but in Europe and Asia, interacting with people from around the world and learning a few languages along the way.

So I can completely disagree with you with total confidence.

Our military is NOT what makes us great. Quite the contrary. The military is a necessary evil in an unjust world. Our founding fathers didn’t even want a standing military, preferring to only call up soldiers as the need arose.

The world admires us (or used to admire us) for our freedom, our creativity, our ability to advance from poverty to wealth.

The world admires our music, our films, our open spaces and natural places. Only a few isolated nuts are gung ho about our advanced weaponry.

The military doesn’t allow freedom. In fact, when you sign that contract you sign away a number of constitutional rights for the duration. And if the military chooses, they can unilaterally extend that contract as long as they like. It’s like indentured servitude, the close cousin to slavery.

Recruiters lie. I know it. Everyone who’s ever been in the military knows it. They take the gullible young and tell them whatever they want to hear. The truth is you sign your life away when you sign that contract.

The fact that minorities are over-represented in the military is because for many it’s the only choice they have left. There is often no other path to getting out of the ghetto. So they believe the promises, only to find themselves chipping paint in the sun, all the offers of job training long forgotten.

I was one of the fortunate few who got real world training that served me well in later life. The overwhelming majority of my shipmates were taught skills relevant solely to the military. There isn’t a lot of demand for bomb loaders in the civilian world, my friend.

The truth is that the schools have so abdicated their responsibilities to teach basic academic skills like research and writing that we are falling far behind as a nation. The proliferation of JROTC and the shanghaing of students into the programs against their will is a bad sign.

I do support JROTC, but only as a conscious choice. Not as a place to warehouse students until they are graduated and left with few alternatives but enlistment.

Posted by tomo-chan on June 7, 8:39 p.m.

Me and my friends are part of the JROTC program at MMHS. After reading this article on the Reader we quickly rushed to the computer to create an account so we could post a comment. We were all really upset that this article was giving the entire JROTC program a bad face just because there have been some problems in some schools. JROTC is a great class that teaches kids leadership and trust. We learn how to work in groups. There is no ‘I’ in JROTC. We all either swim or we sink together.

I’m not going to lie. The only reason I joined JROTC was because I didn’t want to do PE. After a while, though, you begin to like the program. JROTC pretty much forces you to interact and eventually become friends with people you normally wouldn’t even talk to. You learn to work for what you want because nothing is just handed to you in JROTC.

This might sound corny, but after a while JROTC stops being a class, and the people in it just classmates. They become your family. That is why we were all really upset by that article. Not all JROTC programs are like the ones described on this article. We just hope people realize that.
**Dying Ocean, Dying Bay**

*Beach Cleanup in Oceanside*

In the mid to late 1990s, we saw a lot of contamination — from places like the shipyards in particular — flowing freely off those sites, like Southwest Marine and NASSCO [National Steel and Shipyard Company].” says Bruce Reznik, executive director of San Diego Coastkeeper. “When they were working on those ships — painting them, cleaning them — they really didn’t have any pollution control, any policies or procedures. You could see paint and toxins flowing into the bay.”

Reznik partnered with the Natural Resources Defense Council in the late ’90s and sued Southwest Marine, “the Navy’s largest ship-repair and maintenance facility on the West Coast.” In June 2002, when the United States Supreme Court refused to hear the shipyard’s appeal, the company was fined $799,000 and instructed to reduce the amount of pollution it was discharging into San Diego Bay.

“They were required to build a stormwater capture-and-treatment device and send a lot of their waste over to Point Loma,” says Reznik. During litigation a judge ordered divers to investigate the area (now owned by defense company BAE Systems). “Essentially, the leaseholds were devoid of life — everything around where those shipyards were was dead in the bay. Contamination had been going on literally for decades.”

As part of their crusade to promote a healthy ocean, San Diego Coastkeeper hosts bimonthly beach cleanups. The next takes place at Buccaneer Beach in Oceanside on Saturday, June 14. “At our average cleanup, we have well over 100 volunteers,” says Reznik. According to Coastkeeper’s annual report, last year more than 2800 volunteers removed three and a half tons of trash from local beaches as part of the monthly cleanups. Debris included cigarette butts, plastic food containers, Styrofoam, syringes, and fireworks.

“Most people see [cleanups] as a way to beautify their beaches, but what a lot of folks don’t realize is that when you do that, you’re actually protecting the ocean. One of the biggest contamination issues is plastics, which get into the ocean and become marine debris and don’t break down.”

Much of the rubbish from the Californian coast ends up in the North Pacific gyre. “A gyre is a current system,” Reznik explains. “According to studies right now, in the top layer of the ocean, plastic outweighs natural plankton, which is the base of the food chain, by at least a six-to-one ratio in the gyre. It is estimated that that area called the ‘Great Pacific Garbage Patch’ is as large as one to two times the size of the entire continental United States.” Some oceanographers estimate there is in excess of 100 million tons of trash collected in the gyre, located between California and Japan.

Perhaps the most insidious type of plastic debris is the nurdle, plastic pellets that come from the production of plastic. “Nurdles are small, and [animals] think they are food,” says Reznik. All kinds of plastic, he continues, “get ingested by birds, fish, and marine mammals that actually die from ingestion. They literally just fill up on plastic and aren’t getting any nutrition.”

Reznik explains that a bill regarding the “nurdle hurdle” is pending. “The legislation is about how to control nurdles at the source to make sure they’re not falling off [ships] when companies transport them.” Reznik, also an attorney, sued Caltrans in 1997 (and reached a settlement in 1999) to reduce urban-runoff pollution. “There are a lot of things you can do to reduce urban runoff,” says Reznik. “You can put in grates that act as sieves in a normal storm drain. Even something as simple as cleaning out the storm drains…a lot of muck accumulates naturally, and Caltrans never cleaned them before our lawsuit.” As a result of the settlement, Caltrans must annually clean 15,000 storm drains and spend $3.5 million toward designing and implementing pollution-control devices. Reznik likens a polluted environment to a sick patient. “First, you do triage: you stop the bleeding and the immediate threat. Once that’s done, you nurse them back to health, and when the patient is stabilized you can have an impact on their behavior so they don’t end up back in the hospital. You stop the smoking, drinking — the root cause of why they ended up in the hospital to begin with.”

One example of this is the city’s history of chronic sewer spills. “For over a five-year period, from 1995 to 2000, we were averaging a sewage spill a day,” says Reznik. “We sued the City and reached a settlement. It turned out that the City just wasn’t investing in the sewer infrastructure. We have a 3000-mile sewer system, and 1000 miles was beyond its life expectancy.”

Since the suit in 2000, the City has invested $250 million of the agreed-upon $1 billion to upgrade the sewer infrastructure. As a result, says Reznik, “Sewer spills have gone down over 80 percent.”

— Barbara

**Beach Cleanup with San Diego Coastkeeper**

**Saturday, June 14**

**9 a.m. to 11 a.m.**

**Buccaneer Beach (meet in parking lot near lifeguard tower off Pacific Street)**

**Oceanside**

**Info:** 619-758-7743 or sdcoastkeeper.com

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*Price varies by restaurant. Tax, gratuity and beverages are not included.*

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HOW TO SEND US YOUR LISTINGS: Contributions must be received by 5 p.m. Friday the week prior to publication for consideration. Do not phone. Send a complete description of the event, including the date, time, cost, the precise address where it is to be held (including neighborhood), a phone number, and a phone number (including area code) for public information to READER EVENTS, Box 85803, San Diego CA 92186-8580. Or fax to 619-482-2491. You may also submit information online at SDReader.com by clicking on the events section.

**DANCE**

Belly Dance Showcase Rajini and Sadaf Restaurant host performances every Friday. No cover, 619-338-3008. Fridays, 8 p.m.; through Friday, June 27, 2008, Sadaf—Downtown, 828 Fifth Avenue. (downstairs)

Contradance Flight Path makes music, JoAnn Koppany calls. Beginners’ dance workshop: 7:30 p.m. Wear soft-soled shoes. 619-282-8550. Saturday, June 14, 7:30 p.m.; $7. Trinity United Methodist Church, 3030 Thorn Street. (near) English Country Dancing Ellen calls for English country dancing. Beginners’ instruction at 6 p.m. 858-676-9731. Sunday, June 15, 6 p.m.; $6. Jean Hart Academy of Dancing, 12227 Poway Road. (near)

Get Hustling! Hustle workshop for intermediate/advanced dancers led by Debra Hampton for San Diego Hustle Club, 7-9 p.m. ($15). Hustle Club dance party follows 8 p.m.—midnight ($7), with beginner lesson 8-8:30 p.m. (included in admission). 760-803-9992. Saturday, June 14, 7 p.m.; $5-$15. Dance North County, 555 Encinitas Boulevard, Suite 100 (encinitas).

Mambo/Salsa New York Style! Minnie Ruiz leads dance classes with added arms, hips, and footwork styling moves in open position. $100 for ten classes. 619-291-8583. Wednesday, June 18, 7 p.m.-midnight ($25), with mention of this ad. We’ll beat any competitor’s price.

San Diego Dancesport Championships 2008 Top ballroom and Latin dancers from all over USA will be competing. Guest appearances by professional Sheryl Burke and celebrity partner Cis- tian de la Fuente (from Dancing with the Stars). Pro-am competiti-
tions take place Friday and Saturday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.; all ages, levels, styles of ballroom and Latin danc-
ing represented.

Professional and amateur championship competitions in all styles planned Friday and Saturday: (7 p.m.-midnight). Show inc-
cludes dancers Pasha Kovalev of So You Think You Can Dance, and dancers from junior division of Dancing with the Stars. 858-268-3907. Friday, June 13, 10 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Saturday, June 14, 10 a.m. and 7 p.m.; $20-$50. Westin Gaslamp Quarter, 910 Broadway Circle. (downstairs)

T-Lou and the Hot Zydeco Band Enjoy live music during dance hosted by Bon Temp Social Club and Gates by the Bay Festival. Dance in-
struction at 6:20 p.m., live music from 7-10:30 p.m. 858-496-6655. Saturday, June 14, 6:20 p.m.; $14. War Memorial Building, 3235 Zoo Drive. (beachfront)

**FILM**

**Around the Bend** What a cast! Michael Caine, Christopher Walken, Josh Lucas star in this 2005 film, screening for Film Foun-
tum. 619-236-5821. Monday, June 16, 6:30 p.m.; San Diego Public Li-
brary, 820 E Street. (downstairs)

**Election Day** Documentaries com-
bines 11 stories — shot simultane-
ously on November 2, 2004, from dawn until long past midnight —
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felons, harried moms, Native American activists, poll watchers 
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**LAKE WOHLFORD**

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coast live oak. Leafy curtains of poison oak drape the oak limbs, lend-

ding a Tolkienesque flair to the scene. Depending on the amount 
of recent rainfall and the flow of imported water, the lake either brims or wears a “bathtub ring” of bare ground in between the water surface and the scrubby hillside.

To get to Lake Wohlford from Escondido, travel east on Valley Park-
way. At Washington Avenue, Valley Parkway becomes Valley Center Road. Continue another 0.8 mile to Lake Wohlford Road and turn right, Drive 1.9 miles uphill to Oakvale Drive, again on the right. Drive 0.7 mile on Oakvale to a gated dirt road on the left, which leads to a park-
ing area for public access to the south shore of Lake Wohlford.

Hikers (or rather casual walkers) can explore a short section of the lake’s south shoreline. A narrow trail, primarily used for fishing, access, winds for about 0.5 mile amid dense growths of chaparral and coast live oak. Leafy curtains of poison oak drape the oak limbs, lend-

ing a Tolkienesque flair to the scene. It’s quiet here on weekdays, and 
a bit noisy on weekends with boat traffic on the lake and car traffic along 
the far shore. You can sit on benches or lie on a large rock slab by the 
shore, while the white watching the rippling lake surface or the activities 
of birds (I witnessed several hawks exploding into flight over the crown 
of an oak tree).

From the parking area itself, one segment of the shoreline path called the Oakvale Trail goes 0.2 mile west, while the other segment, the Eelgret Trail, winds north for about 0.3 mile.

This article contains information about a park-like owned recreation or wilderness area. Trails and path-
ways are not necessarily marked. Conditions can change rapidly. Hikers should be prop-

erly equipped and have safety and navigational skills. The Reader and Jerry Schad assume no responsibility for any adverse experience.

**LAKE WOHLFORD**

Engage in a bit of bird watching at Lake Wohlford, outside Escondido.

**LAKE WOHLFORD**

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Hiking Length: 1 mile

Difficultly: Easy

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Reader

San Diego

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San Diego Junior Theatre presents Stone Soup Feeds the World

San Diego Museum of Art, 2001 Pan American Way West. (BALBOA PARK)

Stone Soup Feeds the World

San Diego Junior Theatre presents famous story of making something out of nothing. Author Dane Stauffer’s has created this musical adaptation of the classic tale. All ages. 619-239-8355. Fridays, 7 p.m.; Saturdays, 2 p.m. and 4 p.m.; Sundays, 2 p.m. and 4 p.m; through Sunday, June 15, 2008. $5-$10. Ages 8 and up. The Theatre onThird, 250 Third Avenue. (DOWNTOWN)

All Aboard! Chula Vista Live Steam Club provides train rides. Donation: 50 cents. Children under 48” must be accompanied by an adult. 619-421-3277. Saturday, June 14, 12:30 p.m.; Sunday, June 15, 1:30 p.m.; Rohr Park, 4548 Sweetwater Road. (BAY POINT)

Animal Tales Story Time

Enjoy animal stories, crafts, and of course, animals. 619-243-3432. Saturday, June 14, 11 a.m.; Sunday, June 15, 1 p.m.; $3. Ages 4 and up. San Diego Humane Society and SPCA, 5500 Gaines Street. (LA JOLLA)

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Great Escapes

619-235-8200 TO PLACE AN AD

San Diego Reader June 12, 2008

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Calif.

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844-3770. Saturday, June 14, 10 a.m.; $20. Museum of Photographic Arts, 1649 El Prado. (BALBOA PARK)

June 12, 2008

Laughlin Area

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San Diego Reader June 12, 2008

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844-3770. Saturday, June 14, 10 a.m.; $20. Museum of Photographic Arts, 1649 El Prado. (BALBOA PARK)

June 12, 2008

Laughlin Area

Lodge On The River

Stay 1 Night, 2nd Night Free!


Big Bear Cool Cabins

Cabin or luxury home on or near the lake. Fireplace, BBQ, TV, kitchen, hot tub and more. Professional housekeeping, towels, and linens are included. Pet friendly available. Check rates and book online www.bigbearcoolcabins.com or 800-550-8779.
Save $30
enjoying the biggest thrill of your lifetime!

Weekday Skydive Special
Monday-Friday, excluding holidays
Must present coupon. Expires 6/30/08. Other conditions may apply. Must be 18 years of age and weigh less than 230 pounds.

San Diego Reader
June 12, 2008
73

Pamper yourself with luxury…
Spoil yourself with value!
8-day affordable luxury cruise on the 5 Star MV Heidelberg
Flagship of the award-winning Peter Deilmann fleet
Strasbourg • Karlsruhe • Heidelberg • Worms • Rüdesheim Lorelei Rock
Koblenz • Cochem • Trier • October 4 to 11, 2008
From just $2,249 USD
Including all meals, shore excursions, port and fuel charges.

San Diego AAA Travel Agency
2440 Hotel Circle North, San Diego, CA 92108
(619) 681-1570
Price is per person, double occupancy, and cruise only.
Ask about our attractively priced international air and transfers.
Automobile Club of Southern California acts only as an agent for General Tours. CTR#1016202-80

Come and audition to be part of

Halloween Spooktacular
at SeaWorld

Auditions will be held on:
Saturday, June 21, 2008
11 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Marina Village Conference Center
Terrace Room
1936 Quivira Way
San Diego, CA 92109

We are seeking energetic improvisational character actors and actresses along with interactive stage hosts for SeaWorld’s family-friendly Halloween Spooktacular production.
Please bring a résumé, non-returnable headshot photo, and come dressed to move.
All applicants must be at least 18 years of age.

For detailed information regarding audition requirements, visit SeaWorldSanDiegoAuditions.com
Or call our Audition Hotline: (619) 226-3607
SeaWorld San Diego is an Equal Opportunity Employer supporting a drug-free workplace. ©2008 Busch Entertainment Corp. All rights reserved.

The Acorn
Golden Acorn Casino
Travel Center
6165 W. Mission | Golden Acorn Casino • 1 Golden Acorn Freeway 1-8, Crestwood Exit

Delights of the Rhine & Moselle

Pamper yourself with luxury…
Spoil yourself with value!
8-day affordable luxury cruise on the 5 Star MV Heidelberg
Flagship of the award-winning Peter Deilmann fleet
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museum. Winner takes home $300. Signups start at 6:30 p.m. 619-957-3264. Wednesday, June 16, 6:30 p.m.; San Diego Art Institute at Balboa Park.

Pachyforms 2: Bontai Succulents Philippe de Vosjoly and Rudy Lune plan presentation on their new book, which “focuses on cultivation of caudiciform and pachycaul plants, species with unusually thick or globose bodies that naturally develop into sculptural forms.” View exhibit of mature bontai succulents; pre-bonsai plants for sale. Included in regular admission. 760-436-3036. Saturday, June 16, 12 p.m.; Quail Botanical Gardens, 230 Quail Gardens Drive. (ENDEM).


Brilliant and Provocative Snow Falling on Cedars author David Guterson discusses and signs his new novel. The Other, described as a novel about youth and idealism. 858-454-0347. Thursday, June 12, 7:30 p.m.; Warwick’s Bookstore, 7812 Girard Avenue. (LA AXA).

Bringin’ Baby Jana Kohl holds her three-legged baby dog to discuss her book A Bare Foot of Love, a story of saving animals everywhere. “Signing follows.” 858-854-0347. Monday, June 16, 7:30 p.m.; Warwick’s Bookstore, 7812 Girard Avenue. (LA AXA).

Ocean Beach Comedy Enjoys “an underground comedy show” with Aristotle Athiras, Kyle Smith, 619-222-6842. Friday, June 13, 7 p.m.; Winstons, 1921 Bacon Street. (AXA).

San Diego Crime Author Don Winslow signs, discusses The Dawn Patrol. He’s also writer of The Winter of Frankie Machine, 858-287-4744. Thursday, June 2, 12 noon p.m.; Mysterious Galaxy Books, 2373 University Avenue. (ENDEM).

The Vilna Resistance Laurel Corona discusses the book she co-wrote with Michael Bart, Until Our Last Breath, telling the story of the Vilna resistance movement through the eyes of a surviving young couple. 619-236-3000. Wednesday, June 19, 6:30 p.m.; San Diego Public Library, 820 E. Street. (AXA).

San Diego Reader June 12, 2008

Experience life and death in the ancient Roman world
Two thousand years ago, Mt. Vesuvius erupted in cataclysmic fury, burying the Roman city of Pompeii. Preserved in ash, frozen in time...Pompeii lives again.

See more than 250 priceless artifacts from the legendary lost city along with body casts of victims formed at the very moment of death. Experience life and death in the ancient Roman world. Spend a day in Pompeii!

The only showing on the West Coast!

ENDS JUNE 15

Tickets are on sale now online www.sdnhm.org; at the Museum or by phone: 877.946.7797.

SAN DIEGO NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM
A collaboration of the San Diego Natural History Museum and the American Museum of Natural History, the San Diego Natural History Museum is the first such museum of natural history west of the Mississippi. It uses the latest technology and collections of more than one million artifacts to present exhibits and educational programs that help people understand the natural world and the value of life.

$100 Off English Class*

English as a Second Language Program
ESL/TOEFL $300 a month
*W/ this ad. New students only. Not valid w/ any other offer. Exp. 6/30/08.
Free ESL class every Wednesday 2-3 pm. Anyone welcome!

Bachelor’s, Master’s, or Ph.D. degree in Psychology!
(Certificates also available)

Bachelor’s and Master’s Degrees in Business Administration for $390-$400 a month
Classes also available online!

