

FREE VENICE

BEACHHEAD

SINCE 1968



June
2008
#320

P.O. BOX 2, VENICE, CALIF 90294 • www.freevenice.org • Beachhead@freevenice.org • 396-0811/498-8149



Which will it be this summer?

At left: In the aftermath of a Drum Circle, a young woman is apprehended after she stepped off the curb. Shot by Tony Vera.

Below: One of a hundred idyllic summers.

Summer in Venice



Venice Ocean Front Walk and Electric Tram – Venice Amusement Pier in background, 1939

–City of Los Angeles Archives

Welcome to Summer in Venice -A Guide for Visitors and Residents

By Jim Smith

Summer in Venice is hectic and thrilling. It's an all day carnival of the crazy, the craven and the conniving. It's a place where you can have experiences that will change your life. Just being in Venice has brought enlightenment to thousands, and thousands more have found the love of their life. At the least, you can survive, and have lasting memories by following a few simple directions.

What to Do:

Residents and Visitors: Enjoy Venice. Forget about the outside world. It isn't real anyway. Venice is a world apart because of the ocean, the texture of the sky, the mix of people from all over the world. Everyone "does" the Boardwalk (Ocean Front Walk). It's more than a mile of sensory overload and can absorb your entire visit or weekend, if you "go with the flow." Check out the Graffiti Pit (it's new respectable name is the Venice Art Wall). It's on the beach, out from Windward Avenue. In the evening, head out on the sand to the Drum Circle.

But Venice is much more than the ocean front. Visit the canals (south of Venice Blvd.), Visit SPARC, the world's best mural center, in the old Venice jail, 625 Venice Blvd., where you can see people's art (as opposed to commercial art). Next door is Beyond Baroque, poetry central in Venice. On the other side of SPARC is the Pacific Resident Theater, where first class plays are performed.

Stumble around town and you'll be rewarded with sights and people that make it all worthwhile. Venice is full of hidden murals and gardens. Don't miss the Wall of Tiles at the Vera

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How Others See Us

Another Kind of Life

By Peter Rajchert

(I recently visited Venice for the first time and found myself immediately drawn to its community. I live in Canada, but hope to return with my fiancée some time soon, whenever that may be. – Peter)

It wasn't the last stop for the 704 but everyone was getting off and I did too. Maybe it was societal pressure. I did need to urinate after all that soda on the ride from Hollywood. I had my heavy pack of books and clothes. It tired me out, made me thirsty all over again.

"This is Santa Monica," I thought. "It's clean and neat with a promenade of dinosaur fountains, stores and folks meandering worry-free and not a public restroom in sight."

So, I drifted toward the ocean with the other crowd, the crowd that didn't have shopping on its mind.

This was big. I had never seen the Pacific before and there it was below Palisades Park, enormous and different in temperament from its Atlantic cousin. Here I also found a restroom,

–continued on page 10

Venice is seedy?

By Clare Kitchen (from London, UK)

An LA resident told me that 'Venice is seedy and a home of weirdos and don't go.' Being curious I went this week, stayed a night and found it to be full of warm welcoming people and a 'seed bed' for creativity. What I find 'seedy and weird' about LA is the obvious denial of the existence of people in vulnerability and an attitude of 'survival of the fittest'.

As a lone female traveller I felt safe in Venice but remain appalled by the lack of shelter and social care for homeless, needy people. It made me ashamed to see people asking for money for the basics. Maybe Arnie when next jogging along Venice beach could 'feel enough' to address these social issues and by turning his 'predator' powers into serving the vulnerable in LA society. I was brought up loving the dream and community of Martin Luther King - what is Arnie's American dream? and how best does it serve people?

Lawrence Lipton, Beat Poet, once wrote about the poverty of Venice - what has changed? I leave LA hoping that Venice will be supported

–continued on page 10

CASUALTIES IN IRAQ

U.S. 4,084 Dead – 23 this month
U.S. 30,329 Wounded – 500 this month
Iraqi Dead: 1,213,716

Sources: antiwar.com • justforeignpolicy.org

Cost: \$523+ Billion Source: costofwar.com



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Send to: Beachhead
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Dear Peaceful Persons at the Venice Beachhead,

Hi! I would like to become a sustainer of my favorite newspaper and receive the fringe benefits. I'd like to advertise my child care business, "Karen's Kare" for four issues as mentioned in the sustaineer offer.

