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**CITY LIGHTS**

By Reader staff writers

**Cops will be watching**

List of upcoming anti-DUI activities include post-football crackdowns.

San Diego — Law-enforcement groups around San Diego have announced a schedule of DUI crackdown efforts they’ll be engaging in over the holiday season as part of the ongoing “Avoid the 15” campaign, so named for the 15 law-enforcement agencies participating.

The name, along with the strategy of releasing general information on planned actions, is to encourage would-be drunk drivers to plan ahead for safe transportation while partying.

Interestingly enough, as readers have often questioned the lack of DUI controls following football games, two such events are listed as targets on the holiday list.

December 14: Sobriety/driver’s license checkpoints in Vista and Santee from 8 p.m. to 3 a.m. December 15: DUI warrant sweep in the South Bay area, plus sobriety/driver’s license checkpoints in Lemon Grove and Encinitas from 8 p.m. to 3 a.m. December 20: DUI saturation patrol around Qualcomm Stadium following the Poinsettia Bowl, 5 p.m. to midnight. December 21: Sobriety/driver’s license checkpoint in Encinitas from 8 p.m. to 3 a.m. December 22: Sobriety/driver’s license checkpoint in Rancho San Diego (unincorporated El Cajon) from 8 p.m. to 3 a.m. December 28: Sobriety/driver’s license checkpoints in Poway and Imperial Beach from 8 p.m. to 3 a.m. December 29: Sobriety/driver’s license checkpoint in Chula Vista from 8 p.m. to 3 a.m. December 30: DUI saturation patrol around Qualcomm Stadium following the Chargers/Raiders game, 5 p.m. to midnight. December 31: DUI saturation patrols countywide.

“Don’t let a DUI ruin your holidays,” reminds Sheriff Bill Gore. “We will be watching.”

Dave Rice, December 7

**Nonprofits non-permitted**

City proposal could kill entertainment permit exemptions for nonprofits

San Diego — The police department hopes to raise some extra cash by eliminating the exemption that allows nonprofit organizations to throw fundraisers and other entertainment events without having to pay for a city permit.

To boost their argument, San Diego Police Department officials say the exemptions provided to nonprofits violates state Proposition 26 — claiming that those paying for permits are subsidizing those nonprofit organizations because of the need to provide police presence.

But some community nonprofits disagree. One such organization, the WorldBeat Cultural Center in Balboa Park, looks to defeat that proposal.

Today, the nonprofit posted an online petition at signon.org looking for help.

Makeda Cheatam, from WorldBeat, also appeared at a council hearing on December 4 and urged city councilmembers to reconsider doing away with the exemption.

“Most nonprofits didn’t know about this,” Cheatam said. “We didn’t know until we received a notice on our door on Friday [December 1]. We are struggling right now. We can’t take out permits. You have to protect your nonprofits that are here to serve the community.”

Dorian Hargrove, December 6

**Murders down**

Mexico seeing its first drop in drug war murders since 2006

Baja — Mexico is on pace to see a drop in drug-war-related murders for the first time since the campaign against organized crime began in 2006. The Economist reported earlier this month, based on statistics kept by Grupo Reforma, that by the end of November, Mexico had 22 percent less gangland murders as opposed to the same time period in 2011.

Tijuana has made great progress in reducing overall crime, while once much more dangerous cities, like Ciudad Juarez, are beginning to follow the same trend. Murders have been pushed to rural areas.

The new president of Mexico, Enrique Peña Nieto, has vowed to continue the war on organized crime despite doubts by critics.

K. Mennem, December 6

**CHP fires 33 shots**

Incident may have been “suicide by cop”

El Cajon — Anthony Osorio, a 27-year-old resident of the unincorporated El Cajon community of Crest, shot and killed by California Highway Patrol officers over the weekend, had over 30 bullets fired at him after refusing orders to stop and advancing upon officers, the sheriff’s department confirmed yesterday.

Officers involved in the shooting were officer David Bigalk, officer Ryan Harrison, and sergeant Phillip Jones.

After a high-speed pursuit that began on Interstate 8, Osorio eventually rolled his 2005 Chevrolet Tahoe near the 1900 block of La Cresta Drive, with the vehicle coming to rest back on its wheels. A CHP video camera shows that Osorio refused orders to put his hands up and instead exited the vehicle, screaming profanities and advancing toward the three patrolmen.

According to a police statement, officers were unable to see Osorio’s right side and

continued on page 43

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**Jack in the Box**

Should Jack stay in Mexican foods?

By Don Bauder

Gulp. An American icon, fast food, has a bellyache. In October, once-invincible McDonald’s reported that monthly sales in United States units open for a year (called same-store sales) declined for the first time since 2003. November same-store sales rebounded, but Wall Street is still nervous. Chipotle Mexican Grill, whose same-store sales once routinely zoomed more than 10 percent, reported only a 5 percent gain in the third quarter. Chipotle’s stock, which soared close to $450 in halcyon days, has dropped back into the $270s, where it still appears a mite bubbly.

The National Restaurant Association has a restaurant performance index that monitors the pulse of the industry. The survey released November 30 was the worst in 14 months. Only 40 percent of restaurants said their same-store sales had grown the previous month. Most restaurants said traffic had declined in October. Fast-food restaurants were particularly vulnerable.

San Diego’s iconic Jack in the Box reflects industry indignation. In its fourth quarter, earnings per share dropped from 50 cents to 39 cents from 50 cents in the same period a year earlier. Revenue fell 2.5 percent from the comparable quarter last year. “Jack in the Box whiffed on revenues and missed [Wall Street analysts’] estimates on earnings per share,” says Seth Jayson of the Motley Fool, and other analysts exhibited signs of unhappiness. However, the company’s actual performance was much better than earnings, which were affected by complicated technical factors.

Jack in the Box has 2200 fast-food sandwich/hamburger shops in 21 states.

That business started in 1951 with a drive-through operation on El Cajon Boulevard. One current problem has been that 42 percent of Jack outlets are in California, whose economy has been anemic (although some say it is now picking up). Jack also owns 600 Qdoba Mexican Grill fast casual restaurants in 42 states. That business was purchased in 2003. (There is one Qdoba in Tijuana and will likely be one at the San Diego International Airport next year.) This is Jack’s sec-
Ex-boyfriend, meth, a knife, a death
by Eva Knott

I got mad, and we were having pizza, and I threw pizza at him.” Shaquita said she threw the pizza at Fernando. She had been mad at him for some days, since she had loaned him $300.

On the evening of Friday, May 4, 2012, they were in her apartment together on Fig Street in Escondido. Shaquita gets her money from the government. Her “public assistance” arrives on the first of the month. She said she had used an electronic benefits card at an ATM to withdraw the cash that she gave to Fernando. "We didn’t talk about why; I just gave it to him.” She assumed Fernando would use the money to buy methamphetamine. They both used meth.

That Friday, Shaquita told Fernando she wanted her money back. But, “He wasn’t hearing me. Well, I got mad because he wasn’t taking me seriously.” They weren’t really arguing, according to Shaquita. Instead, she says, Fernando was responding to her demands with “the silent treatment.” Tired of his silent treatment, Shaquita grew irate and threw pizza at Fernando. “Then he got mad,” she says, “and he got on the phone, and he called someone, I believe a female, to come. And he said, ‘Come slap this girl.’ He said to come slap me.” Shaquita said she told Fernando to leave, but he didn’t. He had a habit of not leaving when asked, Shaquita explained. “I mean, I would always [ask him to leave] and it didn’t matter.” Fernando wanted to spend nights with her, Shaquita explained, because he was a jealous person. He thought that if he were there then she couldn’t be with someone else.

It was after 3:00 a.m., Saturday, May 5, when Shaquita decided to make a phone call. While Fernando was upstairs, Shaquita went downstairs, to the kitchen. She used her cell phone to call Chris, who is her former boyfriend and the father of two of her children.


continued on page 42
**LETTERS**

We welcome letters pertaining to the contents of the Reader. Phone them in at 619-235-3000, x460; address them to Letters, Box 85803, San Diego, CA 92186-5803; or submit them at SDReader.com/letters. Include your name, address, and phone number. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

**Enough of Apple Pie**

Don Bauder’s November 21 article, “Hispanic vote calls shots in San Diego (City Lights),” regarding changes to voting demographics, was definitely a factor in the recent election. However, I believe that there is another important factor. The Republicans have become old and boring, and most people are aware of their true intentions. Their message is reactionary, and their primary purpose is to create conditions that allow the wealthy to retain their influence and suck money out of the government, e.g. football stadium.

Mom, apple pie, baseball, and religion are not enough to get one elected. People are looking for new ideas to help improve our ability to compete in a global economy. They are searching for candidates who can implement new ideas that will improve living standards for everyone, not just the wealthy.

The Democrats need to take note of this. They need to come up with better ideas than simply raising taxes and handing out money. Everyone who can work, should work. Everyone should contribute something to the government.

As a strong mayor, Bob Filner will have the opportunity to present and implement new ideas in San Diego. It’s critical for him to be pragmatic and fiscally responsible. I suggest his first act be a comprehensive audit of the city’s financial condition. This is especially important considering that Jerry Sanders projected a $4.9 million surplus for fiscal year 2014 before the election, while the SD Independent Budget Analyst predicted a $84.2 million deficit after the election. We must not allow our public officials to lie to us, and we must make them accountable when they do lie.

Ron Harris
Scripps Ranch

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NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

By Reader stringers

LA MESA
Insult to injury
Billboard image of Bonnie Dumanis defaced
On December 3, drivers on Interstate 8 west saw an addition to the picture of district attorney Bonnie Dumanis on the 14-foot-tall, 48-foot-wide billboard near the El Cajon Boulevard exit.

On the billboard warning that "Workers' Comp Fraud Is a Felony," a vandal or vandals defaced the DA's face, adding a black mustache and goatee and blacking out a tooth. The billboard sits atop the roof of Jejjoni Sign Manufacturer, a business located on Center Street in La Mesa's industrial section.

The vandalism occurred during the weekend, probably on Sunday, December 2, according to business owner Hoss Jejjoni. "I don't know if this was an anti-authority expression or a high-school prank," Jejjoni said.

LIZ SWAIN, DECEMBER 7

OCEAN BEACH
Guard salute
O.B. plans for commemorative statue outside lifeguard station
A project to enhance and upgrade O.B.'s main lifeguard station with a bronze statue is being suggested for the lawn adjacent to the tower on Abbott Street.

At the December 5 Ocean Beach Planning Board meeting, former San Diego city councilman Byron Wear spoke before the board regarding the life-size 6’3” statue of a lifeguard to be put in place on the corner of the Veteran’s Plaza lawn, 29 feet south of the tower at the foot of Santa Monica Avenue.

The board viewed a picture of the statue that was made to resemble Skeeter Malcolm, a local surfer who died in 1993 at 70 years old. The sculpture will also memorialize 13 WWI soldiers from Camp Kearny who drowned in O.B. in 1918. It was after this tragic incident that a lifeguard program was initiated in O.B.

Wear stated that the cost of the project would be $38,000 and that $15,000 had already been raised by community groups.

The statue is slated to make its appearance in late spring of 2013.

MERCY BARON, DECEMBER 7

TIJUANA
Border upgrade en route
New pedestrian inspection station under construction at Tijuana border
New rectangular columns of steel rebar sprout into space from a plot of land on the Mexican side of the border at San Ysidro. The columns, reaching the height of the multistoried office building it is planned to be and covering an expanse of roughly a quarter of a football field, mark the parameters of a new addition to the border complex.

Customs inspectors and Mexican border agents are ensconced inside a small room that was once home to the last Caliente betting parlor a gambler could find while waiting in line to cross into the U.S. This former slot and sports-book joint is not working out as a pedestrian border-inspection station, so the new station is being built right behind it.

T.B. BEAudeau, DECEMBER 6

NORTH PARK
Not hip enough
The staple antique and collectible shop Pat's Corner falls to "hipsters" and "gentrification"
"It's a mom-and-pop operation with just mom," says Pat (last name withheld) of North Park antique and collectible shop Pat's Corner.

Pat has less than a month to move

The staple boutique has been at its current location on 30th and Upas for eight years, offering an anachronistic assortment of furniture, crafts, clothing, and knickknacks.

Now, Pat has until January 1 to clear out by order of the property owner or else face a $600 fine.

"The property was leased to some supposedly high-end architecture guy," says Pat, who is currently looking for a new location.

"It was a month-to-month lease, so she can do that..."

"I've been here eight years and the owner has not done a single thing," says Pat. "The roof leaks, there's asbestos in the back, there's mold. I haven't complained at all to her. I even had the building painted myself because it looked awful."

In response, musician and Pat's Corner regular Cervantes Magaña started a Facebook event to rally supporters, writing:

"She isn't being evicted because of a lack of business, but instead big business has made it a $600 fine.

"They are evicting Pat for gentrifying the neighborhood, because Pat's is a small business doing that..."

The thread has sparked a long discussion pointing fingers at primarily "hipsters"

 Tuấn Vietnam, DECEMBER 7

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My nephew Brian greeted us just inside the door to my mother’s house. On his head was a furry Santa hat, and in his hands he held a black plastic camera. “Say, ‘Cheese,’” he said through an adorable smile. I flashed my teeth and leaned in close, thinking to bring him in for a hug after he played picture-time or whatever, but once my face was a few inches from the “camera,” a cold stream of water gushed from the fake lens and onto my face. “Oh, come on,” I said, trying not to smear my lipstick as I patted my nose and lips dry. “Okay, fine. You got me. But I’m going to get you back.” And I did — about an hour later, when I lifted him under my arm like a handbag, carried him to the kitchen sink, and turned the faucet on his head as he laughed and squirmed. But for now, revenge could wait, as I had other matters to attend to; namely, the delivery of gifts.

The gifts David and I came bearing were not Christmas gifts. I assumed that, by now, my sisters had come up with some kind of story to explain why Aunt Barb and Uncle David were never seen on Christmas day. The actual reason is boring — my man and I prefer to do our own thing: we start with champagne and then move on to whatever we feel like doing for a day while the rest of the world is busy. We also have a “no gift” rule. No religion, no obligation, no stress, no email or phone calls to contend with; it’s a wonderful day.

And, anyway, it was only the first of December. The reason for the gifts was we’d just gotten home from visiting with David’s parents on Martha’s Vineyard, and every time we’re on the island we hit up two stores known for their fun gifts (Rainy Day in Vineyard Haven and Alley’s General Store in West Tisbury) and select a few things to bring back to our niephlings. I like to give the kids presents outside the traditional gift-giving occasions — mostly because I don’t want to compete with other gift-givers for the recipient’s acknowledgement and appreciation.

It just so happened that the day we were able to deliver our bag of goodies, the family was gathered at Mom’s to decorate her Christmas tree. Each year, my sister Heather and her husband Sean help Mom pick out a tree, and then they haul it home and make it vertical in her living room. Once the pine is in place, my mother chooses a seat on the sofa that gives her the best full-tree vantage point, and it is from there that she directs the decorating like a New York Italian Tarantino.

When David and I arrived, the tree was already standing, but the evidence showed it had just gone up — pine needles littered the carpet and the boxes of ornaments had yet to be opened. Sean took care of the lights — all white, to match the white lace bows and colored lights of my early childhood for a more “Victorian” look.

My brother-in-law Simon was there with Bella and Olivia. Before the kids broke into the boxes, I had them gather ’round so I could explain each bestowal. “These rocks are actually geodes — you use a sock to bash them open to find the crystals inside. But wait for your dad to help. When you put together the puzzle pieces from this ‘floating bottle,’ it’ll form a treasure map. This...I don’t know what this is, some kind of pirate game. Liam, you’re the oldest, figure it out and explain it to the others, will you? Brian, you and Bella are in charge of the fake tattoos.”

Heather ensured that each child thanked us properly, and I reveled in the gratitude, but only for a few minutes, because now it was tree time. An eight-foot tall tree has never been dressed so quickly. The children formed an ornament brigade, advancing on the tree with the determination of Patton’s Army.

I sat on the couch beside Heather and Mom. “It’s so much more fun when we don’t have to be the ones taking direction,” I said to Heather. She smiled and nodded. I wondered if my niephlings would ever reach the same point of irritation we did with the whole tree-decorating thing; if they would ever snap at their Nana, You think it needs to be a little higher and to the right? Then put it on yourself. I cringed at the memory of what petulant little bitches my sisters and I had been at times.

Ornaments flashed by like memories. The weird nylon granny heads Mom sewed had long since lost their little wire glasses. There were the driftwood pieces painted to look like freakish elves — Mom bought a new one (or two) every year from the holiday craft fair in Coronado. The nutcracker soldier made of construction paper that Jenny created in kindergarten — how had that survived?

“You got me this one,” Mom said, holding up a Patience Brewster “Six Geese a-Laying” sculpture, complete with white, downy feathers. “And this.” Mom handed me a glass hummingbird.

“I have damn good taste in ornaments,” I said. “That reminds me, I have something for you, too.” I returned to the bag of gifts and retrieved a blob of bubble wrap, from which I unearthed a glass dome containing a red glittery cardinal and little balls of snow.

“It’s not a chicken,” Mom said, showing her disappointment.

“You have enough chickens,” I snapped. “It’s time to branch out into other birds.”

“I’m just kidding,” Mom said unconvincingly.

“Hey, Brian,” I said. “Where did you put that camera? I think your Nana wants you to take her picture.”

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San Diego Reader, December 13, 2012
Rewriting Pop Music History?

Newly Discovered Artifact Points to Alternate, Original Version of San Diego-Scribbled Song

If you believe the history — and up until now, you would have had no reason to doubt it — then you think that songwriter Jack Tempchin penned the last verse of “Peaceful, Easy Feeling” (which was later recorded by the Eagles) and became one of the band’s biggest-selling singles) at the Hillcrest Wienerschnitzel on Washington Street while waiting for his order.

But a recent discovery in the archives at the San Diego Museum of Trash (formerly known as the Mira Mesa Landfill) has cast doubt on the historical record.

“What we have found may change everything we know about the history of this important song,” attests Dr. David Dumpster-Diver, who acquired the artifact in a complicated gray-market deal involving a half-eaten Big Mac and a swallow of Popov-brand vodka.

The item in question appears to be a Wienerschnitzel paper placemat/menu, heavily stained and deeply crumpled. “But the typography and pricing are correct for the time period,” observes Dumpster-Diver. “And the oily residue, which apparently acted as a preservative, is consistent with the fries Tempchin claims to have ordered.

Rather, the title reflects something much more germane to the moment in which Tempchin was writing. In this version, it’s ‘Greaseful, Queasy Feeling.’ It’s our contention that Tempchin was originally writing about his lunch.

Most of the placemat has, unfortunately, been eaten by rats. But Dumpster-Diver points to one faded scrap showing a chorus that may have predated the famous lines, ‘Cause I got a peaceful easy feeling/ And I know you won’t let me down/ ’cause I’m already standing on the ground. They read, ‘Cause I got a greasy, queasy feeling/ way down deep inside my gut/ ’cause it’s already heading toward my butt.”

“I mean, sure, it’s poetry,” concluded Dumpster-Diver. “You could even argue that it’s better than the version that eventually made it into the studio with the Eagles. But that’s not the point. The point is that the public deserves to know the truth about its pop songs.”

Nuclear Regulatory Commission Offers Public Virtual Tour of San Onofre Plant

Virtual Guide: “At the NRC, we’re committed to transparency and accountability, even if weEEARRGH!”

RELOADING AT SONGS — Ever since the San Onofre nuclear power plant’s sudden shutdown over this year, controversy and uncertainty has hung in the air around the facility like a blanket of deadly radioactive fallout. Now, in an effort to dispel the persistent rumors about flesh-eating mutants and other safety hazards involved with a possible restart of operations, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission has constructed a virtual tour of the plant, viewable online at onofre.com.

“What we understand that many members of the public are concerned about the safety and stability of SONGS,” said NRC chief of containment Blade Hammer. “We want to give them every assurance that the United States government is looking out for their safety and keeping their children from becoming kiddie tartare for some radioactive nasty. Lock and load, people, and step right this way!”

Asking whether she felt safer as a result of having visited the virtual tour site, Carlsbad resident Susan McCreedy paused before answering. “Yes!”

Dueling Poop Groups

RECONSIDERING OUR ORDER, BROCKTON VILLA, LA JOLLA — “It started with the seals,” recalls Eloise McKinley-Braeburton, who famously spearheaded the La Jolla Women’s Club effort to have Children’s Beach renamed Sealshit Cove “in the interest of truth, justice, and, who knows, maybe even civic action on the part of America’s Finest Shitty. Sorry — ‘City.’”

But, notes McKinley-Braeburton, “as that horrid children’s book that seems so popular today’s toddler set reminds us, everybody poops. And since everybody seems to be welcome along the shores of La Jolla Cove these days, that means that the seals aren’t the only ones...how do you say it, ‘stinking up the joint.’”

The new culprits are the many birds that alight and then eliminate on the rocky outcrops that make La Jolla Cove an otherwise attractive tourist destination. “The very idea that there should be some sort of legal stink about cleaning up this mess is a crock of shit,” complains McKinley-Braeburton. “I’ve read that there are multiple layers of regulations through which our duly elected pooplic officials have to dig before action can be taken. Well, the La Jolla Women’s Club is also digging through multiple layers, if you take my meaning, and we have had quite enough. Area of Biological Significance, indeed.”

To that end, she and her allies have formed POOP, which stands for Prohibit Ornithological Olfactory Punishments. “POOP,” she explains, “is presenting POOP [the Public Outhouse Outlaw Proposal] to the city council on Monday. And if we can’t get satisfaction and relief, we will consider partnering with the decidedly less dignified activist group POOPI [People Outraged Over Poop], which subscribes to a policy of POOPSEA [Pelicans and Ospreys are Over-Populated, Shoot ’Em All]. It’s a drastic option, but I mean, really...”

My grand-nephew Warwick Throckmorton III just paid $2.3 million for a home overlooking the Cove, and he hasn’t been able to open the windows for a month. You see how upset I am? I’ve gone and mentioned money!”

McKinley-Braeburton is not without her opponents, however. The same people who fought her on GROSS, the General Referendum On Seal Shit, are reportedly getting ready to drop a counter-proposal, known as POOPS [Protect Our Outdoor Poop Sanctuaries]. An operative speaking on condition of anonymity warned, “McKinley-Braeburton and her kind are species-specific elitists. They have got to learn: that shit ain’t gonna fly.”
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Heymatt:
I was born and raised in San Diego County. Now I am living in North Carolina and I NEED an answer to my question. Back in the 1960s there was a late-night/early-morning television show. The host was a woman with white/pink hair, sitting in a pile of chiffon and lit by lots of christmas lights. She spoke about being in contact with visitors from another planet or galaxy. The aliens were all blondes. She showed cartoon-like pictures of these meetings, all very crudely drawn. I believe her son and she had a group of followers. I believe they built some sort of a “landing strip” somewhere in East County. Please, Matt...can you tell me her name? You are my last good hope...none of my sisters nor any of my old contacts seem to remember.
— Carolyn

The woman’s name was Ruth E. Norman, and she used to cruise around East County in a Cadillac with a flying saucer on the roof. She, along with her husband Earnest, was one of the founders of the Unarius movement. Unarius promotes a complex, multi-dimensional cosmology and claimed to be in communication with extraterrestrial beings from different planets and planes of existence. The group claims an affinity for inventor Nikola Tesla, whom they consider the “elder brother,” and they hope to bring his dreams of free energy to fruition. For the Unarius Presents show, Ruth Norman would put on the costume of “Queen Uriel” and deliver sermons, lectures, and prophecies of the coming “Space Brothers.” You’re also correct about the landing strip: Norman purchased over 60 acres in Jamul during the early ’70s. Unarius Presents was broadcast sporadically on public-access stations nationwide for about 20 years until Norman’s health prevented her from producing the shows. She died in 1993, but the Unarius Academy of Science still has its active headquarters in El Cajon. Occasionally, the members still produce public-access television programs, links to which can be found on their website.

Hey Matt:
What’s that odd building that is visible from the 52 between 163 and I-15? There’s a small cluster of buildings, and one has something round on the roof.
— Lisa

At first I thought you might have meant the sheriff’s department pistol range, which is out in east Miramar, but then I studied the map. That area is still technically within the bounds of the Marine Corps air base, so the driveway that leads down to the trio of buildings doesn’t have any signage or anything, which heightens the mystery. That little round-roofed building looks pretty cool, like some top-secret espionage stuff might be contained within...or maybe it’s filled with weapons-grade Jiffy Pop. Turns out that it’s nothing special. The three buildings are warehouses, mostly for equipment used in firefighter training that takes place in the eastern portion of the MCAS Miramar territory.

Heymatt:
How can some people be so cruel? My neighbors got a pitbull puppy and have caged it in a tiny space with six-foot plywood walls so nobody can see in and the dog can’t see out. She cries and yelps all day, but nobody ever does anything. I believe they are raising it to fight or be bait for fighting dogs, and it breaks my heart. I’ve called the Pitbull Society and Animal Control many times, but nobody ever returns my calls. My veterinarian says that as long as the dog has food, water, and shelter the owners can do whatever they want with her. Is there anything I can do in this situation?
— Roy, National City

I’ve always been under the impression that individual cases of animal abuse (like the one you refer to) are harder to do anything about than more “institutional” cases (like factory farming and puppy mills). However, according to the Animal Legal Defense Fund, hundreds of individual offenders go through the system every day under animal-cruelty laws. Statute 597t from the California penal code regards the confinement of animals and states that it’s unlawful to keep an animal without sufficient exercise. If the situation is as you describe it, the owners could be in violation.

Of course, I don’t know the exact specifics here, so I can’t give you legal advice or anything, but I can advise persistence! You could check with San Diego County Animal Services and see if there is a report on file for the case you’re talking about. I’m assuming that’s who you complained to originally. They’re the only ones with any real law enforcement powers. If they have a report on file, then you have somewhere to go. If you feel the issue isn’t resolved, pressure them to go back out. Getting a person on the phone who can give you the answers you need is important. Rather than waiting for someone to call you, be active and pursue your own goals. That goes for just about everything in life, when you get right down to it.

Find more Matthew Alice online at SDReader.com/hip

Got a question you need answered? Send an email to heymatt@sdreader.com or fax to 619-231-0489 or mail to Matthew Alice, c/o the Reader, Box 85803, San Diego, CA 92186.
Primal Scream: Higher than the Sun
June 5, 2012

Back home, I had gone to listen to a lecture by one of my favorite authors, Pete Hamill, and he had inspired me to do this study-abroad program at Trinity College in Dublin, Ireland. There was going to be a lot of writing involved, and that was okay with me. I have always known I could write my way out of hell. So, I took out the loan of $5500, and next thing I knew I was in the Emerald Isle….

Then there was Orestes, an Italian boy around my age, a penpal through my college.com email server. Orestes decided he wanted to finally meet me in person. I had just had vocal-cord surgery, and my voice was like that of a male tranny. While talking on the phone one day, Orestes got a rise out of me by telling me that for all he knew, I was a man. I was so mad at his distrust that I didn’t talk to him for days. Then he wrote that he was flying over to apologize in person, and bring flowers for forgiveness. I didn’t believe it until Cheryl and I were picking him up from the airport. I was so nervous, I was having a Harp at ten in the morning at the airport bar.

As the passengers from Italy streamed through the gate, we looked on, hopeful that every Marcello Mastroianni lookalike was Orestes. I don’t know at which point a giant, smiling Quasimodo (sans hunchback) waved at us, but Cheryl and I just had to laugh. Had he looked like a movie star, he would have had me at “Hello,” but Orestes was truly a freak of nature. I had imagined an Adonis, with cheap mascara that should have stung, or call 1-800-435-5515

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BLOG DIEGO

TITLE: Marisa Siervo’s Facebook | ADDRESS: facebook.com/marisasiervooniel
AUTHOR: Marisa Siervo | FROM: Solana Beach | BLOGGING SINCE: The Dawn of the Internet

Marisa Siervo met her Greek god while attending Trinity College in Dublin, Ireland. Unfortunately, he didn’t turn out to be Adonis.

POST TITLE: Primal Scream: Higher than the Sun
POST DATE: June 5, 2012

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I was cranky with a cold and angry that my Prince Charming had turned out to be a toad, but I found that Orestes was — and remains to this day — the most honest and loyal friend I’ve ever had. We became traveling companions, exploring Dublin together on daily excursions, driven by our desire to get out and be free and spontaneous. Our friendship was the purest I have ever had with another human being. No, we never had anything sexual; our hugs at the end of the day were acts of sincere fondness for each other, an expression of gratitude. The best times I had in Ireland were in the company of Cheryl and Orestes; and when I was with the both of them, I felt truly blessed.

Orestes left Dublin two days before my then-boyfriend Fulvio met up with me there. I didn’t cry when we said our goodbyes; I just stared at him and was suddenly struck by his beauty. I hate goodbyes. One last hug, and as I turned away and walked in the direction of Trinity, the tears flooded my eyes with cheap mascara that should have stung, but the pain was all in my heart.

Orestes kept in touch with me for a while, but one day, past-dweller that I am, I nostalgically recalled, for the hundredth time, all the wonderful things we had seen and done in Dublin. We had both grown fond of Malahide and its magnificent castle. We must have done that tour about half a dozen times and eaten at all the restaurants in town. I dreamily said, “I left my heart in Ireland! I must go back.” To this he replied, “I left my heart with you, so you MUST come back.” I flinched. Why did things have to get so complicated?

I don’t remember what I said. Knowing how I am, playing the tough girl all the time, I probably laughed nervously and told him he was delusional and being completely ridiculous at the moment. Humbled and humiliated, Orestes honorably retreated back to his engineering studies, motorcycles, and mean girls. I lost him, and I haven’t been back to Ireland for 12 years.

[Post edited for length]
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Who’s Next?
Andy Reid doesn’t need to coach the Chargers; the man and his mustache need a decade of quiet time.

N ow comes the part where we speculate about the next head coach. This exercise may be more interesting than usual if, as is heard in the public square, general manager A.J. Smith is fired alongside Norv Turner. If true, this means the selection of the next pair of second-raters will rest entirely with Chargers CEO Dean Spanos.

I am not comforted.