San Diego University for Integrative Studies

800.234.7041 or 619.297.1999
Now in Old Town • 3900 Harney St. #210 • Come in today or call. www.sduis.edu

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Real is an attitude. And an address. Real lives where it all began, in the heart of downtown Vegas. Where the senses are dazzled by classic casinos, bars, restaurants and spectacular VivaVision light & sound shows nightly. Real knows that classic never made a comeback, it was here all along. Real people. Real Vegas. The real deal.

A DAY IN POMPEII

Experience life and death in the ancient Roman world
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**OUTDOORS**

* **June Gloom,** the cool and intermittently overcast conditions are here. They’ll make it nearly impossible to dominate the beach and coastal areas through the remainder of this month. Macks will be moving up from the inlets. If it wasn’t for the ocean’s enormous resistance to change in temperatures, the weather along the coast would occur soon after the summer solstice — June 20. Our warmest beach weather will probably not arrive until August or September, just about the time the ocean water temperatures are peaking.

**Pacific Coast Skydiving**

**$125* Tandem**

- Scenic flights over the ocean and downtown San Diego
- Jump from altitudes over 2 miles above the ground
- Ask about RVT video technology

Call or go online for reservations.

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www.pcskydiving.com

Open 7 days a week • MC/Visa

Gift certificates available.

*Must purchase 70$ video ($190 total cost). Weekdays only.
Add $20 for weekend jumps.

- **Elderberry**, two species of which range over most of San Diego County, is in full bloom this month.
- The flat-topped, creamy white blossoms of this large shrub or small tree can be seen in the natural coastal canyon areas such as Tecolote Canyon and Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, as well as in the more moist areas of the foothills and mountains. The elderberry’s tiny fruits, which ripen in late summer, have traditionally been used for various drinks and preserves.

**The Chirping of Crickets**

Tell us the warmer weather of summer is well on its way. Their plaintive pleadings for mates are heard wherever bits of semi-natural scenery cut across the urban tapestries of San Diego. Try the Spruce Street suspension footbridge, just west of Balboa Park between Front and Brant streets. From the swaying deck of the 70-foot-high bridge you can admire a canyon filled with green and gold grasses, nasturtiums, and eucalyptus, pepper, and palm trees. Sound effects begin by mid-afternoon.

**Eldest and Last Sunrise This Year**

The longest day of the year — because of its tinted color. Especially when seen from the high northern latitudes, the June full moon always stays quite close to the horizon, where its light is filtered and reddened by the atmosphere. From San Diego, June’s full moon reaches a maximum altitude of about 35° above the horizon — about as high as the sun gets at noon in December.

**“The Man in the Moon”**

Professor Phillip Blanco plans lunar lecture for astronomy party. 619-884-5327. Saturday, June 14, 6 p.m.; San Pasqual Battlefield State Historic Park, 16666 San Pasqual Valley Road, 520-2500

**Asian Pacific Historic District Tours**

Led on second Saturday of each month, starting at Chinese Historical Museum. Required reservations: 619-338-9888. Satur- day, June 14, 11 a.m.; Chinese Historical Society and Museum, 401 Third Avenue. (meeting room)

**Birding the Marsh**


**Buccaneer Beach Cleanup**

Bag cleanup hosted by Coastkeeper. Meet in parking lot near lifeguard tower 11. Wearing closed-toed shoes. 619-758-7743. Saturday, June 14, 9 a.m.; Buccaneer Beach, Pacific Street, (chula vista)

**Fashional River Cleanup!**

As part of San Diego River Park Foundation’s San Diego River cleanup month, volunteers are needed to help in ongoing efforts to rid river of trash and debris. Volunteers meet at southeast end of Fashion Valley Mall dirt parking lot. No experience necessary. Tools, gloves, trash bags provided, along with wa- ter, snacks. Directions: 619-297-7380. Saturday, June 14, 9 a.m.; Fashion Valley Mall, 7087 Friars Road. (mission valley)

**Fried Eggs and Cream**

See matilija poppies and creamy elder- berry blooms during guided walk in Mission Trails Regional Park. 619-668-3281. Saturday, June 14, 8:30 a.m.; Kumeyaay Lake Camp- ground entry station, Two Father Junipero Serra Trail. (san carlos)

**June Bloom, Not June Gloom!**

Trail guided nature walks amid nature’s San Diego River cleanup hosted by Coastkeeper. Meet at southeast end of Fashion Valley Mall dirt parking lot. No experience necessary. Tools, gloves, trash bags provided, along with wa- ter, snacks. Directions: 619-297-7380. Saturday, June 14, 9 a.m.; Fashion Valley Mall, 7087 Friars Road. (mission valley)

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SOUTH OF THE BORDER

“Baja California y la Revolución Mexicana” Lecture by Marco Antonio Samaniego. 011-52-664-647-836. Wednesday, June 18, 7 p.m.; Centro Cultural Tijuana, Paseo de los Héroes and Mina Street. (MDM)

“I Love You but I’m Happy Without You” Lecture by Peace and Justice World Prize winner Iaini Jaramillo. 011-52-664-629-5848. Thursday, June 12, 7 p.m.; Tijuana Juana County Club, Boulevard Caliente. (MDM)

“Rumorosa’s Round Rocks and Rock Art” María and Esther Mitran and Don Albright lead an adventure to Baja California’s La Rumorosa, famous for granitic boulders and walls and beautiful Kumeyaay rock art. Learn about the area geology, history of rock art. Tour and taste at Tecate Brewery. Price includes transportation and meal. Passport required. Reservations: 619-235-0203. Saturday, June 14, 8 a.m.; 8:52-892. San Diego Natural History Museum, 1798 El Prado, Balboa Park. (MDM)

“Danza Del Oceano” Hosted by Delina Ramirez. 011-52-664-687-9366. Tuesday, June 18, 7 p.m.; Centro Cultural Tijuana, Paseo de los Héroes and Mina Street. (MDM)

“Porras de Agua” New book of poems from state of Tamaulipas by Sara Uribe, Ivain Trejo, and Marco Antonio Huerta. 011-52-664-687-9366. Tuesday, June 12, 7 p.m.; Centro Cultural Tijuana, Paseo de los Héroes and Mina Street. (MDM)

San Diego Field Ornithologists Expert birders lead bird walk on easy trail winding along Tecolote Creek. Bring binoculars, drinking water. 835-565-9944. Saturday, June 14, 9 a.m.; Tecolote Nature Center, 5180 Tecolote Road. (LAMM)

Work Party in Silverwood Sanctuary Help remove noninvasive plants during work event. 619-682-7200. Saturday, June 14, 8:30 a.m.; Silverwood Sanctuary, 13003 Wildcat Canyon Road. (MDM)

“La Ruina y el arte de los Kumeyaay” The Quail at Lake San Marcos, 1800 El Prado. Thursday, June 12, 7 p.m.; 5180 Tecolote Road. (LAMM)

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FIRE AND BRIMSTONE PENDING? What does the California Supreme Court’s Equality of Marriage ruling mean to you? Join discussion hosted by Humanist Association of San Diego. 760-445-8112. Sunday, June 15, 1 p.m.; Joyce Beers Community Center, 1230 Cleveland Avenue. (Hillcrest)

LAVENDER WREATH WORKSHOP Learn to make decorative, aromatic wreaths. Registration: 760-944-2638. Friday, June 13, 8 p.m.; Del Mar Horsepark, 14550 El Camino Real. (Del Mar)

LAVENDER MISSION INDIAN TERTIARY Powwow Local tribal history and spiritual traditions of the Luiseño people shared. Group dancing starts at 10 a.m. both days; grand entry at noon and 7 p.m. on Sunday, noon on Sunday. Intertribal and competition dancing with grand entries on both days. Many different tribes, cultures represented in dance, art, music, vendor village, food, 7:30 a.m.-7:45 p.m. Saturday, June 14, 9 a.m.; Sunday, June 15, 10 a.m.; Mission San Luis Rey, 4070 Mission Avenue. (Oceanside)

LUUX FAMILY Day Daniel Wheeler presents his new photographic body of work, GULP (Generative Urban Landscape Project) and the work-in-progress Blindfold, June 6-12; Wheeler dives into swimming pools and shoots the view overhead. During family day, Saturday, June 14, 1 p.m., see Wheeler’s underwater photography, take in children’s art activities, music, 760-466-6611, Luux Art Institute, 1350 South El Camino Real. On Wednesday, June 18, 6 p.m., see Wheeler’s work, enjoy music, cocktails, Merriment. View Wheeler’s completed work through August 2. (Clairemont)

MAJOR LEAGUE GAMING PRO CIRCUIT TOUR The professional video game league announces Pro Circuit Tour June 13-15. Numerous pro gamers, aspiring competitors, spectators enjoy “intense competition and entertainment.” 310-694-3319, Friday, June 13, 10:30 a.m.; Saturday, June 14, 1 p.m.; Sunday, June 15, 1 p.m., $35–$80. San Diego Maritime Museum, 1360 North Harbor Drive. (Point Loma)

SAM HINTON FOLK FESTIVAL Celebration includes performances of old-timey, Irish fiddle, string-band jamming, crawlers, tales by Storytellers of San Diego, workshops, open-mike stage, family con- tinued. Admission is free during day.

Dance every day through performance by Gunsmoke Run, Thursday, June 12, 7 p.m.; Templer’s Hall, 7 p.m. Tickets: $15, (619) 858-366-4040. Saturday, June 14, 6:30 p.m. at Town and Country Hotel and Convention Center, 500 Hotel Circle North. Tickets are $18. (Mission Valley)

ONE of a Kind! Spring pottery sale hosted by San Diego Pottery Guild. Sale promises “thousands of pieces of handmade ceramics” by area potters, pot-throwing demonstrations. June 13-23; Saturday, June 14, 10 a.m.; Sun- day, June 15, 10 a.m.; Spanish Village Art Center, 1770 Village Place. (Balboa Park)

SAIL Away for Father’s Day Celebrate aboard the 145-foot schooner Californian during three-hour sailing trips while watching the lines and handling the sails with the museum crew. Reservations: 234-9133 x101. Saturday, June 14, 10 a.m.; Sunday, June 15, 1 p.m. $23–$30. San Diego Maritime Museum, 1360 North Harbor Drive. (Point Loma)

Ticket to Tectace Pacific Southwest Railway Museum train exci- sion to Tecate, Mexico. Optional lunch and one-hour Tectacer- brew tour, or side tour to Tama- nia Vineyard after arriving in Tectace. 619-465-7717. Saturday, June 14, 10 a.m.; 82-842-565. Campo Depot, State Highway 94 & Forest Gate Road. (Plandale Borden)

TICKET to TECATE Pacific Southwest Railway Museum train exci- sion to Tectace, Mexico. Optional lunch and one-hour Tectacer- brew tour, or side tour to Tama- nia Vineyard after arriving in Tectace. 619-465-7717. Saturday, June 14, 10 a.m.; 82-842-565. Campo Depot, State Highway 94 & Forest Gate Road. (Plandale Borden)

SPORTS

CORONADO CRUISE Join Knicker- bokers for 25-mile jaunt from Har- drome Drive and Hawthorne Street to Coronado. 619-464-3457. Saturday, June 14, 9 a.m. Ages 6 and up. San Diego Polo Club, 14555 El Camino Real. (Carmel Valley Santa Fe)

NO BRAKES, NO Gears! Tuesday night bicycle racing season continues with racing in many categories. Free for spectators. 619-573-4953. Tuesdays, 6:30 p.m. through September 30, 2008. San Diego Velodrome, 2221 Molloy Field Drive. (Balboa Park)


RIDE with Pride Horse show Host center horse show where children will be showcasing “their horseback-riding accomplish- ments,” silent auction, horse show prizes, food. 619-596-2025. Saturday; June 14, 10 a.m.; Therapeutic Equestrian Activities Center for the Handicapped, 1252 Morenos Avenue. (Ashford)

MUSEUMS

GAULAMP MUSEUM OF HISTORIC SAN DIEGO Glances at San Diego’s colorful past at the museum, where displays highlight Wyatt Earp’s San Diego days, the Peg Leg Legend, end, the first maps and pho- tographs of Old Town and “New Town”, early military conflicts and the naval disaster in 1923 at Point Honda, and more. 413 Market Street, 619-375-4282. (Old Town)

JUNIPERO SERRA MUSEUM “Celebrating 75 Years of the Serra Museum” is said to “re- member the events leading up to the dedication of Presidio Park and the Serra Museum” on July 16, 1929. The exhibit includes a “visit back in time to 1929.” The museum interprets the Native American, Spanish, and Mexican periods of San Diego's history and contains Spanish Colonial furnishings, art, and arti- facts. It’s located at the site of the West Coast’s first European settle- ment. 2272 Presidio Drive, 619- 297-3238. (Old Town)

LA MESA DEPOT MUSEUM Located in a restored 1894 wooden train station, exhibits include orig- inal telegraph and telephone equipment, pot-bellied coal stove, period furniture. The adjacent freight train display features 1923 steam locomotive, 1957 refriger- ator car, 1941 caboose. La Mesa Boulevard and Spring Street, 619- 465-7776. (La Mesa)

MAGEE HOUSE MUSEUM Magee House Museum, built in 1887 and surrounded by rose gardens, the site includes “one of the last barns still standing in Carlsbad.” Decorate and self-guided tours of historic house and gardens. 258 Beech Street, 760-434-9189. (Carlsbad)

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Are you single and over 35?

Imagine finding the love of your life this weekend!

Imagine yourself at our singles party this weekend, where you arrive to mingle and talk with quality singles. You are amazed at how fun and easy it is. Finally, you have discovered the best way to meet singles actually over 35! Every week The Social Place hosts a singles party that gives you a chance to meet more singles in one night than you would mingle on your own in an entire year!

This week our Singles Party will be on:

Sunday, June 14, 2008 5:00 PM at Eddie Kleen

1510 Paseo Del Norte

Carlsbad, CA 92006

Come to the party this week and don’t want to miss it!


Next singles parties:

Saturday, June 21, 2008 5:00 PM at Eddie Kleen

1510 Paseo Del Norte

Carlsbad, CA 92006

Men are as good as women, BE THERETO THEM!

This workshop is amazing,

Dating workshops Saturdays At Café Bleu in Hillcrest 10:00 am - 11:30 am

Private consultations available

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HOW TO SEND US YOUR LISTINGS: Contributions must be received by 5 p.m. Friday the week prior to publication for consideration. Do not phone. Send a complete description of the event, including the date, time, cost, the precise address where it is to be held (including neighborhood), a contact phone number, and a phone number (including area code) for public information on READERS CLASSICAL MUSIC, Box 85803, San Diego CA 92186-8583. Or fax to 619-881-2401. You may also submit information online at SDReader.com by clicking on the events section.

CLASSICAL

Mainly Mozart Festival 2008 Series gets underway with concert by Mainly Mozart Festival Orchestra, conductor David Atherton, and pianist John Lill. Program boasts Beethoven's "Piano Concerto No. 1 in C," "Piano Concerto No. 2 in B Flat," "Piano Concerto No. 3 in C Minor," "Piano Concerto No. 4 in G," and "Piano Concerto No. 5 in E Flat (Emperor)."

Colcliss Ronald Thomas joins orchestra and Atherton on Thursday, June 12, for pieces by Mozart, Strauss, Mozart, and Tchaikovsky.

Next, pianist John Lill performs works composed by Haydn, Schumann, Mozart, and Liszt on Friday, June 13.

Michael Collins (clarinet) joins festival orchestra to play selections by Strauss, Schubert, Weber, and Mozart, Saturday, June 14.

Martin Chalifour (violin) and Joanne Pearce Martin take stage on Sunday, June 15, to present music by Mozart, Schubert, Strauss, Ravel, and Kreisler.

Enjoy selections by Saint-Saëns, Strauss, Ravel, and Mozart when orchestra is joined by pianists Jeremy Denk, Adam Neiman, Anton Nel, clarinetist Michael Collins, and bassoon player Steven Ebner, Tuesday, June 17.

Nathan Hughes (oboe) joins Mainly Mozart Festival Orchestra to play selections by Debussy, Brahms, Strauss, and Mozart on Thursday, June 19.

Pianists Jeremy Denk and Adam Neiman take on Mozart, Strauss, Latulipawa, Berg, Rachmaninov on Friday, June 20.

Festival concludes with selections by Mozart and Strauss performed by Mainly Mozart Festival Orchestra and conductor David Atherton on Saturday, June 21. Reservations: 619-239-0100 x 32.

Balboa Theatre (854 Fourth Avenue); 8 p.m., Thursday, June 12.

Trio Del Mar Ruslan Biryukov (cello), Mary Au (piano), and Alan Busted (violin) perform Mendelssohn's "Piano Trio No. 1" and the "Piano Trio No. 2." by Shostakovich. 619-298-4580. First Unitarian Universalist Church of San Diego (1490 Front Street), 7:30 p.m., Saturday, June 14. (FRI/CONCERT)

Tux 'n Tennes Gala San Diego Symphony's Summer Pops series gets underway when conductor Matthew Garbutt and symphony are joined by Diane Warrock and Kool and the Gang. Evening concludes with fireworks. 619-233-9050 • spanishvillageart.com

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“50 Years of Rock and Roll” Exhibition of “world’s most famous rock ‘n’ roll legends by the world’s most famous photographers” opens with reception. Photographs are by James Fortune, Peter Simon, and from the Hulton Archive. During reception, enjoy music by Robbie Simmons and "A Hard Day’s Night Tribute." RSVP: 888-294-9880. Chuck Jones Gallery (2501 San Diego Avenue); 5 p.m., Saturday, June 14. (OLD TOWN)

Steve Gibson: Prints and Drawings" Reception for artist Gibson, whose exhibition is on display concurrent with "Todd Carpenter: Black-and-White Photographs and Color Photographs." Closes Wednesday, July 9. 619-501-0879. 4 Walls Gallery (3813 Ray Street); 6 p.m., Saturday, June 14. (NORTH PARK)

"Noin The Art of Bryan Baines" This "tasty selection of dark and sexy artwork" opens with reception in conjunction with Ray at Night festivities. Closes Sunday, July 13. 619-297-9663. Planet Rock Gallery (3811 Ray Street); 6 p.m., Saturday, June 14. (NORTH PARK)

"It Doesn’t Take a Wizard" Harry Potter Illustrator James Salvi on hand for opening reception of exhibition of his illustrations, gicelles, original artwork. Through June. 760-505-0063. Gallery Savares (1034 North Coast Highway 101); 11 a.m., Saturday, June 14. (OLD TOWN)

ART MUSEUMS

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Dreadful News "A radio station doesn’t usually have the same DJ on for 20 years," said Makeda Dread in 2003, the 20th anniversary of her Reggae Makossa program on 91X.

On May 18, Dread’s run as producer/host of the show was interrupted for the first time in 25 years. She says she was given a three-week suspension because her staff showed up late.

Since mid-May, the all-local Loudspeaker show, which normally airs from 1 to 3 a.m. on Monday morning, has filled Reggae Makossa’s 8 to 10 p.m. Sunday slot.

Last week, Dread said she planned to resume the show on June 8, but she also indicated everything wasn’t right between her and 91X.

"I’m not just a villain from some late-’70s villain from some late-’70s action movie," she said. "I’m more of a thick-rimmed glasses, he that black Stetson hat and thumping rhythm defined his sound. He just didn’t seem to like crashing cymbals…not mine, anyway. I thought you get reverse racism," says Dread.

After sound check, we all sat together and ate tri-tip (Bo traveled with his own barbecue sauce). We drank beer and ate and listened to him tell stories and jokes. The one I still remember was “the magic dick.”

The gig was great: “Who Do You Love,” “Mona,” “Road Runner”…we played all the classics. And he had this little handheld drum machine, which he said he had picked up on tour in Japan. We did a drum solo together, and the crowd loved it. Then he came back and sat behind my kit and played.