I'd like to tell you a little about myself: I'm Karen (Preston) Reeves and I had the amazing job of going to the beach in the early seventies to work at the Venice Beach Playground, (next to the seniors card room and the Meatless Messhall). I was the Recreation Leader. I'd already worked with five year olds up to teenagers for the city of Torrance and Culver City and the Westchester YMCA, but this was especially sweet for me being connected to a regular little community of mothers and their preschoolers and their dogs too!

At that time Ida Finhandler was a Venetian regular with her son, Freddy, and her grandsons. She took me under her wings and mentored me in many of her loving ways. Then in 1974, I moved from Venice to Mar Vista, (at Rose and Cabrillo), and have been blessed with my own successful family child care business ever since!

Now is the season of children graduating and going on to their next adventure, and I'm in the market for little people, at least 20 months old and preferably on a part-time schedule during the week. Email me at: melek@earthlink.net or call me at 310 390-4589.

Thank-you for your time and for the ever-enlightening Beachhead!

Peace and Love,

Karen Reeves

Dear Beachhead,

I am sure your readers would like to know that there is a scam going on in the Venice area where a man will run up to your car and tell you that you hit his bumper. He seems to have a friend who saw you do this. When asked to produce the person, he is unwilling to do so. If you want to call the police he backs off.

I had this happen to me and several of my neighbors. Please do not use my name and/or e-mail.

Results of the May Beachhead Poll: Should RVs have designated parking areas in Venice?

43 percent of respondents said, Yes, while 56 percent said No.

Some of your comments included:

- but if there is only a few spaces, what about the other people?
- Yes, if they do not crucify the ones still left on the street
- There's a parking shortage as it is, drivers of gas guzzling RVs should be penalized not rewarded
- An RV is all they have. Why torment them?

NEW ONLINE Beachhead Poll

Is Venice too crowded in the summer?

Yes, No, Maybe

To Vote, go to:

www.freevenice.org

Poll ends June 26

RENOVATIONS

Twenty-plus years I have lived in "A" building. Management and/or ownership announced changes. No more roof leakage into third floor apartments. New look was needed.

New look

Luscious thorn tree shaded my patio from strong summer sun.

Sawed down

House wrens and squirrels lost their favorite play place where they amused me.

Gone

Doves had searched there for safe spring nesting. Found hanging patio plant the best place. That too was soon eliminated

New look

Cactus plants I planted and watched grow to protect me from summer heat.

Sawed down

Apartment window enlarged, floor to ceiling eliminated wall space. New wall space needed for large antique armoire.

New look

My patio furniture and decorations were taken to company storage.

New regulations

Many months later I was not allowed my annual lease which I'd had for twenty-plus years, only given a six months lease.

New regulations

No more hanging plants on patio. No more paintings on patio. Only patio furniture and plants.

New look

Many months later my patio belongings, minus a few plants, pots and decorations were brought back. I got notification that some furniture candles and decorations had to be removed from patio. New regulations were in effect.

New regulations

Couch I had put on patio awaiting sale, I had removed according to date demanded. New notice arrived Friday night under my door. Yesterday, Monday, was the deadline to escape legal council being called in on the case. Saturday at 9AM I called for help. Was told it was impossible. Only one person available. Possibly on Sunday. No call on Sunday. My long time friends were Sunday dinner guests and earthly angels. They insisted on giving me last minute rescue. High moguls notified early on Monday, I asked for inspection to stop new notices from the law!

-Ida Lee - age 88



Venice Skates

"Venice Originals" is a skateboard shop in the heart of Venice. It offers gear and accessories for the sport. It helps bring together the youth culture of exercise and fun with transportation needs. The store is owned and operated by longtime Venice residents. One of the proprietors, Cesario Montano says, "Venice Originals" is also a brand name in skateboards and gear. It comes out of the tradition of skating in Venice, along with companies like Hosoi, Dogtown, Zephyr, Santa Monica Airlines, Z-Boy shoes, Z-Flek, Alva, and many others. Indeed, all these names resonate in the shop's walls (the other owners are Aubrey Jons and Jesse Martinez).