Even the names that are bandied about cause an onset of stomach-churning queasiness. Published reports put Andy Reid, Philadelphia head coach, as a leading candidate. The sporting world rises as one and screams, “RETREAD!” Reid is burned out and it shows. Sure, the guy can coach, but not lately: 8-8 in 2011; 4-9 this year. Lately is all that counts in the NFL. Reid has family troubles, media troubles, locker-room troubles...the man needs a decade of quiet time. A good hire for San Diego.

Super-retread Mike Holmgren quit Green Bay, then had a good run in Seattle, making the playoffs six times and the Super Bowl once. Left after the 2008 season to become president of the Cleveland Browns. Four years later, Cleveland still sucks, but now sucks with a new owner who announced Holmgren will leave after the 2012 season.

Why not Mike Ditka?
And there’s super-super-retread Wade Phillips. It’s hard to believe this of anyone under the age of 117 years, but Phillips has been coaching in the NFL since Gerald Ford was president. The man can’t be stopped. He’s had three tries as head coach: two years at Denver, three years at Buffalo, and four years with Dallas. It hasn’t worked out. But he was the defensive coordinator for the Chargers in 2004, 2005, and 2006. The team had a very good run, winning 35 games against 13 losses. Spanos loves promoting people above their level of competency, so why not bring Wade back? Go ahead, hand him a ten-year contract.

Jon Gruden’s name has been mentioned. A fool’s dream. He’s got a great gig now as the new John Madden of MNF. Even if he grows weary of that and wants to get back into coaching, he’s not coming to San Diego. Ownership here is lame unto generations. Forget about winning — ownership can’t get a new stadium built, hasn’t figured out how to move to L.A., basically doesn’t know what it wants. Jon Gruden always knows what he wants.

Okay, can’t get the big brother, how about the little brother, Jay Gruden? He’s the offensive coordinator for the Cincinnati Bengals. They’re having a sort-of good year, 7-6, and could make the playoffs. Or not. I don’t really care. Why not Kevin Gilbride?

So far, we’ve been talking about professional NFL coaches, stout-hearted men every one, but they’re all safe choices. Citizen, this is no time for safety. Dean Spanos must expand his vision, go wherever he needs to go in order to find the perfect fit.

How about the Italian cruise-ship captain Francesco Schettino? As you recall, he ran his cruise ship, the Costa Concordia, into the Italian coast last January. Thirty-two passengers and crew were killed. The good captain abandoned ship before crew, women, and children. Afterward, he explained that he “tripped” into a lifeboat.

But tripping is not the point. As the Costa Concordia was sinking, Captain Schettino called his wife, and according to an onboard black-box recording, said, “We hit a reef, the ship is listing, but I performed a great maneuver [and] everything is under control. Don’t worry, let’s forget all this sailing and we can start another job.”

Bottom line: The man is available and knows how to make excuses.

How about the CEO of Goldman Sachs, Lloyd Blankfein? He’s been CEO since May of 2006 and performed heroically during the Great Theft of 2008, guiding his company and company executives past the shallow reefs of federal prison and bankruptcy. As for the Goldman Sachs practice of selling worthless collateralized debt obligations to clients and then buying positions opposite the positions they had just sold, Blankfein testified before Congress, “Goldman Sachs had no moral or legal obligation to inform its clients it was betting against the product they were buying from Goldman Sachs, because they were acting in a fiduciary role.” Blankfein could mealy-mouth his way past a Chargers loss better than any coach in the NFL.

There are plenty of people out there who could do the job. John McAffee, Oprah Winfrey, O.J. Simpson, Yoko Ono, Ric Flair, Lil Wayne, Lindsay Lohan, and Hugh Hefner, for openers. And yet, and yet, the Chargers have begun their traditional December win streak with a magnificent 34-24 victory over the despoiled Pittsburgh Steelers. Maybe Norv deserves another year.
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**BestBuys**

— EVELYN KELLY

Our Ugly Christmas Sweater Party is fast approaching. The sweaters have been purchased: sequined reindeer sweater for me, neon elf sweater for hubby Patrick. My man has pulled out our Charlie Brown Christmas tree, bought 200 feet of tinsel garland, and is hoping the Christmas Story “fragile” leg lamp he ordered gets here on time.

Now we need a tasty eggnog, so a few mornings ago my friend Bernice popped over for a taste test. We started with the Mountain Dairy Lowfat Egg Nog. “You can tell it’s lowfat. If I’m having eggnog, I want a creamy eggnog.”

Sipping the next offering, she said, “And this [Mountain Dairy Vanilla Egg Nog] tastes like a vanilla milkshake from In-N-Out, not eggnog [$3.59 for a half gallon of both varieties at Ralphs].”

The sweetness in the Alta Dena Holiday Egg nog was overpowering. Its cousin, the Alta Dena Honey Sweetened Egg nog, tasted like honey and cinnamon but not eggnog [$3.29 for a quart of each variety at Albertsons].

“Part of the interest with eggnog is the thick, whipped, frothiness of it,” stated Patrick, “and this Alta Bertonsons Light Egg Nog misses that. It’s watery. With this full-strength Bertonsons variety, I’m just getting corn syrup [$2.49 for one quart of each].”

“This bottle wins the advertising award,” announced Bernice, holding up the bottle of CM Christmas Milk ($6.99 for a quart). “The elves’ favorite drink,” reads the bottle.

“Yeah, but the orange hue is a bit off-putting,” noticed Patrick, “and I’m getting no hint of egg nog — just flavored vanilla creamer.”

We finally hit a winner with the Trader Joe’s Egg Nog ($2.69 for a quart). “This is the first one that I can actually see spice flecks,” said Bernice. “It would present itself nicely in a bowl, and it has a balanced sweet-and-spice flavor.”

The light version: Trader Joe’s Light Egg Nog did not pass the taste test. “Pours like milk,” offered Bernice, “and without the creamy, you get water flavor and then a cloying of nutmeg [$2.69 for a quart].”

Bernice’s eyes lit up when I handed her the Southern Comfort Traditional Egg Nog [$3.49 for a quart at Albertsons). “Does it come pre-spiked?” she asked.

“This I could drink...with three parts bourbon and one part eggnog.”

“Sadly, no,” Patrick answered. “This tastes very different than the others. Sweeter than the Trader Joe’s Egg Nog, more egg flavor, fluffy and spicy. It would stand up nicely to some liquor.”

“But this [Southern Comfort Vanilla Spice Egg Nog] would not,” Bernice said ($3.49 for a quart at Ralphs). “Too thin, tastes like french-toast batter — just egg and vanilla.”

“There are two egg nog essentials,” pronounced Patrick. “It has to be frothy, and it must have the spicy smell of the holidays. These two [Lucerne Holiday Eggnog and the Lucerne Light Eggnog] lack the frothiness [$2.99 for a quart of each at Vons].”

“Ugh, I’m feeling a little queezy,” moaned Bernice. “Too much of a good thing.”

“But we must forge ahead,” encouraged Patrick.

Forge ahead, we did...to the organic selections. Clover Organic Farms Organic Eggnog ($4.99 for a quart at Whole Foods) was the favorite. “There’s a freshness to the creamy flavor that is delightful,” offered Bernice.

Horizon Organic Lowfat Eggnog ($4.99 for a quart at Albertsons) was just 140 calories per half-cup. “I would not know that was lowfat — by far the creamiest of the lowfat ones,” said Bernice.

“Too sweet,” grimaced Patrick, “and it smells like some kind of cleaning agent.”

Organics Valley Organic Egg Nog ($4.99 a quart at Whole Foods) was “a little thin on the pour,” noted Bernice, “but the flavor is a perfect blend of sweet and nutmeg.”

For fun, I wanted to taste some flavored nogs: pumpkin spice, gingerbread, vanilla cinnamon. But my tasters weren’t happy. “I’m a little upset that people would mess with eggnog,” announced Bernice.

“I agree,” said Patrick. “Since when is straight eggnog not good enough? I blame Starbucks for starting this pumpkin-spice craze.”

Of the Hood brand and Lucerne specialty nogs, the best was the Hood Gingerbread Egg Nog ($2.99 for a quart at Ralphs). “The others are horror shows, but this I could drink,” said Patrick, “with three parts bourbon and one part eggnog.”

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DANCING IN THE BONES

by Ian Pike

Did you hear the one about the triathlete who crashed and broke her arm trying to ride her bike down the sidewalk? I did. Heard it straight from the bruised party’s mouth at the third annual Hammer Festival this past weekend. She was still wearing a little mitten for a brace.

You want to know: What’s a Hammer Festival? Is it a celebration of the carpenters’ tool? Perhaps it’s a retrospective on the glory days of parachute pants and being “too legit to quit”? A convention for Thor wannabes?

None of the above. Hammer Festival is a bash for the endurance-athlete community, with a twist of charity fundraiser. The name’s a play on “hammer fest,” which is a term cyclists and other endurance athletes use for intense workouts. Cute, huh? Way to take a grueling experience and turn it into fun! This year, the affair raised a bundle of cash for the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation via silent auction and raffle. Other than the dude who had to dance Gangnam style when he won a new bike, everybody seemed to enjoy giving away their loot to help fight the terminal disease.

Even the horse-dancing guy was pretty into it.

I’ll be the first to admit that charity galas can be lame, but the organizers let the Hammer Festival be a real party. There was plenty of food from a grip of local restaurants, so I got to pig out on curry, cupcakes, and these little deviled eggs that had pork belly and poached lobster on top of them. This girl named “Marvi,” which might very well be short for Marvelous (in which case her parents were awesome), took a clean plate up to the buffet to speedily cheat her way to seconds, the sneaky little minx!

Before they let us party in earnest, there was a sportswear fashion show. Several lovely women had been hiding in the wings, wearing naught but lycra unitards and high heels, and they paraded across a makeshift catwalk to the furious strains of blaring house music. Girls in spandex cycling kits and three-inch stilettos is a must-see event, the awkward/sexy fabulousness of which is hard to convey and sound sincere about.

You wouldn’t think the Hall of Champions would be a good party venue, but it was ideal, and not just because of the sweet sports memorabilia. I saw Ted Williams’s old baseball jersey, an Olympic sailboat, and the architects’ model of Qualcomm Stadium (complete with miniature trees, cars, and people). At one point in the evening, I met a guy named Ted Williams, who was a graduate of Hoover High School. I think his dad might have been a baseball fan. I don’t usually get all googy eyed over stick-and-ball stuff, but the sports museum is rad.

And it has killer acoustics. When DJ Bugz (the resident DJ at the Tipsy Crow) got the okay to crank up the volume, it was as good as most nightclubs. Bugz’ style was poppy, loud, and a touch Euro, which fit the crowd, since being an enduro involves a requisite degree of Europe adoration. Everyone was there with charity on the mind but dancing in the bones. I’ve seen some desolate dance floors at parties and galas, but the Hammer Festival wasn’t one of them. Despite having to pay for drinks (boo!), partygoers emptied plenty of glasses and let the music move them. They didn’t close the bar until almost midnight — pumping time for anyone who has to get up and ride a bike for five hours on Saturday morning.

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In early June 2012, Chris Cruz, guitar and keyboard player for the San Diego band Through the Roots, locked himself in his room for a weekend to study up on Kickstarter, a crowd-funding site for creative projects. He’d heard of Kickstarter in passing but didn’t think much of it until a music-industry mentor told him it was gaining a lot of buzz in creative circles and might be worth looking into.

Cruz, 25, and his band of 20-somethings were on the brink of their fourth national tour, and their green bus (“Betsy”) needed work. They also needed studio time to put together their first full-length album. If they were going to do it all, they’d need more money than their various odd jobs (fast-food service, neighborhood handyman, screen-printing) could generate.

On its website, Kickstarter defines itself as “a funding platform for creative projects.” Users create fundraising campaigns for one-time projects in 13 categories: art, comics, dance, design, fashion, film and video, food, games, music, photography, publishing, technology, and theater. Kickstarter processes pledges through Amazon Payments, which holds the money until a campaign’s funding goal is reached. If the goal is not reached, all funds are returned to those who pledged.

For the uninitiated and others who aren’t familiar with crowdfunding, it’s not a hunt for investors; it’s more like a KPBS pledge drive. Project creators offer incentives for your pledge. These rewards can be anything from your name mentioned on Twitter to a private movie screening in your back yard.

“We realized Kickstarter was probably the best option to keep us on track for meeting all the goals we want to accomplish this year,” Cruz tells me over the phone from somewhere near Cedar City, Utah.

On September 13, Through the Roots began their West Coast tour along with Tomorrow’s Bad Seeds, another reggae/rock band out of Hermosa Beach. During our conversation, Cruz informs me that, tomorrow night, they’ll play the 17th show of the tour in Vegas. Then, next week, they’ll head to the East Coast for a tour with Rebellion and Passafire.
For the moment, the band members are resting at the home of bassist Bryan Jackson’s uncle. He’s given them beds, showers, and biscuits and gravy for breakfast.

I can hear a bird in the background.

“I’m in the middle of a field right now,” Cruz says. His voice sounds young, his manner easygoing. “It’s kind of amazing. I’m not gonna lie.”

The weekend Cruz locked himself in his room, the first thing he did was read Kickstarter’s rules and guidelines. He also studied other campaigns (which the site leaves up even after they’ve ended).

“I asked myself every time, Would I donate to this project? Do I believe them? Then I decided to turn the camera on us and asked, ‘If I were to see these guys’ story on the website or see their video or listen to their music, would I care? Would I want to help?’”

In the end, what the band came up with was a one-minute, fifty-second video (including concert and pushing-the-broken-bus footage), a written thousand-word appeal, and prizes for every pledge level.

On September 4, just before they headed out for the tour, they launched a campaign asking for $10,000.

“We put a lot of time into figuring out what to ask for, what’s a good goal,” Cruz says. “I was arguing for a little less. Ten thousand dollars is a lot of money for a start-up band, an up-and-coming band like us. It’s a little out there. We just had confidence, and we knew that, even if this Kickstarter plan was unsuccessful, we were determined to find plan B.”

After 25 days of what Cruz calls “a roller coaster” of a campaign, Local band Through the Roots needed $10,000 to get their tour bus running. They raised $11,160.

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Through the Roots met their goal. By the end of the 30th, they had $11,160.

“You should have something better to do than pick on a baby butterfly.”

On the same day I speak to Chris Cruz, Connie Hines sits on the brown chenille loveseat in her small, Rancho Peñasquitos living room, hoping for magic. It’s Day 12 of her 30-day Kickstarter campaign and, so far, she has raised only $55 — out of $20,000.

“I don’t think it’s going so good,” she tells me from her perch. “I’m not sure why.”

A Shih Tzu named Max has squeezed himself under the loveseat. Only his nose and paws show. Sheba, an 11-week-old Rottweiler puppy, lounges in a large kennel against one wall of the living room.

In 2010, Hines, a 46-year-old under-employed registered nurse, conceptualized a children’s character she calls “Whisper the Baby Butterfly.” Her original plan, as stated in her Kickstarter video, was “to market the butterfly on clothes and bedding and towels, everything that is little-girl friendly — school supplies, shoes, hair accessories, glasses, costumes — you know, stuffed toys, everything.”

On the advice of an artist she hired to design the character, Hines eventually decided to write a children’s book. It was, the artist said, the best way to get people interested in Whisper.

Hines searched for a self-publishing company that would allow her to use her chosen illustrator and eventually settled on Tate Publishing. The publishing package she selected cost $4000. The other $16,000 she’s asking for is to create and produce the everything referred to in her campaign video: clothes, bedding, and so on.

“I’m trying to start a business and market it like Hello Kitty is marketed. It’s time for Hello Kitty to have some healthy competition.”

The first of three Kickstarter guidelines reads: “Funding for projects only… A project is not open-ended. Starting a business, for example, does not qualify as a project.”

But Hines’s project survived the application process. Now she’s hoping that something big will happen.

She tries to stay away from checking up on the campaign too much. “If you get any more backers, they’ll send you an email,” she says. “I don’t hover over it. I don’t want to jinx it.”

Earlier in the campaign, she received an email from someone who criticized her for creating a baby butterfly character.

“He said, ‘Have you ever thought that a baby butterfly is a caterpillar, so there’s actually no such thing?’” Hines says, her face distorted with disdain for the emailer. “I said, ‘Why would you even ask me that? You should have something better to do than pick on a baby butterfly.'”

Hines worries about the campaign, but she doesn’t quite know how to drive traffic to her Kickstarter page. Her best idea was to pay $50 for business cards featuring the butterfly and to stick them in car windows in busy parking lots. So far, it hasn’t worked, but she has plenty of cards left for further distribution, and she’s hoping for the best.

To show me the possibilities, she picks up a laptop from the couch and pulls up someone else’s campaign on the Kickstarter site. It’s for a children’s book titled What Makes a Baby, a project that was successfully funded in March of this year.

“Look at this! They got $65,516, which means it was 689 percent funded! They asked for $9500.” She pulls up another one. This project is also a children’s book, and it, too, exceeded its original goal. By a lot. The Wollstonecraft campaign made 2293 percent of its $4000 goal.

Although the slow start of her campaign has caused Hines to question whether asking for $20,000 was too ambitious, she says, “After I saw [these campaigns], I thought, Maybe I’m not crazy.”

Today, she has her fingers crossed that Kickstarter will provide the magic, putting $20,000 in her pocket.

A week from now, Hines will cancel her campaign, three days short of its deadline, with only $55 pledged. And in three weeks, she’ll write me an email: “I canceled my project on Kickstarter, because I was not getting any backers. I plan to put it up again in the next week or so, lowering the goal to $5000.”

“ Kickstarter is not a magical source of money.” While crowd-funding sites are popping up all

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over the place, Kickstarter seems to be a favorite among creative types in San Diego. At the time of this writing, there are 269 San Diego projects on the site, although that number changes as projects go up and come down.

Two months ago, the only thing I knew about Kickstarter was that, somehow, it was responsible for the sudden emergence of the San Diego Public Market on National Avenue. I found myself enthralled by their big numbers — $150,000 in 30 days? 158 percent of their $92,244 project goal? It did look like magic. After a bit of research, I realized that my “knowledge” was built on a major misconception: that Kickstarter was responsible for the success of the campaign. (Another misconception: that the San Diego Public Market’s emergence was sudden. A closer look at the market’s campaign page reveals that “Dale Steele has been chasing public properties and pitching politicians about a public market here for more than ten years.”)

At Kickstarter School, a section on the website that breaks down the how-to for fundraising on their site, one paragraph reads: “Kickstarter is not a magical source of money. Funding comes from a variety of sources — your audience, your friends and family, your broader social networks, and, if your project does well, strangers from around the web. It’s up to you to build...”

“I’m trying to start a business and market it like Hello Kitty is marketed. It’s time for Hello Kitty to have some healthy competition.”
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Qualified participants may receive study-related psychological evaluation(s) and may also receive compensation for time and travel.
that momentum for your project. [italics mine]"
Some project creators nonetheless blame Kickstarter for the failure of their projects.

On September 13, 2012, Mitch Wallis launched a campaign to raise $150,000 to open a vegan co-op on El Cajon Boulevard at the I-15. Although he estimates that the whole project will take about $650,000 to get under way, he chose his Kickstarter funding goal based on the amount that the San Diego Public Market had generated less than a month prior.

In his six-minute video plea, Wallis wears his hair in a floppy, curly ponytail. His black T-shirt reads “VEGAN.” Wallis appeals to potential backers with a hand-drawn map that shows the convenient location of the future co-op, with brief appearances by his green builder and the owner of the alternative-fuel station next door.

The video compelled 36 backers to pledge $100 or more, and seven of those pledged upwards of $500. But by the time I catch up with him via email, approximately two and a half weeks after the launch, his campaign has generated only about $10,000.

When I ask why he thinks his campaign hasn’t taken off the way some others do, he responds, “Kickstarter has not supported our campaign. They have not highlighted us to their base of contributors. They seem to be focused mostly on artsy and whimsical products, and not on projects that can directly and drastically improve individual and community well-being.”

Another section of Kickstarter School, dedicated to how to promote projects, does give spe-
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specific information on how to use social networks to generate interest in your project, but it assumes prior knowledge on how to make that work.

Wallis admits that his social-media plans didn’t turn out the way he had hoped.

“Our plan was to align with organizations that share a common vision and have those organizations announce our campaign to their membership,” he writes. “This has proven to be problematic, and has not worked out very well so far, in terms of finding organizations willing to do this.”

Given the timing of Wallis’s launch and the similarity of the scope and budget of both projects, he’d hoped to find potential backers among those already excited by the success of the San Diego Public Market. “It’s the getting it out there that we don’t know how to do.”

That strategy may have backfired.

During their campaign for the public market, Catt White and Dale Steele used every avenue available to drum up backing. They had an advantage in that they didn’t have to build a support network from scratch.

“Dale and I already had well-developed networks, and my farmers’ market management business maintains a very active social-media presence, so we had a head start,” White wrote in another email. “On the nuts-and-bolts side, everyone is overloaded with information nowadays, so to keep any endeavor at the top of people’s minds requires an organized effort to get the word out and keep the updates coming. We updated our message almost daily. That reminded people to support us, and made it easy for them to spread the word about the opportunity to support the project and..."
how the campaign was progressing.”

Wallis updated his message twice.

One of Wallis’s backers, who’d also backed the public market, expressed her disappointment in his campaign via a comment on the project page.

“I am surprised at the lack of excitement, communication and encouragement to support this project from its creators. Why no cheerleading from the sidelines? Please get out there and encourage people to support this worthy project!!! Send us updates, ask us to share with our community! Be proactive!”

Despite a plea for celebrity supporters (“We’re hoping to attract a celebrity — a singer or performer that would appear at a benefit show for us,” writes Wallis. “Jessica Sanchez or Jason Mraz, for example, could easily provide enough ticket sales to push us to the finish line. We just need help reaching out to them”), and an article about his proposed vegan co-op in CityBeat, Wallis ended his campaign on October 13 with $12,519 pledged, roughly 8 percent of his goal.

“We’re the creative types.”

In a quiet, glass-enclosed room at the public library in Rancho San Diego, 25-year-old Devon Duby has set up his invention on a conference table. He calls it the Pendulum Art Machine, and his Kickstarter page describes it as “a graphic art drawing machine which uses a pendulum to create crazy random drawings.” Made from four red anodized aluminum tubes, two polished aluminum connectors, an aluminum plate, and some wires, the design is sleek and simple.

“It’s still in the prototyping stages,” Duby says while he slides a green ultra-fine-point Sharpie through a brass ring suspended above the plate. Two magnets secure sheets of paper onto the plate, which is also suspended from an aluminum tube.

Once it’s all set up and adjusted, Duby swings the plate. We watch as the Sharpie creates designs on the paper.

All across the table, Duby has laid out other sheets of white paper containing drawings he created with the machine. Red, blue, green, or black, some contain testing data lightly penciled in at the top right-hand corner. The whole set-up looks like something one might find at a children’s museum.

Long and lanky at six-feet-four, Duby wears a black T-shirt with “FASTRAX” in red lettering down the length of
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Mitch Wallis wanted to raise $150,000 to start a vegan co-op. But he only generated $12,500 in pledges.

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one of the long sleeves: FASTRAX Sports (not to be confused with the Team Fastrax sky-diving team or the Fastrax RC company that sells radio-controlled race-car accessories) is the name of the company he and his family run out of their El Cajon living room. Previous inventions include the Power-Strap Glove for batting, golf, or tennis, and a Ball-Speed Indicator Batting Tee.

Duby’s father, an engineer and inventor, helped start FASTRAX Sports but eventually went back to being a contract engineer. He now serves as a consultant for his son’s projects.

“Pretty much my whole life, I’ve been helping my father with designs and prototypes,” Duby says. “As of right now, [on my own] I’ve done [the Pendulum Art Machine], but if we fund, we’ll all work on it.”

By all, he means not only his father and mother, who handles the finances, but also his two sisters, Desiree and Denene. Both — young, blonde, and pretty — show up in Duby’s Kickstarter video.

The demonstration over, Duby sits back in what could be mistaken for casual comfort, if not for the bouncing knee and hands folded tightly on his lap. With nervous, fleeting eye contact, he explains that Kickstarter was, in fact, the impetus for this new machine.

“Our other products aren’t suited for the avenue. So we thought, ‘What’s a good product?’” He explains that the family often throws ideas around. “This was one idea. We knew the successful ones are creative.”

Duby launched his project on September 26 with a $10,000 goal. It currently costs him approximately $85 to make one machine. He sells them for $179, which includes $60 in labor. Funding would allow him to purchase his materials in volume, which he estimates would bring the cost down by as much as 30 percent. It would also decrease labor costs by allowing him to do the same step on multiple machines at once, which decreases set-up time.

“We’re not trying to make a killing,” he says. At the same time, he hopes to make some profit. While his sisters and his parents have other jobs, he doesn’t. “This is my job.”

On October 18, with ten days to go, his campaign has generated only $1269 in pledges. He has nine backers, zero comments, and zero updates.

“We’re not marketing people. We’re creative types, getting it ready to go. It’s the getting it out there that we don’t know how to do.”

He does know enough about social media to have posted his campaign on Facebook, sent out emails, and put a video on YouTube. These steps may have been what generated early interest, but he didn’t keep it up.

“If one of us would just get a marketing degree, we would do a lot better,” he says.

Divine intervention might have become the driving force of his project’s success. In the middle of his campaign, Duby received an email from the producers of Steve Harvey’s new television talk show, inviting him to the show. That’s the kind of exposure that Mitch Wallis was praying for. But Duby failed to send the sample they’d asked for prior to taping.

“I spend a lot of my time trying to perfect the design instead of doing other things,” he says. “That’s my problem.”
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I’ve been collecting people. They’ve been collecting art.” Andrea Steorts greets me at the door of her Eastlake home with a hug. The vivacious 65-year-old artist has both the energy and the long, wavy blond hair of a woman 40 years her junior. Her silver wrist bangles clang as she reaches out to embrace me. To the left and right of us, five 4-by-5-foot paintings crowd the living-room walls. Ahead hangs a larger painting, 6-by-7 feet. All are Steorts’s work. All feature images of women and expansive landscapes in bright colors. I recognize two from her Kickstarter campaign page.

Steorts walks me through the living room, past the kitchen, and into another sitting room, where she introduces her elderly mother and her husband, a former lawyer and wood sculptor. The three live in this 1500-square-foot house on their combined Social Security incomes and the occasional sale of one of Steorts’s paintings.

“We live well, we eat well, we laugh, we drink wine,” she says. “Well, cheap wine.”

Steorts began painting around 17 years ago. Aside from a two-year stint as a gallery owner in the Gaslamp, from 2000 to 2002, she hasn’t been much involved with the San Diego art scene. But she has gained a small, loyal following, including a couple of patrons who regularly buy her paintings. “I’ve been collecting people, great people,” she says. “They’ve been collecting art.”

In 2011, two of those patrons paid for the creation of Steorts’s first website — as a Thanksgiving gift. In mid-May 2012, Agora Gallery in New York City found the website and contacted Steorts with an offer of representation. The site, they said, would substitute for the usual portfolio-submission requirement.

Steorts accepted, though she had no idea how she’d pull off the creation of a new body of work to show at the gallery. She loves to paint on 3-by-4-foot canvases and frames every one of the paintings in large, ornate frames, a hefty expense. Because finances were tight, she’d begun painting on smaller, 16-by-20-inch canvases. If she were going to have a show in New York, however, she wanted to return to the larger paintings. That would cost. So would the framing and the shipping and her travel to New York for the show. The way she was living, she didn’t have the extra money.

“My mom would say, ‘I’ve got $5 in my purse.’
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Do you need it?’ And I’d say, ‘That’s our savings, Mom, you keep it.’” She laughs.

When Steorts spoke with one of her patrons about the situation, he mentioned Kickstarter.

“I’d never heard of it,” she says. “I’m not the sharpest tool in the shed when it comes to high tech.”

It didn’t matter. A group of friends came over one day in late August. Three hours later, they submitted Steorts’s project to Kickstarter for review. Three or four days after that, they got the go-ahead.

Steorts launched on September 5 with a $6500 goal.

According to statistics on the Kickstarter site, projects without videos succeed at a 30 percent rate, whereas those with videos succeed at a rate of 50 percent. Steorts had no video. Neither did she have a huge Facebook or Twitter following. What she did have was a small, loyal group of friends and one dedicated sister.

In the beginning, Steorts created an email list of about 70 people. She sent them all a link to her Kickstarter page. She believed that approximately 50 would donate. The number ended up closer to 20.

“The idea of asking people for money kind of made me squirrely,” she says. “But then it just started happening.”

After the initial email blast, donations quickly slowed down. Five days later, Steorts’s sister Claudia, 16 years her junior, decided to send a personal appeal out to the people on Andrea’s list, as well as to those she’d forwarded the message to from her own list.

Claudia’s final para-
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If you feel inspired, and I know you will, go online and support not just Andrea’s journey to NYC, but support Art in general. Through all the noise of worthwhile causes that need our support, if we were to look for one that would make us feel surrounded by beauty, Andrea’s fund would be the one we’d choose every time.”

Four days after that, Claudia emailed one of Steorts’s friends to discuss campaign strategies. “Maybe we put it up on Andrea’s Facebook again with a note that we are $2500 from reaching her goal?” she wrote. “If you think another email push makes sense, I can do that. The other thing I thought about, though I’m still a novice, is Tweeting about it. I don’t have a lot of followers, but Kickstarter does have a presence. It’s a long shot. Any other ideas? I mean, if you look at Andrea’s friend list, if 50 of them put in $50 we’d be there.”

From there, they decided on an email push, offering a new story about Andrea’s artistic journey every few days.

“It’s a long shot. Any other ideas? I mean, if you look at Andrea’s friend list, if 50 of them put in $50 we’d be there.”

From there, they decided on an email push, offering a new story about Andrea’s artistic journey every few days.

“Claudia says you have to nudge people,” Steorts says of her sister. “They forget in a day or two.”

We’re in her bedroom, where at the foot of her bed, two easels, a chair, and a collection of not-quite-finished paintings define her work area. Other paintings lean against the baseboards and hang on the walls. “The minute her emails would hit, the money would come,” Steorts says. “We were all pumped. It was so exciting. Everyone would get up and check [the campaign] first thing in the morning.”

On September 29, Claudia sent out a last email, pleading for donors to help close the final gap of $275. At one point, Steorts received a check from an elderly couple who didn’t want to send their banking information to Amazon. Steorts was afraid to make the deposit to the Kickstarter campaign herself.