After the gig, I asked him to sign my snare head. He did. Then he came over to the drum kit and pointed to my ride cymbal. “See that thing,” he said, “just don’t ever hit that fucking thing and you’ll do fine.” I removed it immediately. Bo loved the drums. Other than his trademark rectangular guitar, a thumping rhythm defined his sound. He just didn’t seem to like crashing cymbals…not mine, anyway. After sound check, we all sat together and ate tri-tip (Bo traveled with his own barbecue sauce). We drank beer and ate and listened to him tell stories and jokes. The one I still remember was “the magic dick.”

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After the gig, I asked him to sign my snare head. He did. Then he shook my hand and said that I had done a fine job — definitely one of the highlights of my musical life.

— Kevin McHatten
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Guitar Man  
I had the opportunity to catch Bo Diddley’s show at the Belly Up back in June of 2005. I have been collecting guitars since the early ’80s. I got the bug from watching the Who movie The Kids Are Alright. There is a scene where John Entwistle is walking in his mansion and you see all these cool guitars! As a kid watching this, it left an impression.

At some point I picked up a Gretsch “Bo Diddley” model guitar… yep, the rectangular one that he is famous for playing. So I figured, “Hell, I’ll bring it to the show and maybe I’ll get him to autograph it.” After the show, I brought my guitar in to get it signed. People were like, “Where did you get that thing?” Other people had brought along Epiphones, Les Pauls, an acoustic guitar, pick guards, and records.

As I waited, the other guitar player in Bo’s band saw me and inquired about guitars. He had brought along a rectangular one that he is famous for playing. “I noticed he had long, thick, calloused blues-playing fingers, which reminded me of the time I met Billy Gibbons of ZZ Top at the Casbah… the same fingers and bands. Anyway, Bo said, “Let me see that guitar,” and he signed it “from Bo Diddley.” That guitar will always remind me of the true meaning of rock ’n’ roll.

— Rex Navarro, Thex Corsairs

Metal Moratorium  
In February, the all-age music venue Channel Twelve 25 opened its doors in downtown El Cajon. Adam Paul helps book hip-hop, acoustic rock, blues, and folk acts. “The only thing we’re not booking is metal,” says Paul. “We just had a bad experience with a metal band. One person jumped onstage with the singer. The singer and the mosher were rubbing faces like they were making love. It wasn’t violent, but it was pretty bizarre. The singer threw up in our bathroom and missed the toilet completely. They were smoking dope in our green room and basically made it into a hot box.”

Channel Twelve 25, in a space that used to house a music store, offers callused fingers to bands. One person jumped onstage with the singer. The singer and the mosher were rubbing faces like they were making love. It wasn’t violent, but it was pretty bizarre. The singer threw up in our bathroom and missed the toilet completely. They were smoking dope in our green room and basically made it into a hot box.

Channel Twelve 25, in a space that used to house a music store, offers head- lines a pay-for-play arrangement; either the band rents the room for a flat $500 fee, or bands agree to cover the price for 60 tickets.

“We most we’ve had is 160 to see an alternative-rock band called Bending Planet,” says Paul. “We also had 150 for a goth night. On that night the promoter just rented the place out.”

Paul says all the bands that play get a DVD of their live set provided by an in-house production crew. (“We use two or three cameras.”)

How is Channel Twelve 25 doing in generally conservative El Cajon? The last couple of shows brought people into the area who were freaks — being freakish isn’t bad. People came down here and spent money.

He says adjacent businesses don’t have a problem with the venue. “The only reason I could see [any problems] is if we did something wrong… Hot Monkey Love [an all-age music venue near SDSU] went away because its neighbors complained. But there aren’t any residential places around us who are going to call and complain… Downtown El Cajon is going through a beautification process; the City of El Cajon wants this to be the next Gaslamp.”

Tragic Tantrum Cabaret and Music appear tomorrow, Lumina and XCD appear Saturday. (channeltwelve25.com)

— Ken Leighton

Freakin’ Neighbors…  
Although music on local television has not had much staying power, KSND-TV resumed its weekly “Concerts on the Square” last month. Taped outdoors at Horton Square (225 Broadway, next to the station’s studios), the music series is part of KSND’s Streetside San Diego program and airs every Friday at 11 a.m. between May and October. Thirty artists take part each season. Playing under a canopy, performers do one song on air and then a full lunchtime set, which is broadcast live on the station’s website. The concert is free to the public.

“Concerts on the Square” has been a part of KSND’s programming since 2002 but was integrated into Streetside San Diego in 2005. The concert portion of the show is cosponsored by KPRI-FM. This season, KSND brings aboard Astra Kelly, the host of KPRI’s Saturday-night Homegrown Hour music show. Kelly will handle band segments, including interviews.

“She fits into our demographic,” says producer Shanna Schwarz, “which includes a bit of everything from college students to housewives.” According to Schwarz, the artists included in the series are chosen by KPRI and generally fit into the station’s Triple A (adult album alternative) format. Although the musicians taking part are primarily local, national acts are worked into the schedule. Schwarz, who is a former DJ at SDSU’s student-run radio station KCR, notes that “We have a lot of neighbors, so we have noise issues… that’s why there isn’t any heavy metal.”

— Bart Mendoza
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“At the age of 21, after a dismal settlement with Wal-Mart, I walked into Guitar Center.”

I know it sounds lame, but I actually did come down here [to San Diego] seven years ago to follow my dreams of grandeur,” says Ambient Bob, bass player for the Vulgar Herd.

What was the dream? “To be a rock star,” he confesses. “Met a lot of great people, did a lot of great things, and it all fell through. I didn’t play the kind of music I liked then, in hopes of getting rich quick. Ended up taking a lucrative yet brief stint in the mort-gage business. We all know about that one. The way I see it now is… I may as well like what I do.”

“Loud and unapologetic” is how the Vulgar Herd describe themselves, “a cross between groove, 7/8, metal, funk…” A blogger at Herd describe themselves, “a cross between the Ken Club, called the band an “odd mixture of Pretzel Logic-era Steely Dan and Europe, of all bands.”

The Vulgar Herd is a five-piece. Trash Arch (guitar) and Ambient Bob provided answers — Theo (keys), Chris (guitar), and Vaughn (percussion) remained quiet.

YOUR AXE?

Trash Arch: “My electric is an Epiphone 335 DOT semi-hollow body that is relatively new, I bought it a few years ago. Because it’s semi-hollow, it really picks up a lot of sustain, and I swear it’s getting a warmer and warmer tone I bought it a few years ago. Because it’s semi-hollow, it really picks up a lot of sustain, and I swear it’s getting a warmer and warmer tone I bought it a few years ago. Because it’s semi-hollow, it really picks up a lot of sustain, and I swear it’s getting a warmer and warmer tone I bought it a few years ago. Because it’s semi-hollow, it really picks up a lot of sustain, and I swear it’s getting a warmer and warmer tone I bought it a few years ago. Because it’s semi-hollow, it really picks up a lot of sustain, and I swear it’s getting a warmer and warmer tone.” — Mark Twain.

WHAT SUCKS WHEN PLAYING LIVE?

Ambient Bob: “Anticipating the other bands that are on the bill and the soundman’s perception of what we are supposed to sound like. Not to say that either is the problem, but sometimes we have been stuck with bands in different genres than what our style is. Also when the soundman thinks that our mix should be one way, finds out that our emphasis less somewhere else, and does a lot of live mixing. A great soundman is crucial, as is getting on, or making, a bill that fits within the same genre. We have played at Humphrey’s a couple of times, had a great time, but I don’t know — if I were on vacation, in my elder years, would I want to hear a bunch of progressive-type music?”

BEST/WORST GIG?

Ambient Bob: “Best: Riverside, playing at a costume party where we represented the future. Every band had a specific timeline that they represented. There was a band called Hobe Jazz that definitely lived up to the old rail-rabo mentality… whether we really are the future is yet to be told. Worst show would have to be at Scolari’s Office. We set up really early and had some time to kill. Arch lives in Encinitas, so I figured I would be hospitable and have him over for a ‘drink before the show. Two bottles of cheap wine and a couple shots of Jim Beam, we stroll back to Scolari’s — we don’t remember the rest of the show.”

SEXIEST LOCAL PERFORMER?

Trash Arch: “I saw a solo cellist perform with the San Diego Symphony last year at the Embarcadero, and seeing a girl put that much passion into an instrument was sexy as hell.”

FAVORITE QUOTE?

Trash Arch: “Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things you didn’t do than by the ones you did.”
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Saturday, 9 p.m. — Cash & Out. A tribute to Johnny Cash. $13-$15.
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American Legion Post 310: 465 47th Street, Southeast San Diego, 619-264-1919.
Sunday, 6 p.m. — Willcuckat. Jazz.
Anthology: 1337 India Street, Little Italy, 619-595-0300.
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Friday, 8 p.m. — Restless Natives. Rock/blues/reggae.
Saturday, 3 p.m. — Nathan James & Ben Hernandez. With Robin Henkel. Roots/acoustic/blues.
Sunday, 2 p.m. — The Blues Pharaohs. With Jerome Dawson. Blues/jazz.

Crockett's: 802 Fifth Avenue, Downtown, 619-233-4355.
Monday, 8 p.m. — Monsoon, Jazz.
Del Mar Fairgrounds: 2260 Jimmy Durante Boulevard, Del Mar, 858-753-1161.

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Wednesday, 9 p.m. — Unsteady. On the Cenco Light Rock-On Stage. ska/reggae.

Dizzy's: 200 Harbor Drive, Downtown, 619-239-5818. Thursday, 8 p.m. — Ruby & the Red Hots. Blues. $15.


Fannie’s Nightclub: 9143 Campo Road, Spring Valley, 619-696-2014. Thursday, 8:30 p.m. — Cory Williams. Alternative/rock/blues.
Friday, 9 p.m. — Hugh Gasikus & the G String Daddies. Blues/soul/r&brockabilly.
Saturday, 9 p.m. — South of 94. Covers/standards/rock.

The Guild Restaurant and Lounge: 1805 Newton Avenue, Logan Heights, 619-564-7584. Friday, 7:30 p.m. — Sambuca Trio.

The Handlebar Hotel and Resort: 1400 East Washington Avenue, El Cajon. Monday, 5:30 p.m. — Flag Day Celebration. The 1812 Members’ Chorus plans “musical salute to God and country.” Program includes an original composition, a tribute to our troops, sung by composer Gene Waltzky.” Dinner (5:30-7 p.m.), followed by open meeting, music (7:30 p.m.). Donation: 619-444-1812. $10.


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The Handlebar Hotel and Resort: 1400 East Washington Avenue, El Cajon. Monday, 5:30 p.m. — Flag Day Celebration. The 1812 Members’ Chorus plans “musical salute to God and country.” Program includes an original composition, a tribute to our troops, sung by composer Gene Waltzky.” Dinner (5:30-7 p.m.), followed by open meeting, music (7:30 p.m.). Donation: 619-444-1812. $10.


Fannie’s Nightclub: 9143 Campo Road, Spring Valley, 619-696-2014. Thursday, 8:30 p.m. — Cory Williams. Alternative/rock/blues.
Friday, 9 p.m. — Hugh Gasikus & the G String Daddies. Blues/soul/r&brockabilly.
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SAT 06.21 DJ COLLETTE & DJ HEATHER
ABOVE & BEYOND
SAT 06.28 DAVE DRESDEN

HAPPY HOUR
Fridays & Saturdays
20% Off Menu Items & 50% Off Sake from 7-8PM

San Diego Reader | June 12, 2008 93
Hiromi is Hiromi Uehara. She is a Japanese-born keyboard wizard who began piano lessons in earnest at the age of six. Some listeners might have a problem with the random starkness of her sound and argue that Hiromi’s big-energy technical brilliance is nothing more than a cool neon-blue reserve. Art Tatum, after all, was lightning fast, accurate to a fault, and still had bucketloads of soul. As for Hiromi, I think emotional aloofness is a choice and not a mandate. Among her stated influences are Sly Stone and King Crimson — the latter a somewhat forgotten (if trend-setting) ’70s prog-rock band. She shares the same thematic, urban wit as those two bands in a form of new-age expression that meets the darker recess of traditional jazz. At times her vision exceeds her grasp, and I’m okay with that. Hiromi comes across as an artist looking for the next new thing in jazz, and I’m okay with that, too. Not every single note in contemporary jazz needs to sound as if it were invented back in the day at the Village Vanguard.

HIROMI, Anthology, June 18, 7:30 p.m. 619-595-0300. $24.


Spreckels Theatre: Nick Tocco, and Nathan Hubbard. with Doug Walker, Tim Nunnink, Modern Jazz Series. Every Sunday, Sundays

Templar’s Hall at Old Poway — Listed Musik. Wednesday — Bruce in the U.S.A. Band tribute show.


Saville Theatre at San Diego City College: 1404 C Street, Downtown, 619-386-3676. Saturday, 6:30 p.m. — “A Back in the Day Soul Music Celebration.” Local bands Rememberance, Mellow Movement, Three Shades of Soul, Alice Lundy perform Motown songs of ’60s, ’70s, ’80s. 619-307-1028. $30-$55.


Sevilla: 555 Fourth Avenue, Downtown, 619-233-5979. Thursday — BombaChante, Salsa/Latin. Mondays, 9 p.m. — Rock en Español.

Soma: 3350 Sports Arena Boulevard, Point Loma, 619-226-5050. Friday, 7 p.m. — No Lifeguard on Duty and the Amalgamated. With Dr. Skavra, the Self-Made Men, and Bucket of Fish. Ski rock. $8. Saturday, 5 p.m. — Scream the Prayer Tour. With Sleeping Giant, Impending Doom, Blessed by a Broken Heart, and more. Christian/hardcore/metal. $15.

South Park Bar & Grill: 1946 Fern Street, South Park, 619-696-0096. Thursdays, 9:30 p.m. — Open jazz jam. Fridays, 7 p.m. — The John Kopecky Trio. Jazz. Saturdays, 8:30 p.m. — Open blues jam. With Will Jackson. Sundays, 8 p.m. — Original Music Modern Jazz Series. Every Sunday, with Doug Walker, Tim Numminick, Nick Tricco, and Nathan Hubbard.


St. Tropez — Encinitas: 947 S Coast Highway 101 # 103D, Encinitas, 760-633-0084. Fridays and Saturdays, 6 p.m. — Inigo Figuereado and Ron Greitter Acoustic/cover standards.

Valley View Casino: 16100 Nyeami Pass Road, Valley Center, 866-453-9464. Thursday, 7 p.m. — Firefly. Classic rock. Friday, 4 p.m. — Hot Rod Lincoln and the Heroes Rockabilly/cover standards. Saturday, 4 p.m. — Makai. Covers/standards. Saturday, 9 p.m. — Crush. Covers/standards.

Wednesday — Bruce in the U.S.A. Bruce Springsteen & The E Street Band tribute show.


**Calendar MUSIC**


**hometown CDs**

**BY MAIL**

**Album:** Haunt This Town (2008) **Artist:** Arm the Angels **Label:** self-released **Where available/price:** CDBaby.com for $12. iTunes, Rhapsody, Amazon, MP3.com, and Napster for 99 cents per song. Songs: 1) Last Goodbye 2) Haunt This Town 3) Enemy 4) Prelude to Saints 5) Saints 6) One That Heals 7) Camouflage 8) Interlude 9) We Won’t Fall 10) Sidekinder 11) Pagan Hearts 12) Moment **Band:** Arnie (vocals, guitar, keyboard), Erock (bass), A Lo (guitar, keyboards), Adam Rapps (drums) **Website:** armsanegels.com

There’s no other band in San Diego with the expertise and honed skill of Arm the Angels. Every beat, riff, pace change, vocal harmony, and chord ring clear, timed perfectly and followed through with professional

**TO GET YOUR LOCAL CD REVIEWED, PLEASE MAIL IT TO:** Music Editor, Hometown CDs, San Diego Reader, P.O. Box 85803, San Diego, CA 92116-5803

**Arm the Angels and We’re Nonconfrontational to Tween-Age Girls; Moms Love Us! If they stop bowing from everyone else and start writing to express themselves, coupled with their perfect playing, they could take over the world.**
Entertainment Circle, Chula Vista, 619-671-3600.

July 27 — 311 and Snoop Dogg.
July 27 — Toby Keith.
July 27 — Journey.
July 27 — Mayhem Festival.
July 29 — John Mayer.
August 14 — Vans Warped Tour.
August 22 — The Dave Matthews Band.
August 27 — Radialhead. September 27 — Third Day and Switchfoot.


Del Mar Fairgrounds: 2260 Jimmy Durante Boulevard, Del Mar, 858-755-1161.
June 19 — The Clay Gobon Band.
June 19 — Dwight Yoakam.
June 19 — Micky Dolenz. June 20 — Satisfaction.
June 21 — The Doodlebops.
June 22 — Los Huracanes del Norte.
June 22 — Lady Dottie & the Diamonds.
June 24 — The Band in Black.
June 25 — Thie Hank Show.
June 25 — Cartel.
June 26 — Pat Boone.
June 26 — Mishawonna.
June 26 — B.B. King.
June 26 — Forge.
June 27 — Wild Child.
June 28 — Skeet & G.A. and Byron Cage.
June 28 — Inviatus.
June 29 — Bajadera.

San Diego Reader, June 12, 2008
**Downtown Café:** 182 E. Main Street, El Cajon, 619-440-5687.
June 27 — Joey & the Sing Rays.

**Embarkadero Marina Park South:** 206 Marina Park Way, Downtown.
June 25, June 26 — “Sinatra Sings Sinatra.”

**Epicentre:** 8459 Mira Mesa Boulevard, Mira Mesa, 858-271-4000.
June 19 — Islands and Sebastien Francis.
June 20 — Casino Madrid and Ration the Truth.
June 29 — End the Century and Katsumoto.

**Flying Bridge:** 1105 North Coast Highway, Oceanside, 760-722-1151.
June 27 — The Lounge Butchers.

**The Guild Restaurant and Lounge:** 1805 Newton Avenue, Logan Heights, 619-564-7584.
June 20 — Sambossa Trio.

**The Handlery Hotel and Resort:** 950 Hotel Circle North, Mission Valley, 619-298-0511.
June 20 — The Pool and Lady Dottie & the Diamonds.
June 22 — Pool Party.
June 25 — Christopher Dale and Friends.
June 27 — Barbara Neibett.
June 28 — Molly Jensen.
June 29 — Pool Party.

**Hawthorn’s Restaurant:** 2895 University Avenue, North Park, 619-297-1488.
June 24 — Dan Papaila.

**Hornblower Cruises:** 1066 North Harbor Drive, Downtown, 619-686-4715.
July 4 — The Bayou Brothers.
August 3 — Cool Fever.
September 5 — West of 5.
October 3 — 2 Boy.

**House of Blues:** 1055 Fifth Avenue, Downtown, 619-299-2583.
June 19 — Modern Day Moonshine.
June 20 — The Old 97’s.
June 21 — Marc Cohn.
June 22 — Detour Live.
June 25 — Ingrid Michaelson.
June 26 — Modern Day Moonshine.
June 27 — Bonfire.
June 28 — R.L.
June 29 — The Casualties.
July 5 — Natasha Bedingfield.
July 7 — Dark Lotus.
July 9 — Rooney.
July 10 — Rustled Root and Pete Francik.
July 11 — Litty & the Wall.
July 14 — Harry & the Potters and Jason Anderson.
August 3 — The Subways.