Cesario Montano is an photographer and film director. He has been documenting the sport of skateboarding for 25 years. In 2006 he directed the release "Rising Son," a film on the life of Christian Hosoi, which won him Best Director at the Malibu Film Festival. He will soon feature a photo gallery presentation at Hama Sushi Restaurant at the Venice Circle, running from June 1 to December 1. A reception with RSVP is scheduled for June 5.

IN BRIEF

VNC Tables Homeless and RV Task Force Committees

The Homeless Task Force was to have been put on the agenda for a later date last Monday but instead both the Homeless Task Force and the RV Task Force were tabled. New committees and members are to be established at the 15 July meeting from applicants.

According to the final board of officers meeting agenda, dated 15 May, for the 20 May meeting "An Ad Hoc Homeless Committee and an Ad Hoc RV Parking Committee have been formed with the chair/co-chairs and members to be chosen and ratified at the July 15 Board meeting from solicited applicants."

Mark Ryavec, head of the petitioning movement against the RV Task Force, spoke at the meeting as did others. Ryavec's contention was that the Homeless Task Force violated the Brown Act and was composed mainly of "service providers, homeless advocates, and homeless persons" with few residents from the community at large.

The Homeless Task Force was tabled at the meeting but the RV Task Force was included in the tabling in the final board of officers meeting agenda.

- Reta Moser

Colonoscopy Required on Homes

L.A.'s Bureau of Engineering has adopted a policy requiring homeowners to pay for and provide a video inspection of their sewer lateral line when making an application for a building permit on any structure built prior to 1965.

A city inspector will review your colonoscopy to determine if you need a costly operation on your waste disposal.

-Thanks to Betsy Goldman, www.betsysellsvenice.com

Military Plane Violates Venice Airspace

Just when the noise ordinance went into effect on Ocean Front Walk, the deafening sound of a large plane, seemingly about to crash into our homes, was heard around Noon, May 26.

Observers said the craft was a four-engine cargo plane about the size of a 747. It appeared to be flying slowly at about 200 feet.

It was not immediately clear why the military chose the anti-war community of Venice for this show of force.

Several residents reported to the Beachhead that they believed the plane was about to crash into their homes, and that they feared for their lives.

Buzzing a populated area is definitely illegal - unless the military is above the law - and complaints can be made to the Federal Aviation Administration at 800-255-1111 or by filling out an online form at http://www.faa.gov/safety/safety_hotline.

Save Venice Manor Apartments

A mass uprising against RAD Ventures, in 2006, defeated its plans for a gated community at the MTA lot on Main St.

Now RAD is back with plans to destroy 28 rent-controlled apartments, called Venice Manor, and replace them with 18 multimillion-dollar houses. The garden-style apartments at 542-568 S. Venice Blvd. resemble those at Lincoln Place (where a long battle has been raging for affordable housing), but they are actually older, having been built in 1947, two years before LP.

At its May 23 meeting, the Venice Town Council voted to oppose the destruction of the Venice Manor Apartments.

Various other organizations will likely be lining up to save these affordable units, which are vanishing from Venice like an endangered species.

Want to help? Contact VeniceManor@gmail.com or www.savevenicemanor.org.



Seagulls scurry to avoid plane



Venice Manor

City of Venice Town Council Revival!

By Erica Snowlake

I felt honored to attend the first meeting of the revived Town Council Friday night, May 23 at the Venice United Methodist Church Auditorium on Lincoln Blvd.

Nearly 50 people and one mellow dog gathered in a heptagonal round to re-animate "the Body." Anticipatory excitement filled the air as we shared a communal feast courtesy of Food Not Bombs, while listening to the soothing homespun tunes of Venice bard Peter Damien, (praising those immortal shopping bag ladies).

Demetrius and Peggy Lee Kennedy co-inspired a marinara for the hemp seed topped pasta, with a green salad and sweet pineapple chunks for dessert.

We introduced ourselves in a go-around, heard announcements, then chose a facilitator/chair and secretary/note taker for the evening.