“If you contribute to your own campaign, you lose it all,” she explains. “I didn’t want to mess with that.”

That last email was the longest so far, and the most pleading, with a personal story about Andrea being a caregiver for both her mother and her husband.

Steorts was fishing in Eastlake with her granddaughter that same afternoon, when she received the alert that her project had been successfully funded. A patron in Austin, who had already donated $1000, upped the pledge to $1275 and later told Steorts, “I couldn’t take it any longer.”

In the final five days of her campaign, Steorts received another $265, putting her at 104 percent of her goal with $6765. She closed with 46 backers, making her average donation $147, almost twice that of the $75 Kickstarter average.

And this with zero updates, zero comments, and no video on her project page.

A week later, over the phone, she says, “The thing I love about Kickstarter is everything, but the thing I love most is that when you make it, they send an email to congratulate you, and they sign it, ‘Love, Kickstarter.’”

— Elizabeth Salaam
San Diego Reader December 13, 2012 41

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Should Jack stay?

continued from page 2

Qdoba is now $10.28. As far as I can determine (the company won’t talk), the average at Chipotle, Qdoba’s primary competitor, is $10.96. Some analysts say that Qdoba is “the poor man’s Chipotle”, but the price differential hardly seems that wide.

While Qdoba is stumbling along, Jack in the Box sandwich/hamburger restaurants are doing better than other fast-food operations. In the fourth quarter, same-store sales at company-owned Jack outlets were up 3.1 percent — the eighth straight quarter of such gains. This was during a period of a weak economy. Traffic was up 1.2 percent, and the average check was up 1.9 percent in the fourth quarter. So Jack has been whipping McDonald’s on a same-store basis. Of course, the far larger McDonald’s is hurt by its overseas operations, and Jack has no foreign exposure, but McDonald’s is also suffering domestically. Boo-hoo.

On a two-year basis at company-owned Jack in the Box outlets, same-store sales are up 9 percent and traffic is up almost 10 percent. Such results make fast-food competitors green with envy.

Executive vice president Jerry Rebel expects same-store sales at both Jack and Qdoba to rise 2 to 3 percent next year. But some analysts wonder if Qdoba can achieve such results.

Sean Williams of Motley Fool is disturbed that the company will employ the same approach to boosting sales and traffic that it has at Jack in the Box. Qdoba should jack up revenue by accelerating its catering business, such as providing food at graduations and Cinco de Mayo celebrations. Qdoba is now looking for a national catering director.

“The [Qdoba] brand is very, very strong, and it’s just a matter of communicating the brand,” Lang told the analysts. “They didn’t appear to be swallowing her story.”

Ex, meth, knife, death

continued from page 3

was still there at my house. And he owed me money, and he wasn’t giving it to me. And that he just wasn’t acting right.”

Shaquita also told Chris that Fernando had phoned someone to come over and harm her.

“He said, ‘If I come over, will you tell?’ I said, ‘No.” She had a restraining order on Chris. “Whenever he had come over I would call the cops. So he was asking me if he came was I going to call the cops.” It was a short conversation. “Not even a minute.”

Then Shaquita went back upstairs. She ran a hot bath because she was feeling “restless” and she wanted to “relax.” And she wanted to keep her “distance” from Fernando.

Shaquita said she fell asleep in the bath. “And then that’s when I heard a scuffle or something going on.” She turned her head and caught a glimpse of someone. “I assumed it was Chris.” She heard noises. “Nobody spoke. I didn’t hear any words. I just heard, like, shoving.” The noise was over quickly. “Very fast, like, not even, like, a minute.” She grabbed a towel and walked toward her bedroom.

Fernando was there in her room, on the floor with his back to her head. “He was on the side of my bed. He was not laying down, but he was sitting up.” He was still breathing then, but not moving. “He looked paralyzed to me.”

Shaquita ran to her daughter’s room. She crawled into bed with her girls, who are 11, 5, and 3 years old. “Then there’s a knock on the door.” It was Chris. “He told me to come out.” She came out.

“He was saying that I should say someone came in there. He was saying, ‘Say that one of his friends came in here. Say a black guy came in here.’ And I told him, ‘Okay.’”

Shaquita went downstairs, and Chris followed her. “Chris said, ‘Do you want me to take him?’ And I said, yes, take him to the hospital.”

Shaquita said she waited for Chris to leave, and then she walked to a friend’s home about a half mile away. It was also on Fig Street in Escondido. Somebody there phoned 911. Asked why didn’t she just go next door. Shaquita answered, “I would never go to my neighbors for anything.”

Contact Don Bauder at 619-546-8529

(CITY LIGHTS)

(CITY LIGHTS)

(CITY LIGHTS)
Scathing report on U-T
A “corporate shill,” says respected publication
San Diego — “The Fall of
the San Diego Union-Tribune”
is the headline in a story
today (December 6) in the
publication Media Matters
for America, a politically pro-
gressive media watchdog.
Owner Doug Manchester
and his chief executive John
Lynch, who spent most of his
career in sports radio, have
transformed the paper “into
a front for Manchester’s
‘cheerleading’ for business
interests and right-wing
politics,” says the story.
This is an observation few
could disagree with. Man-
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would be cheerleading (this,
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ters. Front-page(editorials
pumped up Republican may-
or candidate Carl DeMaio,
who went on to lose. His
opponent, Democrat Bob
Filer, the winner, used the
U-T’s snub relationship with
continued on page 44

Dave Rice, December 6

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San Diego Reader, December 13, 2012 43
**CITY LIGHTS**

**NEWS TICKER**
continued from page 43

DeMaio in pro-Filner ads.
The paper has shamelessly touted downtown projects that would line Manchester's pockets indirectly.

Dean Nelson, director of journalism at Point Loma Nazarene University, is quoted as saying, "The only way the paper will survive is if people trust it to give the news of their community. If people get the sense it is just whoring for the leadership's business enterprises, they are done." Media Matters points out that the U-T not only touts its own projects but attacks institutions such as the port that express opposition to Manchester/Lynch ideas. Media Matters stresses that Manchester has no background in the media business. "Doug Manchester Doesn't Know Anything About Running a Newspaper," says a subhead. Amen.

(Full disclosure: I am one of several journalists quoted in the piece. I am quoted saying the U-T is an embarrassment to San Diego. In retrospect, I should have expressed that more strongly.)

Don Bauder, December 6

**Tickets save lives, Part 2**

Police P.R. touts its aggressive ticketing

La Mesa — The La Mesa Police Department is once again comparing the issuing of tickets to directly saving the lives of the drivers caught engaging in potentially deadly behaviors while behind the wheel.

Last Friday, officers engaged in the second "Traffic Safety Enforcement Program" campaign in as many weeks, this time focusing on distracted driving.

Officers wrote a total of 45 tickets, including 32 for talking or texting on a cell phone while driving and another 13 for unspecified "hazardous driving violations," plus issued 13 more warnings in a six-hour span — resulting in "32 lives saved," according to police chief Ed Aceves.

Dave Rice, December 5

**Citizens United must go**

Council seeks to overturn Supreme Court decision

San Diego — The city council voted 8-0 today (December 4) to ask Congress to get the ball rolling on amending the U.S. Constitution to overturn the Supreme Court's 2010 decision in the Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission case.

The amendment would establish that corporations are not people and corporate spending on elections is not protected free speech. The measure was put forward by councilmember Marti Emerald and also backed by David Alvarez, Tony Young, Kevin Faulconer, Scott Sherman, Sherri Lightner, Todd Gloria, and Lori Zapf.

Before the measure was passed by the Rules Committee on November 14, Emerald wrote that "the Citizens United case directly impacts state and local efforts to control the influence of corporate money in their own elections."

San Diego's council is one of several political bodies having voted for the overturn of Citizens United.

Don Bauder, December 4

**Smashed in the face**

Woman will sue police officer for excessive force

La Mesa — Resident Drendolyn Sims has the right to sue La Mesa Police officer Mike Stanton over injuries suffered as a result of Stanton's kicking in a gate on her property and striking her in the head, an appeals court ruled yesterday.

Stanton was responding to a call in La Mesa, "a high-crime neighborhood near San Diego," reports Courthouse News Service, regarding an "unknown disturbance...involving a baseball bat."

While Stanton and his partner observed nothing unusual upon arriving at the scene, they did notice Nicholas Patrick and two other men walking in the street. The two men walked into a nearby apartment complex, but Patrick took off in another direction. He ignored officers' orders to stop and entered the front yard of another property, closing the gate behind him.

Stanton then gave pursuit and kicked in the gate, unaware that Sims, the homeowner, was standing behind it. She was rendered "temporarily unconscious, or at least incoherent," due to the officer's blow.

After U.S. district judge Jeffrey Miller dismissed a suit by Sims claiming illegal search and excessive force, a three-judge Ninth District Court of Appeals panel reversed the ruling yesterday, finding that Stanton had no justifiable reason to kick in Sims's gate.

Dave Rice, December 4

**Business as usual?**

Fliner says Chargers will stay, convention center will be expanded

San Diego — Incoming mayor Bob Filner gave his inaugural speech today at the Balboa Club. According to sources who were there, Filner said, "We are going to make sure the Chargers stay in San Diego." He also said, "We are going to expand our convention center to strengthen our visitor industry."

As Filner was saying the City will subsidize a stadium for the Chargers? He has previously said that public funds would not go for that purpose. He can forget the Chargers or other private interests financing a stadium. It won't happen. The Coastal Commission still has to approve convention-center-expansion plans. Also, there is a pending lawsuit against the deal. Filner had previously said that he wanted it (the expansion) voted upon, "says civic activist Mel Shapiro, who was at the speech. Shapiro is involved in a lawsuit challenging the constitutionality of hotels increasing taxes for the purpose of financing the expansion.

Don Bauder, December 3

**Safety meeting sabotage?**

Buddhist monks march at nuclear station

San Onofre — A Nuclear Regulatory Commission meeting to discuss the future of the San Onofre Nuclear Generating station went forward last Friday after being delayed when the originally contracted host hotel backed out over attendance concerns.

No concrete plans were laid out for either of the plant's two nuclear generators, idled since late January, to resume service, though plant operator Southern California Edison reaffirmed their assertion that, though similar damage was found in both the Unit 2 reactor and in Unit 3, Unit 2 remains safe to operate under than-normal power-generating conditions.

But activity at the meeting was overshadowed by outside events, including reports of possible sabotage, a protest march led by Buddhist monks, and public dissent from the Utility Workers Union of America, which represents plant employees and has been a vocal backer of restart plans at recent meetings.

The monks, who had originally planned to march past the plant and begin a seven-day fast nearby, were rerouted when environmental activist Gene Stone discovered higher-than-normal levels of radiation emanating from old generator pieces being stored near the road in preparation for shipment.

Meanwhile, the plant's union questioned the wisdom of firing 700 workers while trying to restart the plant, especially given the unknown potential results of firing up the idled Unit 2, where hundreds of steam tubes were found to be damaged to some extent.

Dave Rice, December 3

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am writing, I will say that he's a stand-up guy.

The reason that I am writing is because I just feel like, even though everybody is entitled to their opinion, I just don’t understand what somebody gains by attacking somebody's craft like Alvarez did. I actually paint a lot and have had to grapple with the idea that some of my best stuff might be disliked by people, and some of the stuff that I am initially hesitant to display are some of the pieces that garner the most attention and interest. People see things differently. People hear things differently (like poetry).

While Mr. Alvarez obviously didn’t enjoy Tomás's poem, it moved him enough to take the time to write. So, it might just move somebody else to do some good in the world. Instead, Alvarez chose to further perpetuate the idea that it is alright to just put people down at random, when they are just trying to be true to who they are, because it isn’t agreeable to you or align with what you can appreciate. And that is wrong.

I would side with somebody that is at least trying to say something over somebody that is just writing to be — not even critical — just mean, any day of the week. Having served Tomás for years, I know that he will keep writing and won’t be deterred, so for that I am happy.

I just hope that this serves as a reminder to all of the poets and painters, all of the artists out there, that critics like Alvarez are the reason that — unfortunately, because a lot of artists are pretty sensitive! — you have to develop a thicker skin and take these comments in the November 15 issue and not one was about that interesting story. Curtis is trying to do right even though many things are stacked up against him. I give the guy tons of credit, but that kind of credit does not pay his bills. I wish him the best of luck and hope that his story gets across to others who are following in his footsteps before it’s too late.

Allen Stanko via email

Not Enough Time
Please read my letter, since you clearly did not read the story “Deported,” October 11, 2012, before it was published — or maybe that is not part of your job? The accounts of what happened to Elizabeth Gonzalez and Frank when they were here illegally is loathing and full of racist allegations, lies, and misinformation about immigration laws.

Elizabeth Gonzalez, at 17 years old, came from Acapulco and decided to cross illegally by taking $3,000 to a smuggler. From where the smugglers abandoned her, it took 15 hours to drive to Oxnard. But, prior to that, when the border patrol stopped her and asked where she was going, they let her go when she said she was walking to Oxnard? In one month she learned English. I imagine that for most people it takes years to learn it, and some never do. She traveled to Utah where she was able to get an I.D. and buy a car; then traveled to Washington and Atlanta where she started dating online and married the guy two months after meeting him. After roaming our country freely when it is time to face the fact that she has no papers then she wants a lawyer and knows the law — except, apparently, the federal law that she had been breaking since 2003.

She says for many reasons she doesn’t want to come back to the United States, and that she can wait until her son is 21 and get citizenship. According to ICE, deported people cannot come back ever; they are not even allowed to be a certain distance from the border. If her son was going to be able to get her papers it is called a permanent resident card, commonly referred to as the green card, to become a legal resident; citizenship is obtained after five years of living here.

C. Klos via email

Blurr Request
The “Spotted in San Diego!” Style Stalker section by Ms. Kendra Clark (November 21) featured a woman with the caption “I in 3 suffer from pattern blindness.” The woman does not suffer from pattern blindness. She is an excellent EVS custodian for UCSD Medical Center who is required to wear that uniform, and was likely going to or from work. She is also the nicest person you will meet doing the hardest job you can.

Shame on you, San Diego Reader, for publicly embarrassing a woman for wearing her required uniform. I believe a public apology is in order. Also, do you not have the technology to blur people’s faces? That would be a step in the right direction, in my opinion.

C. M. via email

Hands On
I'm calling in regards to your November 15 issue. I just finished reading it. It took me about an hour. By the time I was done. I noticed my hand was covered in black, oily ink. The back cover of your magazine that week was an ad for Beauty and the Beast, and the entire back of it is black. However, now, on my copy, there are all kinds of hand prints and smears that were transferred from my hand.

I would hope that in the future you folks use a better ink or some kind of sealant so you don’t spread that all over the place. I am now going to wash my hands, and I hope that never happens again. Thanks for the awful black mess.

Dennis Travers via voicemail

According to the firm that prints the Reader, wet ink on the cover is rare, but from the letter to the editor it sounded as if the ovens were not hot enough to seal the ink on a small number of copies. — Editor

Comment Worthy
I can’t believe that nobody commented on the story by Curtis Howard, “That’s Life, and Life’s Not Easy” (November 7). I browsed through the comments in the November 15 issue and not one was about that interesting story. Curtis is trying to do right even though many things...
Living here legally. Her sister, who is a citizen, has provided for her by opening stores where she can work and support herself and her son, but it never occurred to the sister to apply to obtain a green card for Elizabeth? This tells me they all follow the same path — entering illegally into the United States.

In the second story, Frank saw a “white” man for the first time when his mother’s boyfriend showed up one day to smuggle him across the border. His mother worked harder that anyone with 14-hour days, and he, after taking care of his two brothers the mother also paid to smuggle across, instead of working hard like his mother was doing, decided to join the local gangs; choosing “brown pride” instead of becoming a naturalized citizen.

His hardworking mother became a drunk and had a drug-addict boyfriend after her white man left her; but she had the wisdom of applying for papers for her and his brothers when the opportunity came? He had no recollection of his mother because she left him behind and also left two more sons ages four and two. But at only six years old he has fond memories of growing up in Mexico? So, when she left the youngest one had just been born? And he remembers growing up, but not the language?

Frank learned perfect English in about three months. Not even joining the Navy made him love and appreciate our country. He decides to enter the smuggler business and when he is caught, he was set up.

Whites will not be deported because they were born here. If someone smuggles a relative, I do not think they will just receive a fine. Smuggling is a federal crime. The government does not make money from jailing illegals. Local government receives money from the federal government for the expenses incurred from illegals in jail, and it does not cost $100 for each. If you become a naturalized citizen, you can still be deported if you commit a crime against our country. In his mind, he is a good person and life has done him wrong, but he accepts it like any good hero. Just imagine what would have happened to his now-wife if he did not “rescue” her from prostitution. I wonder if she knows he said this of her.

I do not see a point in printing stories like “Deported.” Most illegals do not read Spanish or English. Tijuana is full of deported immigrants, and they all have a story. If you plan to have someone write about them as well, there will not be time on this earth to read them all. There are millions of people from all over the world that want to come live in the United States of America too; imagine if they are all allowed to be here legally or illegally.

Maria via email

A Life of Constant Worry

Regarding the October 11 cover story, “Deported.” Entering the United States of America without the proper documents is illegal. People have crossed — and still continue to cross — the U.S. border illegally, risking their own lives and exposing themselves to dangers such as rape, abandonment by a coyote in the middle of nowhere, and/or starvation, similar to Elizabeth’s experience. Others may have to wait an extra week to see their loved ones that already crossed the border, simply because the coyote decided to increase the amount of the cost for having crossed them illegally, like in Frank’s case. This is heart-wrenching!

The feeling of hiding, or trying not to get caught by the police, such as when Elizabeth encountered cops at a checkpoint on her way to Athens, is unbearable to me. In the past, whenever I have done something I was not supposed to I would feel physically ill. To be willing to feel like this every day makes me wonder how bad it is at home that, however it is, to illegal immigrants it is worse than a life of constant hiding and worry.

I am happy to hear that both Elizabeth and Frank have adapted to Bad Bunny’s style of music, “Bunny v. Bunny” (Blurt, October 11) = really bad article. I mean really bad.

Name Withheld via email

Bad Bunny “Bunny v. Bunny” (Blurt, October 11) = really bad article. I mean really bad.

Name Withheld via email

Only Pretty at Night

Re “Hillcrest Twinkle Lights” (Neighbor hood News, October 4). $50,000 for what? Are you kidding me? If the members of the Hillcrest Business Association think that this big project is going to help the problems Hillcrest has, they are so wrong.

The area needs a lot of TLC, starting with getting the owners of businesses to clean the walks in front of their buildings. The sidewalks are grimy, filthy with old gum, and smell like old urine. The buildings need a face-lift, power wash, paint, plants, flowers, and most of all, they need to deal with the so-called bums that one has to walk over or around because of all they stuff they carry around.

Hillcrest is a great area. I have lived here for three years and enjoy being in Hillcrest/ Mission Hills. I truly hope the association reconsiders how to use this large amount of money. The lights will not solve the issue; they’ll just look pretty at night, that’s all. Hillcrest is starting to look very old and shabby and needs some zing. Please rethink this project.

Jan Alsgard
Hillcrest
Calendar

Your Week

December 13–19

Thursday | 13

STREET. ART. PROPHETS.
The theater company Circle Circle dot dot presents five short pieces featuring stories about the graffiti community and the "life of a street artist." San Diego playwrights collaborated with graffiti artists to give audiences "a glimpse into the poetry, whimsy, danger, and delight of a street artist." $10–$25.

WHEN: 8 p.m. (through December 15, check for dates and times)
WHERE: 10th Avenue Theatre, 930 Tenth Avenue, downtown. 619-356-3682; circle2dot2.com

Friday | 14

IMIG’S FAMILY CHRISTMAS — AN HOMAGE TO THE GRISWOLDS
Catch a screening of National Lampoon’s Christmas Vacation at the Lafayette, where the evening is themed to match the movie with "eggnog, ugly sweaters, drink specials, and tacky decorations." El Cajon Boulevard businesses will be showcasing art, music, food, and spirits.

WHEN: 5:30 to 8:30 p.m.
WHERE: Imig’s Kitchen and Bar, 2223 El Cajon Boulevard, Lafayette Hotel, University Heights. 619-780-0358; lafayette-hotelsd.com

Saturday | 15

HOLLY JOLLY HOLIDAY TROLLEY TOURS
Get in the holiday spirit with Trusted Tours as they lead a trolley full of explorers in sing-along caroling with the conductor, share holiday historical facts and traditions, and point out the "festive lights of Old Town, the Embarcadero, the Gaslamp Quarter, and Balboa Park." $10–$18.

WHEN: 7 to 8:30 p.m. (through December 30, check for dates and times)
WHERE: Old Town Market, 4010 Twiggs Street, 619-298-8687; trolleytours.com

Sunday | 16

WANDERLUST FLEA MARKET
Enjoy live music (Chocolate Revolution, Sister Speak, Heart Pharmacy, Aaron Haines: Rocket Buddha) and food from local vendors while you shop from "rare, eclectic collections" from local artists and purveyors offering their jewelry, vintage dolls, clothing, furniture, decorations, and more. $2.

WHEN: 1 to 7 p.m.
WHERE: Queen Bee’s Art & Cultural Center, 3925 Ohio Street, North Park. 619-255-5147; queenbeessd.com.

Monday | 17

SAN DIEGO SOL WINTER BREAK BASKETBALL CAMPS
Activity camps aren’t just for summertime. These half- and full-day skills camps for boys and girls (7–14) offer professional coaching, games, and contests in the Sol City Sportcenter at Alliant. $90–$185.

WHEN: 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. (December 17–21 and 26–28; January 2-4)
WHERE: Alliant University, 10455 Pomerado Road, Scripps Ranch. 619-933-7740; sandiegosol.com.

Tuesday | 18

WINTER COCKTAIL RELEASE PARTY
Shots make it so you can try multiple cocktails without getting too tipsy. This party celebrates five new offerings on the menu, served as a trio for $12. Also on "tap," $5 specials on new winter cocktails, complimentary bites, and live music.

WHEN: 7 p.m. to 2 a.m.

Wednesday | 19

TEDDY BEAR TEAS
Enjoy traditional and decadent "high tea" (with canapés, pastries, tartlets, and more) and then "spend time with Santa's magician elf" in the hotel’s Grand Lobby. Santa Claus will visit to narrate stories and then share a special moment with each child. $26–$39.

WHEN: 2:30 to 5 p.m. (ongoing through December, check for dates)
WHERE: The Westgate Hotel, 1055 Second Avenue, downtown. 619-238-1818; westgatehotel.com/events-promotions
Giving Face in Kashgar
By James Michael Dorsey

It was my final day in Kashgar, China. I had all the photos I needed and was ready for a good meal before catching my flight out, when I noticed a tiny man sitting outside, alone on a street corner. He had a face as rugged as the local mountains and probably nearly as old. He had an old rag spread in front of him and was selling wooden spoons that he carved on the spot with an ancient pocket knife.

I watched as people stepped over his wares, sometimes kicking them out of the way or stepping directly on them. At one point, two young boys grabbed some of his spoons and ran off, taunting the old man who obviously could not chase them.

Located in the far western reaches of China, Kashgar is not yet a major tourist destination, although in my estimation it should be. My presence attracted attention — but when I knelt down to examine the old man’s spoons it created quite a stir. A crowd gathered, and this immediately drew the police, who formed a barrier around us and were as curious about what was happening as the rest of the people.

I approached him and sat on the concrete opposite him, looking over his spoons, and found them to be exquisite. I chose several of his wares that I thought had a rugged elegance and paid him a bit more than he was asking. This sent a murmur through the crowd.

With a couple dozen onlookers, including two curious policemen, I took the old man’s photo and thanked him for selling me his spoons (even though he did not understand a word I said). I gave him a slight bow as I left.

After walking away, I watched from across the street and saw the crowd still surrounding the old man, but now they were buying his spoons, since they had obvious value, for me, a foreigner, to pay so much for them.

More importantly, my act gave the man great face — and in China that is beyond price.

Breakfast in Macon, Georgia
By Kenneth L. Utterback

When the plane landed in Macon, our manager created a little disturbance to throw us off balance. Sometimes, I think he felt it was his job.

“You know, this is the largest card-carrying KKK town in the United States right now.”

Maybe the other guys were used to hearing stuff like that from him, but it shook me.

My first tour of the South with the band was spent mostly with my heart in my throat, anyway. The South of 1970 still had public toilets where the sign “White Men” had only recently been whitewashed over. I saw one as late as the spring of 1972. And here we were, a group of two blacks and three “long-haired Yankees,” not to mention the two equally hairy roadies. Any stops we made continued on page 50
San Diego Outdoors with the Canyoneers

CHIMNEY FLATS LOOP FROM DOANE POND

One of the finest trails in Palomar Mountain State Park is this loop with great surrounding views and interesting plants.

Distance from downtown San Diego: About 65 miles (Palomar Mountain State Park). Allow 1 hour and 45 minutes driving time. North on SR-163, merge onto I-15, turn right on exit 27 for Via Rancho Parkway. Continue on Bear Valley Pkwy S. After 6 miles, turn right on E. Valley Parkway/Valley Center Rd/SR6 for about 3.5 miles, until it ends, then turn right on SR-76 E. After 5 miles, take a slight left turn onto SR6/South Grade Road/Palomar Mtn. Rd for 6.8 miles to a stop sign on a winding road (take motion-sickness precautions as appropriate). Turn left and continue for a few yards. Ahead on the left is a general store and a restaurant; turn left onto the road just before the general store — that is State Park Road/SR7. Stop at the entrance to pay the day-fee, then make a sharp right turn onto Doane Valley Road, just past the ranger’s house. Follow signs to Doane Pond. The park is open from dawn until dusk. There are no gas stations on the mountain.

Hiking length: 4-mile loop • Difficulty: Moderately strenuous because of the steep trail. Elevation gain/loss 900 feet. Trekking poles recommended. Carry water. Facilities at Doane Pond and Silvercrest parking lot.

One of the finest trails in Palomar Mountain State Park is this loop with great surrounding views and interesting plants. The old-growth cedars and oak trees might make you feel as if you were magically transported into the middle of a Northwest forest. Whether you visit it the park on a warm, sunny day or on a misty, overcast one, stunning vistas abound.

A recommended route with great views is the steep Cedar-Doane Trail up to the Silvercrest picnic area and then along the Chimney Flats Trail until it loops back to Doane Pond via the Thunder Spring Trail. The parking area near Doane Pond offers access to Cedar-Doane Trail once past the facilities and over the small bridge next to the pond’s edge. The trail is steep, so come prepared with good footwear and trekking poles if you use them. Watch out for poison oak, which in October is surprisingly beautiful with brilliant red color that glows with light shining through the leaves. The contrast of red against yellow ferns, the green of the cedar, black oak and maul oak leaves, and the graygreens of lichen and moss on the tree trunks create a perfect fall palette. New healthy growth or, in the winter, leafless twigs ring the base of old, fire-scarred tree trunks and line portions of the Cedar Trail.

Early morning provides the best opportunity for viewing deer and wild turkeys making their way through the forest.

Turn left on Scott’s Cabin Trail, walking past the site and crossing a road to Silvercrest for a short break at the picnic tables. Return on Scott’s Cabin Trail only up to the Chimney Flats intersection, where a right turn is taken to Chimney Flats, then curve back on Thunder Spring Trail to close the loop at Doane Pond. In the cold winter days, ladybug beetles (beetles sometimes can be found in great numbers in the “bunchgrass” or other low foliage. Many native plant species can be found, with a partial list including thimbleberry, honeysuckle, Ceanothus palmeri, coffee berry, Stephanomeria, elderberry, and wand buckwheat.

Check the park website (palomarsp.org/ tmu) for campsite reservations, maps, and other useful information. Day-use parking fees are $8 per car, cash or check only. Dogs must be kept on a leash of six-foot maximum length and are not permitted on trails; however, leashed dogs are permitted on rustic Myer’s Fire Road, east of the Doane Valley Campground. Keep your driving speed low in the park, checking for deer and hikers who sometimes favor the roads on misty days.

Canyoneers are San Diego Natural History Museum volunteers trained to lead interpretive nature walks that teach appreciation for the great outdoors. For a schedule of free public hikes, refer to the San Diego Natural History Museum website.

If you had mentally removed Palomar Mountain State Park from your list of hiking places to visit after the threat of park closures last year, you can confidently put it back on the list of must-do hikes this year. Thanks to the efforts of volunteer organizations such as Friends of Palomar Mountain and the Palomar Mountain Trail Maintenance Unit (TMU), plus the dedicated state-park rangers, the park remains open with well-maintained trails, restrooms, and camping facilities. Simply put, Palomar is beautiful.

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December 13, 2012

December 13, 2012
**ART**


**“Charles Reiffel: An American Post-Impressionist”** San Diego Museum of Art and San Diego History Center present collaborative, two-museum retrospective of work of Charles Reiffel, celebrating the 150th anniversary of his birth. "Charles Reiffel: An American Post-Impressionist." View more than 90 of Reiffel's works, primarily oil on canvas but also watercolors, gouaches, drawings in both pencil and crayon, through Sunday, March 10. Behold, America! Art of the United States from Three San Diego Museums is a collaboration between Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego, San Diego Museum of Art, and Timken Museum of Art. San Diego Museum of Art hosts the "Figures" component of the exhibition, showcasing portraits by John Singleton Copley, Cindy Sherman, and John Currin. Closes Sunday, February 10. Thursdays, 10am; Fridays, 10am; Saturdays, 10am; Sundays, 12pm; free-$12. San Diego Museum of Art, 1450 El Prado. (BALBOA PARK)

**“Margaret Noble: 44th and Landis”** As part of museum's ongoing "Cerca" series, which highlights the work of regional artists, Noble’s mixed-media installation and performance charts a psychological path through the City Heights neighborhood, where the artist grew up. Piece "takes the form of an intricate sculptural environment made up of hundreds of cut paper dolls and other forms." The installation — on view through Sunday, January 20 — also incorporates an experimental soundtrack emanating from 14 handmade paper speakers.

American museum. The artist "builds vibrant photomontages of fascinatingly fabricated realities." View more than 40 of van Empel’s digitally enhanced pieces through February 10. Van Empel constructs his works through staged photography, digital enhancement, and collage. Explore the power of photography to communicate important ideas about the environment and sustainability in "PhotoSynthesis: Images of An/Extinction." Free.