**Fannie’s Nightclub:** 9943 Campo Road, Spring Valley, 619-698-2104.
June 27 — Hugh Gaskins & the String Daddies.

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JONNY LANG WITH SPECIAL GUEST Dave Barnes FRIDAY, JUNE 13 • 7:30

WANDA SYKES WITH SPECIAL GUEST Keith Robinson SATURDAY, JUNE 14 • 8:00

KEB’ MO’ w/BAND/TAJ MAHAL TRIO WEDNESDAY, JUNE 18 • 7:00

INDIGO GIRLS WITH SPECIAL GUEST Brandi Carlile THURSDAY, JUNE 19 • 7:30

IDINA MENZEL FRIDAY, JUNE 20 • 7:30

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Calendar

**MUSIC**

- June 24 — Jackson & Jesus
- June 25 — The Taylor Harvey Band
- June 26 — Big City Shaman
- June 27 — The Motelros
- June 28 — Elevators
- June 30 — Tommy Price


- Native Vibe with Willie Royal on Harney Street
- Guin Mateo on Harney Street
- Will Donato on Harney Street

- Oceanside Pier: 3964 Harney St. Oceanside, Ca. 92054
- 619-296-0600

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- **RIDDIM ROLL**
  - Fridays
  - Deez Riddim
  - Friends

- **STORM SHADOW**
  - Saturdays
  - Hip Hop

- **DEEZ RIDDIM**
  - Fridays
  - Reggae
  - Rasta-jungle

- **RIDDIM ROLL**
  - Thursdays
  - Bands

- **SMOKE THOUGHTS**
  - Fridays

- **STORM SHADOW**
  - Saturdays
  - Hip Hop all night

**2007 awar****d****s**

- best sushi—CityBeat Magazine
- best sushi—Channel 10
- first date spot—Citysearch
- award of excellence—Zagat

**Upcoming Shows**

- **Saturday, June 28**
  - Liquid Blue
  - Gino Mateo

- **Thursday, July 10**
  - Will Donato

- **Sunday, July 13**

**On Harney Street**

- Deez Riddim
- Friends
- Reggae
- Rasta-jungle

- **Storm Shadow**
- **Dj Ramsey**

- **On Harney Street**

- **At Oceanside Pier**

- **Lunch**
  - mon-fri 11:30am to 3pm
  - Dinner
  - mon-sun 5:30pm to 12am

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- best sushi—CityBeat Magazine
- best sushi—Channel 10
- first date spot—Citysearch
- award of excellence—Zagat

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6/12
Full Monty

FRIDAY

Trainwreck
performs all your fav metal hits

**EVERY SATURDAY**

6/14 9 pm
Bobby Fantasy
The Disco Pimps

**SUNDAY**

9 pm
Open Mic

**MONDAY**

7 pm: Comedy hosted by Mark Schreiber
9 pm: Reggae
International Connection

**TUESDAY**

6/17
China Clippers • Giant Peach

6/18
China Clippers

**WEDNESDAY**

Upcoming: 6/19
8K Lounge
762 Fifth Ave. | Gaslamp | Corner of 5th & F
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**THURSDAY**

6/12
Live Hip-Hop
Den Dai
Uno
Six9teen
Live Music • Alt Rock
Friday The 13th
“The Bikini Massacre”
featuring:
Sight
Unscene
JHC
Squirrelly
Arts
Alessa
Is Red

Saturday The 14th
Live Music • Rock
“The Day After”
featuring:
Mad Habit
S.A.T.O.R.I.
Six
Reasons
Crashing
Marbles
Restricted
Personnel
Wednesday 6/18
Live Music • Reggae Rock
On The
Line
Likewise

**SALSA @ 8:30 pm**

**SUN 6/15**
Noche De San Juan
Celebration
DJs New Yo Rican & Jose
ANGEL LEBRON Y SU
SABOR LATINO

**WED 6/18**
China Clippers • Giant Peach

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Celebration
DJs New Yo Rican & Jose
ANGEL LEBRON Y SU
SABOR LATINO

**WED 6/18**
China Clips...
DEATH CAB FOR CUTIE
with ROGUE WAVE & SDSU OPEN AIR THEATRE
FRIDAY, JUNE 20

MY MORNING JACKET
evil urges tour
SEPTEMBER 25

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JULY 16

Journey Heart Cheap Trick Cheap Trick
JULY 15

6/27 7/24 7/26 7/27
MercyMe
Comedians of Comedy
Alkaline Trio

John Mayer
Warped Tour 2008
Soma
Cricket Wireless Amphitheatre
Cricket Wireless Amphitheatre
Cricket Wireless Amphitheatre
San Diego Civic Theatre: 100 Third Avenue, Downtown, 858-570-1100. June 24 — Widespread Panic.


San Diego Civic Theatre: June 22
Chula Vista.

San Diego Sports Arena: June 24
570-1100.

— Cool Fever.

Soma: 3500 Sports Arena Boulevard, Point Loma, 619-226-SOMA.
June 19 — Marie Digby and Eric Hutchinson.
June 20 — The Almost and Emery.
June 21 — Somato Sensory.
June 22 — The Human Abstract and Eyes Set to Kill.
June 23 — Muff, Duff-O-Cide, 12 Cent.
June 24 — Suffokate and His Irre Life.
June 25 — A Dull Science and Pensive.
July 2 — Ours and God or Julie.
July 5 — The Dajjal Persona and Name.
July 6 — Dance Gavin Dance and a Static Lullaby.

July 2 — American Idol.
July 5 — Raven-Symone.
October 7 — Neil Diamond.
November 1 — Celtic Thunder.

Schulman Auditorium at Carlsbad City Library: 1775 Dove Lane, Carlsbad.
June 28 — Peter Sprague String Consort.

Soma: 3500 Sports Arena Boulevard, Point Loma, 619-226-SOMA.
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July 5 — The Dajjal Persona and Name.
July 6 — Dance Gavin Dance and a Static Lullaby.

July 12 — Secondhand Serenade and My American Heart.
July 13 — Summer Slapther 2008.
July 14 — A Change of Pace and Houston Calls.
July 17 — Kill Hannah and Metis Dand.
July 18 — Eirich.
July 19 — The Hooddown and the Blood Counters.
July 20 — Cute Is What We Aim For and Ace Enders.
July 22 — State Radio and Rose Hill Drive.
July 24 — Terror, Warriors, Death before Dishonor.

July 25 — This Is the Hospital and A Legend Unknown.
July 26 — The Alkaline Trio and American Sirl.
July 31 — Jon McLaughlin.
August 6 — The Hush Sound and the Cab.
August 8 — Shai Hulud, Full Blown Chaos, Woe of Tyrants.
August 9 — The Find.
August 13 — KBIWhitneyDead and Carefics.
August 28 — Stick to Your Guns and Winds of Plague.
August 30 — The RX Bandits and Portugal the Man.

South Park Bar & Grill: 1946 Fern Street, South Park, 619-696-0996.
June 20 — The Downstroke.

Sprechels Theatre: 123 Broadway, Downtown, 619-233-9500.
August 10 — Kidz Bop.

Static Lounge: 634 Broadway, Downtown, 619-544-1409.
June 26 — X-Kid and Afa-Ra.

Tiki House: 1152 Garnet Avenue, Pacific Beach, 858-273-9734.
June 20 — Secret Samurai and the Tomorrow Men.
June 21 — The Nards.
June 27 — The Professors and Elephants in Mud.
June 28 — Roky Monoxide.

Tio Leo’s Lounge: 5302 Napa Street, Linda Vista, 619-542-1462.
June 21 — Colin Clyne.

University of California San Diego: 9500 Gilman Drive, UCD, 858-534-2230.
June 26 — Paul Ingles Quartet.

Valley View Casino: 16300 Nyenu Pass Road, Valley Center, 866-843-9946.
June 19 — Street Heart.
June 20 — Innovation.
June 20 — The Fabulous Pelicans.
June 21 — Crush.
June 23 — Billy Idol.
June 23 — Metro.
June 27 — Hot Rod Lincoln and the Heroes.
June 28 — The Shockwaves.
June 28 — Mako.
July 15 — Chris Ivan.
July 15 — Stix.
August 3 — The Temptations and the Four Tops.
August 14 — The Cipsy Kings.
August 21 — Sheerit Crow.
October 15 — Randy Travis.

Viejas Casino Concerts in the Park: 5005 Willow Road, Alpine, 619-445-5400.
June 22 — Michelle Lundeen & Blues Streak.
June 27 — Cyndi Lauper, B-52s, Joan Jett & the Blackhearts.
July 3 — Cinderella and Warrant.
July 12 — Boy George.
July 20 — Michelle Lundeen & Blues Streak.
July 20 — Boys Like Girls and Good Charlotte.
July 26 — Les Lonely Boys.
July 27 — Coheed & Cambria.
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I tried to fit three events into one day. It almost worked.

The first thing I went to was a motorcycle ride for the troops. I heard about it from DJs on Rock 105.3. It was sponsored by Biggs Harley-Davidson in San Marcos, which is in my backyard. There was no excuse to miss it.

I showed up for the after-party. The ride had taken place that morning. Pro wrestler Bill Goldberg was there, and I overheard a few kids talking about trying to get his autograph.

There were games set up for kids. I saw something that looked like horseshoes, but they were tossing motorcycle parts.

There were games for adults, such as the bikini contest. I officially turned into my mom as I watched the ladies walk around the venue in bikinis — I was thinking that they were probably going to get sunburned. It was hot.

There was a long line for free steak sandwiches. I’d never seen more motorcycles in one place — there were hundreds of them.

When I approached two guys in leather vests on Harleys, I thought they’d be biker snobs, but these guys were nice. One said, “It’s not about who has what bike. This was about the troops and getting everyone together — family, friends — for a nice ride on a nice day.”

I grabbed an energy drink and stood under the shade of a canopy. I saw a woman walk by with several raffle tickets. She told her husband that she had told a dream the night before that she won a contest. He rolled his eyes.

“He’s funny. They call him the Spanish Howard Stern.”

I saw a musician tuning his guitar onstage but didn’t stay long enough to hear him play. Instead, I headed to the gym for a few hours of basketball because later that evening, I had two events to try to catch.

One was in my old stomping grounds — Mira Mesa. The guys on the phone told me that there’d be a few bands at a surprise birthday party. I figured the cops would show up with bands playing at a house in the Westonhill development. The homes there are close together.

When I showed up around 10 p.m., there didn’t seem to be a party, but I heard voices in a closed garage. It sounded like a couple of guys and a girl, and they were in a heated argument. I walked up to the door, peered into a window, and didn’t see a party going on. So, I took the big drive to Bonita for the last event of the evening.

A woman named Jacqueline works for the law offices of Lewis Muller. They were sponsoring a dance contest at Club Caribe.

When I got there, the place was packed. A bouncer at the door had a buzz cut and black leather gloves and looked as if he’d squash anyone who got out of line.

Jac got me in without the $10 cover, and I asked her about the dance, called bachata. She tried to explain it, but with the loud music, I couldn’t hear her. I just nodded.

They had a free buffet, and although there were several people eating, the two dance floors were packed. One room was playing contemporary hip-hop, while the other...
where bachata would be taking place, had lyrics that were all in Spanish. The songs sounded good, though.

There was a DJ named Mario Alberto from 107.3 FM. Since he spoke Spanish, I didn't have a clue what he was saying. One of the club managers said, "He's funny. They call him the Spanish Howard Stern."

I was seated in a VIP area with Jac, her sister, and a few of their friends. They immediately set me up with shots of tequila. As long as some annoying person with a whistle didn't come by and shake my head with a towel afterward, I'd be fine.

It was high-end tequila and went down smoothly. Well, as smoothly as tequila can go down.

I was given a few whiskey sours and hoped the drinks would help get me on the dance floor. Jac tried to get me out there a few times. When she saw I wouldn't budge, she showed me a few moves and said, "It's simple. You just put your hands on your hips," and then she started moving like Shakira. I felt like an old white guy — I couldn't believe my hands were on her hips and hadn't a clue that a hardwood floor could be used for anything other than basketball.

I talked to José, one of the owners of Club Caribe. I mentioned the club being somewhat close to a residential area. He said that in years past they had had problems with noise. From cars in the parking lot peeling out or playing their stereos too loud. He said, "Since we've gotten security out there, we haven't had the sherriffs come out."

Since Jac works for a defense attorney, I asked her for a good story. She laughed and said, "We had a client that had 40 pounds of weed. He had no priors. And my boss got him a deal that only involved probation." I said, "I would think with that amount they'd try to nail you for selling it." She replied, "Well, just having it in your vehicle...they can get you for that. That's why my boss is good."

When I asked for other stories, she didn't want to share. She did say, "You can mention that my boss gives the $100 prize each week for the best dancers."

I noticed that as songs played, the DJ was talking over them, saying things like, "Come on! Move! Shake it!" His words of encouragement seemed to add to the songs.

Once, though, I leaned in to ask him something, not realizing he was in the process of talking into the mic. I just thought his talking was part of the song.

I heard all kinds of instruments in the mix — steel drums, whistles, accordions, keyboards. I asked a guy named George, a manager at the club, to tell me about the dances. "Oh, we've been doing them here for five or six years. Bachata originated in the Dominican Republic. I'm not sure how long it's been around."

When Jac got down to hand out the prize, a circle formed around her. Couples took their turns, each with less than a minute. It seemed to be a mix between a tango and dirty dancing. I asked Jac if it would be hard to pick a winner. She told me that she couldn't believe Jac as I was leaving. "It's smart of your boss to sponsor this thing. With people drinking...there's the possibility of getting some DUI clients out of this."

She said, "With all the food people are eating, most of the people here aren't driving out drunk. That happens more at clubs when people are drinking all night and they haven't eaten in eight hours." 

To get an online version of this column, go to sdreader.com. You can print it, email it to friends, or get other "Crasher" columns and stories by Josh Board.

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The old Naval Training Center at Point Loma is now a perfect new neighborhood, a salmon-colored village with shops, groceries, restaurants, and even an arts center, all within a short walk—something like urban heaven on earth (albeit slightly marred by the periodic roars of aircraft). One of the amenities of the area is a new and very newfangled Italian restaurant, Solare. Solare is an offshoot of the well-respected Bella Italia in Pacific Beach. The restaurant’s owner, Stefano Cerisoli, is from Milan, and at his P.B. restaurant the fare is classically Milanese. With this new venture, he decided he wanted to do something different, a “green” restaurant with a less traditional menu. His chef, Mark Peliccia, a New York–born world traveler from a restaurant family, owns a home on a vineyard in Liguria, a province on the Mediterranean coast of Northern Italy. Liguria’s regional cuisine is light and bright, emphasizing seafood and vibrant vegetables—closer to Cal than the familiar heavy red sauces of the south or the austerity of the now-fashionable Tuscan table. At Solare, Peliccia’s cuisine is even more Californian, making liberal use of Asian ingredients for an Italian slant on fusion.

The setting is a large, woody room with a glass-shielded open kitchen fronted by a small sushi-style wooden eating counter. The floors are uncarpeted wood, and the unvarnished wooden tables bear beautiful placemats of soft, dark brown leather, bordered in woven straw. The high ceiling is crisscrossed with anacondas of exposed metal ductwork. The only element of plush is provided by thick gold-colored satin cushions on the wooden chairs. The result is—a rattle of sound level, even though the am-bient music is soft. You don’t have to converse it—a rackety sound level, even though the ambiance music is soft. You don’t have to converse to be heard, and so does everybody else. Not a place for serious conversation, romantic cocktails.扎

As the hostess showed us to our table, she smiled proudly and said, “All our vegetables are fresh and organic or sustainably raised, and our meats are naturally raised and hormone-free.” When he learned that we’d be sharing all our food, he wisely proposed staging the meal in four courses instead of the standard three, if we had the time. Of course we did.

Bread (mostly crusty Italian white, some dark) comes with olive oil and balsamic vinegar, assembled as usual on the spot. Dave and I caught each other dipping a finger into our sauces to taste the oil. Sorry, it’s light, mild, nothing special. If it’s extra virgin, this was the extra virgin the monster found too bland to bother eating.

We began with a small bream carpaccio dressed with lime citrus (which is a vinaigrette made with lime juice instead of vinegar), garnished with mandarin orange segments and lychees, the latter’s sweetness and louche, sensual texture almost shocking. This dish has a genuine “sashimi” feel, mirroring the Japanese taste for rich fishes served raw. It was shivery good.

Sharing the table were zucchini tagliatelle—not pasta, but wide ribbons of raw zucchini, lightly dressed in oil and lemon juice and accompanied by two huge, seared jumbo shrimp in the shell, head to tail. We’d been offered the customary grind of pepper before tasting and refused, since, well, we hadn’t tasted it yet. “This would be a wonderful dish to eat al fresco for lunch on a summer day,” said David. “But eaten inside, it needs something more.” He was right. “A pinch of salt,” said Marcela, adding one. “White pepper,” offered Dave, “and maybe basil.” “Something darker,” said Barb, “maybe paprika.” “Maybe a heap of minced fresh basil,” I thought, or a frizzle of sautéed garlic. Something. Slow-roasted pork belly (unsmoked bacon) looked like some ancient mountaintop monument, arriving in the shape of two upright rectangles, plated atop islands of butternut squash puree, next to a surprising screech of chopped mild onions and pears. It took us each two tastes to identify the fruit. The top of each pork block was a crisped thin layer of fat; the rest was all lean, tender meat, resembling an unsmoked, unpeeled version of pulled pork.

A “mini chick pea pizza” is a misnomer. It’s not a pizza at all but a thin crépe the diameter of a standard tortilla, made of finely grainy chick-pea flour. Resembling a thinner, more delicate Breton crêpe, it’s topped with soft, slick, sautéed calamari rings, snow peas, and a frizzy mass of greenery described as a “spring mint salad.” The combination is likable but elusive—especially if your mouth is set for pizza. (The menu should call it like it is.)

Other appetizer possibilities include several interesting salads: strawberries, arugula, and dry ricotta in one; spinach with crab meat, blue cheese,
and blueberry sainagoite for another; a normal Caprese, along with house-cured salmon, a Middle Eastern “seared beef tartar” with tabouleh, and an antipasto of Italian cold cuts and cheeses.

The chef, who has been cooking for 22 years, discovered his love for cooking, doing the same thing day after day. Luigi’s my name, but I am Pietro, from the village of Sant’Ambrogio, near Genoa. I come from a family of cooks, and one of my brothers is already building the restaurant. So the menu is a collaboration of our skills and dreams. But over here, coming in from Europe, Europe is much more ahead — here the cost is so high to buy the equipment. Eventually, a little at a time, we’re going to buy a vacuum sealer, after a little bit of time, more equipment. I like learning new stuff, it’s fun. We’re having fun, and a little bit at a time we’re growing.”

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**ABOUT THE CHEF**

Chef Mark Pellicia, aged 32, was born to the job. Both parents are in the restaurant business, and both cook professionally. Although born in America, his English bears a faint accent and distinct Italian rhythm. “My mother is from Calabria, my dad is from near Genoa, in Italy. I know Luigi’s Italian Restaurant, in Mission Beach near the roller coaster! It’s a family restaurant, it’s been in San Diego for a long time. I was born in New York, but when I was 10, we moved to San Diego. But over here, coming in from Europe, Europe is much more ahead — here the cost is so high to buy the equipment. Eventually, a little at a time, we’re going to buy a vacuum sealer.”

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**OUR FAVORITES**

- **Lamb**
  - **Roast rack of Colorado lamb.** The rack is on the bone, so the meat is tender and juicy. The chef fell under the magnetic pull of the lamb and wanted to do more with it. The lamb is roasted to medium-rare to suit Barb and me.
  - **Beef tenderloin with truffle and black pepper sauce.** The chef explained about service, well, it’s a bit of a challenge. We’ve now been in the restaurant’s early days for many years.

- **Fish**
  - **Braised red snapper, Direct from the Sea.** The chef told me that he’s fascinated by the fish. The meat is almost as tender as butter, and the sauce is made like a classic lobster bisque (from the Veuve Clicquot, or from a base of lobster shells and spare parts), but with a whole Maine lobster, cherry tomatoes and had a buttery-tender flesh “like buttah.”

- **Pastas**
  - **House-made egg pappardelle with a lobster “beer” sauce.** The chef told me that he’s fascinated by the pasta. The sauce is made like a classic lobster bisque (from the Veuve Clicquot, or from a base of lobster shells and spare parts), but with a whole Maine lobster, cherry tomatoes and had a buttery-tender flesh “like buttah.”

- **Antipasto**
  - **Cold cuts.** The chef told me that he’s fascinated by the cold cuts. The chef fell under the magnetic pull of the lamb and wanted to do more with it. The lamb is roasted to medium-rare to suit Barb and me.

- **Bread**
  - **Breadsticks.** The chef told me that he’s fascinated by the bread. The chef fell under the magnetic pull of the lamb and wanted to do more with it. The lamb is roasted to medium-rare to suit Barb and me.