Jim Smith led us in a comprehensive reading of the "Resolution," stating the aim and purpose of the council; specifically "Whereas, The people of Venice need a forum for expressing themselves, and making decisions, on the important issues affecting them."

This not-for-profit organization will consider placing anyone's item on the meeting's agenda, though you must be a Venice resident, i.e. local, to vote. All decisions are (hopefully) agreed upon by consensus, otherwise a vote of hands or a carrying aye or nay will do. The Venice Town Council plans to meet once a month, yet people are so fired up with the urgency of the issues at hand the group moved to meet again in two weeks! (due to scheduling problems at the auditorium, the meeting will be held on June 13 at 7pm).

And the issues are: Solutions for Homelessness, Venice Boardwalk Ordinances and Lottery,

Beach Environmental Protection, Permit Parking, Save the Venice Art Walls, Venice Cityhood, Protection for the Trees of Venice, Police Relations, red curbs that go on forever, and perhaps most importantly, a renewed Moratorium on Development.

The Town Council has already taken positions on several important issues, including saving 28 rent-controlled apartments at the Venice Manor, and opposing Proposition 98, which would ban rent control in California. We also voted for very democratic rules to run the organization, including having a rotating chair/facilitator and secretary.

The previous VTC enjoyed a nearly 20 year run and organized very effectively against unsustainable development in Venice, influencing L.A. City Council decisions and the Coastal Commission reviews.

So dear Venice is embodying a Body once more, of and for the people. A group mind with limitless power to create and uphold a healthy and happy sustainable community for all, a forum in which to discuss the details of our timely co-existence.

Manifestations of true democracy, free speech, and free assembly for the respectful sharing of ideas and actions in equality and dignity to ensure we live in a land of harmony and longevity.

Indeed, the evening was fairly merry-spent, lastly, we thanked one another for coming out to participate, caring enough to leave, at least for the evening, car commercials and war machines far behind. The next meeting, scheduled for Friday, June 13, 7 pm, again at the Venice United Methodist Church Auditorium, 2210 Lincoln Blvd., promises more lively fun and unity, please join in! ★

Vandalism on Pacific - Getting the rules straight with the LAPD

By Cristina Rojas

In my letter to your May Issue, I described the vandals on Pacific who I saw taking a light fixture as "white youths". I did so because it was so, but also, to counter comments I have heard

supposing that vandals in general are probably either Gangs, or African-American, or Latino, or homeless, or "bums"...

Since last month, there have been a few more acts of vandalism that I know of: another left side car mirror hanging just by a thread (really!), and a right side mirror smashed.

In looking into the LAPD solutions to this particular problem our neighborhood is experiencing, I contacted various police officers referred through 911.

A "lead" officer returned my phone message, and after hearing my story and my questions, proceeded to tell me in no uncertain terms that I needed to educate myself on the correct procedure and the correct numbers to phone....that the community had to get educated.

And no, he does not read The Beachhead!

So, mindful of his 4 suggestions, and in an effort to bring my involvement with this question to a close as I share it with you, here is the gist of it:

1.- Do not call 911 - Unless it is life threatening.

2.- Call 1 (877) 275 52 73 / 1 (877) ASK LAPD, the LAPD non emergency number. If you are not aware of this number, as I was not till then, you may go on the Web and find it.

Personally, as I watched from my parked car as the vandals took down a neighbor's front door light around past midnight I did not have access to the Web, only to my cell phone. And my lifelong hearsay limited education resulted in my calling 911.

Now, mindful of the suggestion, I have phoned 1 (877) ASK LAPD.

I was informed that this is the main police car dispatch number, and that possibly there are more urgent requests which might take priority...hence my 45mn wait the night I reported the vandalism.

In checking this number again tonight for this letter, there was more education:

-call 911 if you see a crime in progress,

-call 1 (877) ASK LAPD if the perpetrators are leaving or have left the scene.

3.- If you do not know the 1(877) ASK LAPD number, call 411 to get that right number in case of vandalism. I did tell the "lead" Officer that 411 will just give you 911. He disagreed. I tried his suggestion...a couple of times. The surprised, slightly amazed answer came back each time: 911

When I suggested that there might be another number, the operators got really flustered...until I assured them that I was just checking for a story.