**“Margaret Noble: 44th and Landis”**

Art San Diego, Downtown, 1100 and 1101 Kettner Boulevard. (DOWNTOWN SAN DIEGO)

**“Pieces of Me|Self-Canvassed”** The Hill Street Country Club to introduce Correne Bussey’s premier solo exhibition. The artist blends abstract and expressionism techniques to create colorful acrylic works on canvas. Influenced heavily by music and language, Bussey often creates visual works that transform audible art into its visual form, and also uses art to explore her spiritual journey, posing the questions and answers critical to her personal growth.

**“Strange Beauty”** Explore the world of Ruud van Empel in the artist’s first solo exhibition in an American museum. The artist "builds vibrant photomontages of fascinatingly fabricated realities." View more than 40 of van Empel’s digitally enhanced pieces through February 10. Van Empel constructs his works through staged photography, digital enhancement, and collage. Explore the power of photography to communicate important ideas about the environment and sustainability in "PhotoSynthesis: Images of An/Extinction." Free.

**“We Always Sleep Alone (Unaudited)”** Opening reception Friday, December 14, 6pm; for artist Dani Dodge. Show runs through January 20, 2013. San Diego Art Institute: Museum of the Living Artist, 1439 El Prado. (BALBOA PARK)

**“We Always Sleep Alone (Unaudited)”**

**“Art Uncorked — Twisting Trees”** Paint twisting trees while sipping wine or cocktails. Supplies (canvas, paints, brushes, apron) included. No experience necessary. 819-255-7785. Save $20 with promo code 9B8OT12. Thursday, December 13, 6pm; $25-$45. 21 and up. 98 Bottles, 2400 Kettner Boulevard. (LITTLE ITALY)

**BOOK SIGNINGS**

**“Kellerman Family Presents”** Jonathan (Vicente), Faye (Decker/Lazarus mysteries), and Jesse (Pot-boiler?) Kellerman discuss their latest books and how their faith (they are practicing Orthodox Jews) drives the themes within their work in public places put me on edge.

It was still morning as we proceeded to the hotel, and someone decided that we should get breakfast. The place we stopped at looked non-threatening but had more than a little run-down charm.

At that point, for me, time seemed to slow down. I watched the doors nervously. I just wanted to be in my hotel room. As I look back, I’m sure that the movie Easy Rider, which I had seen about a year before, had wormed its way through to the deepest parts of my psyche. I was probably shaking, had anyone looked closely enough.

The waitress came back fairly quickly, empty-handed except for a slip of paper. With no obvious sign of emotion, she placed it in front of me and left again. It was one of those little green-and-white meal checks, torn from her pad. I flipped it over and read the one word on the face of the check: "SCRAM." My fear reached new heights.

I slowly showed it to the band member to my left, and we looked up at each other with wide eyes. We’d both received the same translation at the same time: "GET THE HELL OUT!" Time was now at a standstill.

Eventually, the waitress came back out of the kitchen with another slip in hand and placed it in front of my band buddy. I was watching intently when he turned it over. It had one word on it: "PAN." He had ordered pancakes.

Win $25 for your travel tips or a pair of movie passes for the best travel photo of the week. Go to SDReader.com/travel for more information.

### Art in Books Day! San Diego Writers, Ink celebrates visual arts, bookmaking, and writing. Day begins with hands-on bookmaking class promising writing prompts; students create, write, draw, and bind their own books (10am-2pm). Kevin Greenday and featured artist Blair Thornley answer questions about art in books (3pm). Gallery reception featuring Thornley’s

**“Art in Books Day! San Diego Writers, Ink celebrates visual arts, bookmaking, and writing. Day begins with hands-on bookmaking class promising writing prompts; students create, write, draw, and bind their own books (10am-2pm). Kevin Greenday and featured artist Blair Thornley answer questions about art in books (3pm). Gallery reception featuring Thornley’s**
Win Tickets to See Bobby Lee!
Bobby Lee performs at American Comedy Co. on New Year’s Eve.
Enter by Wednesday, December 26 at 1PM

Win a $400 Suit!
Enter to win a free suit valued at $400 from Men’s Fashion Depot.
Enter by Friday, January 4 at 1PM

San Diego Reader December 13, 2012 51
COMEDY

Charles Phoenix Retro Holiday Show Retro pop culture humorist, author Charles Phoenix “roasts and toasts the classic and kitschy life and style of all the holidays” during festive live comedy performance. Phoenix “shares his latest eye-popping food creations, frolicking road trip adventures across the USA,” and guide to SD landmarks. “Fun holiday fashions are encouraged but not expected.” Friday, December 14, 8pm; $25-$27. 18 and up. Scottish Rite Center, 1895 Camino del Rio South. (MISION VALLEY)

Iliza Shlesinger — from Last Comic Standing, Comedy Central, and Late Night with Jimmy Fallon! Thursday, December 13, 8pm; Friday, December 14, 7:30pm; Saturday, December 15, 9:30pm; American Comedy Company, 818 Sixth Avenue. (DOWNTOWN SAN DIEGO)

DANCE

Argentine Tango with Colette. Learn tango now! Take a first class free this Monday, December 17, or on Wednesday, December 19, at 7pm, when another 6-week session starts (or any Monday or Wednesday at 7pm) at Dance Place San Diego. No need for a partner. We will introduce you the passion and magic of Tango. Dance Place San Diego, 2650 Truxtun Road Studio #1106. (POINT LOMA)

'Tis the Nutcracker Season West Coast Ballet Theater’s production of The Nutcracker in association with San Elijo Dance and Music Academy and 45 Dance Academy. 800-988-4253. Saturday, December 15, 1pm and 7pm; $12-$39. California Center for the Arts, Escondido, 340 North Escondido Boulevard. (ESCONDIDO)

California Ballet’s The Nutcracker California Ballet Company presents The Nutcracker with the San Diego Symphony and Orchestra Nova. Join Clara and her prince as they embark on a magical Christmas journey. This year the performance will be accompanied by live music as follows: Orchestra Nova December 15-16, San Diego Symphony December 19-23. Tickets: 858-560-6741. Saturday, December 15, 2:30pm and 7pm; Sunday, December 16, 1pm and 5:30pm; $25-$90. San Diego Civic Theatre, 1100 Third Avenue. (DOWNTOWN SAN DIEGO)

Club Crescendo Complimentary dance class at 8:30pm — styles vary. No partner is ever necessary to participate, the students will be in a constant rotation. Club Crescendo opens at 9pm, featuring DJs, VIP booths, bottle service, and party packages. Art installations, dance performances, video DJ, and theme nights. $5 before 9pm, Fridays, 8:30pm; through Friday, February 22. $5-$10. 18 and up. Four Points by Sheraton, 8110 Aero Drive. (KEARNEY MESA)

Jingle Jam ’n’ Blues Dance Party Dress up in red party dresses and suits (or “green if you’re a non-conformist”) for evening promising blues and swing dance lessons (8:30pm), dancing, gag gift exchange, holiday prom promises, swing and blues music by the Fremons (9:20pm-12:30am). 619-291-3775. Friday, December 14, 8:30pm; $13-$22. 18 and up. Dance for 2, 7528 Clairemont Mesa Boulevard. (KEARNEY MESA)

Edward Colletti Alaska’s “Tea for Tiaras” — the Princess Project San Diego hosts this family-friendly afternoon lunch raising money to provide free prom dresses and accessories for local high school girls who cannot otherwise afford them. All ages welcome. Saturday, December 15, 11am; $40-$50. Westgate Hotel, 1055 Second Avenue. (DOWNTOWN SAN DIEGO)

Melts, Hops, and Curds The final Andaz San Diego event of 2012: a craft beer and artisanal cheese pairing event held in Andaz’ Ivy Wine Bar. This event intends to expose San Diegans to two local companies: Green Flash Brewing Co. and Venissimo Cheese. Guests will have the opportunity to sample at least six different beer and cheese pairings throughout the course of the evening. Representatives from both Green Flash Brewing Co. and Venissimo Cheese will be present to speak about the tastings and educate guests on local craft beers and artisanal cheeses. At the close of the event, guests are invited to stay for a complimentary experience at Ivy Nightclub, opening at 9pm Thursday, December 13, 7pm; $25. 21 and up. Ivy Wine Bar, 600 F St., in the Andaz hotel. (DOWNTOWN SAN DIEGO)

IMIG’s Family Christmas An homage to the Griswold’s... Join the IMIG’s “family” for eggnog, ugly sweaters, drink specials, tacky decorations and of course a screening of Christmas Vacation. This will be the first stop kicking off the Boulevard Night’s event. Starting at 7pm hit the streets and get to know our neighborhood as the businesses of El Cajon Boulevard showcase art, music, food and spirits from The Lafayette to 30th Street. Friday, December 14, 5-30pm; IMIG’s Kitchen and Bar, 2223 El Cajon Blvd, Lafayette Hotel. (NORTH PARK)

Painting & Vino! Painting & Vino is the marriage of an entertaining painting class, sipping wine, listening to music and having a great surface to cover with color, pattern, words and images. Transform your feet into an art gallery. 619-223-0058. Sunday, December 16, 9am; $52-$58. 8 and up. Bravo School of Art at NTU Promenade, 2600 Decatur Rd., Studio 206. (POINT LOMA)

FOOD & DRINK

Tea for Tiaras” The Princess Project San Diego hosts this family-friendly afternoon lunch raising money to provide free prom dresses and accessories for local high school girls who cannot otherwise afford them. All ages welcome. Saturday, December 15, 11am; $40-$50. Westgate Hotel, 1055 Second Avenue. (DOWNTOWN SAN DIEGO)

Craig's Wine Tasting A Saloon-style wine tasting event held in Andaz’ Ivy Wine Bar. This event intends to expose San Diegans to two local companies: Green Flash Brewing Co. and Venissimo Cheese. Guests will have the opportunity to sample at least six different beer and cheese pairings throughout the course of the evening. Representatives from both Green Flash Brewing Co. and Venissimo Cheese will be present to speak about the tastings and educate guests on local craft beers and artisanal cheeses. At the close of the event, guests are invited to stay for a complimentary experience at Ivy Nightclub, opening at 9pm Thursday, December 13, 7pm; $25. 21 and up. Ivy Wine Bar, 600 F St., in the Andaz hotel. (DOWNTOWN SAN DIEGO)

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Rhyme & Verse In Defense A poem by LaVerne Brown

Taking little notice of her womanly ambitions he captured her with words of love and all of the positions, explored her beauty bodily from lip to breast to bottom, but left her mind a mystery, and that is why she shot him!

LaVerne Brown (1912—2000) lived much of her life in sparsely peopled places — the Aleutian Islands, her grandparents’ homestead in Wisconsin, and in lumber camps and iron- mine company towns along the Brule River in Upper Michigan. In Juneau, she worked as a reporter, and later, in Sitka, she and her husband published a weekly newspaper, The Westward Alaskan. She subsequently taught creative writing for the VA at Fresno Junior College and for the community school system in San Diego, the city in which she spent the last decades of her life. LaVerne Brown was a central figure in the San Diego poetry world and a writer and mentor who was greatly loved. This year marked the centennial of her birth, and in July the Ocean Beach Historical Society held a celebration of LaVerne Brown’s life. “In Defense” is from her collection The Underside of Snow, published by Tectolite Press. It is reprinted by permission.

Find more poetry online at SDRacer.com/poetry

FANTASTIC ADVENTURES Holiday Flight Tickets on Sale Now!

Sky Sailing offers a variety of breathtaking scenic sailplane rides. The adventure begins as you slip into the glider sailplane for an experience you will remember forever. You will be treated to a gentle, tranquil ride or a roller-coaster ride — whichever you prefer — at no extra charge. All our pilots are FAA-certified commercial pilots. Rides for two start at $80 per person. If you think that special someone would like to take the controls and handle most of the flight, then an Introductory Lesson (starting at $125) is just the ticket.

Ask about our wing-mounted camera pictures.

Ask about our special holiday discount for flight tickets.

Sky Sailing • (760) 782-0404
31930 Highway 79 • Warner Springs, CA 92086
http://www.skysailing.com • Open 7 days a week
Parade of Lights Dinner Cruise
Three-hour yacht cruise on San Diego Bay includes glass of champagne or sparkling cider, holiday buffet dinner, and a dessert buffet. Music, dancing, and on-the-water views of the boat parade. Sunday, December 16, 6pm; $50-$94. Hornblower Cruises, 970 North Harbor Drive. (DOWNTOWN SAN DIEGO)

“Whale of a Tail” Get up close to real whale baleen. Learn why these mega marine mammals swim more than 10,000 miles each year. Scripps Oceanography scientists share stories of their current research. Included with admission. 858-534-7336. Saturday, December 15, 11am; free-$14. Birch Aquarium at Scripps, 2300 Expedition Way. (LA JOLLA)

Santa Brunch Have you been naughty or nice? Come enjoy a delicious holiday brunch with your family and then visit with Santa. Adults $39, kids 4-12 $18 (free under 4), seniors $30. Reservations required and must be made by 12/12. Call 619-780-0361 or email events@lafayettehotelsld.com. Mississippi Ballroom. Sunday, December 16, 10am to 3pm. (NORTH PARK)

End of Days 12.11.12 | A Vertical Epic event. Stone Brewing Company is offering all 13 Vertical Epic Ales. 03.03.03, 04.04.04, 05.05.05, 06.06.06, 07.07.07 (Wine BA), 08.08.08, 09.09.09, 09.09.09 (Wine BA), 10.10.10, 10.10.10 (Oaked), 11.11.11, 12.12.12, 5 oz pour: $3; Belgian pour: $6.50, Commemorative glass: $5 (first 100). Friday, December 21, 5pm. Hamilton’s Tavern, 1521 30th Street. (SOUTH PARK)

Food “Cooking” Class
Learn raw food recipes and techniques from Chef Perkunas, who has created hundreds of living raw and fusion menus. Bring any produce from home to play with and to create dishes for all ages. 619-200-5016. Thursday, December 13, 7pm; free. Lazy Hummingbird, 4876 Santa Monica Avenue. (OCEAN BEACH)


Food and wine not included with ticket purchase. Locations vary by class. Month of December. (SAN DIEGO)

Parade of Lights Dinner Cruise
Three-hour yacht cruise on San Diego Bay includes glass of champagne or sparkling cider, holiday buffet dinner, and a dessert buffet. Music, dancing, and on-the-water views of the boat parade. Sunday, December 16, 6pm; $50-$94. Hornblower Cruises, 970 North Harbor Drive. (DOWNTOWN SAN DIEGO)

Play with Your Food — Raw Food “Cooking” Class
Learn raw food recipes and techniques from Chef Perkunas, who has created hundreds of living raw and fusion menus. Bring any produce from home to play with and to create dishes for all ages. 619-200-5016. Thursday, December 13, 7pm; free. Lazy Hummingbird, 4876 Santa Monica Avenue. (OCEAN BEACH)


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Women with Curves!! SoCal’s Large and Lovely Connection for San Diego!
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San Diego Reader: What is your main concern as a member of the clergy?

Rabbi Josh Burrows: On the one hand, what concerns me is what do my congregants need, what are they going through, and what can I do to help them to think about their lives and celebrate the good times and face the tribulations all right. On the other hand, as rabbis we’re also tasked with the job of teaching, inspiring, motivating, and challenging. In addition, we Generation X clergy have got to figure out — about 20–30 years from now — how to transition the Holocaust as an historical event from recent history to ancient history. It’s going to be toward the latter part of our careers that the Holocaust is going to be approaching its 100-year anniversary. How will we mark the Holocaust without any survivors of the Holocaust around to share their stories?

SDR: Why did you become a rabbi?

RB: As a kid growing up, I wanted to be a teacher, a writer, a counselor, and work with kids, adults, and the elderly. I couldn’t choose any one of them individually, so I chose all of them — and that’s how I became a rabbi.

It was not about God for me, even though I’m a faithful person, and it was about how do I know myself and put myself in the position where I can make the biggest difference in the world.

SDR: Why Reformed Judaism?

RB: I was born into the reform movement — my parents and grandparents were both reformed Jews. It just so happens that the people I come from were big leaders in the reform movement. My grandfather was chairman of the reform movement for a number of years and was a big player in the creation of certain things that defined what the reform movement is today, I grew up in the thick of it. Besides that, for my personal politics, theology, and what I see as the authentic Jewish life, I would say the reform movement matches these things the best.

SDR: Where do you go when you die?

RB: We don’t really have a clear answer in the Jewish tradition. We give a number of possible different answers, but my personal view is that I have no idea. Until I go there, I won’t really be able to work on view. Included in admission ($12 general), 619-232-7931.

Thursday, December 13, 12pm; free-$12. San Diego Museum of Art, 1450 El Prado, (BALBOA PARK)
PEÑASQUITOS
5pm; 668-3281. Saturday, December 15, end of day use parking lot. 619-ters will be targeted. Meet at far Cluster in Perseus and open clus-
high in the southern sky, views
ing for good viewing. With Jupiter
behind the Fortuna Range, allow-
past new phase, will set early
BERVALLEY)
Star Party
Carmel Valley Road.
free
Saturday, December 15, 9am;
Mountain Park. 858-484-3219.
hike on north face of Black
Naturalist Mike Kelly leads
The Moon, two days
sign-up now
January class
Panorama Balloon Tours
1439 El Prado.
Thursday, December 13, 7pm; $60-
leyh@jfssd.org
Leaders of Jewish Family Service
host evening with live music, food,
Drinks. Proceeds benefit Hand Up
Youth Food Pantry and Foodmo-
bile hunger programs. RSVP: ash-
leyh@jfs.sda.org or 858-637-3051.
Thursday, December 13, 7pm; 860-
$75. Mingel International Museum,
1439 El Prado. (BALBOA PARK)
Bicycle Warehouse Grand Re-
 Opening Join Bicycle Warehouse
at their new location! Free Grand
Re-Opening Event. Bring the family
to see Jeff Lenosky put on a Giant
Bikes Stunt Show, test ride bikes
from Liv Giant, enjoy a free bar-
beque and lots of give-aways and
special deals. Saturday, December
15, noon to 3pm. Bicycle Ware-
house 3513 Main Street. (CHULA
VISTA)
Christmas Holiday Artists
Bazaar Art showcase, painting,
photography, sculpture, hand-
crafted items, books, and more
at Pasaje Rodriguez. arttijuana@
hotmail.com. Friday, December
14, 1am; free. Pasaje Rodriguez,
Avenida Revolución #710, Tijuana
Garden of Lights After the sun
goes down, the San Diego Botanic
Garden is transformed into a daz-
zing winter wonderland with over
100,000 sparkling lights. Live music
nightly from 6-8pm, campfire for
roasting marshmallows, additional
food, wagon rides, crafts, and snow
(weather permitting) — bring your
own disc or sled (no metal runners
please). Saturdays, 5pm; through
Sunday, December 30, free; $12.
San Diego Botanic Garden, 230
Quail Gardens Drive. (ENCINITAS)
Holiday Nights Visit Santa and
Mrs. Claus, ride a carriage through
the vineyards, listen to carolers
singing in old fashioned costume,
enjoy holiday entertainment. Arts
and crafts vendors. Wine tasting
room will be open. 858-487-1866.
Thursday, December 13, 4pm; 
Friday, December 14, 4pm; Satur-
day, December 15, 4pm; Sunday,
December 16, 4pm; free. Bernardo
Winery, 13330 Paseo del Verano
North, (SAN DIEGO)
Holiday Open House The San
Diego Elks Lodge will be opening
its doors to the public Saturday,
December 15 from 12-4pm. Bring
the kids to see Santa Claus and join
us in the festivities. 619-376-0168.
Saturday, December 15, noon to 4pm.
San Diego Elks Lodge #148, 7400
Jackson Drive. (Behind 7-Eleven,
(SAN CARLOS)
Holiday of Lights More than
400 lighted, holiday-themed dis-
plays for viewing from visitors'
cars. Holiday hayride December
14 (5:30-9:30pm), Admission: $15
per vehicle (up to five people). $20
per vehicle with six or more people,
$50 per bus. 858-793-5555. Thurs-
days, 5:30pm; Fridays, 5:30pm; Sat-
urdays, 5:30pm, Sundays, 5:30pm; 
through Tuesday, January 1, Del
Mar Fairgrounds, 2260 Jimmy
Durante Boulevard. (DEL MAR)
Holly Jolly Holiday Trolley
Tours Get into the holiday spirit,
with candy canes and holiday
music playing. Required reserva-
tions: 619-298-8687 or San Diego
Tour, Friday, December 14, 7pm;
Saturday, December 15, 7pm;
Sunday, December 16, 7pm; $10-18.
Old Town Market, 4010 Twigg,
San Diego
Imig’s Family Christmas
An Homage to the Griswolds
Enjoy “eggnog, ugly sweaters, drink specials, tacky decorations,”
and a screening of National Lam-
poon’s Christmas Vacation. Busi-
nesses along El Cajon Boulevard
will showcase art, music, food
and spirits, from the Lafayette to
30th Street. 619-780-0358. Fri-
day, December 14, 5:30pm. Imig’s
Kitchen and Bar, 2223 El Cajon Bl,
Lafayette Hotel. (NORTH PARK)
Knitting Circle Share project
and pattern ideas, learn how to
knit, improve your skills with
Eileen Adler. Bring yarn, needles,
a project. 858-581-9934. Saturday,
December 15, 10am; free. Pacific
Beach Library, 4275 Cass Street.
(PACIFIC BEACH)
Las Posadas The 62nd annual Las
Posadas is a walking reenactment
of biblical story of Mary and Joseph’s
search for a birthplace for Christ;
participants invited to join candle-
light procession, sing traditional holiday
songs as players move “from inn to
inn, asking for symbolic lodging.”
Event begins at 2pm with a musical
pre-show in the state park, with the
live theatrical procession starting
at 5pm. Procession concludes at
6pm with bonfire and piñata party.
Sunday, December 16, 2pm; free.
Old Town State Historic Park, 4002
Wallace Street. (OLD TOWN)
New Earth Expo Shop for holistic
and metaphysical gifts, products,
services including sessions with
healthy habits practitioners and
psychics, gemstone jewelry, aroma-
therapy products, massage sessions,
healing music, more. Health and
wellness and intuitive arts presen-
tations. 831-239-6835. Sunday,
December 16, 10am; free-$10.
Mission Valley Resort, 875 Hotel
Circle South. (MISSION VALLEY)
Parade of Lights Cruises Three-
course dinner, complimentary
boarding champagne and DJ ent-
tertainment. What you get: 2.5-hour
scenic cruise. Three-course served
dinner. Complimentary boarding
Champagne. DJ Entertainment
Featuring J. Dean. Watch the
bay light up in magnificent color.
Sundays, 5pm; through Sunday,
December 16, $47-59. Flagship —
San Diego Harbor Excursion, 1050
North Harbor Drive. (DOWNTOWN
SAN DIEGO)
Parade of Lights Spectator
Cruise Narrated passage will treat
you to the illuminated magic of
San Diego landmarks and the
festival decorated vessels of the
annual San Diego Parade of Lights.
Candy canes, hot cocoa, and snack
bar. Sunday, December 15, 6pm;
$17-$35. Flagship — San Diego
Harbor Excursion, 1050 North
Harbor Drive. (DOWNTOWN
SAN DIEGO)
San Diego Bay Parade of Lights “USS Santa Claus” is theme for 41st annual event, promising “procession of more than 80 lavishly decorated vessels” reflecting the theme. Parades begin with fireworks (5:30pm). Boats sail from Shelter Island to Coronado. 619-224-2240. Sunday, December 16, 5:30pm; free. Embarcadero, Along Harbor Drive. (DOWNTOWN SAN DIEGO)

Santa’s Naughty Variety Show Pink Boombox Burlesque, Mimi Zulu and Friends, Gabriel Joseph, Soul Ablaze, Kim Thompson, Ryan Roots as Naughty Santa, host Ophelia Later. Friday, December 14, 5pm; $10. 21 and up. Ruby Room, 1271 University Avenue. (HILLCREST)

Skating by the Sea Enjoy outdoor ice-skating on rink overlooking Pacific Ocean. Three-hour sessions (at 2pm and 6pm daily) cost $25 for adults and $20 for kids ages 10 and under. Two-minute matinees (11am) are $20 for adults and $15 for kids ages 10 and under (skate rentals are included in the price). Thursdays, 2pm and 6pm; Fridays, 2pm and 6pm; Saturdays, 11am, 2pm and 6pm; Sundays, 11am, 2pm and 6pm; and through Saturday, January 5. $15-$25. Hotel del Coronado, 1500 Orange Avenue. (CORONADO)

Wanderlust Flea Market Live music, food and shopping! “Rare, eclectic collections” from local vendors and artists includes jewelry, vintage dolls, clothing, furniture, decorations, tea, comics and more. While shopping, indulge yourself with yummy treats made by local food vendors such as Surely We, Often Wander, S. Chicken Doodle Soup, Black Velvet Creations, The Necklace Faerie, RePlayed’n REmaDe, Toswerks, Crissy’s Cookie Creations, Luna de Ana, Studio 110 Design, Kreation Factory, Tea Gallerie and more! Live performance by Linkletter (1:30-2:30pm), Chocolate Revolution (3-4:30pm), Heart Pharmacy (4:30-5:30pm), and Sister Speak (5:45-6:45pm). $2 door cover. Be sure to bring cash to support the local artisans. Sunday, December 16, 1pm; $2. Queen Bee’s Art & Cultural Center, 3925 Ohio Street. (NORTH PARK)

Wreaths Across America Ceremony and wreath laying to honor those who serve. To volunteer to place the wreaths: timocampion@yahoo.com. Saturday, December 15, 9am; free. Fort Rosecrans National Cemetery, Cabrillo Memorial Drive. (POINT LOMA)

Blue Christmas: An Evening of Jazz and Art Jazz and artistry collide! Music by Blue Chunks jazz ensemble. View original artwork by North County artists. Emcee Connor Gressitt provides comedy and magic. Saturday, December 22, 7pm to 10pm. Sunshine Brooks Theatre, 217 North Coast Highway. (OCEANSIDE)

NYE 2013 Concert Join over 2000 people as they ring in the New Year in style at the Broadway pier (“the Pavilion”), the finest venue in San Diego. Purchase your tickets early — the price goes up as we sell more tickets; this party will sell out! Three ballrooms of entertainment. DJs spinning retro/disco music during and in between live event to keep the party going nonstop. Live bands Camero, Angela, Winbush, Jay Lamont Benefit Concert to support Luke’s Hands of Hope. Prices: $100 general admission; $150 premier seating. Lukehandsofhope.org/events. Monday, December 31, 8pm. Port Pavilion on Broadway Pier, 1000 North Harbor Drive. (DOWNTOWN)

Singles New Year’s Eve Soiree Simply The Best Singles, an upscale organization for singles looking for relationships, marriage, and more offers this dance/mixer with DJ Keith, special performance by Elvis, complimentary appetizers, champagne toast, coffee/dessert and party favors. Discounted NYE rooms plus breakfast buffet. Price $55 per person, $65 door, valet $7, dressing dress (formal optional). Sign up at SimplyTheBestSingles.com or call 818-577-6877. Monday, December 31, 8pm. to midnight. Hilton Garden Inn Carlsbad Beach, 6450 Carlsbad Boulevard (CARLSBAD)

SPOKEN WORD
Sunset Poets Holiday Party Featuring Steve McDonald and Kate Harding in a holiday reading with Christmas cookie buffet. Sandy Carpenter hosts. Sunday, December 16, 2:30pm; free. 10 and up. Vista Library, 700 Eucalyptus Avenue. (VISTA)

The Gelato Poetry Series Featuring Michael Schmitt. Open mic follows. 760-434-1240. Friday, December 14, 7pm; free. Korky’s Ice Cream and Coffee, 2375 San Diego Avenue. (OLD TOWN)

Buy one natural pulled pork sandwich, get one 1/2 off! at Little Italy and North Park Weekly Valid through December 20, 2012 only. One coupon per customer per booth.

Ranchwood Deli & Catering Located at State & Date

$1 OFF any 2 Paninis at Little Italy Valid through December 20, 2012 only. One coupon per customer per booth.

Seb’s Paninis

www.salt-farm.com Perfect gifts for foodies, the “hard to shop for” the hostess & stocking stuffers too! Holiday wrap available for all purchases.

Fresh Harvest RED and CHANDLER Walnuts Valid through December 20, 2012 only. One coupon per customer per booth.

Near the Corner of State & Date Terra Bella Ranch

Save $1! 3 Vegetarian Samosas $5 at Little Italy, North Park and Pacific Beach Weekly Valid through December 20, 2012 only. One coupon per customer per booth.

Masala Cottage

California raised grass-fed, beef, free range chicken and natural pork.

SonRise Ranch Little Italy at Date and India.

FREE Polito Farms market bag with $10 purchase Valid through December 20, 2012 only. One coupon per customer per booth.

Polito Family Farms Little Italy at the SW corner of Date & Columbia

Winter Squash $2 per pound Valid through December 20, 2012 only. One coupon per customer per booth.

JR Organics Ask about our CSA at Little Italy, North Park, Pacific Beach and Public Market

100% Raw Almonds, Roasted Almonds, Almond Butter $1 off any purchase at Little Italy, North Park, Pacific Beach and Public Market Valid through December 20, 2012 only. One coupon per customer per booth.

HOPKINS AG

$1 off Cabbages at Little Italy, North Park, Pacific Beach and Public Market www.suziesfarm.com Valid through December 20, 2012 only. One coupon per customer per booth.

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Save $5 when you buy any 3 items at $5 each at Little Italy, North Park and Pacific Beach Weekly Valid through. December 20, 2012 only. One coupon per customer per booth.

Baba Foods

Gilbert Quintos Farms Buy 4 Avocados for $5.00 at Little Italy, North Park, Pacific Beach and Public Market Valid through December 20, 2012 only. One coupon per customer per booth.

$2 off any 1lb. purchase of our flavored almonds at Little Italy, North Park and Pacific Beach Weekly Valid through December 20, 2012 only. One coupon per customer per booth.