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**Desserts**

- **Nutella and hazelnut mousse.** The chef seduced us with a description of the dessert. “Are any of you Italian?” Pietro asked. If you order it, have it opened in a-nice little crisp cockscomb of fudge.

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**LAST WORDS**

“I’m like a picky widow for it — nobody else’s will do as well.” The chef explained about service, well, it’s a bit of a challenge. We’ve now been in the restaurant’s early days for many years.
Happiness, Ocean, and Kebabs

“That’s what financed this restaurant. Three tours in Iraq [as a translator].”

Baktiar has surely found the sweet spot. This is where folks wandering down Fourth start running out of steam. They can’t see anything ahead except the bricky Horton Grand Hotel. They hesitate and, most of them, turn around. And then a few come in here, because, well, it’s food, and — Galapam miracle! — it’s cheap. That’s what happened to me, anyway, that Thursday evening. I’m starting to get used to all this Middle Eastern food popping up around town. I mean, yeah, we invaded the Middle East with tanks, but the Middle East has invaded us right back with grub. And baby, we’re willing to be occupied. The Middle East has invaded us right back with grub.

Middle Eastern food popping up anyway, this Thursday evening. Cle! — it’s cheap. I’m starting to get used to all this Middle Eastern food popping up anyway, this Thursday evening. Cle! — it’s cheap. I’m starting to get used to all this

The frontage is olive green with big varnished planks, black iron railings. In the fading light, a coro-net of dripping lights switches on. Avan brings out a beautiful little plate of hummus with pita, plus a glass of water. The hummus has a black olive in the middle of a puddle of golden olive oil, with parsley for the green effect. Little extra I love is the stick of red pickled turnip that comes with it. Can’t beat that garbanzo and lemon taste. Then Baktiar brings the shawarma. Must say, one bite and this spiced chicken thing truly works great. Can taste — sesame! Maybe has tahina paste in it? Hummus! Both! Whatever, those golden chunks of chicken taste rich and moist. They’re surrounded by onion, pickle, lettuce, tomato. It’s so juicy I hardly need the water to slosh it down.

Baktiar comes and sits with two dudes eating chicken and beef shawarmas out here, Christian and Jose. He knows these guys. His little boy Rewan (“Guide”) wants to come out tonight. He must be all of seven, eight max. “No no, Rewan,” Baktiar says. “This is man talk.” “I’m a man, aren’t I?” says Rewan. His dad replies, and the boy sits down, looking really proud. It turns out Baktiar is Kurdish, from northern Iraq. The people Saddam gassed. He escaped to Turkey and Greece, and finally San Diego. “I tended up driving a cab here, at the airport,” he says. “Then when 9/11 happened, flying tanked. Taxi business tanked.” So Baktiar decided to get a job as translator with U.S. forces in Iraq. “That’s what financed this restaurant,” he says. “Three tours in Iraq. Three years. It was worth it. This is what I’ve always wanted, a little place of my own.”

Wow. While we’ve been talking, Rewan has wandered out onto the sidewalk. But his dad’s not worried. “He’s in love with Monique,” he says. “He’s just stands and looks at her.” And, yes, Rewan’s leaning against a lamppost, staring at the hostess outside the cafe next door, Cafe Sevilla. Monique. She smiles at him. Rewan breaks into a grin and runs back inside.

I think I may head inside too, for Kurdish baklava ($1.50). Can’t resist. Guess I’m just another victim of Operation Dessert Storm.

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The Place: Sultan Shawarma, 543 Fourth Avenue, downtown 619-231-1824
Type of Food: Mediterranean
Prices: Beef shawarma, chicken shawarma, beef kebab, ground beef kebab, skewered chicken, as sandwich, $6.49; as plate (with hummus, rice, salad, pita bread), $8.95; shawarma combo, of beef and chicken, $10.95; “three of a kind” combo — beef kebab, ground beef, chicken, $13.95; chicken and vegetable sandwich with grilled onions and mushrooms, $6.49; Mediterranean veggie plate (with stuffed grape leaves, falafel and hummus, baba ghanouj, pita), $9.85

Hours: 11:00 a.m. — midnight, Sunday — Wednesday; till 3:00 a.m., Thursday — Saturday

Buses: all downtown

Nearest Bus Stop: Fourth and Broadway

Father’s Day Specials
from $12.95-$22.95

Obi
4934 Voltaire St.
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Book your Christmas parties now! Newely remodeled interior coming December 2008.

Interior and exterior dining

Dogs welcome

Breakfast on weekends • Lunch and dinner daily • Full bar
Located in Ocean Beach on Voltaire St.
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We’ve got huevos!
$2 off Yogurt
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Expires 6/26/08

Capri’s yogurt
Indian Style

1010 University Ave.
(in Ralphs Center next to Big City Bagel)
619 297-0850
Self-serve — You choose your size!
14 flavors including sugar-free and nondairy

Baklava

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RECENT RESTAURANT LISTINGS
The Reader’s Guide to Restaurants are recommended listings written by our reviewers (Ed Bedford, Barbara Davia, Androse Martin, Shari McCullough, Max Nuss, Eleanor Widmer, Naomi Wise). Each issue contains only a fraction of over 700 reviews. A complete searchable list is available online at SanDiegoReader.com. Price estimates are based on the latest information available for a midrange estimate. Inexpensive below $10; moderate: $20 to $29; expensive: $30 or more. Please call restaurants in advance for reservations.

BEACHES
A.R. Valentien 11480 North Torrey Pines Road, La Jolla, 858-777-6835. A superb choice for a splurge. Chef Jeff Jackson cooks up a daily changing menu of California cuisine emphasizing the natural flavors of peak, in-season produce and top-quality seed-raismed meats and wild seafood. Not only is the food delicious and quietly inventive, but it’s relatively healthy, with less fat, salt, and “bad carbs” than at most restaurants. Note that all dishes on the “chef tasting” dinner are also available a la carte. The setting (a stone rivet on a golf course) is beautiful, the warren of dining rooms quiet and romantic unless packed. Validated valet parking, free self-parking; full bar and romantic unless packed. Validated valet parking, free self-parking; full bar and romantic unless packed. Validated valet parking, free self-parking; full bar and romantic unless packed. Validated valet parking, free self-parking; full bar and romantic unless packed. Validated valet parking, free self-parking; full bar and romantic unless packed. Validated valet parking, free self-parking; full bar and romantic unless packed. Validated valet parking, free self-parking; full bar and romantic unless packed. Validated valet parking, free self-parking; full bar and romantic unless packed.

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Carbolite Shakes JUNE SPECIAL
White Chocolate & Hazelnut
Low Carb • Over 30 Flavors
Diabetic-Friendly
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16 delicious frozen yogurt flavors
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We carry Wow-Cow!
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Free lunch or dinner
With purchase of another entrée of equal or greater value and two beverages. One coupon per table. Not valid on holidays or with any other discount.

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Treat Dad on Father’s Day with our special menu served all day $35.95

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Old Town’s original border pub

DRAUGHT

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With any appetizer purchase 4-7 pm daily. With this ad. Expires June 30, 2008.

Free lunch or dinner
With purchase of another entrée of equal or greater value and two beverages. One coupon per table. Not valid on holidays or with any other discount. $20 maximum value. Dine-in only. Expires 6/25/08.

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45 kinds of sushi & 20 selections of salad & sashimi & fresh salmon
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Fresh seasonal fruit & 20 delicious French-style desserts

Buffet includes champagne service for Dad!

Father’s Day is Sunday, June 15.

www.todaisandiego.com

Visit Carbolite Shakes, 11480 N. Torrey Pines Rd., La Jolla, 858-777-6835. They have incredible frozen yogurt flavors, one of which is white chocolate hazelnut. Get this discount when you show this ad.

Restaurant reviews from Ed Bedford, Barbara Davia, Androse Martin, Shari McCullough, Max Nuss, Eleanor Widmer, and Naomi Wise.
Santurce Chinatown. Stuff as much as you can on your head and face, and step slowly toward the rowdy hula hoop, and add noodles. Bonito gallery view of skaters or an ice hockey match while you eat. Open lunch through dinner weekdays, earlier dining weekends. Inexpensive.

**Moderate. — N.W.**

Harry’s Coffee Shop 7451 Girard Avenue, La Jolla. Hours: 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. weekdays, 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. weekends. A stream of energetic, often barefoot and often bareheaded, food- and coffee-centric regulars pass through to catch the latest edition of the coffee magazine. It’s now in a comfortable atmosphere and in a larger space. But the coffee is still damned good, the food is so-so. Try their coffee macchiato.

**Moderate to high, but with low-moderate specials. No reservations, cash only. — N.W.**

Señor Frog’s Via Osti 60 G, La Jolla, 858-462-4862. Normally this is a moderately priced eatery, but Tequila Tuesdays promote a much food offer, including two-morada margaritas (in a shot glass for one cover charge $15, last time we checked it). Food includes a buffer with good food choices, tequila, horchata, carne asada, ceviche, and on and on. House beers and Mexican liquor include tequila are usually to the taste, but every so often they come across a really good box of Absolut. You’d say, “I can’t believe this is already good!”

**Moderate. — E.B.**

Anthony’s Fish Grotto Downtown 1360 North Harbor Drive, Downtown, 619-232-3513. Anthony’s has been up and running for over three decades. Now Harry III reigns qui-...
Edgewater Grill 861 W. Harbor Drive, Downtown, 619-232-7301. An easy walk from the Convention Center, the dining room is spacious and hand-somely appointed, and if you're coming from the crowded Convention Center, it's the perfect place to unwind. The menu, though, is conventional and straightforward — like a Howard Johnson's for the 21st century. The flavor of the food is the most successful — this is not a bad place to “graze” on appetizers and a mini-pizza when you’re stuck for a view. Difficulty accessing the bar and the kitchen's open late, plus, on a date, the view from the crowded upstairs bar is hard to see. Folks say that land flavor is the real Mexican. Also famous is their Saturday morning Warming: go easy with their deep-fried, golden hued corn fritters for starving students. But it’s easy to tell which twin is which: The main dishes listed on a card in a plastic holder resemble meat-flavored roasted tofu — these deep-fried sizzle plates, the hot pots that taste like home cooking (best ordered by four or more), the greasy fried rice, the noodles especially “house special rice noodles”, and the whole steamed fish-of-the-day are palpable hits. And if you really want to know what the flavor about fritters is all about, try the fish plate stuffed tofu — these deep-fried sizzle plates are added to the menu Monday through Friday. Pleasant service, very casual, mainly inexpensive. — N.W.

Golden Dragon Asian Bistro 619 University Avenue, Hillcrest, 619-296-4119. The historic building has been freshly redecorated, keeping only the overhead sign that used to mark a one-time Chinese “dive.” Now the eclectic pan-Asian menu emphasizes Thai flavors — the owners and kitchen staff are Thai, including executive chef “Miss Songsri” (who put Celadon on the map), and working in a more casual vein here. Don’t miss “Atomic Hog’s Wings” (small pork shanks) or the Louisiana fried hunter crab dish named “Jumping Larsen.” The beer and wine lists are international and affordable. Lunch and dinner through Saturday. Entrées high — like a Howard Johnson’s for the 21st century. The fare features middle-of-the-road fusion salads, seafood, grilled steaks, pastas (most with shellfish), and individual pizzas, plus daily fin-fish dishes listed on a card in a plastic holder on the table. The lighter dishes are the most successful — this is not a bad place to “graze” on appetizers and a mini-pizza when you’re stuck for a view. Difficulty accessing the bar and the kitchen's open late, plus, on a date, the view from the crowded upstairs bar is hard to see. Folks say that land flavor is the real Mexican. Also famous is their Saturday morning Warming: go easy with their deep-fried, golden hued corn fritters for starving students. But it’s easy to tell which twin is which: The main dishes listed on a card in a plastic holder resemble meat-flavored roasted tofu — these deep-fried sizzle plates, the hot pots that taste like home cooking (best ordered by four or more), the greasy fried rice, the noodles especially “house special rice noodles”, and the whole steamed fish-of-the-day are palpable hits. And if you really want to know what the flavor about fritters is all about, try the fish plate stuffed tofu — these deep-fried sizzle plates are added to the menu Monday through Friday. Pleasant service, very casual, mainly inexpensive. — N.W.

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Mediterranean Cafe and Lounge
1352 Fifth Avenue, Downtown, 619-515-2233. Don’t come early. You’ll be alone. Turn around midnight, and you’ll see how social the Lebanon location is. Meds are served over a couple of hours with lots of conversation. Your finishing with a bahlaha, Turkish cof, and a shot—waterpipe (much cheaper by the hour than down in the Gaslamp; best flavor). Roses. They have the whole panorama of Middle Eastern and Greek food, but the best deals are probably the simple shawarma on a roll with pita bread with hummus, tomatoes, or pickles, and the chance to nosh on pita on your own. Open 5:30 p.m. to 3 a.m. Sunday through Thursday, and 5:30 p.m. to 4 a.m. Friday and Saturday. Inexpensive to moderate. — N.W.

Mission—North Park
2801 University Avenue, North Park, 619-220-8992. “Urban assault food for a revolution- ary people,” say the wait staff’s black T-shirts. But the food here is less raw. If you come in here, the rest of your friends will probably be on their way out. This place is run like an old rock club. No Res. Strong coffee. Good good-looking, and intelligent, if a little middle-class taut. Breakfasts are big here. The delicious chicken-apple sausage and eggs come on a foot-wide plate loaded with unmixed rosemary potatoes, scrambled egg, and scrun- pings baked in a clay pot (the meat is from a local farm). The toast butt hash can be checked out. Check out the “Chino-Limos” dishes (lunch only) like the small ravioli filling. You’ll get a larger tofu-sesame tofu with brown rice and peanut sauce, which comes with a plethora of asia-cana-style veggies. The interior has an airy, space-in-the-middle, coliseum feel. Open daily, 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. Inexpensive. — E.B.

Rama
324 Fourth Avenue, Downtown, 619-510-8424. This large, handsome restaurant is the younger brother of Galadon in Hillcrest. It’s named for the king of Thailand and offers Thai cuisine fit for royalty, made with top ingredients (including Chino Farms produce). The menu includes all the popular favorites but adds authentic dishes rarely found locally, such as chicken and squid with fat noodles and cardamom-scented sugar, and a wicked Thai version of Chinese sweet corn-pork — a fat-feast made with unsmoked bacon. Soups and curries are served on finely made crock of steaming brown rice. The extensive list of wines is unusual in this genre of restaurants, offering food-friendly choices plus an interesting reserve list. Full bar. Lunch Monday through Saturday, dinner nightly. Moderate. — N.W.

Sadaf—Downtown
628 Fifth Avenue, 619-260-0048. You worry — those formal fixtures and black waiters, the gold leafed paintings, and the crisp, pink table linens all seem “expensive.” Actually, the prices are Reasonably, especially at lunch. After the basket of complimentary bread, try skewers of chicken or ground filet mignon with rice or salad, or allahs (bun)—a giving and stretching bread. For- takhes and roasted-endive is a great first dish, and the soups and sandwiches cost more, but at any price this is real Persian food, with typical Persian herbs and barberry-cutting spices. Try-ming a nightclub after dinner, but the food’s better at this La Jolla flash. Inexpensive to moderate. — E.B.

Saloon
4611 El Cajon Boulevard, City Heights, 619-284-4213. You’re in a big glass parking lot. It’s especially good on Sundays, when three- or four-hour推理-Generation Vietnamese families gather for lunch. Lunches of wavy rice over the placemat, and the food’s not bad. You can choose buckets of steamed, barbecued, or gar- baged (or various subspecies), or go for fried or grilled seafood or tofu, or a combination of pita bread with hummus, tomato, lettuce, and pickles, or the chance to nosh on pita on your own. Open daily for lunch and dinner. Moderate. — N.W.

Indian foods, with even a hint of Greek

Serving Argentinian-style
BBEEEEFF  CCUUTTSS
2060 India Street (at Hawthorn) www.puertolaboca.us Thurs.-Sat. 7:30 pm-11 pm

Vincent’s Sirino’s
113 West Grand Avenue, Escondido, 760-745-8335. French-born chef-owner Vincent Sirino’s gives Cali classics an intimate, small-town bistro setting. This is a cuisine of rich dark sauces robing fresh ingredients, such as a huge, flavorful grain chop (no fact-ery-cafe, that). Mushrooms

-dinner, serving until 3 a.m. nightly. Lushly inexpensive, dinners moderate. — N.W.

Joe’s Crab Shack — Downtown
525 East Harbor Drive, Downtown, 619-233-7591. Joe’s is yummy with crab-shell ambience (cami-sea salt on the parasol), but the food’s not bad. But you can choose buckets of steamed, barbecued, or garbaged (or various subspecies), or go for fried or grilled seafood or tofu, or a combination of pita bread with hummus, tomato, lettuce, and pickles, or the chance to nosh on pita on your own. Open daily for lunch and dinner. Moderate. — N.W.

Grand Opening: Kai Sushi
50% off sushi and hand rolls
15% off all menu items Must bring coupon.
3455 Bernardo Center
Rancho Bernardo • 868-613-9000 www.kaisushicatering.com Open 7 days: Lunch and dinner Monday-Saturday • Sunday dinner only

Free lunch or dinner Purchase one entree and two beverages and receive one entree of equal or lesser value Free! Not valid with any other offer. Expires 6/26/08.

El Bischoxe
17550 Bernardo Oaks Drive, Rancho Bernardo, 858-475-8500. The delicious restaurant in this rural golf-and-tennis bungalow features spectacular, creative French-California cuisine, incorporating old-new techniques and imaginative combinations of seasonal ingredients. The worthy wine list also starts out expansive and goes up from there, with relative bargains at the head and some full bottles. The thoughtfully chosen choices are just adequate. To drink it: Find it. Bernardo Oaks Drive (about 4 blocks of Pomerado) north to the end of the road to the BBK parking lot (with validated parking pass for restaurant goers). If disabled, specify when you reserve, and they’ll set up your table in an accessible area. Otherwise there’s a 15 minute short wait to negotiate on route from the parking lot entrance to the restaurant. Jean jacket required now relaxed, but still very dressed up. Service, luxury resort atmosphere. Dinner Monday. Very expensive. — N.W.

Dumpling Inn
619-601-6019. Don’t come here looking for simple Chinese fare. This is serious Chinese food, the kind that’s Been here for the past 30 years in Hillcrest. The menu is based in China Town markets, and offers affordable, food-friendly choices. This isn’t a mega-McDonald’s eating barn inside, but a mega-McDonald’s eating barn inside, nor even the old cowboys and Indians. The food is fabulous, but not expensive, and is typical of pita bread with hummus, tomato, lettuce, and pickles, or the chance to nosh on pita on your own. Open daily for lunch and dinner. Moderate. — E.B.

Spices Thai Cafe — Miramar
6730 Miramar Boulevard, Miramar, 858-355-9845. Superior Thai restaurant that’s not only elegant but whose food contains all MSG and very little fat. The seafood dishes rate highly. Among other delicacies are duck and frog legs. Pot Thai Cafe that’s not only elegant but whose food contains all MSG and very little fat. The seafood dishes rate highly. Among other delicacies are duck and frog legs. Pot Thai Cafe that’s not only elegant but whose food contains all MSG and very little fat. The seafood dishes rate highly. Among other delicacies are duck and frog legs. Pot Thai Cafe that’s not only elegant but whose food contains all MSG and very little fat. The seafood dishes rate highly. Among other delicacies are duck and frog legs. Pot Thai Cafe that’s not only elegant but whose food contains all MSG and very little fat.
Sushi Bar

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Nigiri Sushi: Albacore, Amaebi Avocado, Clam, Crab, Eel, Squid, Tuna, Uni, Red Snapper

Appetizers: California, Caterpillar, Cucumber, Philly, Rainbow, Cut Rolls: Eel, Salmon Skin, Scallop, Crab, Spicy Tuna, Shrimp, Vegetable, Yummy, Firecracker, Seafood Dynamite, Crab, Soft Shell Crab, Spicy Tuna, Tempura Shrimp, Vegetable, Yummy, Firecracker, Seafood Dynamite, Crab, Soft Shell Crab, Spicy Tuna, Tempura Shrimp, Vegetable, Yummy, Firecracker, Seafood Dynamite

Lunch Daily 11:30 am-2 pm
Dinner Daily 5-9 pm

All-You-Can-Eat Sushi Bar $23.95 per person

With this ad. Expires 6/26/08. Up to 5 persons. Reg. $25.95.