4.- Unless you get a slip, your report is not filed. The two officers who showed up 45mn after the vandalism of one of my neighbor's door lamp, long after the vandals had weaved their way towards Venice Blvd, did see the hanging exposed wires, and listened to my story, and the 911 officer had also listened to my story twice.

But, without a written report resulting in a slip, it is as if it had never been reported.

If only there had been such lack of "dynamism" in the LAPD/Feds/ATF February 19 Operation Oakwood.

Back in the late 1970s, I lived in the Pilsen neighborhood of Chicago. We started hearing and reading about neighborhoods "suddenly" becoming increasingly dangerous: gangs, drugs, violence...and Chicago's Finest to the rescue.

Then there was a rash of "inexplicable" fires, and families shivering out in the street watching their homes burn to the ground.

And then there was "gentrification," "urban renewal," or as we used to call it, "urban removal," of the people that is...scattered like leaves...

I think I may be having a Deja Vu all over again. ★

Good Bill



Councilmember Bill Rosendahl Applauds Same-Sex Marriage Decision

I am elated and moved beyond words by the news that the California Supreme Court has struck down the ban on same-sex marriage. Like my sisters and brothers in the LGBT community, I am thrilled, proud and excited by the court's just and wise decision affirming our basic civil rights.

As a teenager living in the closet, or as gay man watching my friends die from the scourge of AIDS, I never thought I would see the day when our rights would be fully recognized. This is an important and historic day. I am proud to be a Californian, and proud to be a gay man.

I applaud the legion of activists, lawyers, and elected officials who have made this day possible. There have been tens of thousands of quiet, invisible soldiers who have applied remarkable talent, incredible heart, and tireless commitment to this issue for more than a generation. We are part of a community rich with heroes.

I also applaud and thank our allies, of all political parties and sexual orientations, who helped make this day possible. Just as we shared our struggle for civil rights with them, we share our moment of celebration.

Together, we will make sure that this decision is not overturned at the ballot box. And together, we will work to make sure that someday soon our equal rights are recognized by the federal government.

—Bill Rosendahl

From the Beachhead:

Come on, Bill!

Bill Rosendahl has been, in most respects, an excellent representative for Council District 11, including Venice.

He has stood up for Lincoln Place tenants and has opposed many of the most outrageous development schemes for our town.

Yet, he must be judged by the same standard we would apply to anyone, that is: How does he treat the most defenseless members of our society?

The homeless, including those who sleep in cars, are powerless when confronted by city government, the police, landlords, employers, and even homeowners.

We urge our friend Bill to make his first priority finding safe and healthy places for mobile residents to spend the night. Then, and only then, should rules about who can park on our streets be promulgated. ★



Bad Bill

Councilmember Bill Rosendahl Calls RVs "Blight" on our community

Dear Neighbor-

Thanks so much for your email regarding City government efforts to prevent people from living in their vehicles on city streets. Many of you have asked about my position on an ordinance banning the overnight parking of oversized vehicles, such as campers and RVs, on certain City streets. I voted in favor of the ordinance in 2006. I supported it then, and I continue to support it now. I believe strongly that you, me and our neighbors deserve a quality of life that includes clean and safe neighborhoods. **Oversized vehicles and people living in cars on our residential streets imposes blight upon our community.** That problem must be stopped.

Currently, the City's Department of Transportation is implementing a pilot program enforcing this ordinance in two neighborhoods in San Pedro and Brentwood. As soon as these pilot programs are completed (in about a month), DOT will evaluate how well the program worked and was enforced, and report to the Transportation Committee. At that time, I plan to ask DOT to begin implementing the ordinance in Venice. I am confident that LAPD will effectively enforce these new rules.

Many of you are also asking about the status of requests for more comprehensive Overnight Parking Districts. At my request and with funding I have secured, the City's Bureau of Engineering is working on issuing the permits for those parking districts, which would allow parking by permit only from 2 a.m. to 6 a.m. in certain areas. The OPDs are being fast-tracked and should be in place by late August, unless they are appealed to the California Coastal Commission.