Polito Family Farms Little Italy at the SW corner of Date & Columbia

Chargers versus Panthers San Diego Chargers host Carolina Panthers. Game broadcast on Fox. 877-CHARGERS. Sunday, December 16, 1:30pm; Qualcomm Stadium, 9449 Friars Road. (MIL- SIGN VALLEY)

Jingle Bell 5K Run/Walk Wear a holiday themed costume! Tie jingle bells to your shoes! Proceeds benefit Arthritis Foundation. Race day registration: 6:45am ($40 for adults; $20 for kids), Run/walk starts 8am at 6th and Quince. 1K children’s run with the elves starts at 9:15am Event also includes a gingerbread cookie decorating contest, free hot chocolate and refreshments in the family tent, a costume contest for humans and pets, as well as a beer tent. Saturday, December 15, 8am; $20-$40. 6th and Quince Streets
Carla wins again

Amazing how childish you get when you’re eating out, but I wanted to see the sizzle.

Hair day.
Carla gives me that look, like, Has Diane totally wrecked my hairdo? Tell me!

“Course, I never would, not in a thousand years, not if I wanted to live.”

“Great, great,” I say.

“I don’t lie to me, Bedford. She’s making me look like a hurricane victim, right? Right?”

Man, she nailed it.

“No way,” I say. “Well, okay… right now it is a bit wild, like, hair today, gone tomorrow. Heh-heh. Kidding!”

I look around, desperate for a distraction.

We’re at the corner of Orange and B, in Coronado. It’s a building with thick-walled arches, Spanish-style. Lots of potted trees and flowers outside.

“Hey?” I say. “Look where we are. Didn’t you come here as a kid? When it was La Avenida?”

I’ve heard about this place. Famous landmark.


“So, let’s go in,” I say. “See if they have a lunch deal.”

Carla hesitates. Maybe a few memories flashing by.

“Course, now this place is Bistro d’Asia. And not the cheapest. The menu on the wall by the door shows items like Open Sesame Chicken ($13.95) and Dancing Scallops ($18.95).

“Still,” I say, “they’re bound to have lunch specials.”

I lead the way under the arch of the corner door.

“Welcome,” says this gal at the reception desk.

“For two?”

“Do you have any, like, lunch specials?” I ask.

“Yes! We have a lunch-special menu,” says the gal, Mariana. “It’s $11.75. That includes soup, salad, an entrée, rice, and a drink.”

“How many choices are there?”

Mariana checks her menu.

“About 20.”

Well, now. Paydirt. That doesn’t sound bad at all.

She leads us to a window seat, where we can catch winter sunbeams. The decor is woody, dark carpet, black tabletops, but with sky-blue walls, lots of mirrors, and purple-ish chairs.

“Guess who sat in this very spot?” Carla asks.

“Got me. Bill Clinton?”

“Marilyn Monroe and Errol Flynn. I never saw them, but my parents talked about it. These very seats! They’d come here from the Hotel Del. For lunch.”

“Wow.”

“And that’s not all. Every time we’d sit down, my dad would say, ‘Guess who stood outside right there on the sidewalk, recruiting pilots for the Flying Tigers? Chiang Kai-shek, the generalissimo who ruled China.’ I’d look out the window, hoping to see him. I wanted to know what a Chinese generalissimo looked like.”

Carla’s all amped up now. “And Mom would tell us to have the Jack Salad because it was originally made by Jack Clapp, the maître-d’. He helped develop the Caesar salad down at Caesar’s in Tijuana….”

This is when Mariana appears to take our order. We’re talking Asian food now, of course. For the past 11 years, Mariana says.

First up, I get a pot of Chinese tea. Carla gets a pink-lemonade. It’s included in the deal.

She orders the hot-and-sour soup and I go for the velvet egg-drop soup. She has a coleslaw appetizer salad. Me, I get the Caesar, though it’s probably not Jack Clapp’s no mo’. She decides on the Saigon kung pao chicken, while I ask for Firecracker Shrimp only, because I see one go by, sizzling on a black iron plate.

In our never-ending competition over who orders the best stuff, Carla wins round one. Her hot-and-sour is really good, dark and tangy. Mine’s well, egg soup. Fine when you add some soy to it, but no contest. She wins on the salad front, too.

That coleslaw has crispy wontons and a “secret” peanutty sauce with a vinegar tang. Real refreshing, the one bite I’m able to sneak.

“And guess who painted murals all around these walls when it was La Avenida?”

Carla says.

“Picasso? No, wait, wait, La Avenida… Mexican… Diego Rivera, Frida Kahlo’s main squeeze?”

“Close,” Carla says. “It was Rivera’s teacher, Ramos Martinez. He taught at the National Art Academy in Mexico City. It was started in 1785 — can you believe it? The murals he painted here were some of his greatest works.”

“I’d love to see the sizzle. They taste great, though, chili-hot. So, the La Avenida murals?” I ask. “What happened to them, if they were so important?”


Her family’s been here since Mexican days. Touchy subject, still. I don’t argue.

The Place: Bistro d’Asia, 1301 Orange Avenue, Coronado, 619-437-6677
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Wish for knish
Confession: I had always assumed that City Delicatessen in Hillcrest would suck. The internal system of hints and warnings, which is usually reliable to me, sounded the alarm every time I traveled past on University Ave. Keep going, the voice of reason said, there’s nothing for you there. It turns out that I was wrong and that my love of Jewish comfort food has been inches from satisfaction this whole time.

The place is modeled, more or less, after venerable institutions like the Carnegie Deli in NYC and other bastions of corned-beef-and-bagel consumption. When I finally went into City Deli, I was thrilled to see a menu replete with knishes, noodle kugel, matzoh, whitefish, and pastrami.

I dove straight into the vat of pickles at the center of the table.

“But...sanitation?” my companions wanted to know.

“They’re pickles,” I said. “The most sanitary food there is. Eat them.”

Delicious.

The matzoh-ball soup featured an enormous dumpling afloat in a briny sea of chicken consomme and aromatic veggies. Perfect to ward off the chill of a cooler evening.

A plate of brisket and smoked tongue, in no uncertain terms, was a heroic portion of food. Half a pound of meat lurked beneath a ladle-full of brown gravy; and a few steamed veggies hung out at the periphery. The secret star of the show, not just a mere side dish, was the huge latke — the corned beef and kugel — and maybe end with a slice of cheesecake.

City Delicatessen, 353 University Avenue.

by Ian Pike

25Forty: A la famiglia!
How can you make a sausage look like a million bucks? Come to Old Town.

I did, the other night. Right across from the late, lamented Wine Cabana, I spotted 25Forty Bistro and Bakehouse (2540 Congress Street, Old Town, 619-294-2540). Then I noticed a clump of people at the entrance to that chic black-and-white bistro.

So I cross Congress and jump up the steps that lead to the fire-pit patio and the li’l ol’ white house that this bistro occupies.

Big clump of folks at the entrance, all talking at once, in Italian.

“My family,” says Mark. Oh, yeah. I remember him from two years back. Came in when he was just starting.

“We’re very proud of our boy,” says Maria. “I’m his mom. His madre orgullosa.”

“He’s turned out good, real good,” says Joe. “I’m his uncle.”

“And I’m his dad,” says Luigi. “We come from Calabria. His food is as good as home.”

“We’ve made it to two years,” Mark says. “That wasn’t always easy.”

I understand. Heck, there’s Wine Cabana closing down right across the road. Congress Street ain’t San Diego Avenue, where all the business is. This is when I see the banner outside: “Happy Hour, 5:00-6:30. Fifty percent off all drinks and listed food items.”

It’s 6:15. Who wouldn’t investigate?

So, a moment later, I’m sitting inside this clean, mainly black-and-white interior with the kitchen on one side and a big chalk-drawn map of the world on the other. Oh, I get it. It’s showing where all the house wines come from. “We’ve been starting to get African wines,” Mark says. “They’re really interesting.”

Wow. African. From Mauritania, Morocco. I see they also have an $8 lunch buffet and a cooking-class schedule.

Merissa the waitress brings the menu. Items you can have at happy hour include kale (with sugar-coated cashews, raisins, and soy) for $10. So, that’d be $5; pork chops and spinach ($17/$8.50), and, hey, bangers and mash with gravy and onions for $9. Which’d be $4.50.

So I ask for that and a glass of the house red — getting off on wine right now — normally $8, so $3...deal!

And here’s a nice touch: the black-cloth table tops are overlaid with paper. And they have a jar of crayons so you can doodle while you wait. I’ve just about completed a Mona Lisa that beats the heck outa Leonardo’s when Merissa arrives with my sausage and wine. It’s beautifully presented like I was the king of da world, not some cheap-skate always looking for a deal. And this guy Mark sure knows how to make a humble sausage look and taste good.

Yes, you’re gonna get lash-burn on your cheek from onion-flick as you suck them babies in, but $7.50 for food and wine ($8.66 after tax), who’s complaining?

I’d ask Mark more about it, but he’s tied up with his doting parents and uncles and aunts and cousins. Half of them are on vacation, out from Italy. I tell you. Everybody’s talkin’.

by Ed Bedford

White: Out
Cheffing is a transient line of work. It’s common for culinary professionals from exec chef on down to prep cook to have lengthy résumés populated by a plethora of bullet-points denoting previous employers. It’s just the nature of the biz and nobody bats an eye when they hear a kitchen worker has left their post. Well, unless they are a part of the small sect of San Diego chefs that qualify as household names. They garner the attention of the dining public who, when they hear of a transition of any kind beg the questions: what, where, and, inevitably, why?

In most cases, the why part is, frankly, nobody’s business but those who are part of the businesses in question. When everybody else in town is talking...
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Watercress & fingerling potato salad, truffle fries
La Jolla salad, mixed greens, candy nuts Champagne vinaigrette

Hand Carved
Thyme & black pepper seasoned prime rib, horseradish sauce
Salmon Coulbiac, wild mushrooms, fresh spinach and sliced egg, baked in flaky puff pastry served with bearnaise sauce

Traditional Accompaniments
Shrimp & crab bisque en croute
Teriyaki-caramel glazed duck legs, cranberry walnut rice pilaf
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Cheesy Italian

Seriously? That was the gist of my thoughts when I was outside Sanfilippo’s in Bankers Hill, about to walk in and join friends for dinner. Let’s just say my expectations were minimal and falling. “We’re, like, right down the street from the Tractor Room,” I wanted to say, as my inner foodie hipster kid desired craft cocktails and game meat instead of noodles and red sauce.

But then I scoped out the menu and it turns out you can get a pitchfork of Sanfilippo’s pale ale for under $10...whenever you want. Not just for happy hour. And it was good, too. Smooth. Drinkable, like an English-style ESB. I could’ve stopped and declared victory for Sanfilippo’s right there, but I didn’t. I gave the food a chance.

The front of the menu proclaimed the restaurant was the “home of the casserole.” And the house specialty commanded its own section, sans descriptions on what, exactly, the casserole contained. The “meatball, cheese, and bell pepper” casserole contained exactly that. The constituent elements laid in an oblate soufflé dish with a smothering of red sauce and cheese. A few minutes in a hot oven gave everything a chance to meld together. The shape of the plate evoked images of some that my mother had when I was just a little dude eating mac and cheese from a box. The same dishes also showed up at the mom ‘n’ pop family restaurants we would go to in the years of little Ian. Seeing one in front of me the other day was a tad spooky, but also kind of cool.

The casserole itself was just a meatball covered in stuff, which is actually okay. It’s definitely the height of unpretentiousness. The meatball was of average deliciousness, making up for subtlety with excessive size. I ordered the small portion ($7.85), and it was more than adequate to my needs. It wasn’t much to look at, but there was plenty of it.

In fact, much of the food is under $10. It would’ve been an act of gluttony for me to try and eat the plates that featured, for example, lasagna AND meatballs AND sausage. The only things on the menu with bigger price tags were dinner specials such as chicken parmesan and linguine with clams. Some of them were almost $19, and I think it would be hard to justify the 50 percent price increase. A simple pasta plate is enough to feed two light eaters.

Sanfilippo’s also managed to boggle my mind with a touch of service, too. I can only assume that their service must be lightning-fast on any given day, because my waiter was apologetic over the “delays” we were experiencing. As an act of expiation, he rushed an extra order of free garlic bread to the table, apologizing the whole time.

I couldn’t have waited more than ten minutes for my food. I’d like to see that kind of professional courtesy from most of the “nice” restaurants I go to. Sanfilippo’s, 2949 Fifth Avenue.

by Ian Pike

RakiRaki

I was en route to one of my favorite lunch spots on Convoy (I’m talking about Tofu House), when I spotted RakiRaki. Ramen and Tsukemen, a new noodle joint in the same strip mall, sharing one of the more frustrating parking lots in San Diego.

David and I are particular about our ramen. Lately, we’ve been torn between Tajima and Yakyudori, so we were game to see how this place measured up to the Convoy Ramen Gods.

It was a cool day, so though the tsukemen looked interesting (dipping noodles — the broth is hot, but the noodles on the side are cold until you dip them) both of us opted for a simple bowl of spicy ramen. Each table included a bottle of “Enagic Kangen Water” water (misspelled twice on the menu). The water is not only served for drinking but is the only water used in the kitchen, which meant I’d be drinking it from both my cup and my bowl.

Unlike ramen at most other places, the broth at RakiRaki is chicken-based (not pork or fish). The broth itself was light and clean, but not too watery. The flavor was balanced, not too salty, just the right amount of umami, and when I stirred it in my little ball of red pepper, it had a pleasant kick. The pork was tender and tasty.

On the downside, the egg (ordered as an extra) was overcooked and underflavored, and the gyoza David and I shared...
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San Diego Reader December 13, 2012
Manj kreyol
I have been eyeballing the new Haitian restaurant in City Heights for a while now. They’ve been open about two months, and I had a chance to pop in the other night. I liked the way the restaurant was put together. It was bright inside, with jazzy world-beat tunes playing loudly from the PA. Dining area was scrupulously clean, too, which is no surprise in such a new place but inspires confidence nonetheless.

“Have you ever had Haitian food?” asked the girl behind the counter.

No, I had not. But I was willing to try. I didn’t say that it looked like a lot like Jamaican food or other Caribbean cuisines I’d had. I figured it would be different in small ways, signature flavors, if you will.

“It’s the best!” the girl said with enthusiasm. Her service style proved a touch slip-shod at times, with the forgetting of orders and an inability to run my credit card later so that I had to go across the street to an ATM to pay for my meal. The whole place was a little bit chaotic, but at least everybody was super friendly.

I ordered some “akra malanga” (fried yuca and malanga root for $3) to start. It came out looking almost like starch, fried quenelles with a pile of cole slaw in the middle. They weren’t super flavorful, but the texture was fun to sink the teeth into. I really wanted some sauce to dip them in, but there was apparently nothing available.

The best part was the cole slaw. The creole term is pikliz and it was a simple mixture of shredded carrot and cabbage in a vinegar dressing. What made it special was the scotch bonnet peppers. They’re kind of habanero flavored, but different. Very smooth and spicy. The Haitian slaw seriously topped the best slaw I’ve ever had from good BBQ places. Even a small portion is sufficient since it packs a wallop.

Goat stew ($9.99) came with a huge plate of rice and beans (more than one guy could ever eat), a few tasty slices of fried plantain, and more of that amazing slaw. The gamey goat meat had been boiled roughly in a thin, oily stew with onions. I think it could have benefited from a slower braising because the meat was still rife with connective tissue and difficult to eat.

Perhaps this is the “correct” way to prepare a Haitian-style goat stew. If so, it’s not for me. The meat hadn’t been fully skinned, either, so there were a few thick pieces of skin (with a little hair) attached to some of the goat nuggets. Those joints could have produced a lovely sort of pot au feu if prepared a bit differently, but as it was they were hard to handle. The best part of the stew was spooning the oily, flavorful broth over the rice and eating that with a spoon. I think that if I had it to do all over again, I would go with fried pork or chicken, especially if there was some sauce I could add.

For a drink, malta is the way to go with Haitian food. The syrup, unfermented barley malt soda has the perfect taste to go along with Caribbean cuisine. It’s kind of weird, but if people keep an open mind, it turns out pretty satisfying, which I guess you could say about anything.

Haitian Cuisine, 3695 University Avenue. by Ian Pike
next big thing.” It was one of the few on the list without any helpful description, but fortunately I was already familiar with this type of wine from that region.

We ordered the lamb meatballs (from the happy-hour menu) and a daily special of pork belly, which we’d seen written in chalk on a board above the bar. While we were waiting for our food, we were given a bowl of roasted chickpeas flavored with red pepper and lemon. I joked that they should have been called “chickTEASE.” The seasoning was delicious, and we were hungry, but unlike edamame, a snack that these were clearly mirroring, there was no satisfying pop of bean to chew — just very tasty, indelible skins to suck on. After trying to get some kind of discernible nub from the goodies in the bowl, each of us grew frustrated and gave up.

When the real food arrived, our exasperation with the chickpeas was soon forgotten. The lamb meatballs had a caramelized sear, and the yogurt sauce complemented them nicely. The pork belly was served atop a thick slice of rosemary bread.

We got two pizzas for the table, served rectangular on a board (as it is at BO-beau). The prosciutto pizza had a bit too much of the house-made mozzarella on top, but once a piece was adjusted for ratios, the combination of green grapes, prosciutto, cheese, and balsamic port reduction was delicious. The other pizza was another special from the board — fig, cheese, bacon, and sun-dried tomato, all coming together for a man-inducing mouthful.

“We didn’t make it to dessert… at least, not this time.”

by Barbara

Heritage-infused brewing

Once upon a time, beer in San Diego consisted mainly of but a few styles: hefeweizens, amber ales, brown ales, porters, stouts, pale ales and, of course, the India pale ale. But, as brewing has taken hold across the county, brewers have gone on to tackle all sorts of styles. Nowadays, it seems pretty much every type of ale and lager the world has ever seen — and then some — are available in America’s Finest City. A recent interview with an upcoming brewing company, ChuckAlek Independent Brewers (2330 Main Street, Suite C, Ramona) disproved that theory. There are a number of Old World styles currently unavailable in San Diego…but not for long. Ever had a Grodziskie ale? How about a Kentucky common? To the best of my knowledge, neither are being produced locally, and one would be hard pressed to find them on shelves anywhere in the country. In the case of Grodziskie, it’d be extremely tough to find even in its country of origin, Poland, where the ChuckAlek team says it is no longer produced except among homebrewers. This is why they’re producing it. It doesn’t exist, but they feel it should. That same thought process is why they’re basing their operation in Ramona. No brewery exists there, but they feel one should.

I first wrote about ChuckAlek two weeks ago when talking about some of my new brewery leads. Shortly after, the company’s CEO Marta Jankowska shared some details about her business, which is aiming for a number of years. He and Jankowska are available in America’s Finest City. A recent interview with an upcoming brewing company, ChuckAlek Independent Brewers (2330 Main Street, Suite C, Ramona) disproved that theory. There are a number of Old World styles currently unavailable in San Diego…but not for long. Ever had a Grodziskie ale? How about a Kentucky common? To the best of my knowledge, neither are being produced locally, and one would be hard pressed to find them on shelves anywhere in the country. In the case of Grodziskie, it’d be extremely tough to find even in its country of origin, Poland, where the ChuckAlek team says it is no longer produced except among homebrewers. This is why they’re producing it. It doesn’t exist, but they feel it should. That same thought process is why they’re basing their operation in Ramona. No brewery exists there, but they feel one should.

ChuckAlek is named after Jankowska’s grandfather, Alek. The other half, Chuck, is the name of the grandfather of ChuckAlek’s brewer, Grant Fraley. Fraley, a mapping and aerial photography software developer, has been homebrewing for a number of years. He started with IPAs but, inspired by time spent studying the history of beer and visiting breweries during stretches spent living in Germany and Austria, he switched to reviving lesser-seen and in some cases defunct European styles. He and Jankowska refer to this style of beer-making as “heritage-infused brewing.”

Fraley’s Grodziskie, a smoky wheat ale with hop bitterness that was inspired by a Polish ancestor who fought against the Ottoman Empire in the Battle of Vienna, will be named the Hussar. His light-boded Kentucky common ale, which will be brewed with hops grown in Julian, is named Fiddler after another ancestor, legendary Kentucky fiddler, J.P. Fraley. ChuckAlek will also

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produce a Dusseldorf-style altbier called Dowser, a porter fermented in part with wild yeast (Brettanomyces), and a Berliner weisse (a low ABV, slightly sour wheat beer).

Once ChuckAlek is open, those beers will be available almost exclusively from their combo tap room, public house, and brewhouse. The tap room will be a typical tasting room where visitors can order taster samples of what ChuckAlek has to offer, while the public house (which will include a view of the one-barrel brewhouse, from which Jankowska and Fraley plan to produce between 250 and 300 barrels of beer in 2013) will be the place to enjoy full pints of their heritage-infused creations.

by Brandon Hernandez

Bad ass: badass?
Franchises and chains always tip their hand early. I actually think it has something to do with the way the design is free of error. It always seems like the place is laid out with an overarching vision that makes everything sync up perfectly, from the menu boards to the tables to the little caddies that hold condiments and stuff. It looks tailor-made. Curiously, the same could be said of very nice restaurants, where chic design firms plan out every detail of the dining room before construction begins and everything looks one-of-a-kind, but I'm pretty sure Bad Ass Coffee fits into the former category.

I had never seen the store before, probably because it is up in Rancho Penasquitos where I seldom find myself, but I'm always into checking out a new coffee shop, franchise or otherwise. I learned that the next nearest one in California is in Rancho Cucamonga. There are franchises all over the country, but they are very spread out. It has a cute, Hawaiian theme, allegedly paying homage to the bellowing donkeys of the Big Island's coffee industry. Evoking the legends of some bad asses to imply that your coffee is truly badass. I see what you did there! Snark aside, Bad Ass Coffee is legit. The java is good. It's strongly brewed, bold in flavor, but very smooth. Better than 'Buks or low-grade indie-coffeehouse brew, but not as good as the rad places like the Collective or the Art of Espresso. As winter approaches in San Diego, I seldom find myself, but I'm pretty sure Bad Ass offered.

Another adornable gesture was the little sink by the cream and sugar station. "Liquids," read the label. It was obviously for pouring out excess coffee, rather than into the trash or a pan, and I have to say that it appealed to my sense of "doing things properly." Kudos.

Last point of advantage for Bad Ass: they have a drive-thru window. Quite the godsend for people on the go, I'm sure. Bad Ass Coffee, 9978 Carmel Mountain Road.

by Ian Pike

Ramen quest continues
As winter approaches in San Diego, my endless quest for the perfect bowl of ramen continues.

Right now, my favorite can be found at Yakuyoro (most San Diegans call it Yakitori Yakuyoro, but the sign above the door simply reads "Yakuyoro," so I'm sticking with the single word). Most recently, I enjoyed the "spicy mizo." The noodles are perfectly chewy, the ground pork is tender and cooked separately so that it retains its own flavor, the hanjuku (soft-boiled) egg is bathed in a delectable and well-balanced marinade of sweet mirin and salty soy sauce, the broth is rich but not oily with just the right kick... well, see for yourself. It was a satisfying meal. This particular bowl was enjoyed as brunch on a recent weekday.

Whereas I'm all about the flavor bombs (Spice! Sweet corn! Savory pork!), David often opts for food in its purest form. For example, he likes vanilla ice cream. So when it comes to ramen, he orders the standard. In this case, he got a simple bowl with shoyu (soy) broth. As they say in Japan, itadakimasu!

by Bararella

Grabbing a (Healthy?) Bite at the Mall
When I heard about a "great new healthy restaurant" from a friend who is a proponent of "cleanseless," I thought, Awesome, I'm off to spend an hour politely nibbling on an alfalfa and flax seed dish with the texture and flavor of cardboard. Even the restaurant's name — the new-age-y, imperious True Food Kitchen — exuded a sort of yoga-pants-wearing pretension.

At first I was surprised to find the huge, mostly outdoor restaurant in the middle of the Fashion Valley shopping mall, just a crosswalk away from the Cheesecake Factory. But after a moment's consideration, this made a lot of sense — when did you ever see a yogastika take a break between Nordstrom and Nieman Marcus to "grab a bite" at the Cheesecake Factory? Or any of the usual shopping mall food-court fare, for that matter?

I met up with my friend and we grabbed a table outside. I was ecstatic to find alcohol on the menu. Before looking at the food options, I ordered a cocktail called Flower Child (Juniper Green Organic Gin, St. Germain, fennel, mint, pineapple). Most of the cocktail names — Peacemaker, Spontaneous Happiness — seemed overwrought, as though someone was trying a little too hard to convey a tranquil, SoCal spa resort aura.

By the second sip, my opinion began to change, and not just because I was enjoying an adult beverage — the drink was good, it was well-balanced, flavorful and beautiful to look at. I scanned the menu and was amazed to find more than a few dishes that caught my interest.

In the end, I settled on the street tacos (grass-fed-of-course steak, avocado, cotija cheese, sour cream, with a side of beans). Everything on my plate was delectable and so well seasoned that I didn't need to add the salt I'd already had in hand when the food was set before me.

My friend ordered something with cauliflower in it. That's all I could see, because I really don't like cauliflower. But later, after a second cocktail (this one with a house-made cinnamon soda and vodka), I finally gave in and had a bite of brussels sprouts and squash from her dish, and I admit it was pretty tasty. It was the "Autumn Ingredient Salad," with roasted cauliflower, the sprouts and squash, mulberries, pomegranate, and a horseradish vinaigrette.

By the time we left, I was sold. "I would totally come here for lunch and shopping," I said. "I might walk around and browse right now, just because I'm already here." We parted ways to hit up the stores that filled our respective needs, and for the first time ever, I left a mall restaurant without feeling even the slightest bit gross.
It is excellent because...

“Despite the antagonism and strain, this message is just as relevant today as it’s always been.”

The following are classical music entries from the Reader’s “Jam Session” music blog. Click to Sandiegoreader.com/weblogs/jam-session for more.

NOT HANDEL
Tired of the Messiah? Me, too. So I plan hear Respighi in Point Loma this Christmas season. Respighi’s Laud to the Nativity has long been a favorite piece of Christmas music. However, it has always been overshadowed by Handel’s Christmas oratorio Christmas music. However, it has always been a professional level group.

Musica Vitale was founded in 2005 by Elena Vizuet and has been giving top-shelf performances ever since. Respighi’s music is complex and challenging on every level, and Musica Vitale is a professional level group.

I asked Elena what her take on Laud was. “What I love about Laud is its fluid, spontaneous, and fast-changing musical elements. Respighi closely follows and illustrates the story of the Nativity.

“The fabric of this work is like a quilt which contains numerous episodes of different style, texture, and color. The composer blends luscious romantic harmonies, church modes, elements of Gregorian chant, and madrigals into exciting musical episodes.

“The choral writing is demanding and varies from unison to seven-part divisi. The finale of the cantata is absolutely thrilling and is one of the most challenging in all of choral literature. I really cannot point to a single episode that I like more than others.

“Angelo, Maria, and pastore solos; larger-than-life choral writing, beautiful in its simplicity; the central episode of the work with men’s a cappella choir — it’s all part of a beautiful, timeless Christmas story that Respighi tells us in music.”

The performance takes place at 4:00 p.m. (December 16) at All Souls’ Episcopal in Point Loma.

BRAINS AND RESONANCE
Singing the part of the shepherd, or pastore, in the upcoming performance of Laud to the Nativity is local tenor Nick Munson. Nick possesses a beautiful and pleasing tenor voice that fits the shepherd’s solo like a glove.

Tenors are often said to have extra open spaces for resonance where their brains should be. In other words, tenors are shallow and flighty. I asked Nick what he thinks about Laud. His answer was anything but shallow. Brains and resonance? Look out.

“Its main challenge is also its most interesting, motivating asset — it moves through contrasting styles quickly and often. This demands a degree of concentration that prevents the performer from mentally dropping out of the piece, which, let’s be honest, is common for a work of this length [25–30 minutes].

“When I think about what Respighi’s done by combining six or seven different styles here, it seems that it should have turned piecemeal, almost frantic. But it works. He reveals what he wants to communicate in each section without pontificating.

“Just when you get comfortable with the music, it refreshes itself by traveling in an entirely new direction, but in a way that manages to be a delightful invitation rather than a jarring rush that leaves the performer and audience stammering to keep up.

“I’m glad you asked us about all of this, because it’s given me a chance to reflect a little. There’s something to be said here about sampling musical experience.”