Dine-in only. Not valid with any other offers, discounts or specials.

**Beach Grass Café**

159 South Coast Highway 101, Solana Beach, 858-569-0812. Formerly a branch of Parkhouse Eatery, Beach Grass has been bought by a mini-chain (with Steam’s Cafe and Honey’s), but still serves the original recipes. You could eat breakfast here daily and never get bored with the creative morning menu, which includes foamy, fresh orange juice and “Beach Benedict” with eggs and house-made hollandaise on a soft, lush crab cake. Oddly, though, the “maple” syrup and “butter” spread are both mass-market blends. Lunches and dinners feature multi-ethnic “coastal cuisine,” with the best results in seafood dishes like “Moroccan crawfish” and the fish-n-yum chips (with fine-house-made tater sauce). Vegetable accompaniments are tasty and creative. Reservations essential for weekend breakfasts. Free parking in back via driveway to right of restaurant. Breakfast through dinner daily. Moderate to slightly expensive. — NW

**Buc di Rappo — Carlsbad**

921 Calle Barcelona, Carlsbad, 760-479-2533. People come here to celebrate, in party-dresses, by gobbling huge plates of “thumped” Italian. Buc di Rappo (“Joe’s Callas”) is a mighty national chain — but it works. Try the peas and artichokes with its spicy sausage or the popular chicken parmigiana. Standard staff, but what the heck — you’re having fun. Don’t leave without conquering the mountainous, wicked Baja Festa, two huge half of ice cream on double-chocolate cakes running with sambuca sauce, caramel, and nuts on an 18-inch plate. Open for lunch and dinner daily. Inexpensive to moderate. — E.B.

**La Especial Norte**

604 North Coast Highway 101, Encinitas, 760-942-1400. This big, brightly lit roadhouse sports highly whimsical decor (take a look at the blue ceramic “pond” in the dining room, complete with cayman) and boasts a five-page menu, including a page of all-you-can-eat regional soups and another full page for seafood. The soups are superb — the authentic Mexican City-style chicken soup is laden with avocados, chicken shreds, cilantro, and rice, and the savory eggplant soup includes any little “creations” of puffed relleno batter. The fresh, interesting seafood entries showcase the relatively ordinary renditions of the standard South-of-the-border variations. No wheelchair access to restrooms. Open daily, breakfast through dinner. Inexpensive. — NW

**Firefly**

231 North El Camino Real, San Diego, 760-433-1896. At this spacious wine bar and restaurant (sharing a small mall with well-known Sassy’s), the wine list emphasizes California boutique wineries and lesser-known bottlings from around the world, and plentiful choices by the glass make it easy to experiment with unfamiliar wines. The menu starts with a half-dozen wine bar snacks including a cheese plate and a charcuterie plate. The most popular lunch item is a good Cobb salad, and at dinner there’s a tasty bourbon-and-food broth. The menu changes frequently, but this likable spot feels like a sophisticated neighborhood restaurant where, if you’re old enough to enjoy a taste of the grape, you can pretty much come as you are. Open for lunch Monday through Friday, brunch weekends, dinner nightly. Moderate to expensive. — NW

**Il Fornaio — Del Mar**

159 South Coast Highway 101, Solana Beach, 858-509-0632. Formerly a branch of Parkhouse Eatery, Beach Grass has been bought by a mini-chain (with Steam’s Cafe and Honey’s), but still serves the original recipes. You could eat breakfast here daily and never get bored with the creative morning menu, which includes foamy, fresh orange juice and “Beach Benedict” with eggs and house-made hollandaise on a soft, lush crab cake. Oddly, though, the “maple” syrup and “butter” spread are both mass-market blends. Lunches and dinners feature multi-ethnic “coastal cuisine,” with the best results in seafood dishes like “Moroccan crawfish” and the fish-n-yum chips (with fine-house-made tater sauce). Vegetable accompaniments are tasty and creative. Reservations essential for weekend breakfasts. Free parking in back via driveway to right of restaurant. Breakfast through dinner daily. Moderate to slightly expensive. — NW

**Vietnamese Beef Noodle Soup**

8657 Villa La Jolla Dr., Suite 125
La Jolla • (858) 550-0861
(near AMC 12 Theatres)

10% Off Entire Check

$10 minimum purchase.

Lunches and vegetables (from local farmers or Grumel’s own garden) are the season’s best and sensitively treated. Desserts are worth every calorie — save room for the spectacular Bavarian. Full bar, fine wine list. Lunch Tuesday through Friday, dinner Tuesday through Sunday. Expensive. — NW

**NORTH COASTAL**
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### Pacific Beach, Mission Beach & Ocean Beach

- **Atoll at the Catamaran Hotel**
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- **The Blue Parrot Bar & Grill**
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- **Canes**
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  - **Free tapa for lunch**
- **Gringo’s**
  - **Free appetizer at lunch**
- **Kirin Sushi**
  - **Free crazy or spicy tuna roll**
- **Lahaina Beach House**
  - **Free breakfast**
- **The Mission**
  - **50% off any entrée**
- **Moondoggies**
  - **50% off second lunch**
- **Pacific Beach Bar & Grill**
  - **2 for 1 entrée**
- **Pacific Rotisserie**
  - **Free entrée**
- **PB. Mika**
  - **$99 sake**
- **Saska**
  - **$12 off second entrée**

### North County

- **Calypso**
  - **Free appetizer**
- **Greek Village**
  - **Free saganaki**
- **Mikko Japanese**
  - **50% off sushi**
- **Pho Lucky**
  - **10% off entire check**
- **Rossi’s Pizza**
  - **Free mini pizza**
- **Santa Fe Cafe**
  - **50% off 2nd entrée**
- **Wild Note Cafe**

### La Jolla

- **Aloha Sushi**
  - **Free sushi**
- **Cafe Milano**
  - **Free Comedy Store tickets**
- **Clay’s La Jolla**
  - **Free sushi**
- **Ginza Sushi**
  - **Sushi dinner for 2 $16.95**
- **La Dolce Vita**
  - **Free sushi**
- **La Jolla Brew House**
  - **Free lunch or dinner entrée**
- **Su Casa**
  - **20% off entire check**

### East County & State College

- **Centifonti’s Restaurant**
  - **50% off entrée**
- **Chopsticks Inn Restaurant**
  - **50% off sushi**
- **Fix Me A Plate Cafe**
  - **15% off any entrée**
- **Golden Wok**
  - **30% off buffet**
- **Shakey’s Lunch Buffet**
  - **$5.49**
- **Thai Dragon House**
  - **Free Thai entrée**
- **Toro Sushi**
  - **$3 off sushi**
- **West Coast BBQ & Catering**
  - **BBQ combo dinner $10.99**
- **Windy City Beef**
  - **1/2 off menu item**

### Uptown & North Park

- **Baby Back Jack’s BBQ**
  - **$2 off any sandwich**
- **The Cask Room**
  - **$10 off any bottle of wine**
- **Coffee House on Broadway**
  - **Free Mocha Jackson**
- **Harar Ethiopian Restaurant**
  - **Free sambussa appetizer**
- **India Princess**
  - **Lips**
    - **50% off dinner**
    - **Medgrill**
      - **Free lunch or dinner**
- **Mediterranean Cafe**
  - **Free lunch or dinner**
- **New York Giant Pizza**
  - **$3 off any pizza/calsone**
- **Rudford’s**
  - **$2 off any menu entrée**
- **Sicilian Thing Pizza**
  - **$3 off any pizza**
- **Vesuvio Gourmet**
  - **25% off lunch or dinner**
- **The Wine Encounter**
  - **Free wine tasting**

### Midway, Old Town & Mission Valley

- **The Amigo Spot**
  - **15% off entire check**
- **Lot 81 Restaurant & Bar**
  - **$1.25 price dinner**
- **Tio Leo’s Dinner combos $9.49 each**
- **The Waffle Spot**

### South Bay & Coronado

- **Beach’n’Diner**
  - **Free entrée**
- **El Dorado Seafood & Grill**
  - **50% off entrée**
- **Lai Thai**
  - **50% off entrée**

### Downtown & Point Loma

- **Al Bustan**
  - **Free dinner entrée**
- **Alex’s Brown Bag**
  - **Phillly cheese steak $6.49**
- **The Boathouse**
  - **2-for-1 lunch or brunch**
- **Dublin Square**
  - **2 for 1 breakfast**
- **Hornblower Cruises**
  - **Free entrance**
- **Humphrey’s**
  - **Jewel Box**
    - **2 for 1 entrée**
- **Little Italy Spaghetti**
  - **2 for 1 lunch**
- **Petra’s**
  - **Free entrée**
- **Puerto La Boca**
  - **Free Argentinian dessert**
- **RA Sushi**
  - **Richard Walker’s Pancake House**
    - **$1 off entrée**
- **Rock Bottom**
  - **25% off sushi**
- **Sevilla**
  - **$10 off Spanish cuisine**
- **The Shout House**
  - **Visions**
    - **25% off sushi**
- **Xavier’s**
  - **Free appetizer**
- **Yogo Tango**
  - **Free yogurt or smoothie**

### Clairemont, University City, Miramar Rd., Poway, Mira Mesa, Scripps Ranch & Kearny Mesa

- **Filling Station**
  - **Free appetizer**
- **Kai Sushi**
  - **15% off all menu items**
- **Lightnin’ Jack’s BBQ**
  - **Free BBQ**
- **Lot 81 Restaurant & Bar**
  - **Free lunch or dinner**
- **Mo’s Island Grinds**
  - **50% off plate lunch**
- **Pampas**
  - **Free empanada**
- **RB Sushi**
  - **50% off sushi and rolls only**
- **Sunrise Super Buffet**
  - **$3 off buffet**
- **Thai Cafe**
  - **$1 off buffet**
- **VIP Orientat Buffet**
  - **$3 off all-you-can-eat buffet**
- **Yogurt Lounge**
  - **Free yogurt**

Restaurants listed without coupon offers have only menus online. Restaurants with * have multiple locations. See online menu or coupon for all locations.
we’re talking rustic-feeling, herbal, ultra-creamy dijon and salad) to a giant (thin grilled steak on a baguette with...

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The Gaslamp 15 still bears keeping an eye on. Hopefully this won’t turn into a deathwatch, though I note that the hours of operation have been scaled back on weekdays to a late-afternoon start, a worrisome sign. Under the new management of Reading Cinemas, however, the theater continues to be what it was under Pacific, if not more so: a shelter to prolong the shelf life of the mainstream film (e.g., 21 and 88 Minutes, still lingering as of this week), as well as an outlet for alternative films, oftentimes hand-me-downs from Landmark (The Counterfeiters, Before the Rains, In Bruges, et al.), sometimes even first-run ones, to chip away at the Landmark monopoly. I missed the blink-of-an-eye engagement of the American indie, Meet Bill, a couple of weeks back, but this Friday’s offering of Giuseppe Tornatore’s The Unknown Woman was screened ahead of time. (The concurrent offerings of Harmony Korine’s Mister Lonely and Christopher Zalla’s Sangre de Mi Sangre were not.) It bears a closer look.

Tornatore’s name imprinted itself on the filmgoer’s consciousness twenty years ago with Cinema Paradiso, and, riding that tidal wave, each of his half-dozen films in the interim (counting his one-third of an anthology film) has been blessed to see the light of day, or light of projector, at one or another of the Landmark houses, Malena most recently. The Unknown Woman, dated 2006, and now saved from the orphanage by the Gaslamp, keeps us abreast of developments. Which in this case means deviations. His made-in-France crime thriller, A Pure Formality, had once before taken the filmmaker out of the syrup and into the slime, albeit with some cerebral-absurdist-surrealist pretensions. In his latest one, he has ventured again into the thriller realm, without such pretensions. The cognoscenti might even be tempted to dust off the term giallo, Italian synonym for dime novel, penny dreadful, the pulps, série noire (to the French), and, in its particular incarnation on the Italian screen, heyday in the Sixties and Seventies, the erotic thriller, or, in awkward but graphic translation, the “sexy-thrilling.” Dario Argento, one of the pillars of the genre, has a film currently in production titled bluntly Giallo, strict equivalent of Tarantino’s Pulp Fiction.

The Tornatore film begins in a fog of intrigue. Its first shot, a lascivious stunner, is a rear view of three women in thongs and bras, symmetrically lined up in a vague cavernous interior. A disembodied male voice gives them direction: turn around (revealing the women to be wearing masks), strip, and send out the next three. He selects the one in the blond wig on the left: she’ll do fine. Do what? We then drop into the chosen one’s life, sans wig, as a Ukrainian immigrant looking for work as a maid, bedevilled by brief, almost subliminal flashes of flesh and rope, too quick to make out, but redolent of S&M. She sets her cap for a specific apartment building, kicking back thirty percent of her salary to the super for the privilege, turning down other jobs, and setting her cap anew for a specific apartment in the building, befriending the elderly nanny of the accident-prone little girl in residence, and then ruthlessly getting the nanny out of the way, in a pool of blood. (The fog thickens.) What’s she up to? Are we supposed to sympathize?
One senses, one smells, the possibility of a revenge scheme, although the insidious insinuator proves to be not in perfect control of the situation. After a while one gets a whiff of something sweet, a protectiveness towards this bruised little girl, a benevolent regimen to toughen her up. Any tentative hypothesis you might form are sure to fall short of the full story. And yet the plot twists are not so lofty as to overpower centripetal force and to send credibility hurtling off into space. It requires a tight rein. At times Tornatore could stand comparison with Hitchcock. But in lieu of his usual point of comparison, Fellini. One of those times, an excruciating exercise in subjectivity, perhaps just a bit rushed, would be the heroine’s lifting of a set of keys from her companion’s purse at the movies, her excusing herself to the ladies’ room, and her frantic dash next door to get copies made, only to find long lines at the counter and to draw ticket number 51 when they’re now serving customer 37. Nor is Tornatore afraid to make a stab at upmanship: the denigration of the scissors as a lethal weapon can be seen as a deliberate snub of the Master’s Dial M for Murder. The Bernard Hermann-esque score of Eanni Montico, in the pulsing, reving, driving vein of North by Northwest, Vertigo, Psycho, invites more of this comparison than Tornatore can truly stand. All the same, the high polish of his technique goes far to counteract the lurriness of the material: the couple of strong-arm thugs in Santa suits, the dictable, and pallidly photographed, yet an agile and energetic playing of the angles. Strong supporting part for Steve Martin, plus poignantly, as a self-mythologizing food-food tycoon: “I was swimming this morning with dolphins in Costa Rica...” With Greg Kinnear and Sigourney Weaver, written and directed by Michael McCullers. 2008 ★★☆☆☆ (FASHION VALLEY 18; GALSAMP 15)

Before the Rain — Interracial, extra-marital in unrest of India in 1977. Things take a tragic turn fairly early, and then grind on taking melodramatic ones. Capably directed (as well as photographed) by Santosh Sivan, but heavy-handedly. With Lavus Roache, Nandita Das, Rahul Bose, and Jennifer Ehle. 2008 ★★☆☆☆ (GALSAMP 15)

Bigger, Stronger, Faster — Chris Bell’s documentary on steroid abuse in American, including his own family. (HILLCREST CINEMA, FRID 5/13)

The Big Sleep — The Bogart-Bacall team’s playful, pastiche exchanges are quite dated now, although at times still quite salacious, and the adaptation of the labyrinthine Raymond Chandler mystery novel is not as baffling as it is reputed to be. However, there is also a grand confidence in the allure of film noir atmospheric detail and narrative conventions — night-time fogs, neon lights, trench coats, clandestine comings and goings and doings — for which director Howard Hawks has a non-chaotic knack. And there are sublimely well-played impersonations, by Martha Vickers and Bob Steele respectively, of a debauched sex bomb and a bummed-out gunman. 1946 ★★★ (CINEMA UNDER THE STARS, 6/12 AND 13; 8:30 P.M.)

The Children of Huang Shi — True tale of a British correspondent in China during the Japanese invasion of 1937, reluctantly assuming responsibility for five dozen war orphans. The cardboard characters, the bat-ter-ram-dramaturgy, and the lackluster look of the thing (excepting the luminous Michelle Yeoh as a shaky lady) fail to substantiate the truth of it. Testimony from actual survivors at the endunderscores your heart. With Jonathan Rhys Meyers, Radha Mitchell, Chow Yun Fat, directed by Roger Spottiswoode. 2008 ★★★ (LA DELLA VILLAGE)

The Chronicles of Narnia: Prince Caspian — The follow-up to The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe, or as we could call it, The Lion, the Witch, No Wardrobe, maintains the medium-high standard of its forerunner, higher, that is, than the standards of such close-by epic cycles as the Lord of the Rings series and the Harry Potter series. The narrative elements seem somehow to have more life, more harmony, more resonance, and the individual installments demonstrably stand more solidly on their own. The four Prevenus siblings, otherwise known as “the Kings and Queens of Old,” herein returns to the parallel universe of Narnia, not through the portal of a magic clothes closet but from an ordinary London subway platform (call it The Lion, the Witch, and the Tube, if you choose), but while it’s still WWII-time in England, a “few hundred” years have passed in Narnia. A paradigmatic deliveryman’s myth is now in progress, encompassing an evil lord to the throne, an oppressive regime of swarthy Mediterranean types called Telmarines, and a gathering rebel army numbering among its ranks a grumpy dwarf, a swashbuckling mouse and a Turjol old dodger (both big-ger than life), an air force of griffons, some centaurs, some minotaurs, one of whom merits a special medal of valor propping open a falling grate for an escape route as his body gets pierced by enemy arrows. If the film overall is a bit battle-heavy, and a bit long, and a bit slowed by immediate slow-motion, the climactic battle nevertheless features some galvanizing and agonizing changes in momentum, an imaginative strategem of a subterranean cavalry charge, and the majestic intervention of a swelling water deity, bringing matters to a decisive resolution. Ben Barnes, William Moseley, Anna Popplewell, Skandar Keynes, Georgie Henley, Peter Dinklage; directed by Andrew Adamson. 2008 ★★★ (GALSAMP 15)

The Counterfeiters — Stefan Ruzowitzky’s Holocaust survival tale, loosely based on the novel is not as baffling as it is reputed to be. It is a passably interesting tale to tell, a new fact on how “the world’s worst counterfeiter” (the long, long face of Karl Markovics) eases his existence in a Nazi concentration camp by suppressing his scruples and using the German war effort, speedily mastering the British pound, but then dilly-dallying over the U.S. dollar, theoretically affecting the outcome of the war. It is a passably interesting tale to tell, a new path through old territory, but the interest is rather in the tale than in the telling. At any number of stopping points along the path, the sight is liable to seem too familiar (the bullet in the head, etc.), never mind the refreshing route that led there. And the course, now de-structured in time, whether a chosen cliché or an imposed hardship, is at no point much to look at, a husk thing to say about a motion picture. 2007 ★★★ (GALSAMP 15)

88 Minutes — 102 minutes minus closing credits. A famous forensic psychiatrist (a puffy-haired Al Pacino), on the scheduled day of execution of a sadistic killer against whom he testified, receives a dis-torted-cell-phone threat, “You have 88 minutes to live.” Once the countdown begins, not a single minute is remotely credible. How could the plotter count on the doctor returning to his car, after a wild-goose chase in pursuit of a suspicious leather jacket, just in time to read “72 Minutes” scrawled on the coat of dust? How could the plotter be sure the doctor would...
The Happening — M. Night Shyamalan's science-fiction thriller starring Mark Wahlberg and Zooey Deschanel (CARMEL MOUNTAIN; CHULA VISTA 10; ESCONDIDO 10; FASHION VALLEY 18; FLOWER HILL 4; GROSSMONT CENTER; HORTON PLAZA 14; LA COSTA 8; LA JOLLA 12; MIRA MESA 18; MISSION MARKETPLACE 13; MISSION VALLEY 7; MISSION VALLEY 10; OCEANVIEW 16; STAY RANCH 12; PALM PROMENADE 24; PARKWAY PLAZA 18; PLAZA BONITA 14; POPPY 10; RANDO DEL REY 16; RANDO SAN DIEGO 15; WHEN VILLAGE 8; SAN MARCOS 18; TOWN SQUARE 14; VISTA VILLAGE; FROM 6/13)