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“Born is the King” Christmas Concert The LPJC Chancel Choir and professional orchestra under the direction of Dr. Keith Pedersen celebrate Christ’s birth with a program featuring Bach’s masterwork, Magnificat. In music that juxtaposes jubilation, wonder, and awe, Bach reflects on Mary’s response to the news that she will bear the Messiah. This annual Christmas concert for the community will also showcase the Handbell, Chancel, Youth and Children’s Choirs performing traditional carols and Christmas favorites. No tickets are required; a free-will offering will be received. Free parking in underground garage accessed from Kline Street. 858-729-5511. Sunday, December 16, 10am; free. La Jolla Presbyterian Church, 7715 Draper Avenue. (LA JOLLA)

“Christmas Around the World” Fair trade holiday fair supporting artisans around the world; free admission (1-5pm). Holiday a cappella concert features Daughters of Norway, Sugartime Quartet, Fabulous Earrings, Pacific Belles, and Singchronicity; $15 donation (2-4pm). 760-434-8080. Sunday, December 16, 1pm; free. Carlsbad Co-op Community Church, 1050 Regal Road. (CARLSBAD)

“Holiday Sparkler” The North Coast Symphony performs includes Mendelssohn’s “The Hebrides (Overture),” “Fantasia on Greensleeves” by Vaughan Williams, and other holiday favorites, concluding with a carol sing-along. 760-733-9301. Sunday, December 16, 2:30pm; $8-$10. Sea- coast Community Church, 1050 Regal Road. (ENCINITAS)

“I Believe” Christmas cantata “highlighted with a multimedia presentation of scenes depicting the Christmas story” presented by the Chancel Choir during service. All welcome. 619-464-1519. Sunday, December 16, 10am; free. United Church of Christ of La Mesa, 5940 Kelton Avenue. (LA MESA)

“Messiah” Sing Join La Jolla Symphony and Chorus and guest soloists for annual sing-along of the Christmas portion of the “Messiah.” Attend to sing or simply enjoy. Music scores available for rent. 858-534-4637. Sunday, December 16, 4pm; $8-$15. St. Elizabeth Seton Church, 6628 Santa Isabel Street. (CARLSBAD)

“Messiah” Sing-Along and Play-Along Head to USD’s Founders Chapel to join soloists Wei Fung (soprano), Christine Tripp (alto), Jim Boydstun (tenor), and Wan-Tin Yeung (bass), along with the Greater San Diego Community Chorus using Mozart’s orchestration of Handel’s “Messiah.” Sing along with choruses from Part I plus “Hallelujah” chorus. Bring a “Messiah” score or rent one at the door ($5). Instrument parts available for audience members who bring instruments to the concert and play along the chorus movements or rent one at the door ($5). ayung@sandiego.edu or 619-260-4106. Friday, December 14, 7:30pm; Saturday, December 15, 2pm; $5-$10. University of San Diego, 9598 Alcala Park. (LINDA VISTA)

“Ring Out, Wild Bells!” The bell is considered by many to be the most fascinating instrument of celebration. Listen when Pale- mar/Pacific Coast Concert Band explores “the mystique with music from around the world, spanning ancient to contemporary times.” 760-744-1300 x2345. Friday, December 14, 8pm; $8-$12. Palomar College O2 Performance Space, 1140 West Mission Road. (SAN MARCOS)

A Celebration of Carols Annual Christmas concert features Chancel and Dorian Bell Choirs performing selections from Benjamin Britten’s “A Ceremony of Carols,” John Rutter, Don Forrest, Howard Hevey, and Craig Courtney. Offering. 858-454-7108. Sunday, December 16, 4pm; La Jolla United Methodist Church, 6063 La Jolla Boulevard. (LA JOLLA)

L’Obsession Fantastique Berlioz was brilliant, but he was a tortured soul. The object of Berlioz’s desire was the beautiful actress Harriet Smithson. Desperate for Harriet’s love, Berlioz’s brilliance inspired him to write Symphonie Fantastique. Jahja Ling, conductor; Nuvi Mehta as Francois Hunecque. Thursday, December 13, 7:30pm; $20. Copley Symphony Hall, 750 B Street. (DOWNTOWN SAN DIEGO)

Symphonie Fantastique Jahja Ling, conductor; Jeremy Denk, piano. Program: Verdi’s Overture to La forza del destino, Mozart’s Piano Concerto No. 21, and Berlioz’s Symphonie Fantastique. Friday, December 14, 8pm; Saturday, December 15, 8pm; Sunday, December 16, 2pm; $20-$39. Copley Symphony Hall, 750 B Street. (DOWNTOWN SAN DIEGO)

For more information, please visit somsd.com.
Anthology, the high-end restaurant/music venue in Little Italy, is temporarily postponing its concert schedule. No national acts have been booked for 2013, says co-owner Howard Berkson. “We’re spending a few days in January to close down the interior, the five-year-old India Street music venue is known for presenting R&B, jazz, and blues artists, such as Dr. John, the Fabulous Thunderbirds, Richie Havens, and Al DiMeola. Anthology is known for paying top dollar to secure headliners such as Branford Marsalis and Natalie Cole. Tickets for those artists will sell in the $85–$125 range. A New Year’s Eve show with a classic rock cover band has tickets in the $15–$185 range. That is the last show booked at Anthology this year.

Dinner shows have a 300-plus capacity. Without tables the room can hold 650.

Meanwhile, the abrupt closure of 4th&B following a court-ordered eviction of owners Vince and Judy Puma, who owed $125,000 to landlord Crown Investments LLC, has agents scrambling to move their artists who were booked at 4th&B to new venues. Barrington Levy (December 14) will now be at the World Beat Center, and Soulfly (February 14) has moved to Brick by Brick. Roger LeBlanc, who books the Coach House in Orange County and the Canyon Club in Agora Hills, says 4th&B with its $32,000 monthly rent may be a challenge for an independent owner/operator who is not connected with a major entertainment company such as Live Nation/House of Blues or AEG/Goldenvoice. “That’s a big nut in a tough market. You’ve got the casinos, Humphreys, the Belly Up, and the Del Mar Fair. There’s a lot of competition for entertainment down there.”

— Ken Leighton

Feral Elephants

Indie-soul outfit Hills Like Elephants have made a quick climb to the limelight since their debut album, The Endless Charade, dropped in February 2012.

Playing a danceable crossover of indie rock, lo-fi disco, and what singer/keyboardist Sean Davenport calls “Motown with town machines,” Hills Like Elephants were crowned Best New Artist at the 2012 San Diego Music Awards, scored several favorable local and blogland reviews, and went on to play a series of hometown gigs before hitting the studio with vintage aficionado Christopher Hoffee at CHAOS Recorders in Escondido.

Now, having grown from a solo project of Davenport’s into a fully integrated quintet (including Andrew Armerding of alt-folk outlaws River City, Greg Thelmann of darkwave five-piece Dark Shapes, and drummer Carlos Ortiz of Davenport’s previous lineup, Gun Runner), Hills Like Elephants are gearing up for a nationwide tour — first stop, SXSW 2013 — to support their pending sophomore release, Feral Flocks, due to drop via Requiemme Records/BMG Chrysalis on February 12, 2013.

The title comes from a prerecorded zoo segment that Davenport overheard while interviewing with FM 94/9 host Tim Pyles and refers to lost birds of prey forming feral flocks to migrate home. There’s a metaphor in there somewhere, Davenport agrees, disclaiming: “I’m not trying to be profound. Like, if I wouldn’t say it to you at a bar, I won’t say it lyrically. I’m not going to start spouting poetry.”

Davenport says Feral Flocks strikes an upbeat contrast to the laments of his debut.

“On Endless Charade, I was harping on the idea of past relationships, but I was also trying to move on,” Davenport says. “Feral Flocks is more about noticing the subtleties of life.”

— Chad Deal
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San Diego Reader December 13, 2012
In a weaker economy, McBane says avenues available to musicians of eras past no longer exist. “You have to make your own opportunities,” he says. — Dave Good

Tuned to teach. “The kids are playing everything from Sleeping with Siens to Taylor Swift,” says guitarist Wayne Riker, who just launched a new guitar curriculum at Coleman Tech High School in Kearny Mesa. “I’m there five days a week and every day, making up to eight songs a week, from rock, reggae, pop, country, and Mexican pop tunes.”

Riker has been teaching guitar around town for over a decade, including a recent stint at Rick’s Guitar Shop. “My teaching philosophy has always been the same, whether in a group or one-on-one, which is to teach students songs and styles that they want to learn. Hence, I’m transcribing six to eight songs a week from classic and alternative rock and some hand-me-downs from their households.”

The school will soon move into a new building on Aero Court, with Riker performing at a ribbon-cutting ceremony slated for December 29. “The larger facility will give me the opportunity to bring in guest players once a month, in an assembly-like setting, exposing students to some of San Diego’s top-shelf pros from all different musical genres.” Alternating male and female guitarists, guest players will include Robin Henkel, Steph Johnson, Jimmy Patton, Roni Lee, Fred Benedetti, and Veronica May.

“Conveniently, my teaching studio is a few minutes away from the school, so I’m teaching the other end of the spectrum as well, with private lessons to a couple dozen baby boomers each week.” — Jay Allen Sanford
Financial support is provided by the City of San Diego Commission for Arts and Culture.

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San Diego's favorite holiday music tradition returns. Enjoy festive holiday favorites, traditional carols and yuletide hits!

Friday & Saturday, December 21 & 22, 8pm
Saturday, December 22, 2pm
Sunday, December 23, 2pm†
Sunday, December 23, 7:30pm “Home for the Holidays”

Matthew Garbutt, conductor; Eileen Ivers, celtic fiddle; San Diego Master Chorale; San Diego Children’s Choir; Irish Dancers

†Family Festival version. Just one hour featuring holiday favorites with sing-along. Perfect for ages 4-12.

TICKETS START AT $20!
Thursday 13
Need some art? Want to save some tail? Well, look no further than El Dorado downtown, where local electro-pop duo Lion Cut is hosting an art auction slash benefit for big kitties. The pair will perform in their TM feline attire as a silent auction featuring the work of 30 local artists raises funds for all the big jungle cats under the scope of the World Wildlife Fund’s “Save Tigers Now.” The video for the teaser tune, “Tiger Bomb,” is pretty awesome: vimeo.com/42500587.... Miss the door, right down the street at House of Blues, surfer-shredder Gary Hoey of the Strokes’ out to tout his new joint, De Ja Blues, the hard-rockers’ first foray into trad blues.... Uptown, Bay Area band Soft Moon waxes on the Soda Bar stage. The synthpunk five-piece is touring in support of this year’s “less song-based, more sound-based” Zeros, a fuzzed-out Gothic-er, if ever there was. Read Will Cain’s take in this week’s OF Notes. Group Rhoda and Tropical Popsicle open the show.... And over in Bay Park, Brick by Brick ushers in the Sword. The doom-metal band’s latest, Apocalyptic, is full of Sabbath-flavored riffs, “summoning you to bang your head and celebrate the apocalypse.” For all you Mayan apocalypticists, you guess. Gypsphawk lands first.

Friday 14
“If Beck were a decade or so younger and had grown up more heavily immersed in hip-hop...” he’s got a gifted gabber, riff-rapping about any damn thing you throw at him. He also makes records, like last year’s This Is Our Science, which despite no budget beat it up the Billboard charts by interweb word-of-mouth. Check this out: youtube.com/watch?v=4N4YeNYbU5I... He looks like Mitchell, the gay gingerballs from He’s not heavy; he’s Bulk-He’s not heavy; he’s Bulk-hoodoo has me, and I can see that.... Dead Animal Hod, Stupid Man Suit, the Vaginals, and Penis Hickey fill a noise-rock bill in Bankers Hall at the Tin Can Aerialhouse.... White northa text, jazz guitarist Peter Sprague joins pianoman Irving Flores at Dizzy’s new digs in PB.... and Oak-town hip-hop duo Zion I pops the mic at Porter’s Pub behind this year’s punchy Shadowboxin’.

Saturday 15
Couple of anniversary celebrations will pop the cork. Uptown Saturday night, as local Lurkville USA drops in on their third year in the biz of building skateboards. They’re staging Kyle Thomas, aka King Tuff, who was the frontman of J Mascis’ Witch and Sub Pop psych-poppers Happy Birthday. Dude’s got the Midas touch. With like-minded locals the Kabbs and Chango Rey setting the stage, this is a kill triple bill at Te-Te in City Heights.... and the Thrill Jockey 20th Anniversary tour rolls into nearby Soda Bar with DC post-rock trio Trans Am, High Places, Man Forever, and Trans Am co-owner’s solo show, Life Coach.... Staying Uptown: Sonnake slithers into Tower Bar after Hobotobor. Noah Tabakin, the man behind Soss- nake, has been likened to a hip-hop Jeff Buckley. I can see that.... Dead Animal Hod, Stupid Man Suit, the Vaginals, and Penis Hickey fill a noise-rock bill in Bankers Hall at the Tin Can Aerialhouse.... White northa text, jazz guitarist Peter Sprague joins pianoman Irving Flores at Dizzy’s new digs in PB.... and Oak-town hip-hop duo Zion I pops the mic at Porter’s Pub behind this year’s punchy Shadowboxin’.

Sunday 16
Sunday 16
Grammy-winning Tex-Mex rockers Los Lobos take the stage at Belly Up after Southwestern College’s mariachi ensemble Mariachi Garibaldi.... SanFranc blues-rock man Tommy Castro and his band visit the multiple-award-winning Fender bender Hard Believer on the Ramona Mainstage.... And heavy-metal vocalist Don Dokken (Dokken, don’t play Birck after L.A.) glam-metal band Bullet Boys.

Tuesday 18
It’s time for Sandiego staple Gary Shuffler’s (Honey Glaze) birthday bash, when Shuff does his screwed-up eyes and screwed-down hairdo as Ziggy Shuffledust & the Spiders from Mars. If you’ve never seen a Shuffler trib, which includes Bauhaus, Queen, and GNR, then you’re in for a treat. Bowie fan, as the performer and his all-star band rock the Thin White Duke right over the top. DJ Diana Death will deck the halls with her deep-crave tunes.... The rest of you: Blackberry shill Diplo’s worming earholes with his brand of electro-gaga at Voyeur. Wait for that beat to drop...

Wednesday 19
From The Funk Capital of the World, that bass-slapping badass and Rock and Roll Hall of Famer Bootsy Collins takes the stage at Belly Up Wednesday night. Funk Capital, a phunky foray into hip-hop beats, is Bootsy’s 13th solo studio set (‘n anote to go along with the 2004 ‘n 2005) and features vocal takes by Cube, Snoop, Chuck D, Dr. Cornel West, and Samuel “Bad Muftufukah” Jackson. Bootsy can play some drums, now, so be ready for that if it’s so inspired.... Else: Bay Park’s going to get loud, as Brick by Brick brings in heavy metallurgists High on Fire, Corrosion of Conformity, and Godfathers, yes, Godfathers. Maa-aa-aa.

---

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San Diego Reader
December 13, 2012

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WEDNESDAY 12/12 • 9 PM

LOS LOBOS
W/ MARIACHI GIRIBALDI
SUNDAY 12/16 • 8 PM

HEAD NORTH BENEFIT
W/ LEGAL TENDER, VAGUOLINE, GODSPELL MCQUEEN
TUESDAY 12/18 • 7 PM

AN EVENING WITH
BOOTSY COLLINS
W/ JAMIE JAMES
SATURDAY 12/22 • 9 PM

THE VENICE CHRISTMAS SHOW
W/ PAUL CANNON BAND
THURSDAY 12/20 • 8 PM

DEAD FEATHER MOON
W/ THE HEAVY GUIT, TROUBLE IN THE WIND
FRIDAY 12/21 • 9 PM

DENNIS QUAIL & THE SHARKS
W/ JAMIE JAMES
SATURDAY 12/22 • 9 PM

THE MAR DELS CHRISTMAS MATINEE
W/ TOTAL DISTORTION (SOCIAL D TRIB)
SUNDAY 12/23 • 9 PM

KUT U UP
W/ SECOND GENERATION
WEDNESDAY 12/26 • 8 PM

CRACKER AND CAMPER VAN BEETHOVEN
THURSDAY 12/27 • 8 PM

THE AGGROLITES
W/ B-SIDE PLAYERS
FRIDAY 12/28 • 9 PM

Upcoming Shows:
12/15 Jonny Lang • SOLD OUT!
12/29 Vokab Kompany
12/30 Dust N Bones (G n' R Tribute)
12/31 New Year's Happy Hour
w/ Candye Kane
1/31 The Reverend Horton Heat
1/3 Rhythm and the Method
1/4 Pat Banton
1/5 3rd Annual Beat Farmers Homegrown Family Fest
The Farmers, The Mindbenders, Nancarrows
1/9 Lucinda Williams
1/11 11 & 12 The English Beat
1/12 Sara Petite Album Release Show
w/ Eve Sells and Lisa Sanders - Matinee

Just Added:
1/16 1/18 1/30 1/31 1/9 1/12 1/23 1/24 1/26 1/27 1/30 1/31

W/ TRIXIE WHITLEY
W/ MARIACHI GIRIBALDI
W/ LEGAL TENDER, VAGUOLINE, GODSPELL MCQUEEN
W/ PAUL CANNON BAND
W/ THE HEAVY GUIT, TROUBLE IN THE WIND
W/ JAMIE JAMES
W/ TOTAL DISTORTION (SOCIAL D TRIB)
W/ SECOND GENERATION
W/ B-SIDE PLAYERS

W/ Trixie Whitley
W/ Mariachi Giribaldi
W/ Legal Tender, Vaguoline, Godspell McQueen
W/ Paul Cannon Band
W/ Heavy Guit, Trouble in the Wind
W/ Jami James
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The video for “Into the Depths” by the Soft Moon is filmed in grainy black-and-white, with claustrophobia-inducing camera work. It shows a woman who keeps looking over her shoulder in fear as she runs through a dark tunnel. Soon, these images are intercut with scenes of her nose bleeding, of hands grabbing her face, of extreme close-ups of her eyes, of her falling, of other images that are no less unsettling for being more abstract. I’ll leave it to other critics to discuss the misogynistic implications of all this. I’ll just say that the music may be even more disturbing than the video. The Soft Moon began as a solo project by San Francisco’s Luis Vasquez, who recorded his 2010 debut at home by himself. He must have had a gloomy apartment. Inspired by krautrock and lesser-known post-punk acts such as Chrome and the Danse Society, the Soft Moon features huge drums pounding away relentlessly, an insistent bass guitar twisted by effects pedals into something alien, and squelching synthesizers that sound like robots screaming. Vocals appear only rarely, and when they do they’re usually in the form of wordless breaths or grunts. Are they just too creepy to think about?

Vasquez put together a band to tour behind his first record, and his solo work is now supplemented onstage by a bassist, a drummer, a synth player, and even a guy who just supplies the freaky visuals. While on tour, Vasquez began writing the material that would make up the recent full-length follow-up, Zeros, and the result was very much like the debut but even more intense and scary.

R. O’Sullivan’s:
Saturday, 9pm — David Lally and Patric Frieze.

Ramona Mainstage
Nightclub:
Friday, 7pm — Sprung Monkey, $15.
Sunday, 7pm — Tommy Castro and the Painkillers, $35.

Ray and Joan Kroc Corps Community Center:

Rebecca’s Coffee House:
Saturday, 7pm — Tom Baird’s & Friends Acoustic Showcase.

Riviera Supper Club & Turquoise Room:
Thursday, 8pm — Bart Mendoza & True Stories.
Friday, 8pm — Rio Peligroso.
Saturday, 8pm — Bedbreakers.
Tuesday, 8pm — Supertasty.
Wednesday, 8pm — Kice Simko and Friends.

Ruby Room:
Thursday, 8pm — MC Ohm-I, Dez Thrill, Chalkskin, El Gum Legro, Broken Pixels, $5.
Saturday, 8pm — Slogun & IOH and Austin Speed.
Sunday, 8pm — Toothless George’s Band Together.
Tuesday, 8pm — The Tighten Ups and Runhoney.
Wednesday, 8pm — Veiled Butterfly.

Shakedown Bar:
Saturday — Last 2 Know and Convalescents.
Wednesday — The Blood, Evacuate, Rat City Root.

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San Diego Reader December 13, 2012
San Diego, December 13, 2012

Thursday, 9:30pm — The Jones

Friday, 8pm — Tio Leo’s:
Warren & The Billy Goats.
Tiki House:
Friday, 8pm — The Temptations
Sycuan Casino Showcase
Sunshine Brooks Theatre:
Friday, 8pm — Mercedes Roots, Natural Heights, the of the World Party.

Friday, 9pm — The Simpkin
Lion Path.
Saturday, 8pm — Dazz Band.

Saturday, 8pm — Butler and
Mower).

Saturday, 9pm — King
Schascha & Issrael, Soluteive, Lion Path.
Friday, 9:30pm — The Simpkin
Project and the Expanders. $10
Saturday, 9pm — Realfyves: A Night of Electro DJs, $7.
Sunday, 10pm — Jose Sinatra presents OB-e-ke.$1.
Monday, 9pm — The Electric Waste Band. $5.
Tuesday, 9pm — Soul Ablaze and Mad Traffic. Free.
Wednesday, 9pm — Tommy Dubs, Seismic Levels, DJ Carlos Culture.
Zel’s Del Mar:
Saturday, 8pm — Robin Henkel. Free.

Surrise Brooks Theatre:
Thursday, 6:30pm — Let Your Heart Right.

Sycuan Casino Showcase Theatre:
Friday, 8pm — The Temptations Review. $45-$55.

Tiki House:
Thursday, 9pm — Jonathan Warren & The Billy Goats. Free.

Tin Can Ale House:
Thursday, 8pm — The Treaties, Scatter Gather, Landis. $5.
Friday, 8pm — Translation Audio, Lexington Field, Arts Away. $5.
Saturday, 8pm — Dead Animal Mod, Vagnalis, Pepsi Hickey. $5.
Monday, 8pm — The Tin Can Country Club.
Tuesday, 8pm — Butler and Ninja Love. $5.
Wednesday, 8pm — Midnight Fern and Jupiter. $5.

Tio Leo’s:
Thursday, 8pm — Mercedes Moore Band.
Friday, 9pm — The Jones Revival.
Saturday, 9pm — Rising Star.
Wednesday, 7pm — Zydeco Patrol.

Trattoria Tiramisu:
Friday, 8pm — Patrizia the Sultry Lady of Jazz. Free.

Upstart Crow Bookshop and Coffee House:
Thursday, 7pm — Teagan Taylor Trio. Free.

Winstons:
Thursday, 9:30pm — King
Schascha & Issrael, Soluteive, Lion Path.
Friday, 9:30pm — The Simpkin
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Zel’s Del Mar:
Saturday, 8pm — Robin Henkel. Free.

UPCOMING SHOWS

710 Beach Club: 710 Garnet Ave., Pacific Beach, 858-483-7844.

December 21 — Boomsnap’s End of the World Party.
December 22 — Arden Park Roots, Natural Heights, the Originals.
December 23 — Slower (acoustic Mower).

December 20 — Ian Tordella.

AMSconcerts: 4630
Manuel St., Normal Heights, 619-303-8176.
December 29 — Peter Rowan.

Anthology: 1337 India St., Little Italy, 877-828-0891.
December 20-22 — Deck the Halls.

December 23 — Hiroshima.
December 26 — Beattles vs. Stones — A Musical Shoot Out.
December 27 — Lee DeWyre.
December 28 — Wizards of the Harp.
December 28 — The Manny Cepeda Orchestra.
December 29 — Dazz Band.

December 26 — Robin Henkel Band with Whitney Shay and Billy Watson.

Balboa Theatre: 868 Fourth Ave., Downtown San Diego, 619-570-1100.
December 22 — A Peter White Christmas.
December 22 — An Evening with Primus 3D.

Bar Pink: 3829 30th St., North Park, 619-564-7194.
December 20-21 — DJ Claire.
December 22 — The Stileetones.
December 22 — The Loons, Sidewalk Scene, Operation: Mindbown.

December 23 — Happy Endings.
December 26 — H.A.M.
December 27 — Fam Royal.
December 28 — Bonkers!

Belly Up: 143 South Cedros Ave., Solana Beach, 858-481-8140.
December 20 — The Venice Christmas Show.
December 21 — Dead Feather Moon.
December 22 — Quilhuin.
December 23 — A Cash’d Out Christmas.
December 23 — The Mar Dels.
December 26 — Kut U Up.
December 27 — Crack and Camper Van Beethoven.
December 28 — The Aggolites.
December 29 — Vokab Kompny.

December 20 — Joe Troutman & Midnight Star’s EDM.

December 29 — Mandy Lion, Rammouth, Sinner’s Rage.

December 20 — Dublin Mob Holiday Party.
December 22 — El Vez for Prez.
December 23 — X.
December 24 — Exile on Kettner Boulevard.
December 25 — Turquoise Jeep.
December 27 — Louis XIV.
December 28 — The Donkeys, Cuckoo Chaos, Teenage Burritos.
December 29 — Sweet & Tender Hooligans.

Ché Café: 9500 Gilman Dr., UCSD, 858-534-2311.
December 20 — Everything Is Terrible Holiday Special.
December 21 — Japandi.
December 27 — Kids, Tough Stuff, Twin Cabins.

Copley Symphony Hall: 750
B.St., Downtown San Diego, 619-235-8084.
December 21-23 — Holiday Pops: A Celtic Celebration.

December 28 — The Aggolites.
December 29 — Vokab Kompny.

December 17 — Ian Tordella.

December 21 — Night Beats. $8.
December 22 — B.L.G.
December 23 — Smoketet.
December 27 — Clay Mob Band.
December 28 — Smoketet.
December 29 — Zyclode Bluez Patrol.

Dirk’s Niteclub: 7662
Broadway, Lemon Grove, 619-469-6344.
December 21 — Nemesia.
December 22 — Zone 4.
December 28 — Rhythm Red.

Drizzy’s: 4275 Mission Bay Drive (in the showroom at San Diego Jet Ski Rentals), Pacific Beach, 858-270-7467.
December 22 — Besos de Coco.
December 29 — David Negrete Quartet.

Eleven: 3519 El Cajon Bl., City Heights, 619-450-4292.
December 20 — Night Flight, the Dirty Legs, Hugh Noble.

Psycho & Evacuate, and Rat City Riot also perform.

THE BLOOD: Shakedown, Wednesday, December 19, 8 p.m. 619-804-9523, $8.

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Friday, Dec. 14 5pm  PLATO SOUL (DANCE)
9pm  THE FARMERS (ROCK & ROLL)
Saturday, Dec. 15 5pm  SISTER SPEAK (SINGER, SONGWRITER)
9pm  POPRX (ROCK)
Sunday, Dec. Dec. 16 8pm  REGGIE SMITH (SMOOTH JAZZ)
WITH DJ JOHN PHILLIPS
Monday, Dec. 17 7pm  CHET CANNON BLUES PARTY (BLUES)
Tuesday, Dec. 18 7pm  BACKWATER BLUES BAND (BLUES)
Wednesday, Dec. 19 7pm  BLUE FEVER (JAZZ, BLUES)

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4th YEAR!
Since 1997, Godspeed has sounded like a prodigiously talented teenager’s imagination: spilling the guts of the world with youthful abandon. The band had painted the sounds of life with a better view. Godspeed explored great heights and their influence could not have been anticipated. After ten long years, fans will be pleased that Allelujah! Don’t Bend! Ascend! holds within Godspeed’s discography. Godspeed has released perhaps their most realized album to date — the boy is now the maestro he once imagined himself to be. The 20-minute leviathan “Maidic” is the heaviest of the album’s epics, blasting holes in the earth with a tasty Middle-Eastern flavor. The song is entrancing to the point of disorientation. You don’t remember how this happened, but it would be ungrateful to argue. Conversely, “We Drift Like Worried Fire” is grand and tender. With gorgeous texture and tonality, the song sweeps through density and sparsity without exposing its seams. If the world outside is on fire, it was inconsequential, anyway. The album’s two “drones” are apt. Acting more as interludes, the two pieces make for a necessary foil. In a word, this is transcendent. Godspeed is #8. Godspeed is infinite.

Humphreys Backstage Music Club: 2241 Shelter Island Dr., Shelter Island, 619-224-3557.
December 20 — West of 5.
December 21 — 8 Broke Jews.
December 22 — The Rhythm Scratchers.
December 25 — The Salamanders.
December 26 — Dave Brandt.
December 27 — The Porches.
December 28 — The Roosevelt.
December 29 — The Kelly's Band.

Diamond Rings glitter at Soda Bar
By Marcus Perez
John O’Regan, who has sanctoned the stage name Diamond Rings, brought his ‘80s pop show to Soda Bar. In support of his sophomore release, Free Dimensional, the Canadian artist had been opening for the band Stars before venturing on his current headlining tour. Backed by a four-piece band, O’Regan is infatuated with glitz and glamour, circa early David Bowie with a slice of Gary Numan on the side. Standing six feet, four, the lanky O’Regan possesses a surprising baritone that intensifies the glam-rock songs he belts out. O’Regan’s bright eye shadow surrounded piercing blue eyes, and his black leather vest was bedazzled with glitz and spires. There seems to be a plan embedded in O’Regan’s stage show: to make attendees remember not only what they hear but also what he was wearing. Starting the show with the pop song “Day & Night,” followed by the guitar-heavy track “Runaway Love,” O’Regan was in high spirits as he danced flamboyantly upon the speakers and among the crowd. Other than the unattractive rap verses in a couple of songs, Diamond Rings’ music is engaging and his performance entertaining.

Concert: Diamond Rings
Date: November 5
Venue: Soda Bar
Seats: General

Pechanga Resort & Casino: 45000 Pechanga Parkway.
December 28 — The Steely Damned.
Molly Malone’s: 1270 Main St., Ramona, 760-789-9505.
December 21 — Outta Line.
December 28 — Safety Orange.
Pal’s Casino: 35008 Pala Temecula Rd., Pala, 779-946-7352.
December 22 — Siren’s Crush.
December 27 — Ruby & the Red Hots.
December 28 — Ruby & the Red Hots.

Up to $100 for your concert review, $25 for your CD review. Submit at SDReader.com/critic
Happy Hour
You can submit a listing or find more information about these establishments online at SDReader.com/drinks

Alpine
Donato’s Italian Restaurant: Monday-Friday, 4-7pm; $3 glass Bud Light, $6 pitcher; $3.50 house wine.

Balboa Park
The Prado: Tuesday-Saturday, 4-6pm, 8-10pm: $4.50 wells, wine, draft ale, margaritas; nonalcoholic drinks.

Bankers Hill
Bertrand at Mister A’s: Monday-Friday, 2:30-6pm: $5 wells, $6 wine, $13.50 cocktails; $6 nonalcoholic drinks, $7 appetizers. Bar or patio only. No Happy Hour in December.

Bay Park
The High Dive: Monday-Wednesday, Friday: 3-6pm, 9-11pm: $2 off Local San Diego Craft Beers. $1 off House Wine by the Glass. Thursday: 3-6pm: $2 off Local San Diego Craft Beers. $1 off House Wine by the Glass.

Bonita
Villa Capri: Wednesday, 4-7pm: Half-off bottles of wine.

Cardiff
Chart House: Monday-Friday, 3-6:30pm: $4 wells, drafts. $5 cocktails, wine. $6 martinis. $4 spinach & artichoke dip, $5 fried shrimp, $6 wood-fired pizzas.

Carlsbad
The Alley: Daily, 11am-7pm: $2.75 wells, domestics.

On the Tracks Brewery and Tasting Room: Thursday, 5-7pm: Ladies, $3.50 pints.

Carmel Mountain
Conway’s Irish Pub: Daily, 10am-8pm: $2.75 seasonal drafts and bottles; $2.75 & $3.75 wells.

Carmel Valley
Twenty/20 Grill & Wine Bar: Daily, 4-6pm: $2 off drinks. 1/2-off seasonal spreads and pizzas. Excludes special events and promotional nights.

Chula Vista
Bu’s Brehouse: Monday-Thursday, 3pm-7pm: $1 off draft and cocktails. 10pm-close: 1/2-price mini pizzas, $2 off appetizers (snacks and small bites not included). Friday, 3pm-7pm: $1 off beer and cocktails.

City Heights
Eleven: Daily, 5-8pm: $1 off local draughts and drinks.

The Tower Bar: Monday-Friday, 4-7pm: $3 wells and import drafts.

Clairemont
Blarney Stone Pub: Monday-Friday, 4-7pm: $5.50 off all drinks.

College Area
Casa Machado: Monday-Friday, 4-7pm: $2.50 and $3.50 drafts. $3.50 wells, margaritas. Free chips & salsa.

Coronado
Bistro d’Asia: Daily, 3-6pm: $3 beer, $3.50 Gekkeikan sake, $4 wells, $5 sake-tini. Sushi specials. $5 chicken sliders, vegetable spring rolls, sushi rolls.

Leroy’s Kitchen + Lounge: Monday-Saturday, 3-6pm: Drink specials & bar bites, including sweet-potato fries and Bavarian pretzel. Sunday, 3-6pm & 10pm-11pm: $5 bloodymarys & mimosas, featured skinny cocktail.

Del Mar
Brigantine: Daily, 4-6pm: $4 Brig, $4.75 margarita, $5.50 chardonnay, $1 off featured wine. Discounted fish tacos.

Ze’l Del Mar: Daily, 4-6:30pm: $1 off drafts & premium drinks, $2 off wines by glass, $3.50 wells. $4 fried calamari, $5 fish tacos, $10 burger & beer.

Downtown San Diego
Alto Sky Lounge: Monday-Friday, 5pm-7pm: $4 drafts, $5 premium wells. 1/2-off artisan flat breads.

Sunset Cliffs
Eleven: Daily, 5-8pm: $1 off local draughts and drinks.

The Tower Bar: Monday-Friday, 4-7pm: $3 wells and import drafts.

Encinitas
Encinitas Ale House: Monday, 4-6pm: $2 off drafts, $5 glass wine, $8 off bottle wine. 1/2-off crab cakes, calamari, veggie caprese bruschetta. Wednesday-Friday, 4-6pm: $2 off drafts, $5 glass wine, $8 off bottle wine. 1/2-off crab cakes, calamari, veggie caprese bruschetta.

Patricks Gaslump: Daily, 10am-8pm, 11pm-close: domestics from $2.50, wells from $3.25.

The Stage Rock Bar & Grill: Daily, 5-8pm: 1/2-off all wells, beer, wine.

Year Round: Monday-Wednesday, 3-6pm & 10pm-close: $3.50 domest- tic pints; $6.25 martinis. 1/2-off select pizza, appetizers, and more. Thursday-Friday: 3-6pm, 3-5pm: $3.50 domestic pints; $6.25 martinis. 1/2-off select pizza, appetizers, and more.

East Village
Basic Urban Kitchen and Bar: Monday-Friday, 4-7pm: $4 keg beers, $5 liquor, house wine. Free pizza samples.

Monkery Paw: Daily, 5-9pm: $1 off local draughts and drinks.

Eastlake
Chilis: Monday-Friday, Sunday, 3pm-close: $1 off drafts, discounted margaritas. Discounted nachos, fried cheese.

El Cajon
Blarney Stone Pub: Monday-Friday, 4-7pm: $1-$2 off liquor.

Main Tap Tavern: Monday-Friday, 4-7pm: $1 off all 16-oz. pints, $2 off pitchers, $3.50 wells.

Encinitas
Encinitas Ale House: Monday, 4-6pm: $2 off drafts, $5 glass wine, $8 off bottle wine. 1/2-off crab cakes, calamari, veggie caprese bruschetta. Wednesday-Friday, 4-6pm: $2 off drafts, $5 glass wine, $8 off bottle wine. 1/2-off crab cakes, calamari, veggie caprese bruschetta.

Union Kitchen & Tap: Monday-Friday, 4-6pm: $2 off craft cocktails;

$4 drafts, $6 select wine glasses. $9 flatbreads.

ESCONDIDO

Fallbrook
Aqua Terra: Monday-Friday, 4-6:30pm: $3 domestic, $9 pitcher; $4 imported, $12 pitcher. 1/2-off sushi rolls (no sushi on Monday).

Golden Hill
Turf Supper Club: Friday-Sunday, noon-8pm: $1 off beer/wine/ports. $5 burger, chicken sandwich, hot links + chips.

Grantville
Tio Leo’s: Monday-Friday, 3-7pm: $3 domestic & Mexican pints. $4 house margaritas, wells, $5 quesadillas, hot dogs, tacos.

Harbor Island
C-Level: Monday-Friday, 3-30pm: $4 brews, 5 specialty drinks.

Hillcrest
Busalacchi’s A Modo Mio: Monday, 4pm-6:30pm: $12 Off Wine Bottles. Tuesday, 4pm-6:30pm. Wednesday, 4pm-6:30pm. All martinis 1/2-off Live Music. Thursday-Friday, 4-6:30pm. Live Music. Saturday, Brunch 9am-2pm.$2 Mimosas. Live Music. 4pm-6:30pm. Sunday, Brunch 9am-2pm.$2 Mimosas. 4pm-6:30pm.

Imperial Beach

La Jolla
Bird Rock Pizza & Sports: Monday-Friday, 4-6pm: $3 pint, $12 pitcher; $7.50 pint with appetizer, $15 pitcher with appetizer. Saturday-Sunday, all day: $3 pint, $12 pitcher, $7.50 pint with appetizer, $15 pitcher with appetizer.

La Jolla Brew House: Friday, 10am-12pm: $2 Off Pints. $3 Wells & Wine; Buy Any Pizza Get One Free.

Roppongi: Monday, Sunday, 3-9:30pm: half-price tapas; $8 hand-crafted drinks including skinny cocktails.

The Shores Restaurant: Monday-Friday, 4-6pm: $6 blood-orange martini, wine, margaritas, Julian hard cider. $6 fish tacos, deviled eggs, flatbread.

La Mesa

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11.11.11
12.12.12
5 oz pour $3
Belgian pour $6.50
Commemorative glass SS (first 100)

Hamilton’s Tavern
1521 30th Street | South Park | hamiltonstavern.com
There has been a lot of media buzz about Tijuana lately. With homicide rates dropping starkly from what they were a few years ago, the city has been reestablishing its nightlife along the renowned Calle Sexta, catering to throngs of local youth in lieu of tourism. The result is a thriving art, music, and bar scene that gives San Diego’s hippest hangouts a run for their money.

If you’re not ready to make the leap across the border, get your feet wet at El Uno Bar on University, just east of the 805. This bar actually sketches me out way more than anywhere I’ve been in Tijuana.

Never have a pair of laminated Chargers curtains felt so foreboding as those that separate the volatile cosmos of El Uno Bar from the outside world. Once you go in, there is no turning back. There are things you will see that you cannot see. Seriously, just go to TJ.

For starters, the bar offers nothing on tap, overpriced tequila that is always the last shot in the bottle, and cans of Tecate for a brazen $3.75 a pop. The menu operates on a haphazard pricing structure that once resulted in a bill of something like $9.67 for a couple of beers and a shot, so I suppose that could work in your favor if you’re in the mood for barter (Spanish only, güero).

On the bright side, I recently got a bottle of Victoria that was so cold, I thought I’d gotten a bunch of pulp in with the lime, but then realized it was simply frozen. The traditional salt took on a whole new meaning as I shoveled it into my beer, slowly melting the ice until the beer dislodged itself from the bottle.

Speaking of ice, the bathrooms offer a chance to enjoy the near-obsolete sport of ice-cube pissing in the urinal troughs. The usual clientele is a grim assortment of vaqueros and transvestites — which really is the best crowd for karaoke Wednesdays.

El Uno is a welcoming venue once you get past your own inhibitions (though one Google reviewer asserts that their phone was stolen here — by the bartender!).

There is a saying south of the border that the best part of TJ is San Diego. But as El Uno Bar so unabashedly demonstrates, the best part of San Diego may, in fact, be TJ.

— Chad Deal
Sunshine Co.: Daily, 5-6pm: $1 off all pitchers.

WINSTONS

AISLAND

Firewater Saloon: Monday-Friday, 3:30-6:30pm; 10pm-midnight: $3 lager, $3.50 domestic draft beers, $3 wells. $3 off all pitchers, $1 off drafts & wells.

Pier 32 Waterfront Grill: Friday, 7-9pm: 1/2 off bottles of wine.

DEMONIC

Barra Barra: Monday-Friday, 4-7pm: $2 off all appetizers.

OCEAN BEACH

Redwing Bar & Grill: Daily, 3-7pm: $1 off all appetizers.

RAMONA

Café on the Park: Monday-Friday, 5-8pm: $2 margaritas, $3 domestics, $2.75 wells, $4 select wines.

Pacific Beach

710 Beach Club: Tuesday, 4-9pm: $2 drinks. Complimentary appetizers. Saturday, all day: $2.50 Bud & Soles specials. $2 off absinthe specials. $2 flatbread tacos.

PACIFIC BEACH

Baja Oyster Bar: Friday, 11am-9pm: 1/2-price food & drink specials.

PACIFIC BEACH

SOUTHERN CAFE

Jimmy’s Famous American Restaurant: Monday-Friday, 3-6pm: $1 off all appetizers, drafts, wells, and select house wine.

POMO

Pompeii’s Pizza: Monday-Friday, 3-6pm: $1 off all drinks.

SOUTHERN CAFE

SOUTHERN CAFE

Riverwalk: Monday-Friday, 3-6pm: $1 well.

SOUTHERN CAFE

Tony Roma’s: Monday-Friday, 3-7pm: $3.50 wells. $1 off all beer/wine.

SOUTHERN CAFE

Humphreys Backstage Music Club: Tuesday, 3-7pm: $1 well. $2 street tacos.

SOUTHERN CAFE

POWAY

Kaminski’s BBQ & Sports Bar: Monday, Wednesday-Friday, 3-6pm, 9-11pm: $1 off all drinks, drafts, bottles, wine.

SOLANA BEACH

Chief’s Burgers and Brew: Tuesday, 11am-2pm: $1 off all drinks & menu items (excludes holiday/concert nights).

SOLANA BEACH

SANTA CRUZ

Babbo’s Bar and Grille: Monday-Friday, 5-8pm: $2 domestic, imports, 2/$5 margaritas, $3 wells, microbrews, $4 Leaping Horse wine.

SANTA CRUZ

SANTA CRUZ

Universities

UCSD

Porter’s Pub at UCSD: Daily, 11am-7pm: $5 Well; 4pm-7pm: $1 off all beer.

UCSan Diego

Press Box Sports Lounge: Monday-Friday, 4-7pm: Half-off appetizers, $1 off drinks, house wine, and wells.

RAMO

Boll Weevil Restaurant: Monday-Friday, 3-5pm: $2 off all appetizers.

RAMO

BernardO Restaurant: Monday-Friday, 3-5pm: $2 off all appetizers, drafts, wells, and select house wine.

NATIONAL CITY

Buster’s Beach House & Longboard Bar: Daily, 7-10pm: $2.25 Bud drafts, $3.50 mai tais, Long Beach tea, margaritas.

NATIONAL CITY

Baja Oyster Bar: Monday-Thursday, All day: $9.99 fish tacos. 3-6pm: Two-for-one domestic bottle, discount on special roll.

NATIONAL CITY

The Air Conditioned Lounge: Monday-Friday, 4-9pm: $3 draft, bloody marys, $5 you-call-it, $6 jaynee’s Gastrothefare.

NATIONAL CITY

Triple Crown Pub: Monday-Thursday, 3-7pm: $1 off all appetizers.

NATIONAL CITY

La Costa: Daily, 5-7pm: 1/2 off all appetizers.

NATIONAL CITY

Jig’s Kitchen and Bar: Daily, 3-7pm: $1 off all appetizers, drafts, wells, selected wines.

NATIONAL CITY

Iggy’s, The Grandstand: Daily, 3-7pm: $1 off all appetizers.

NATIONAL CITY

Vista Entertainment Center: Monday-Friday, 11am-8pm: $2 domestic and $3 premium drafts; $3 wells.
Jane Austen’s characters read each other like novels. They inspect qualities, every human chapter and verse, and sum them up in lists of checks and balances. In *Persuasion*, Austen writes, “Her manners were open, easy, and decided, like one who had no distrust of herself, and no doubts what to do, without any approach to coarseness, or any want of good humor.” This, along with four more lines, describes Mrs. Croft, a minor figure.

They read each other, but since few dare reveal feelings openly, must often base impressions on scant evidence, a gesture, the hint of a blush. As landed aristocrats often obsessed with rank and decorum, they exist from the neck up, with appearances thick as marble masks, which is why they spend so much time trying to sound each other’s depths.

Anne Elliot, the heroine of *Persuasion*, seeks the truth in flaws. “She felt she could so much more depend upon the sincerity of those who sometimes looked or said a careless or hasty thing, than those whose presence of mind never varied, whose tongue never slipped.”

Some of Austen’s best writing works this way. It starts with a close-up, then peers even closer: What did that look, held a split second too long, mean? Will eyes meet? Fingers touch? Into these questions, Austen packs tension and drama.

*Persuasion* begins with a misreading. Much against Anne Elliot’s instincts, her father, older sister Elizabeth, and guardian Lady Russell persuaded 19-year-old Anne to break off her engagement with Frederick Wentworth. Why? He had everything but lucrative prospects. On hearing the news, he exploded. And she spun inward, becoming a spinster-in-waiting and a marginal figure in her eccentric family.

Now she’s 27, and Captain Wentworth, decorated officer of the Royal Navy and man of nouveau means, suddenly returns. But will he woo one of the flighty Musgrove sisters or cross the gulf and renew with Anne what never went away?

In the process, Austen asks who suffers more, or longer, men or women? No matter which you choose, the book will “persuade” a more balanced view. (The title was posthumous: Austen died tragically of Addison’s Disease in 1816, age 41. Her fourth brother, Harry, chose it.)

Jon Jory’s new adaptation, at OnStage Playhouse, feels more like an early draft than a world premiere. The script shows the difficulties of converting a novel to the stage. How do you take a story, told by one of English literature’s most engaging narrators, and transpose it into “two hours traffic on a stage”? Jory’s answer is “traffic.” Scenelets, at least 25 in the first act, snippet out information. It’s clear he knows and loves the novel, since he tries to honor so much of it. But, overall, the story unfolds like a Cliff’s Notes.
condensed version. Some scenes take longer to set up — loading in chairs and tables, clustering actors, changing the lights — than to play. Austen’s characters exist almost exclusively in leisure time (and in “a long, uneventful residence in one country circle”). Few work, and even fewer move with anything resembling haste: their top speed maxes out at a stroll. Presenting them in quick, cinematic takes cuts against their way of life. (In future productions, a revolving stage might solve some, though not all, of these problems.) Also missing, along with Austen’s engaging narration, are the brief, heightened moments that charge a nuance with drama.

OnStage’s technical elements are an uneven mix. Though Chad Oakley’s light is a mite too somber, Carol Whaley’s period costumes are quite good. And Mark Robertson’s stone-walled set has its uses, in particular for the famous Cobb fiasco, where Louisa (a nicely giddy Laura Bohlin) leaps into Wentworth’s unsuspecting arms (though the fall itself takes place offstage).

Austen asks us to lean forward, attend to microclues. But instead of subtlety, many in the cast opt for overbroad portrayals — Larry E. Fox’s hypercentric Sir Walter, for example, and Holly Stephenson’s Mary Elliot — that leave no room for close inspection. Though his final scene with Anne is touching, Chris Renda’s Captain Wentworth is too young and hardly a naval hero in the Napoleonic Wars. Others play obviously for laughs, which could be funnier if done with more restraint.

While most of the cast prefer the surface, Kym Pappas’s excellent Anne begins deep within. Austin took a risk with this character. At 27, Anne is “past the bloom of youth” and far too old for a romantic lead. Plus, she violates the first rule of fiction: she doesn’t change. She’s “constant.” Pappas deftly portrays Anne’s intelligence, extreme sensitivity, and emotional blooming. Along the way, her eyes give a master class on suggesting minute details and feelings she fights to repress.
Tricky Orcs

It would be easy, and it is certainly tempting, to use a review of *The Hobbit* as the occasion for an all-out assault on High Frame Rate (HFR) digital cinema. HFR is, after all, the Big New Thing about the Middle Earth after the enormous effort and even more enormous success of *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy, bigger even than the dragon Smaug (glum and not held in this first installment). And this Big New Thing is, to my eyes, a very bad thing: a technology so bent on making things look clear that it forgets about making things look good. (Has anyone ever thought that the *Mona Lisa* would be improved if we could make out her pores?)

I could go on. But HFR is not the whole story of *The Hobbit*, especially when it is also available in IMAX, ordinary 3D, and (best of all) plain ol’ 2D. So I will launch only a couple of additional salvos and then move on. First, there is the mangling of light. Every outdoor scene looks like a Thomas Kinkade painting; every indoor scene seems to glow from within. (When the wizard Gandalf asks the hobbit Bilbo Baggins for a little more light so that he can display a map during an after-dinner conference, Bilbo fetches a candle, a candle that makes absolutely no difference at all.) Second, it strips movies of whatever magic they might have left, reducing Ian McKellen’s “wandering wizard overlooking the Elven city of Rivendell” to a guy with a fake nose and a big beard, wearing a funny hat and standing on a stone platform.

Still, one wonders if the Big New Thing wasn’t what finally brought Jackson onboard for this second trilogy. It doesn’t seem to have been the prospect of writing another Tolkien-based script; this one begins and ends with a clunk.

Early on, an elderly Bilbo writes to his nephew Frodo that “quite by chance, and by the will of a wizard, fate had decided” to involve him in this particular adventure. Well, which is it: chance, will, or fate? And it wasn’t the prospect of telling a different sort of story than *The Lord of the Rings* — say, the lighter, more straightforward sort of adventure found in *The Hobbit*, the book. Jackson pauses for flashbacks to horrible wars between orcs and dwarves, side trips exploring the rise of malevolent forces in the larger world, and bouts of petty personal drama on the part of ostensible heroes: in this case, exiled dwarf-king Thorin Oakenshield. It wasn’t even the chance to show his chops as a director; I spotted not one but two glaring breaks in continuity: a sudden shift from forest to plains during an orc ambush, and a sudden shift from daylight to nighttime during another orc ambush. Tricky orc.

For better and for worse, apart from the Big New Thing, *The Hobbit* is more of the same, a prequel that sets the stage for *The Lord of the Rings* as it tells the story of 13 dwarves who hire a burglar to help them take back their mountain kingdom (and its treasures) from an invading dragon. For better: the creation of a believable fantasy world through well-pitched performances (Martin Freeman makes a fine homebody hobbit, and Andy Serkis’s Gollum gets to mix comedy with his menacing pathos), resonant themes (the dwarves are seeking to regain their homeland after a diaspora), and really fine costumes. For worse: overlong fight scenes, special effects that lean heavily on cartoon physics, and a tendency to overstuffed.

— Matthew Lickona

### COOLEST MAN ON EARTH

It’s been almost 20 years since Walter Hill (48 Hrs., Streets of Fire, Southern Comfort) has rewarded us with anything to look at. My head began spinning the second I saw his name attached to the trailer for Stallone’s latest action flick, *Bullet to the Head*.

Exhale. It’s not a remake of the John Woo classic, *Bullet in the Head*. Jim Hemphill, former student and eternal teacher, arranged a visit to the 20th Century Fox editing room to watch Walter Hill cut a scene from *Wild Bill*. After a couple of hours, Mr. Hill invited us to the Fox commissary to join him for lunch.

Halfway through the meal, Mel Brooks walked up to the table to say hello to Walter.

“Hello, Mel,” Hill said as he stood to shake Brooks’s hand. Without missing a beat, Hill motioned toward the peanut gallery and asked, “You know Jim Hemphill and Scott Marks, don’t you, Mel?”

If there is a cooler way for one to introduce commoners to royalty, let me know. Until that time, Hill wins the brass ring.

— Scott Marks

### WHAT HAPPENED, ANTHONY HOPKINS?

My pal Scott was not impressed with Academy Award winner Sir Anthony Hopkins’s performance as Alfred Hitchcock in *Hitchcock*. He charges the actor with having “an oscillating accent” and with being unconvincing in general. I’d argue that the one leads to the other. Playing a famous person is more than a simple matter of imitating speech, but imitating speech is a major first step — so much of the person is in the words and their delivery. That kind of adoption/imitation, when done without slipping into caricature, is a real achievement, one I thought Seymour Hoffman and Meryl Streep managed rather well in *Capote* and *Juliet & Julia*. Alas, not so, dear Sir Tony.

The failure got me to wondering what happened to the man who so mesmerized the world as Hannibal Lecter in *The Silence of the Lambs*. And he didn’t stop there. The early ’90s were very good for Hopkins. I admired him in *Howard’s End*, but I adored him in *The Remains of the Day*. The scene where Emma Thompson attempts to wrestle away his book has stayed with me over the years.

So, what started the slide? Was it *The Mask of Zorro* or *The Lecher* sequels? Difficult to say. But I’m trying to remember the last time I really enjoyed him in a film (which is not to say I’ve seen everything he’s done). He was okay as Odin in *Thor*, I suppose. Maybe I’m just mad about his lazy portrayal of a Southern aristocrat in Sean Penn’s disastrous *All the King’s Men*. There, as much as anywhere else, I was reminded of this bit where he remembers receiving advice from Katharine Hepburn on the set of his first film, *The Lion in Winter*.

“ ’I’m gonna give you a few tips,” she said. ‘Don’t act. You don’t need to act. You’ve got a good face, you’ve got a good voice, you’ve got a big body — don’t act.’... Watch Spencer Tracy; watch the great American actors who never act, they just do it, you know? Speak the lines and show up.” I took that advice as the best advice I’ve ever been given as a film actor.”

Hmm... Rewatching *The Silence of the Lambs*, I’m not sure I buy that. It seems to me that there, Hopkins wriggled into his character’s skin and played around for a while.

— Matthew Lickona

### FILM FESTIVALS

**PEARL HOTEL**

*1410 Rosecrans St., Point Loma*  857-732-7773

*National Lampoon’s Christmas Vacation* Dive-In Theatre series at poolside lounge—continues with 1989 Christmas comedy during Chevy Chase, Beverly D’Angelo, and many others. 619-226-6100. **Wednesday, December 19, 8:00pm**

*The Wandering Wizard and the 13 Dwarves* Ralphie tries to convince his parents, teachers, and Santa that a Red Ryder BB gun is the perfect gift in this 1983 movie screening for Dive-In Theatre series at poolside lounge. 619-226-6100. **Wednesday, December 26, 8:00pm**

**SAN DIEGO PUBLIC LIBRARY**

*Small, Beautifully Moving Parts* Film Forum continues with a coming-of-parenthood tale for the Internet age. Engaging comedy-drama of Sarah Sparks, pregnant and uncertain of her future as a parent. Sarah hits the open road, in search of her estranged mother, now living off the grid. **Monday, December 17, 6:30pm**

**SEA ROCKET BISTRO**

*48 Hrs.* screening in the front room. **Wednesday, December 19, 7:00pm**

*Home Alone Double Feature* Family comedies without the family screens in the front room for Wine & Cheese Movie Night. **Wednesday, December 26, 7:00pm**

**THE HOBBIT, or The Wandering Wizard and the 13 Dwarves**, sets the stage for *The Lord of the Rings*.
**MOVIE LISTINGS**

All reviews are by David Elliott, Matthew Lickona, John Babbo, Scott Marks, and Duncan Shepherd. Priorities are indicated by one to five stars and antipathies by the black spot. Unrated movies are for now: unviewed. Thousands of past reviews sorted alphabetically, by year of release, and by rating are available online at SanDiegoReader.com.

**Deadfall (Kin)** — A brother and sister (Eric Bana and Olivia Wilde) are forced to adopt a scheme: "show off your image now, play it cool, then stick to a "show off your image now" policy after a casino robbery they masterminded goes terribly wrong. That same day, a boxer (Charlie Hunnam), freshly sprung from the clink, accidentally kills his former associate. I suppose there are less lofty goals in life than setting up a group of unlikeable characters so you can watch them die, but couldn't screenwriter Zach Dean at least have found a way to smooth out a few of the film's numerous plot contrivances? There's nothing here that you haven't seen before, and even less that you need see again. Stefan Ruzowitzky (The Counterfeiters) directs. With Kate Mara, Stacy Keach, and Kris Kristofferson. 2012. — S.M.

**Dragon** — A terrific genre bender that combines film noir, police procedural, and historical epic all in one film. 2012. — S.M.

★ ★ ★

**Flight of the Butterflies** — The iconic monarch butterfly is a true marvel of nature. It weighs less than a penny, yet it makes one of the longest migrations on Earth across a continent, with pinpoint navigational accuracy, to a secluded place it has never been. In *Flight of the Butterflies*, you'll join the monarchs' perilous and extraordinary journey while following an intrepid scientist's 40-year search to find the monarchs' secret hideaway. Featuring breathtaking cinematography, an award-winning production team, a true scientific mystery, and hundreds of millions of real butterflies.

**Hitchcock** — Instead of following author Stephen Rebello's fine *Alfred Hitchcock and the Making of Psycho* by turning out a procedural on the art of making a masterpiece, Sacha Gervasi (Anvil: The Story of Anvil) gives us a watered-down romcom directed in the style of an episode of *Hitchcock Presents*. (It's ostensibly about the production of the most influential horror film ever made, yet Anthony Perkins only appears in two scenes!) Anthony Hopkins — encased in a Martin Lawrence fat suit, outfitted with a bad latex nose, and suffering from an oscillating dialect — is simply not convincing as Hitchcock, and Helen Mirren would never be confused, on her best day, with the mousy Mrs. H. Hitchcock purportedly wants to do nothing more than count all the years that loudmouth 'Tipp' Hedren spent publicly branding Hitch a pervert by playing fast and loose with the facts. Beyond that, screenwriter John M. McLaughlin attempts to give Alma her due by dredging up a zippy romantic thing she allegedly had with a screenwriter during the making of *The Paradine Case* (1947). A fantasy sequence wherein Hitchcock employs the services of Ed Gein, the monster upon whom Norman Bates was based, as a psychiatrist is downright unclean, as is the assertion that Cockey had a Bates-style peephole drilled in his office wall in order to spy on his leading ladies. Perversely as it sounds, the film was shot in 'Scope, a ratio Hitch despised and never used. Gervais's talent did wonders when it came to revitalizing the careers of a pair of bird-brained heavy metal singers. Leave the Hitchcock legacy for the big boys, or not at all. Better yet, re-release all of Hitch's 54 films and let his artistry speak for itself. With Scarlett Johansson, Toni Collette, Michael Stahlberg, and the beautifully blank Jessica Biel perfectly cast in the Vera Miles role. 2012. — S.M.

**The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey** — Reviewed this issue. — M.L.

★ ★

**Hyde Park on Hudson** — Bill Murray goes fishing for an Oscar in shallow water. In the Spring of 1939, Franklin D. Roosevelt (Murray) was the first-ever president to host British royalty on American soil. The weekend shindig was thrown at the title locale, F.D.R.'s home in upstate New York. Chin jutting, cigarette holder pointing northward, and voice lolling in a jaw-stretching drawl than can only be described as Thurston Howell, III ab, Murray's Roosevelt is more of a graphite rubbing than it is a completed portrait. What baubles of wisdom are to be gleaned from this shad- dersome hooch? That the 32nd president loved his mother and behind-the-wheel hand jobs, though never at the same time. Laura Linney's somnambulistic performance as Frankie D's lover/distant cousin makes this feel more like *Dawn of the Dead than Sunrise at Campobello*. In 1995, director Roger Michell came out of the gate swinging with _Persuasion_ and hasn't given us much worth looking at since. Hide or park yourself in another theater, anything but this. With Olivia Williams, Elizabeth Marvel, and Elizabeth Wilson. 2012. — S.M.

**Killing Them Softly** — In order to ham- mer home its point about American moral- ity with regard to money as manifested on the macro level by the 2008 financial crisis and on the micro level by the machinations of some truly unpleasant urban lowlifes, *Killing Them Softly* asks the audience to believe that the patrons of an illegal high- stakes card game would ever select, by way of background ambiance, a televised speech from President Bush. Also, that a couple of thugs sent to beat a man half to death would warm up for the occasion by listening to a speech on Federal intervention in the mar- ketplace. Also, also, the audience — if it isn't has been lulled to sleep by the endless, gentle lapping of dialogue and a storyline so flat it requires jolts of electric effects- heavy violence to keep it moving — will very likely call bullshit. A similar charge may be made against the film's efforts to obtain our sympathies for these scumbags — like us, they have money troubles, relationship troubles, work troubles, and all the rest of it — while at the same time insisting that they operate just like the one-percenter who did to this country what Mickey from New York (James Gandolfini) did to his hundred- dollar whore. In other news, Brad Pitt makes the most of his handsome, seedy authority, right up until the point where he decides to start speculating about Thomas Jefferson. 2012. — M.L.

**Life of Pi 3D** — [Nota Bene: the 3D is probably worth it on this one.] If Ang Lee's adaptation of Yann Martel's novel had been nothing more than the story of a teenage boy who survives a shipwreck only to find he must share lifeboat with a Bengal tiger, it might have been a very fine — and often visually astonishing — adventure movie. But for better or for worse, *Life of Pi* aspires to be much more than that. For better: the adventure is strong enough to bear the weight of some larger meaning. For worse: that meaning is spelled out and hammered home in a pair of tacky bookends. This isn't a film about a boy lost at sea, this is a film about humanity adrift, about the importance and significance of storytelling, about reli- gion and God him/her/itself. That doesn't have to be a bad thing, it doesn't take much to see the tiger as death itself, an immutable and inexorable fact that nature imposes on every person. The boy struggles against it. He tries to trick it. Eventually, he realizes he must make peace with it. And somewhere along the line, he realizes that the certainty of death is what has helped him cling to life. Storytelling! Significance! Ditto the boy's struggle with faith, he prays, and things hap- pen. Are those things answer to prayer or just things that happen? Don't worry about answering; the film is happy to do that for you. The viewer does get to make a choice at the end, but it's not a choice about anything as exalted as the existence of God. It's more about where we find consolation during our own adventure in the lifeboat. With Irfin Khan, Suraj Sharma. 2012. — M.L.