The Incredible Hulk — Louis Leterrier's new screen treatment of the comic-book superheroes, played by Edward Norton. (CARMEL MOUNTAIN; CHULA VISTA 10; DEL MAR HIGHLANDS B; ESCONDIDO 10; FASHION VALLEY 18; GROSSMONT CENTER; HORTON PLAZA 14; LA COSTA 8; LA JOLLA 12; MIRA MESA 18; MISSION MARKETPLACE 13; MISSION VALLEY 7; MISSION VALLEY 20; OCEANVIEW 16; STAY RANCH 12; PALM PROMENADE 24; PARKWAY PLAZA 18; PLAZA BONITA 14; POPPY 10; RANDO DEL REY 16; RANDO SAN DIEGO 15; RIVER VILLAGE 8; SAN MARCOS 18; SANTEE DRIVE 19; TOWN SQUARE 14; VISTA VILLAGE)

THE CHILDREN OF HUANG SHI — Comedy and heartbreak and heartburn, under the imprimatur of producer Iudd Apatow, but directed by newcomer Joachim Trier (vintage 1963) rerouted through present-day Afghanistan. Weapons manufacturer. (PARKSIDE DRIVE IN; TOWN SQUARE 14)


The Foot Flat Way — Bargain-basement comedy, improvisational in feel, documentary in technique, about a tea-loon-do in structure (Danny McBride) with a fraggle-ego and a thin veneer of machismo. Some of the notions seem viable, though they don't really flourish. With Ben Best and Mary Jane Bostic, directed by Jody Hill. 2008. (MISSION VALLEY 20)

Forgetting Sarah Marshall — Comedy of heartbeat and heartburn, under the imprimatur of producer Fudd Apatow, but directed by newcomer Nick Stoller, and written by its star, Jason Segel, who envisons for himself the role of a would-be scene composer, cranking out mood music for a network crime drama when he would rather be devoting his time to a Dravil stage musical. (When, that is, he's not devoting his time to eating Fruit Loops out of a mining bowl on the couch.) The vocational aspect of the role, in any case, straightaway gets put on the back burner in favor of the personal aspect: the dumped girlfriend of the lead actress on the afore-mentioned crime drama. The main point of interest in the movie, fractional though it may be, is Segel's penis, a raising of stakes on the old reliable tush shot. ("Would you take a look at my penis?" is an actual line of dialogue he has written for himself. It could just as well have been the advertising slogan.) For the rest, the movie gives the game away early when the schlump protagonist accidentally-on-purpose runs into his ex-girlfriend at her preferred Hawaiian resort, where she's caving with a lavishly tattooed British rocker, and where the copper-toned hostess at the check-in desk immediately jumps out at us as (a) a ready and willing shoulder for the schlump to cry on and (b) a couple of miles prettier than the ice-sculpture Hollywood girlfriend. Russell Brand's self-absorbed rock star ("Yeah," he responds to the fan who had slipped him a demo tape, "I was going to listen to that, but then I just car- ried on living my life") and Paul Rudd's dopeshotAPER ("When life gives you lemons, just say 'Fuck the lemons' and move on") are funny enough for skillet comedy, but scarcely for comedy of character. Kristen Bell, Mila Kunis, Jonah Hill. 2008. (PADRE VALLEY 18)

In Bruges — Writer-director Martin McDonagh, in his feature debut, dispatches two British hit men to lie low, after a job with messy collateral damage, in the "fairly" medieval Inermon near the coast of Belgium, where one of them (the boulevard Brendan Gleeson) is interested in seeing the sights while the other (the tight-wire Colin Farrell) sizes the place up as a "shithole," so that he shows no such signs of wear and tear as would demand any added sus- pension of disbelief beyond the several tons suspended already in the prior adventures. Spielberg, for his part, eager to show that Munich burned no bridges, any more than Schindler's List or Amistad burned any, is still a superior technician. Superb, that is to say, in Michael Bay, Simon West, Brett Ratner, Roland Emmerich, Benny Harlin, John McTiernan, Jon Turteltaub, among other wannabes, and the relentless action scenes are always impressive in their engineering while never being in the least believ- able or involving. (A fencing bout con- ducted in side-by-side jeeps at top speed unfailingly focuses our attention on the filmmaker rather than on the fencers.) In the end — in the accumulation — the ac- tion grows more than a little tedious. Spiel- berg's technique is superior not only to others' but also to his own taste. A good long time, needless to stress, has gone by since the previous Indy adventure, and the new one can't be content to try to top just that one. It has to try to top, in ad- dition, The Da Vinci Code, the National Treasure hacks, the Luna Croc adventures, etc. With a plot that links Roswell, New Mexico, to the Erich von Däniken theory of extraterrestrial influence, Spielberg keeps pace with that pace as well. To say so is no great compliment. Case Blanche, Shia LeBouf, Karen Allen, Ray Winstone, John Hurt, Jim Broadbent. 2008. (CARMEL MOUNTAIN; CHULA VISTA 10; DEL MAR HIGHLANDS B; ESCONDIDO 10; FASHION VALLEY 18; GROSSMONT CENTER; HORTON PLAZA 14; LA COSTA 8; LA JOLLA 12; MIRA MESA 18; MISSION MARKETPLACE 13; MISSION VALLEY 7; MISSION VALLEY 20; OCEANVIEW 16; STAY RANCH 12; PALM PROMENADE 24; PARKWAY PLAZA 18; PLAZA BONITA 14; POPPY 10; RANDO DEL REY 16; RANDO SAN DIEGO 15; RIVER VILLAGE 8; SAN MARCOS 18; SANTEE DRIVE 19; TOWN SQUARE 14; VISTA VILLAGE)

Iron Man — Marvel Comics superhero (vintage 1963) coursed through present-day Afghanistan. (GASLAMP 15)
Power, he manages to dumb luck to get himself so annoyed, in effect hitting the kung-fu lottery. With that, the filmmakers set out to portray a deeply and widely held fantasy: the idea that the noophyte in any field, but especially the martial-arts field, can sparsely close ground on the masters by means of a remedial crash course. No matter how low your opinion of kung fu or its film genre, you would be justified in finding this insulting, to both the specified martial art and your intelligence. And animation, despite its ease of physical laws, does not much soften the insult. If the Furious Five — Tiger, Crane, Mantis, Hummingbird, and Viper — are together no match for a key, and Viper — are together no match for a martial art and your intelligence. And animation, despite its ease of physical laws, does not much soften the insult. If the Furious Five — Tiger, Crane, Mantis, Hummingbird, and Viper — are together no match for a martial art and your intelligence.

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Colin Firth's monumental role in "The Happening" is a testament to the actor's versatility and range. His portrayal of a scientist struggling with the consequences of a world gone mad is both profoundly moving and thought-provoking. Firth's performance is adeptly balanced, showcasing a depth of emotion and complexity that is both mesmerizing and chilling. His work in "The Happening" is a reminder of the power of cinema to explore the most profound human experiences, and Colin Firth's dedication to his craft is evident in every frame of the film. This is a must-see movie for fans of the thriller genre, as well as for anyone interested in a thought-provoking and emotionally charged cinematic experience.
left by his late wife, a concert pianist, he tries desperately to master the instrument himself, late in life. Then a reluctant change of scene, when he is forced out of his orbit, under departmental orders, to attend a Developing Nations Conference in New York City, where he finds his unusual apartment occupied by two squatters, a musician from Syria and a jewelry designer from Yemen, husband and wife. Muslins both. The initial shock gives way to a slightly hospitality, and the apartment is turned into a haven for struggling artists. The film takes a dice throw in the face of finding that it has put one with an illustration of Racial Profiling and the incidence of the happy-go-lucky street musician in a detention center for illegal aliens—a bit of hot topic to give the story Relevance. Significance, Importance. That notwithstanding, it presents just one, small personal story of the post-9/11 world, not a Big Sweeping Statement. For all its liberal sentimentality, it indulges in no outsized emotionally. And it offers a muscular role to Richard Jenkins, an able character actor, never the lead, who nibbles at the meat with proper restraint, hiding his avidness and gratitude. (With an eye on the most modest box-office, and with but a minor effort to the story, the role could have been offered to enough household names, a Richard Gere, a Kevin Kline.) Haaz Studdert as the unforgivingly discreet drummer, Dana Girits as his febrilely guarded mate, and Ham Abbas as his dignified and elegant mother, in from Michigan to stand vigil outside the austere United Recreational Corporation, complete the ensemble, a decent quartet, revolving into warmth. All four of them in their separate ways are painfully affecting. The outcome, although from happy, could not plausibly have been a lot farther from it. A statement is made after all, if only a quiet one. Written and directed by Tom McCarthy.

**FLICKER HILL 4: HILDEGARD CEMETERY**

**LA JOLLA VILLAGE**

**What Happens in Vegas** — What happens in the early 21st Century as a “rom-com.” (The very term drips with derision:淘汰 lovers and, not fully romantic, not fully comic.) It pairs perfect strangers in a drunken impulse wedding in Sin City, whence they return to Manhattan with $3 million in disputed winnings (a contrivance copied from Larry Sturgess is Young Paul McCartney cute as a Richard Gere, a Kevin Kline.) Haaz Studdert as the unforgivingly discreet drummer, Dana Girits as his febrilely guarded mate, and Ham Abbas as his dignified and elegant mother, in from Michigan to stand vigil outside the austere United Recreational Corporation, complete the ensemble, a decent quartet, revolving into warmth. All four of them in their separate ways are painfully affecting. The outcome, although from happy, could not plausibly have been a lot farther from it. A statement is made after all, if only a quiet one. Written and directed by Tom McCarthy.

**FLICKER HILL 4: HILDEGARD CEMETERY**, **LA JOLLA VILLAGE**

**What Happens in Vegas** — What happens in the early 21st Century as a “rom-com.” (The very term drips with derision:淘汰 lovers and, not fully romantic, not fully comic.) It pairs perfect strangers in a drunken impulse wedding in Sin City, whence they return to Manhattan with $3 million in disputed winnings (a contrivance copied from Larry Sturgess is Young Paul McCartney cute as

You Don’t Mess with the Zohan — Adam Sandler’s Israel accent plus his shambling multiple negatives: “No—no—no—no” seems like a sufficient base for a spy comedy revolving around a hasidic agent of Mossad, a sort of anti-Moshe if you please. But the jokes stray a long way off the base and in diverse directions: the hero’s superhuman powers (snagging a bul- let in his nostril, doing no-hands pushups, etc.). In his pursuit, in America, of his secret desire to cut hair (“I just want to make people smile”), his time-warp sense of fashion, gleaned from a disco-era Paul Mitchell catalogue; his sexual predilection for golden-oldie bathers, or his real, (one and the same) the “worker-producer.” His Pollyanna appeal for peaceable coexistence; and the hypercritical ruminations, since somebody has to be the bad guy, of the corporate money-grubber — anybody to be more particular, besides those adversaries. Happy Madison Productions and Sony Pictures. Just as Sandler’s accent could seem a sufficient comic base, John Turturro might seem an adequate comic adversary as a Palestinian terrorist and fast-food entrepreneur, but this would be hard to verify on the laugh-meter. There are good-sized parts, too, for an all but unrecognizable paintings, painted by Robin Schirra, Lainie Kazan, Nick Swardson, and Emmaual Wahlke as a Palestinian captive, and minor-sized parts for Sherman, Chris Rock, Kevin Nealon, Mariah Carey, and John McEnroe — and enough laughs to go around even were they sliced into thin dates. Directed by Dennis Dugan. 2008.
"COMPLETELY ORIGINAL. THIS IS ADAM SANDLER DOING WHAT HE DOES BEST. ZOHAN IS A CLASSIC COMEDY CHARACTER THAT AUDIENCES WILL LOVE FOR YEARS TO COME."

Ben Lyons, E!

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Rafael Guzman, Newspapers

"YOU WILL LAUGH UNTIL IT HURTS."

John Urbanchic, Sun Newspapers

**ADAM SANDLER: YOU DON’T MESS WITH THE ZOHAN**

**NORTH INLAND**

**CARMEL MOUNTAIN**

Carmel Mountain 14

3825 Carmel Mountain Road (828-472-9700)

The Chronicles of Narnia: Prince Caspian (PG)

The Happening (R)

The Incredible Hulk (PG-13)

India Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull (PG-13)

Iron Man (PG-13)

Kung Fu Panda (PG)

Sex and the City (R)

The Strangers (R)

**ESCONDIDO**

Escondido 16

38 W. Valley Parkway (760-291-0139)

The Chronicles of Narnia: Prince Caspian (PG)

Fri., 11:00, 1:30, 2:30, 4:30, 6:30, 9:00, 11:00

The Happening (R)

Fri., 11:30, 1:00, 3:00, 5:30, 7:30, 9:30, 11:00

You Don’t Mess With the Zohan (PG-13)

Fri., 11:00, 1:30, 2:30, 4:30, 6:30, 9:00, 11:00

**FALlbrook**

River Village 6

5296 S. Mission Road (760-945-3784)

The Chronicles of Narnia: Prince Caspian (PG)

Fri., 10:00, 10:35

**NORTH COASTAL**

**LA PALOMA**

330 E. La Paloma (760-471-3711)

You Don’t Mess With the Zohan (PG-13)

Fri., 11:30, 1:15, 4:05

**NORTH SD**

**CHULA VISTA**

Chula Vista 10

4228 Broadway Avenue E (619-338-4214)

The Chronicles of Narnia: Prince Caspian (PG)

The Happening (R)

The Incredible Hulk (PG-13)

India Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull (PG-13)

Iron Man (PG-13)

**SAN DIEGO**

**BROADWAY BETWEEN H AND I**

(PG); Broadway between H and I (619-338-4214)

The Chronicles of Narnia: Prince Caspian (PG)

The Happening (R)

The Incredible Hulk (PG-13)

India Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull (PG-13)

Iron Man (PG-13)

Kung Fu Panda (PG)

Sex and the City (R)

The Strangers (R)

**SAN DIEGO**

The Chronicles of Narnia: Prince Caspian (PG)

Fri., 10:00, 10:30, 1:30, 4:30, 7:30, 10:30

The Happening (R)

Fri., 10:00, 12:00, 1:40, 3:40, 6:40, 9:40

You Don’t Mess With the Zohan (PG-13)

Fri., 11:00, 1:30, 2:30, 4:30, 6:30, 9:00, 11:00

**SAN DIEGO**

**EL CAMINO REAL**

2385 El Camino Real (760-364-8425)

Impact Point (R)

The Incredible Hulk (PG-13)

India Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull (PG-13)

Iron Man (PG-13)

Kung Fu Panda (PG)

Sex and the City (R)

The Strangers (R)

**VISTA**

Vista Village

Highway 78 at Vista Village Drive (760-962-7460)

The Chronicles of Narnia: Prince Caspian (PG)

Fri., 10:00, 10:30, 1:30, 4:30, 7:30, 10:30

The Happening (R)

Fri., 10:00, 12:00, 1:40, 3:40, 6:40, 9:40

You Don’t Mess With the Zohan (PG-13)

Fri., 11:00, 1:30, 2:30, 4:30, 6:30, 9:00, 11:00

**LA COSTA**

La Costa 6

6991 El Camino Real (at Avenida!Aliga) (760-999-8221)

The Happening (R)

The Incredible Hulk (PG-13)

India Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull (PG-13)

Iron Man (PG-13)

Kung Fu Panda (PG)

Sex and the City (R)

The Strangers (R)

**OCEANSIDE**

Mission Marketplace 13

College Boulevard and Mission Avenue (760-382-1790)

The Chronicles of Narnia: Prince Caspian (PG)

Fri., 10:00, 10:30, 1:30, 4:30, 7:30, 10:30

The Happening (R)

Fri., 10:00, 11:05, 12:10, 1:15, 2:20, 3:25, 4:30, 5:35, 6:40, 7:45, 8:50, 9:55

**NOW PLAYING**

Check local listings for theaters and showtimes.

**SOUTH BAY**

**SANTEE**

Santee Drive In

10900 Westside Avenue (619-468-7474)

The Incredible Hulk (PG-13)

Fri., Sun., Indiana Jones and the Crystal Skull (PG-13)

Fri., Sun., Iron Man (PG-13)

Fri., Sun., Kung Fu Panda (PG), Fri., Sun.

**NOW PLAYING**

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Cubicle Gal

“When there are no distractions, like words and other actors, every move becomes enormous.”

We watch a woman just home from work. Her eyes are so blank, it’s hard to tell if she’s glad to be back in her spotless studio apartment or relieved to clock another eight hours. She checks her mail: a lone advertisement. No human contact.

Almost immediately she goes to work. She stores groceries in careful piles, labels front. She makes a meal, washes dishes, cleans her hands every time she touches something. She checks a blemish on her right cheekbone, rechecks later: a nagging imperfection.

Much of what she does prepares for the next day. But something about her mindless rituals, ending one and immediately beginning another, suggests that tomorrow will mirror today, just as today has mirrored yesterday. It’s as if, as Wordsworth wrote, her whole “vocation were endless imitation.”

That tomorrow will mirror today, just as today has mirrored yesterday. It’s as if, as Wordsworth wrote, her whole “vocation were endless imitation.”

She’s Miss Rasch, the sole character in Franz Xavier Kroetz’s Request Programme, a minutely detailed study of compulsion and emptiness. In German, rasch means “impetuous, brisk, rash.”

For most of the drama, which closes this weekend at Ion Theatre, the 45-year-old woman’s anything but. In the end, however, she’s aptly named.

“In the piece,” says Linda Libby, who plays Rasch, “the audience is like a fly on the wall. They become Jimmy Stewart in Rear Window but can’t take action when they need to.”

Request Programme is one of the most talked about, many say unique, dramas of our time. Kroetz strips away all the usual sources of information — dialogue, other characters. He leaves one actor alone onstage, speechless, for 65 minutes. Libby agreed to talk about what it’s like to play a character “as daunting as Hamlet.”

Kroetz radically narrowed the depth of field. Nothing “big” happens. Every action is mundane, which requires the audience to look closer than usual. At one point, for example, Rasch decides to have juice. Instead of telling another character, or licking her lips to show intent, three fingers of her right hand flicker for an instant, as if something inside has said, “Aha, beverage time.”

In this sense, Request shows us how lazy our eyes have become, how often we don’t see something the first time but rely on instant replays. And how, in an era of sensory overload, we accept obvious clues and easy answers at face value — and overlook the fine print.

“In most theater, especially musicals,” says Libby, “I have a rep for being a lively performer, and for most actors stress them, often to the exclusion of everything else. Libby had to dull hers, collapsing almost everything actors use to explain and, quite frankly, to please.

When Libby’s mother saw the show, she barely recognized her daughter’s dead-eyed stare and obsession with order. “After, she had to make sure I was okay. She was a little unsettled.”

Libby began studying for the project two years ago. “Rasch is not like me a lot,” she realized. “I’m neither organized nor clean.” Libby focused on simple activities. “Do I put the dish soap on the sponge or in the water?”

Libby invented a whole lexicon of Rasch’s physical habits: open both cabinet doors at once; close the armoire with both hands; quietly at first, louder later.; fold things with microprecision, even toilet paper in neat squares. Rasch moves as if she must stay busy; must have the TV on, or a radio concert (which awakens moods, memories?), as if she must remain on automatic pilot.

Every move speaks. For instance: who would believe that a smudge of a tornail, tossed on the floor, would hold such significance?

What in her background prepared Libby for this once-in-a-lifetime role? She cites Samuel Beckett’s later one-acts, where he insisted on taking all the “color” — everything actors add to a character — out of the performance (“Less,” he shouted at Billie Whitelaw in rehearsals, “even less”). By eliminating color, Beckett made the audience more a participant in the process, tilting forward and paying attention, than a passive recipient.

Most acting requires layers,” says Libby. “Beckett subtracts, so you just do the action by itself.”

Libby also recalled an exercise she did as an MFA student at Temple University. Wal Cherry, department head, demanded simplicity. One day he asked students to walk in a room, club a guy over the head with a rubber truncheon, and walk out. The first actor didn’t just enter. He stalked in, eyebrows bouncing, inspecting every mote of dust. Then he saw his target and froze. His face bubbled with perplexity: to club or not to club? He half-stepped forward. His legs locked.

“No-o-o-o-o!” shouted Cherry. “Stop adding stuff! Just walk in, belt the guy, and walk out! Is that so hard?” Given most actors’ training, Libby recalls, this exercise ranked among the toughest.

But it prepared her for what she calls “the invisible line” in Request between the “actorly” and the unadorned. In rehearsals she and director Glenn Paris squelched every theatrical impulse. Lately,

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Hershey Felder as MONSIEUR CHOPIN. Photo by John Zich.

for a backer’s audition of onstage — me, Libby. Miss Ratch has entered the room.

Hershey Felder’s GEORGE GERSHWIN ALONE has been thrilling audiences and critics. This acclaimed musical

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Many theaters offer discounts to stu-

dents, senior citizens, and the mil-

itary. Ask at the box office.
In the Blood
Golden/Bushnell Productions presents Zora Neale Hurston's play that follows a woman who is often forced to choose between the desires of her mother and those of her own. The play's director, Sheryl Kaller, is known for her sensitive and nuanced approach to character development. The setting is a small town, and the cast includes some of the most talented actors in the business. The play opens on September 26 and runs through October 5.

The Hit
This new play by David Wiesner is a spine-tingling drama about a medium who must confront her own demons in order to help others find peace. The play's director, Patrick Galligan, has a reputation for bringing out the best in his actors. The production opens on October 3 and runs through October 16.

I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change
The book and music by Terrence McNally and John Kander is a hilarious look at love and relationships. The cast is led by two of Broadway's biggest stars, Ben Vereen and Melba Moore, and the production is directed by the award-winning Michael Wilson. The show opens on October 26 and runs through November 10.

A Number
David Lindsay-Abaire's new play is a thought-provoking exploration of the nature of identity and the search for meaning in a random world. The production is directed by the highly regarded John La Ross, and the cast includes some of the most talented actors in the business. The play opens on November 3 and runs through November 19.

The Squeak
This new play by John Patrick Shanley is a heart-wrenching drama about a family facing the challenges of loss and recovery. The production is directed by the award-winning David Cale, and the cast includes some of the most talented actors in the business. The play opens on November 10 and runs through November 23.
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San Diego Reader June 12, 2008 131

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Say What?

Derek Evans
Age: 28
Occupation: Food Critic
Lives: Mira Mesa

I have an adorable golden retriever named Charlie who was four years old on May 19. I have always said he should be a dog model, which is a dog model. I don’t know if there are actual dog models out in the world but it would be nice if Char- lice could be one. Then he could be tied with dawdle, which means something else altogether. If you had a really cute cat, I guess you could call it a codel.

To see an online version of this column, go to sdreader.com. You can print it, email it to friends, and find archived columns.
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CLARA HAUS. All units are $100 off first month's rent! Great location. 2520 Chicago Street. TPPM, 619-405-7775.
I was that [my father] was cheating on my mom. And he lied to me about it, only to the truth. The woman he married was my mom, and he has been for years, knowing things about me from when I was ten. She wouldn't know certain things about my childhood. My mom was still alive then, and they were together. The things my dad lied to me about ... I can give you a list.

My answer would probably be the same as a lot of kids': the truth about Santa Claus. I was probably six or seven when I found out it was my parents. I was so happy, realizing that my mom and dad cared enough to buy us things and pretend about Santa Claus. My older sister found out about Santa because she smelled painted. A lot of the gifts were always painted in this battle gray, and you could smell it in the morning.

Ragtagging the existence of Santa Claus. My sister told me one time that there was no Santa. She was actually younger than me. I asked my mom. I was probably in third grade. She said there wasn't a Santa but that his spirit lives on. I started crying and said, "How could you lie to us about something so important?" And she didn't lie to me since then.

I would say the things I told them found the outline of a condom in the Velcro surfer wallet I had when I was 13. It had been there for a long time. I formed a permanent outline. She was really upset. I just thought it was cool to have one because a few friends had them in their wallets. None of us had money in our wallets, so storage of things was the last use. I immediately got the birds-and-bees talk with my parents. I was told that she really got that great. In their attempts to keep our rest of the life, a lot of lies were told.

I don't think they even told me. Maybe a few little white lies. They used to tell me if I don't clean my ears they'll grow potatoes in them. I don't know, I may still believe that because I'm always cleaning them. Regarding the Easter Bunny and Tooth Fairy, I never really believed they were real. You just want to enjoy those things as a kid. One of my co-workers was told by his parents that words didn't produce oxygen, and that's why he needed to pull them all out of the garden.
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NAME This Place

Last week's place (clue: Crown this our smallest park?) Rotary Park, at the intersection of Orange Avenue, Isabella Avenue, and Park Place, by Tenth Street, Coronado (unofficial moniker: "Crown City"). The little park was created to preserve the 95-foot-tall, 80-year-old Norfolk pine that serves as Coronado's official Christmas “Tree Christmas Park,” as most folks refer to the approximately 700 square feet of green space, may be the smallest in California. (Last week's winners: Brian Nickman, Marie Pedrinizone, Lance Rydey, Hazel Quatermain, Robert Wissaliew)
THE READER PUZZLE

by David Levinson Wilk

Across

1. ____ Moines 4. Insight
2. Poet famous for the words that begin 17-, 30-, 47- and 59- 6. First female-directed movie to...
3. Small songbird 7. Year “Don Quixote” was written;
4. Bob Maxwell, Reader 8. Top of the agenda
5. Not loco 9. Rusher’s cry
10. YMCA member?: Abbr. 11. Not of the cloth
15. Oldest among the Huxtable kids 12. “Over my dead body!”
26. Pro’s opposite 27. Act cautiously
29. Coiffeur’s goop 30. 30K, 60K, 90K, 120K
31. Ditto 32. STRANDS in the winter?
33. Seattle-to-Tacoma dir. 34. TV’s Anderson
36. Poet famous for the words that begin 17-, 30-, 47- and 59- 37. Do zilch
37. “Very funny” 38. Indians can be found there
40. Indians can be found there 41. ___ Moines
42. Top of the agenda 43. Fix
44. Do zilch 49. Rusher’s cry
51. Not of the cloth 52. Moray, e.g.
57. Not loco 58. Discount label abbr.
60. Fix 64. Metric wts.
62. Moray, e.g. 65. Color
64. Metric wts. 66. Black and tan ingredient
67. Do zilch 68. Strands in the winter?
70. Asner and O’Neill

Down

3. Small snobbed 4. In the event of disputes or ties,
4. In the event of disputes or ties, decisions of the judges will be final and
5. Decisions of the judges will be final and arbitrary. We’ve only got five
6. Article in Le Figaro 7. “You Don Quixote” was published
8. Beethoven’s 3rd
9. “Time Out___ Quixote” the Rose”
10. YMCA member!: Abbr. 11. Occupy
14. Typical Mad reader 15. Feminine suffix
16. Cable channel with the slogan “Very funny”
17. Down the road
18. Extra if diagnosis required 19. Free search at

Solution to and clues of the Reader Puzzle for 6/5/08

There were 48 solutions. The winners are:
1. Trinaise Abbott, San Diego
2. Ted Scalfia, San Diego
3. Amanda Hall, San Diego
4. Bob Maxwell, Coronado
5. Kate Mappin, Encinitas

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Roommate From Hell

when I first met my roommate, she was a very involved and social person. We were fine for the first year; neither of us was home often, as we kept busy. In the second year, everything changed. She went from being in a sorority, working at the gym, playing basketball, and being home almost to literally nothing but staying home and studying. I never did learn exactly what happened, but all of a sudden she got kind of wacky.

As she started staying home more and more, Sarah started acting as if the apartment was hers. It began when she started making what I call “huffing and puffing” breathing sounds when I walked anywhere near her bedroom or opened a drawer looking for something or did, well, anything. This expulsion of air was her signal that I was distracting her from her intense studying. It got to the point where I couldn’t even do laundry without the exhalation.

Eventually, even the lightest, quietest noise of the bathroom light switch or even bothering her by asking if the apartment might as well have been a library; no music or noise allowed. The worst came when I invited my boyfriend over for dinner one night — although we were in the living room, as far from her as possible, Sarah actually asked us to stop talking!

She would warn me 10 to 15 minutes before she was going to bed so that I could “get everything together.” (brushing teeth, etc.) so as not to bother her during her sleep. This was fine until the one time I needed to take a nap. Just as I was about to fall asleep, there was suddenly a ridiculous amount of noise from the living room. I got up and asked her what she was doing. No joke, she said she was “shredding last year’s receipts.”

Out of nowhere Sarah deve-
opened an obsession with plants, despite having the blackest thumb you’ve ever seen. Not only did she kill every plant she owned—and there were a lot, one after another—when the plant inevitably died, she would refuse to admit it! When one of her larger plants died on a windowsill—located on my half of the room, by the way—I asked her if she had realized that the plant had died. She shouted, “It isn’t dead!” and burst into tears. The dead plant sat there, curled over its pot, for the next six months. I wish I would have disposed of it.

Sarah would always leave at least one piece of toilet paper on the roll so that she didn’t have to replace it. I bought all the toilet paper—perhaps my biggest pet peeve. At one point I noticed the characteristic two pieces short of emptiness. I was about to go home for a week for Christmas break, and Sarah was still supposed to be there. Just to see what would happen.

When I came home the roll was still empty.

Months later, as we were moving out, I saw a secret stash of toilet paper among her things.

Tell us the story of your roommate from hell and we will publish it and pay you ($500 for 2000 words).

E-mail story to roomie@sdrudent.com

Or mail to:
San Diego Reader/Roomie Box 85803 San Diego, CA 92186
My brother is an addict. He contaminated me. I've gotten
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was but never got to know. When Ahmed and I got admitted to school — on the same day — Oumar was three classes ahead. When we passed our primary school certificates exams, Oumar was two classes behind us. We decided he was just a bad kid who enjoyed torturing other kids.

I still have no idea what went on between the two of them — Ahmed and Oumar. During break time, Oumar came over and told Ahmed that he was going to show him good after school for what he did. I asked what the matter was, and Oumar told me to mind my own business. I thought that wasn’t fair; I was just asking, and he didn’t have to talk to me that way. Oumar said fine, he’ll show me too. Ahmed bared his teeth at Oumar. Oumar scowled and said rendezvous after school. Only he was talking to Ahmed, he wasn’t talking to me. What to do... I had to be there, otherwise my reputation was done.

After school, I had an errand to run for a friend of my mom. She gave me a 2.5-liter empty gallon I had to fill with peanut oil at the grocer’s. When I got back to school, where we would be picked up to be brought home — seven kilometers away — my classmates and Oumar were holding siege. Some thought I’d run away. They cheered when I turned the corner.

Running and I took our positions. There was sand all over the place. Oumar: “C’mon, hit me...touch me!”

Me: “No, you start!”

That’s the way our fights started — you had to touch your opponent for the fight to be declared open.

Shaaaannnn!

He slapped me. I almost fell. He snickered. It was no use trying to slap him back; he was much taller than me. I hit him in the nose. One of his classmates tried to grab it, and I lashed at him. I guess I looked demented because he sure got scared.

Oumar slappe me again. I dropped the gallon and tried to dodge. He started playing Jackie Chan, and his classmates chased him. My classmates looked worried. I lost the fight, they’d take the shame too. Oumar was getting excited. I was starting to tire, and he knew it. Soon I’d fall and he’d get over me, slap me more, and be declared winner.

Then, Eureka!

His being tall was an advantage. I decided my being shorter should be too.

His next Jackie Chan kick found me prepared. I grabbed his foot. He had nothing to hold onto. The sand was slippery. My classmates were crazy. I pulled and pulled and he fell. I kept on pulling. The stupid boy started playing mad and got sand all over his face, blinding himself. I sat over, took up my gallon, and hit him on the face, the chest, wherever I could reach.

My classmates chanted my name. It was great!

I won.

The next day, Oumar brought his father to school to show him who’d done what. The director came to fetch me, feeling sorry for me because he knew Oumar was a no-good kid. When Oumar’s father saw me, his jaw dropped. He looked at his son, the length and size of him, and at tiny, skinny me. He slapped his son for shaming him and went home.

I wonder how they are doing.
KIM CATTRALL IS A VAMPIRE. By night, Kim Cattrall feeds on Hooters girls innocently making out with each other in the parking lot. I haven't looked up her Wikipedia entry to verify this fact, but she's super old, pale, and dare I say, fang-y. So, quod erat demonstrandum, for Latin that's “Yes, she's a vampire.”

Last night at midnight I stood in the bushes outside of the Mission Valley Hooters.

"Oh, my God," Kaitlin said, "I think I have my shot here in a hole. Can you look for me?"

"I have to pull your shot up to here," Bree said. "Oops, sorry. I pulled your shirt waaay to far up."

"No, it's okay," Kaitlin said. "I kind of like it."

I could sense Kim Cattrall's ancient evil presence in the air like a frog in a puddling. She was somewhere high up; she was in the eucalyptus. I took off my wide-brim vampire-hunter and peered into the treetops for her shiny little raven croaks. Leaves rustled. I wished my cape and309. 619-670-8356.

WHAT WILL I AND WON'T WATCH THIS WEEK
THURSDAY, JUNE 12
MICKEY MOUSE CLUBHOUSE
DISNEY 8:30 P.M.
For those of you still confused about this, let me tell you: Bambi was a boy. I know. It's weird because he's a little sissy and his name is Bambi and everything. But, if you watch all the way through his prancing little spindly legs grows a set of horns or antlers or whatever those branchy things on deer heads are called. And at the very end he has kids, although — wow — I really doubt he's the dad, you know? Like Tom Cruise and that thing Katie Holmes carries around.

MILLION DOLLAR PASSWORD
CBS 8:00 P.M.
Super. Now Regis Philbin and Betty White have someplace to go during the day. Otherwise, they'd spend their afternoons in tattered robes riding golf carts around their "community" and yelling at teenagers, "You kids get out of here! I see you, smoking cigarettes in that parking lot, your rotten little SOBs!"

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BY OLLIE
Northern Exposure and his little brother with the Jewfo were “math cops” or something. Yeah, that sounds awesome. Let’s run a marathon of that stinkin’ Tupperware full of monkey armpits.

SATURDAY, JUNE 14
TERMINATOR 3: RISE OF THE MACHINES
FX 5:30 P.M.
Better than Terminator 4: Pay No Attention to His Gray Hair or His Man Boots. He’s a Robot, Damn It. He Doesn’t Age. Really Yes, He’s in Dolphin Shorts and a Fedora This Time, But He’s the Same Robot as the First One. We’re Serious. Pay NO ATTENTION!

SUNDAY, JUNE 15
INNINGS BY INNINGS: PORTRAIT OF A COACH
ESPN 7:00 P.M.
Damn, I’d love to be a major-league coach. By the time players have hit the major leagues, they already know how to hit and bunt and all that. As a coach, your main concerns are (a) chewing something and (b) getting one foot on the highest step possible to let that cameraman get a nice close-up of the “place that shall be scratched.” You could be drunk as hell. Man, I want to be a coach.

MONDAY, JUNE 16
SAM THE COOKING GUY
CBS 9:30 P.M.
Probably the most embarrassing food is the hotdog. In public you have to say, “Oh, hotdogs! Gross!” They’re made out of but and knees! But you know you love ‘em. You sneak hotdogs. Your girlfriend caught you once because you came home smelling like hotdog, but you played it off and told her that a bum jumped you and rubbed hotdog smell on you, but you didn’t eat one. “No way. Not a hotdog, Gross!” When she turned around you smelled a happy just-eat-a-hotdog-and-got-away-with-it smile.

TUESDAY, JUNE 17
NORA’S HAIR SALON 2: A CUT ABOVE
BET 8:00 P.M.
If I were white, I’d write someone in Congress. “Please prevent Hollywood from making any more black-hair-salons movies. Really, we have lives outside of hair salons; in fact, I spend more time at the bank and grocery store, easy, but this is the 19th movie about black hair salons in the past three years. Please, Asians have martial arts movies and white people have weddings and robots, and those are cool. Please, help us.”

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 18
CELEBRITY CIRCUS
NBC 9:30 P.M.
Ah, cute. Is there anything celebrities won’t do for money that makes them look completely stupid? No. That’s why they’re celebrities. Dance, monkey boy! Dance!

THURSDAY, JUNE 19
100 GREATEST SONGS OF THE ’80S:
HOUR 5
VH 10:00 P.M.
Ugh. Just ugh.
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I am put in mind of my mother’s adage, and that was “Never borrow trouble.”

I suppose it can be classed as a superstition that I have an irrational fear of things going too well. As common as it may be, there is no logical reason why a series of desirable events need be followed by a series of the undesirable. I think of this as the “other shoe dropping” theory or the “it’s just too quiet, too quiet, Kowalski” theory.

I suppose I am in one of those periods where nothing is going hellishly wrong, or what I call Good Times. This makes for poor subject matter along the personal or confessional lines, which is why I often have something interesting to go on about. As for this mid-weekend in June, I foresee nothing foreboding. In fact, I foresee sitting at a friend’s poolside, sipping iced coffee just a shuffle away from his condominium’s clubhouse featuring four pool tables. Another friend also has a pool at his building. He also has a great record collection, a Rickenbacker 12-string, and a convertible in case we want to go cruising for chicks or replays our supply of Depends. Hey, Gary, I always liked you best.

So what could go wrong on Friday? For one thing, it’s payday, which means Bank Day. Every Friday at the bank I am open for some unpleasant surprise involving my balance or some new courtesy of one of my muses...that is to say, my creditors. Another real possibility is some new crisis involving my son—it always seems to happen on weekends. But I am put in mind of my mother’s adage (not original with her, but she was fond of it), and that was “Never borrow trouble.”

And the whole Friday–the 13th thing is nothing if not an occasion for that sin. When things are going well, a hazard is boredom or complacency. While boredom has never been a serious problem of mine (always being gifted with some order of suffering or another as it has been needed), I do find myself looking for or borrowing someone else’s trouble. This is the root appeal of all adventure stories, which was once defined by someone or other as “Someone else, far away, in trouble.”

I’m better at this than I used to be. I find, looking around at the books piled up around me, that fewer titles than usual indicate some truly bad scene or another for someone, real or imagined. Here is The Day of Saint Anthony’s Fire, by John G. Fuller, a book that I discovered in the ’70s that I am re-reading. It is about a town in France, Pont-Saint-Esprit, some 800 years ago, which was dosed with a crude form of LSD in the town’s bread and flour supply. Fifty-some people had one very bad trip and three people died in the throes of diabolical hallucinations. Damn bad luck and great reading. I also have The Ruins, by Scott Smith, a commercial horror novel and summer chiller, well written but a little formulaic: vacating young people in the Yucatan encounter mythic ancient evil, and — aaaaah! — it gets them.

I’ve also been reading The Shadow of the Wind, by Carlos Ruiz Zafón, a cozy, bookish tale set in Spain in the 1940s and ’50s concerning a demonic boogeyman who sets out to systematically burn certain obscure novels as if they needed any help on their way to oblivion. Cheesy (as Stephen King called it) and purple, it is good fun and couched in reassuring comfort-food type prose.

These are the only real touchstones to the dark side I find I need this weekend and hope the fates will be happy with that. Possible with the exception of The Ruins (though it’s not all bad) I can wholeheartedly recommend the other titles. St. Anthony’s Fire is hard to find, but you should have no trouble with Shadow. Those stories contain all the troubles any of more readers could want, and I see no problem with borrowing them at all.