**Lincoln** — Four score and 150 minutes ago, Steven Spielberg shifted into his John Ford mode with this giant, myth-bolstering Golden Book of a movie. As the Civil War rages on, we open with a moment lifted from Saving Private Ryan: a shorter, but equally anonymous massacre. Inasmuch as it fails to properly set the mood and tone of this otherwise setpiece gaffest, the scene is as spectacularly executed as it is worthless. (As my friend Tim Sweeney, AFI's Doc, might note: the initial bloodbath was over, "the closest thing to an action sequence is Tommy Lee Jones taking off his hairpiece.") Moving on, we find Lincoln's ear being bent by a returning black soldier while The Great Emancipator is seated at a railway station. The soldier, after spelling out the future of African-American relations for both the audience and Honest Abe, is conveniently bounced from the pro- ceedings. In his place, comic relief appears in the form of James Spader, Tim Blake Nelson, and John Hawkes. Their schtick feels like a reprise of Sneak, Snoop, and Snitch from Flessher's animated version of Gulliver's Travels. And what of the rest of the cast, you ask? For the first time in his

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**EXCLUSIVE ENGAGEMENT STARTS FRIDAY, December 14**

**HYDE PARK ON HUDSON**

**DEADFALL**

**KILL BILL VOL. 2**

**NOTORIETY**

**THE VULTURE**

**THE VULTURE**

**THE VULTURE**

**AL Formaldehyde**

**LIFE OF PI**

**TITANIC**

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**TITANIC**

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Central

Photograph of a Museum of Art: December 13, 2012

Carmel Mountain

Reading Carmel Mountain

Coronado

Resident of Happy Days

Downtown

Reading Gaslamp

La Jolla

AMC La Jolla

Mission Valley

Mission Valley Hazard Center

Uptown

Mission Valley

Regal Parkway Plaza

Regal Ramona Plaza

Clairemont

Reading Town Square

Calendar

career, Daniel Day-Lewis lets the costume and the adrenalin do much of the acting for him, he needed a little more Bill the Butcher here, and a little less Left Field. Sally Field performs as if she really wants the Academy to like her too. The good news is that scenarist Tony Kushner’s authentic-sounding period dialog flows in abundance, helping to make this the closest I’ve come to not wanting to walk out on an Amblin production since Catch Me If You Can. You’ll want to see, and you’d better get there before December 13, 2012, 9:00p.m.

Playing for Keeps — Keep play away!

Jessica Biel’s reward for her brief, vanilla-flavored performance as Vera Miles in Hitchcock is a lousy-dyed joke and a starring role opposite a wrong man in this facetless rom-com. Gerard Butler stars as Biel’s ex, a one-time maybe-girlfriend whose recent run of bad luck finds him coaching his son’s soccer team. The result is more bad news than any other recommendation, but Butler wants nothing more than to reunite with his family — but Biel has already set the date with her replace-

More than a few箱 leaking the kid out of Christ’s butler, and John Hannah, who becomes a very brave and rather savvy young man, who lets his body to his character. The main thing here is that everyone is working well together. Indeed, the film moves smoothly, and the acting is uniformly good. The only real problem is that the script is a bit too predictable, too safe, too easy. But it’s a good movie, and well worth your time if you have a few hours to spare and want to see a good, clean film that doesn’t try to be something it isn’t.

Silver Linings Playbook — David O. Russell is likely to go to South Philadelphia and learn just how to make a movie that is as true to life as any other. The film is a triumph of writing, direction, and acting. It is a story about a man who is trying to come to terms with the fact that he has a mental illness, and how he must learn to live with it. It is a story about a woman who is trying to love a man who is not in control of himself, and how she must find the strength to do so. It is a story about a family that is trying to understand what is happening to their son, and how they must learn to deal with it. It is a story about a world that is falling apart, and how people must find the courage to keep going.

Skyfall — James Bond returns to his roots. A Bond film is never quite a straight-up spy movie, but it’s not far off. In Skyfall, Bond is sent on a mission to Scotland to protect the Queen. The mission takes him to the island of Skye, where he encounters a group of terrorists who are planning to attack the Queen’s official residence. Bond is able to stop the attack and save the Queen, but not without suffering a few injuries himself. The film is a classic Bond film, with all the action, gadgets, and humor that we’ve come to expect. It is also a film about redemption, about how Bond is trying to find his way back to being the man he once was. The film is a fitting end to the current series of Bond films, and a great way to cap off the trilogy.

Search of truth and beauty amidst a group of boorish louts with personalities akin to the cast of Here Comes Honey Boo Boo. A former schoolteacher (Bradley Cooper) is given a job teaching at a run-down school in a tough neighborhood. He quickly discovers that the students are not interested in learning, and that the staff is corrupt. Cooper must fight to change the school, and to make a difference in the lives of his students. The film is a powerful and moving story, with beautiful performances from Cooper and the rest of the cast. It is a film that will make you think, and that will leave you feeling uplifted.

Rancho San Diego

Regal Rancho San Diego

San Diego National History Museum

Flying Monkeys (3D) (Not Rated) Fri-Sun 12:00 p.m., 2:00 p.m., 4:00 p.m., 6:00 p.m., 8:00 p.m.

San Diego Natural History Museum

Seaquest (Wet) (Not Rated) Fri-Sun 4:00 p.m.

Carmel Mountain

Reading Carmel Mountain

Coronado

Lifestyle Plaza

Lifestyle Plaza

La Jolla

AMC La Jolla

Mission Valley

Mission Valley Hazard Center

Uptown

Mission Valley

Regal Parkway Plaza

Regal Ramona Plaza

Clairemont

Reading Town Square

Calendar

career, Daniel Day-Lewis lets the costume and the adrenalin do much of the acting for him, he needed a little more Bill the Butcher here, and a little less Left Field. Sally Field performs as if she really wants the Academy to like her too. The good news is that scenarist Tony Kushner’s authentic-sounding period dialog flows in abundance, helping to make this the closest I’ve come to not wanting to walk out on an Amblin production since Catch Me If You Can. You’ll want to see, and you’d better get there before December 13, 2012, 9:00p.m.

Playing for Keeps — Keep play away!

Jessica Biel’s reward for her brief, vanilla-flavored performance as Vera Miles in Hitchcock is a lousy-dyed joke and a starring role opposite a wrong man in this facetless rom-com. Gerard Butler stars as Biel’s ex, a one-time maybe-girlfriend whose recent run of bad luck finds him coaching his son’s soccer team. The result is more bad news than any other recommendation, but Butler wants nothing more than to reunite with his family — but Biel has already set the date with her replace-

More than a few箱 leaking the kid out of Christ’s butler, and John Hannah, who becomes a very brave and rather savvy young man, who lets his body to his character. The main thing here is that everyone is working well together. Indeed, the film moves smoothly, and the acting is uniformly good. The only real problem is that the script is a bit too predictable, too safe, too easy. But it’s a good movie, and well worth your time if you have a few hours to spare and want to see a good, clean film that doesn’t try to be something it isn’t.

Silver Linings Playbook — David O. Russell is likely to go to South Philadelphia and learn just how to make a movie that is as true to life as any other. The film is a triumph of writing, direction, and acting. It is a story about a man who is trying to come to terms with the fact that he has a mental illness, and how he must learn to live with it. It is a story about a woman who is trying to love a man who is not in control of himself, and how she must find the strength to do so. It is a story about a family that is trying to understand what is happening to their son, and how they must learn to deal with it. It is a story about a world that is falling apart, and how people must find the courage to keep going.

Skyfall — James Bond returns to his roots. A Bond film is never quite a straight-up spy movie, but it’s not far off. In Skyfall, Bond is sent on a mission to Scotland to protect the Queen. The mission takes him to the island of Skye, where he encounters a group of terrorists who are planning to attack the Queen’s official residence. Bond is able to stop the attack and save the Queen, but not without suffering a few injuries himself. The film is a classic Bond film, with all the action, gadgets, and humor that we’ve come to expect. It is also a film about redemption, about how Bond is trying to find his way back to being the man he once was. The film is a fitting end to the current series of Bond films, and a great way to cap off the trilogy.

Search of truth and beauty amidst a group of boorish louts with personalities akin to the cast of Here Comes Honey Boo Boo. A former schoolteacher (Bradley Cooper) is given a job teaching at a run-down school in a tough neighborhood. He quickly discovers that the students are not interested in learning, and that the staff is corrupt. Cooper must fight to change the school, and to make a difference in the lives of his students. The film is a powerful and moving story, with beautiful performances from Cooper and the rest of the cast. It is a film that will make you think, and that will leave you feeling uplifted.

Rancho San Diego

Regal Rancho San Diego

San Diego National History Museum

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Motion Showtimes:

**The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey**

- **FALLBROOK**
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    - Sun: 1:00 PM, 4:30, 7:30, 10:30

- **ENCINITAS**
  - Temecula Tower Cinemas (951-699-2205)
    - Fri: 1:00 PM, 4:00, 7:00, 10:00
    - Sat: 1:00 PM, 4:30, 6:00, 7:30, 9:00, 10:00
    - Sun: 1:00 PM, 4:00, 5:00, 7:00, 8:00, 10:00

- **NATIONAL CITY**
  - Plaza Bonita (382-862-4386)
    - Fri & Sat: 10:10, 4:00, 7:10, 10:20
    - Sun: 10:00, 1:15, 4:30, 7:45

- **NORTH INLAND**
  - River Village (760-943-8144)
    - Fri: 10:00 AM, 1:15, 4:30, 7:15, 10:15
    - Sat: 10:00 AM, 1:15, 4:30, 7:15, 10:15

- **SAN MARCOS**
  - Regal San Marcos (382-862-4386)
    - Fri: 10:10 AM, 1:15, 4:30, 7:15, 10:15

- **SAN DIEGO**
  - Imperial Beach (619-448-7474)
    - Call theater for program information.

- **TEMPLE CITY**
  - Escondido Village (760-943-8219)
    - Fri & Sat: 10:15 AM, 1:15, 4:30, 7:30, 10:30

- **VISTA**
  - King's Village (760-943-8219)
    - Fri: 10:10 AM, 1:15, 4:30, 7:15, 10:15

- **WALNUT CANYON**
  - Escondido Plaza (760-943-8219)
    - Fri & Sat: 10:15 AM, 1:15, 4:30, 7:30, 10:30

- **ENCINITAS**
  - Temecula Tower Cinemas (951-699-2205)
    - Call theater for program information.

- **ULTRASTAR OCEANSIDE**
  - Oceanside (760-439-1733)
    - Call theater for program information.

- **ULTRASTAR OCEANSIDE MISSION**
  - Oceanside (760-439-1733)
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**Prime Sweep**

**Prime Sweep**

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  - Fri: 10:10 AM, 1:15, 4:30, 7:15, 10:15

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  - AMC Plaza Bonita (382-862-4386)
    - Fri: 10:10 AM, 1:15, 4:30, 7:15, 10:15

- **SAN MARCOS**
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**Imperial Beach**

**Border bounty**

Federal government settles border land lawsuit with county and state

On Tuesday, December 4, the federal government agreed to pay $7 million to the county parks, state parks, and California Coastal Conservancy for land that was condemned in order to build additional layers of border fencing between the International Boundary Water Commission sewage-treatment plant and Goat Canyon.

Federal court records show that the $7 million payment will be split three ways: about $2.1 million to the state parks for land leased to the county, $2.5 million to the county, and $2.4 to the California Coastal Conservancy. The money is payment for land taken and is not earmarked for any specific use.

The court fight over the land does not include additional land taken from Border Field State Park, including part of the top of Bunker Hill; that court battle continues.

Neither the state nor county have stated what they will do with the money.

LUCY D. BARKER, DECEMBER 5

**La Mesa**

**Magician marvels motorists**

Police chief suggests median magic show requires business license

Wearing a gray fedora and dressed in a white T-shirt, vest, shorts, and black shoes with bright white laces, Joe Spelton performed magic tricks on Thursday, November 29, for a temporarily captive audience. The spectators were drivers waiting for the light to change at the intersection of Baltimore Drive and El Cajon Boulevard.

At his feet was a brown case holding a sign that proclaimed “MAGIC SHOW.” As drivers waited at the red light, Spelton produced a royal-blue piece of silk cloth and then made it vanish. The fingers of his empty hands moved as if he spoke a secret sign language, and then the blue silk reappeared.

A motorist responded with a honk. With a flourish, Spelton changed the color of the cloth to shamrock-green. He then turned the silk to its original color and transformed it into a coin. Some spectators tipped the magician.

Spelton said he performs on medians in La Mesa, usually around Fletcher Parkway, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Wednesday or Thursday. On the weekends, Spelton works his magic in San Diego, generally at Seaport Village. On the median, Spelton is a one-trick magician who performs the “vanishing silk” routine during the two to five minutes when the stoplight is red.

La Mesa councilwoman Ruth Sterling brought up Spelton’s act at the November 13 city-council meeting, asking police chief Ed Aceves about ending the performances. Aceves explained that the vehicle code regulated how far from freeway on-ramps and off-ramps that people could stand. The police chief said that the City could “suggest the magic guy needs a permit for a business license.”

LIZ SWAIN, DECEMBER 3

**North County**

**I-5 mess coming?**

SANDAG polls residents on the planned I-5 widening

Last week, North County coastal residents started receiving live telephone survey calls from the San Diego County Association of Governments (SANDAG) regarding the upcoming I-5 expansion.

Residents are being polled on how they currently use the I-5. After a few minutes into the survey, (paraphrased) questions included: “Do you find riding your bike safe?” and “What form of alternative transportation would you consider if the freeway were clogged?”

According to SANDAG’s Colleen Windor, the survey is being conducted to find out what residents are willing to do during the construction phase of the freeway, which is sure to cause more traffic congestion than already experienced by commuters.

The expansion plans for I-5 have commuters and property owners concerned. Caltrans proposed numerous options over the past few years, from doing nothing to widening the freeway 75 feet on each side and adding eight lanes (two additional lanes and two car-pool lanes on each side).

The expanded I-5 project will probably not be completed until the 2020s. The project will also coordinate and expand area bus service, with major off-ramps connecting with several planned transit centers.

KEN HARRISON, DECEMBER 4

continued on page 99

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THE READER PUZZLE:

RULES OF THE GAME
1) Submit your completed puzzle to the Reader each week for our ongoing contest! We keep track of each puzzle you successfully complete, and the results and ranking are posted online each week to www.DCReader.com/puzzle. But your submission will only be considered if you correctly solve the puzzle. And get it in by 7:00 a.m. Monday.
2) Submit the correct answers to the puzzle along with your name and a clean limerick.
3) This is a great way to express yourself. You may submit a new limerick weekly. We reserve the right to edit or reject inappropriate test.
4) The puzzle-content ranking, online and in the paper, will be ranked once every three months. Complete the journey four times a year.
5) Entries must be sent to 619-221-0849; or mailed to Reader Puzzles, P.O. Box 85883, San Diego, CA 92138-8830, or delivered through our mail slot at 1703 India Street in Little Italy, or scanned and e-mailed to puzzles@sdreader.com. Submissions that don’t fit the format will not be counted or counted.

And now for the real small print:

1) All answers must be legible and entered in the space provided.
2) Late entries will not be considered.
3) We will award writers of the best limericks, among those who correctly solve the puzzles, one of the famous Reader baseball caps or T-shirts. And we will print the winning limericks– screened for plagiarism – in the paper and online.
4) One entry per person per week or you will be disqualified.
5) Employees of the Reader and their immediate families are not eligible.

Across
1. Garden of the Food Network
4. Bigger
9. “... of God” (1985 film)
10. Boxer’s wear
16. Took the wheel
17. Drunkard
18. Target of October ads
19. What the employee said she was to her boss after hitting the lottery jackpot?
21. Mike Abbr.
22. Roof application
23. Play (with)
24. A child’s worst nightmare?
25. Mr. TV gang
26. “Chocolat”
27. Mediterranean relative of a star of “The Sopranos?”
28. Mushrooms
31. “I’m Impossible!”
32. Deadlocked
33. Rev’s address
34. “Good buddy”
35. Japanese “yes”
36. Call ____ day
37. “Tutte ____ cor vi sento” (Mozart anat)
38. Industrial container
39. “Um...”
40. Washer Filip
41. Building annex
42. 2002 Nas hit “One ____”
43. Diciembre ends it
44. Mine, in Marseille
45. Toddlers’ age
46. Publisher often seen in PJs
47. Teacher’s deg.

Down
1. “Goethe, bro”
2. “Stop! That’s totally wrong!”
3. Bureau
4. Where kroner are spent: Abbr.
5. Others, to Octavian
6. Beginning trumpeter’s sound
7. Promise
8. QB Favre and others
9. Daily or weekly
10. Mushroom
11. “Men!”
12. Deadlocked
13. “Bilk a buddy”
14. “Good buddy”
15. “Good buddy”
16. “Yes”
17. Call ____ day
18. Japanese “yes”
19. “Tutte ____ cor vi sento” (Mozart annata)
20. Industrial container
21. “Um...”
22. Washer Filip
23. Building annex
24. 2002 Nas hit “One ____”
25. Diciembre ends it
26. Mine, in Marseille
27. Toddlers’ age
28. Publisher often seen in PJs
29. Teacher’s deg.

THIS WEEK’S WINNERS: (All winning entries will be screened for plagiarism). Prizes will be available for pickup at the Reader offices front desk from the Thursday your name appears in print to the following Thursday at 5 p.m.

Joe Shearman, Ramona, 3
Martin Soblick, Del Mar, 5
Joseph Ciprian, Little Italy, 5
Larry Johnsgard, Escondido, 5
Jim Piburn, Point Loma, 5

THE READER PUZZLE: 1995 #1 hit
14. “This Is How ____ It” (1995 #1 hit)
19. This is sick
20. Walt Disney biopic that focuses heavily on the creation of Mickey and Minnie?
24. Er, in the office
25. Call ____ day
27. New, freshly painted
31. It’s time for a finite resolution
35. Toilet to the chase...” (or a hint about solving 19-, 24-, 34-, or 42-Across)
38. The guy who invented the first wheel was a genius?
39. Arrow
40. “Lumber”

SOLUTION TO LAST WEEK’S PUZZLE:

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Mias vestee esl
Ulerna eri rape

LA JOLLA, $4000.

LA JOLLA, $3500.

LA JOLLA, $2900.
1BD+1BA. Studio. Move-in Special! Open House Saturday, 12/12, 2-4 p.m. Light, bright, and updated studio in the heart of La Jolla Shores. Close to all private balconies and parking. 8049 Calle de la Plata. TIPPM, 858-969-3851. www.torreyapines.com.

LA JOLLA, $2200.
2BD+1BA. 5500-off 1st Month’s Rent! Open House Saturday, 12/12, 12-3-4 p.m. Beautiful garden community located in the Village. Washer/dryer. Parking 2 parking spaces. 7651 Eads Avenue #2. TIPPM, 858-699-3851.

LA JOLLA, $4000.

LA JOLLA, $5800.
Incredible ocean views from every room. 4BD+3-1/2BA house. 4 levels of decks. In the Village of La Jolla. Blocks from beach. Newly renovated. Brokers $5800. 641-220-5425.

LA JOLLA, $9300.
Study/Office/Bed. 1/2 off 1st month! Extra large studio on the 2nd floor. With new wood floors, new paint, 10 ft. woodbanks, on-site laundry, off-site parking. 1129 Torrey Pines Rd. #4. 619-866-0088.

MISSION BEACH, $5800.

MISSION BEACH, $3100.
2BD+1BA large apartment. Sunset Cliffs. One block to beach! Stove, refrigerator, dryer, washer, parking. 10 ft. woodbanks, on-site laundry, off-site parking. 2036 5th Avenue. TIPPM, 858-969-3851.

MISSION BEACH, $3100.
2BD+1BA large apartment. Sunset Cliffs. One block to beach! Stove, refrigerator, dryer, washer, parking. 10 ft. woodbanks, on-site laundry, off-site parking. 2036 5th Avenue. TIPPM, 858-969-3851.

MISSION BEACH, $2500.
2BD+1BA house. 1-car garage plus 1 private parking space. Roof deck. 3 blocks to ocean. Washer/dryer. Dog OK with additional deposit. 4655 Mermaid Ave, front house. 858-276-4402 x203, CDunphyPacwest@san.icom.

MISSION BEACH, $945.

MISSION BEACH, $1500.

MISSION BEACH, $1395.
1BD+1BA large apartment. Sunset Cliffs. One block to beach! Stove, refrigerator, dryer, washer, parking. 10 ft. woodbanks, on-site laundry, off-site parking. 2036 5th Avenue. TIPPM, 858-969-3851.

MISSION BEACH, $800.

PACIFIC BEACH, $550.
1BD+1BA apartment. Sunset Cliffs. One block to beach! Stove, refrigerator, dryer, washer, parking. 10 ft. woodbanks, on-site laundry, off-site parking. 2036 5th Avenue. TIPPM, 858-969-3851.

OCEAN BEACH, $2900.
3BD+1BA house. Clean, fresh paint. 1-car garage plus 1 private parking space. Roof deck. 3 blocks to ocean. Washer/dryer. Dog OK with additional deposit. 4655 Mermaid Ave, front house. 858-276-4402 x203, CDunphyPacwest@san.com.
NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS
Continued from page X

TIJUANA
Futbol fans flip
Los Xolos give T.J. its first-ever first-
division soccer championship

The Tijuana Xolos (or “Xolos”) made
history on Sunday, December 2, by beating
the favored Toluca Red Devils in Toluca, 2-0.

The Xolos, only three seasons into the
first division of Mexican soccer, became the
quickest team to win the title after ascending
into the big leagues.

As expected, futbol fans went nuts after
the victory, but they only went nuts and not
crazy: there were zero reports of vandalism
or injuries in the mass celebrations, culminating
in a parade on Monday afternoon.

In Tijuana, it didn’t take but moments for
the folks here to start celebrating. The revelry
included massive hugs and kisses and screaming
and fist-pumping in the streets. News
services in Mexico are reporting about how
well-behaved tijuanenses have been throughout
the celebrations.

DAVID ALTON DODD, DECEMBER 4

CHULA VISTA
Change of (zone) plans...

Developer gets cracking on unapproved
Ojay project, residents not happy

Chula Vista residents who have been battling
the city and the developer about a proposed
284-condo/apartment complex in eastern
Chula Vista were alarmed last week when
earth-movers appeared on the scene.

Barney Reed, a spokesperson for the
Eastlake Action Group, said the project
has not yet been approved by the city council,
so “Why is the developer grading and
compacting?”

In September, the Chula Vista City Coun-
cil approved a general-plan zone change for
the 12.2 acres — from commercial zoning to
mixed-use. The change made way for
Integral Communities’ Lake Pointe project.

Even though it was the weekend,
construction workers were hard at work at
Olympic Pointe condos, directly adjacent
to the proposed project. Olympic Pointe,
also an Integral Communities development,
will include 427 units. The target market,
according to Olympic’s website, is “move-up
renters and displaced homeowners.”

The website describes the location as
“nestled on a hill…[with] panoramic lake
and mountain views.” But some neighbor-
hood residents say that the scenic quality
and commercial opportunities are being wiped
out by the concentration of development.

Residents have many concerns — unre-
solved parking overflow is at the top of the
list. Reed said, “The condo developments
that already exist — Graystone and Summer
Hill — clearly don’t have enough parking
spaces per unit; the streets inside are painted
red, so the excess cars bleed into the sur-
rounding residential and city park areas.”

SUSAN LUZZARDO, DECEMBER 5

COMMENTS

JOHN DEWEY, DEC. 5, 2012 @ 11:14 A.M.
...getting involved in the city’s “community out-
reach” is a waste of time. Many people spent a lot
of time and energy meeting, discussing, compro-
mising, and finally agreeing on a general plan.

Now, with an addendum, the city gives the devel-
opers what they want and ignores the residents.

Everyone, especially long-time residents, should
take a ride out to Otay Lake to see how it’s being
traumatically ruined by these greedy developers and
our enabling city council. What a shame.

Those hills beyond the lake are probably next.
The Reader Sudoku Puzzles:

Rules of the Game:
1) Submit completed puzzle of any difficulty level (Easy, Medium, Hard or Evil) to the Reader each week for our ongoing contest. We keep track of each puzzle you successfully complete, and the results and ranking are posted online at SDReader.com/puzzle. But your submission will only be counted when you successfully complete a puzzle AND get it to us by 7:00 a.m. Monday.
2) Submit the correct answers to the puzzle along with your name and a clean limerick.

Easy:

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Solutions to Last Week’s Sudoku Puzzles:

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**Puzzles and Limericks!**

**Easy:**

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1) Something other than prose
   'Cos how can I compose
   Lest I drown, oh, I need a life raft.
   Help, help, help! I've lost all of my drafts!
```

**Medium:**

```
2) The holidays are drawing near.
   The stores want to make it so clear.
   For Kwanzaa or Chanukah
   We'll spend a lot, no need to fear.
```

```
3) Figuring out gifts is a pain
   Even with my list
   someone special will be missed
   and will only receive a candy cane
```

**Hard:**

```
4) The new ranking is posted each Wednesday. To use the “comments” feature, you must be a registered site member.
   We cannot accept your entry without the following:
   Name: ____________________________
   Address: ____________________________
   City: __________________ Zip Code: ______
   State: ___________ Limerick: ____________________________
   We will award writers of the best limericks, among those who correctly solve the puzzle, one of the famous Reader baseball caps or T-shirts. And we will print the winning limericks – screened for plagiarism – in the paper and online.
   Clear marks the puzzle that you want to enter this week by crossing off the other completed puzzles. All puzzles that are cut into pieces will be disqualified. You may submit a new limerick weekly. This is a great way to express yourself! We reserve the right to edit or reject inappropriate text.
   3) We will award writers of the best limericks, among those who correctly solve the puzzle, one of the famous Reader baseball caps or T-shirts. And we will print the winning limericks – screened for plagiarism – in the paper and online.
   4) The puzzle-contest ranking, shown online and in the paper, will begin anew every three months. Complete the journey four times a year!
   5) Entries must be faxed to 619-231-0489; or mailed to Reader Puzzles, P.O. Box 85803, San Diego, CA 92186-8583; or delivered through our mail slot at 1703 India Street in Little Italy, or scanned and e-mailed to Sudoku@sdreader.com. Submissions by e-mail must be attached in JPG format, 800 by 800 pixels, maximum file size of 1MB. Submissions that don't fit the format will not be counted or viewed.
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**Evil:**

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6) The puzzle-contest ranking, shown online and in the paper, will begin anew every three months. Complete the journey four times a year!
   5) Entries must be faxed to 619-231-0489; or mailed to Reader Puzzles, P.O. Box 85803, San Diego, CA 92186-8583; or delivered through our mail slot at 1703 India Street in Little Italy, or scanned and e-mailed to Sudoku@sdreader.com. Submissions by e-mail must be attached in JPG format, 800 by 800 pixels, maximum file size of 1MB. Submissions that don't fit the format will not be counted or viewed.
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**See Your Ranking Online!**

Now you can go online to check your ranking and communicate with each other! Simply visit: www.SDReader.com/puzzle. The new ranking is posted each Wednesday. To use the “comments” feature, you must be a registered site member.

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**THIS WEEK’S WINNERS:**

- **L. Barling, El Cajon, 4.**
  - Help! Help! Help! I’ve lost all of my drafts!
  - ‘Cos how can I compose
  - something other than prose
  - At the last minute? I’m going nuts!

- **Roy Stone, Santa Monica, 3.**
  - It’s already Christmas again
  - Figuring out gifts is a pain
  - Even with my list
  - someone special will be missed
  - and will only receive a candy cane

- **Martha Awdiewicz, Clairemont, 5.**
  - The holidays are drawing near.
  - The stores want to make it so clear.
  - For Kwanzaa or Chanukah
  - We’ll spend a lot, no need to fear.

- **Ric Witt, Clairemont, 4.**
  - There’s a TV show on called Moonshiners
  - from the hills of Virginia and the Carolinas.
  - Them ‘ol boys know it’s risky
  - Makin’ illegal whiskey,
  - But it’s better than dyin’ young as coal miners.

- **Larry Clark, Clairemont, 3.**
  - I have never seen a player so shattered,
  - As the Cadet who fumbled when it mattered.
  - Conflict is a test of will,
  - When in combat his foes will be scattered.

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**CLAIREMONT, $900.** 1BD/1BA apartment inclusion, 1-car garage, washer/dryer. Pets allowed. People Helping Others Property Management, 619-282-5400.

**ESCONDIDO, $1550.** 2BD+2BA for $1525 and 1BD+1BA for $925. Cherokee Avenue. People Helping Others Property Management. 619-295-1100.

**MISSION HILLS, $750-800.** 1BD+1BA, no hook up or hookup fee required. Near 52nd and 15th. 3304 52nd St. 619-279-1935.


**MISSION VALLEY, $1400.** 2BD+1BA, 750 sqft. Huge upper unit in beautiful complex with heated pool, spa, fitness center, outdoor rock climbing, dishwasher, microwave and more! No pets. 526 Camino Del Mar. 619-765-4722.

**MISSION VALLEY, $1525.** 2BD+2BA. 1100 sqft. First floor unit with fireplace, large upper unit, large kitchen with tons of cabinets, washer and dryer, huge bedrooms with mirrored closet doors, on-site laundry. Small pets negotiable! Garage available at an additional cost of $205. 520 Nebraska Ave. 619-304-3535.


**NORMAL HEIGHTS, $825.** 1BD+1BA, water/sewer/trash included, section 8 ok, assigned parking. Available 12/20/12. 1BD+1BA apartment. Available 12/20/12. 4027 34th Street. 619-629-1969.

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**NORMAL HEIGHTS, $1675.** 2BD+2BA, upstairs apartment, close to University Ave and shopping. 19th Street. 619-295-1100.

**NORMAL HEIGHTS, $1775.** 3BD+2BA. Includes your choice of Hot Tub, Jacuzzi (2 of 3), washer/dryer, storage, 1-car garage. 6035 22nd Street. 619-295-1100.

**NORMAL HEIGHTS, $1795.** 3BD+2BA apartment. Large, new kitchen and bath, countertops. Parking. On-site laundry. No pets. 4377 39th St. 619-298-7724.

**NORMAL HEIGHTS, $2200.** 1BD, cottage, detached garage. Yard. Lots of windows. Short walk to Alamo Ave. 4112 38th St. 619-521-1061.


**NORTH PARK, $1675.** 2BD/2BA, Coin-op laundry, no pets, section 8 approved. Appliances included. Large, on-site laundry room, gas stove. 5900 1st Ave. 619-266-5590.

**NORTH PARK, $1775.** 2BD, coin-op laundry, no pets. Section 8 approved. Appliances included. Large, on-site laundry room, gas stove. 5900 1st Ave. 619-266-5590.

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**THEATER**

continued from page 83

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