While I am moving forward with these restrictions, I want to underscore that I am determined that we not criminalize homelessness and punish those who live on the margins and in the shadows of society. I continue to seek alternative locations -- in Venice, in other areas of the 11th District, and other parts of the City of Los Angeles -- where people who are forced to live in their vehicles are allowed to park. I am encouraged by the leadership and vision of the Homeless Task Force of the Venice Neighborhood Council, and I look forward to reviewing the VNC's recommendations.

This is a difficult and wrenching issue for many people, in and out of government, who genuinely struggle with the sometime competing interests of protecting our neighborhoods and preserving the social safety net. I encourage each side of this difficult issue to appreciate the concerns and needs of the other side, so that we can work together as a community to address this controversy.

Regards,

—Bill Rosendahl

From Greed to Green

By Stephen Longfellow Fiske

Everyone is going green. On TV you can see Chevron, Dow, Ford, and other corporations green-washing themselves with tasteful eco-ads. Walmart and others have realized the long term economic value of going green. The good news is that from the corporate CEOs to the person on the street, we are all more eco-conscious than ever before. This is a great thing, but we have a long way to go.

What does it really mean to go green? In a practical sense, it's changing our lifestyle so that our carbon footprint is as neutral as we can possibly make it, as we recycle, reuse, and reduce. We can drive less, and walk, ride a bike, skateboard, or rollerblade more; we can stop using plastic bags; we can buy bio-degradable eco-friendly goods; we can change our light bulbs to those energy saving fluorescents; we can work for environmental groups; we can better conserve water and other resources; we can drive a hybrid or an electric vehicle; we can keep our cars well tuned and use more public transportation—each of these and many other actions we can take are votes for building a sustainable future...and each vote counts. All of our small but positive steps together make a difference. Our future depends upon it.

But these practical actions reflect a change of consciousness on a much deeper level. Green is the color of healing, of nurturing, of sustainability. It represents the sprouting of seeds, health, and the resurgence of life. It also represents an awareness that the environmental movement has brought to the everyday forefront of our thoughts—that we are intimately and intrinsically intertwined with our planet and all of life. What we do on one side of our world affects what we do on the other. The basic ecological teaching is that everything is interconnected; there is no "away" to throw anything.

We and our enemies share the common air, water, and soil of the Earth. So the environmental movement teaches us that we'd better learn to get along, because there are few things as ecologically destructive as war, not to mention the ultimate threat of nuclear annihilation. You can't punch a hole in one end of the boat and think you're safe from sinking if you're on the other end. In contrast, green teaches us to act as stewards

and caretakers of the life support system that sustains us all. Dominion over the Earth does not mean to dominate, but rather to be gardeners for what we have been given. Nature is inherently giving—we are given all we need to live on this beautiful planet. But we human beings have been like parasites, sucking the life out of our very Mother and cutting off our own lifeline, in addition to overpopulating the place. It is a biological fact that an organism cannot survive in its own waste. Our vulnerability to the lowest common denominator of human character leads us to seek the power to exploit, to pillage, rape, plunder, destroy, manipulate, control, enslave, colonize...all fueled by the disease of greed.

To move from greed to green is the imperative for our future. In green we find inclusiveness, interdependence, and generosity. The apple tree just gives its apples; it doesn't charge us \$1.89 a pound. The rain falls freely to the waiting soil. The Sun doesn't bill us for its light. Everything in nature has a place and a purpose. The indigenous people have always known that Mother Earth is a great teacher and provider, blessing us with her bounty, and we best respect, honor, and learn her ways if we are to live and prosper. But in the green movement, prosperity does not mean exploiting the market place for the momentary profit alone. Green creates a double bottom line, where our choices are based upon the long-term good of the whole, as well as on earning a rightful living. Can you imagine if the industrial revolution had been based upon such a philosophical economic premise? We would never be in the mess we are in now. But alas,

we must learn from our mistakes and suffer the consequences, as crises so often precedes solution. A mistake as colossal as contributing to the melting of the icecaps is not one to take lightly.

So the environmental movement has taught us the immediacy of the crisis, and although there are those who may make light of the "alarm-ringers," the evidence is all around us. Just look at the rise of disease, the decimation of the forests, the loss of species, the depletion of resources, and the gasping, choking, unhealthy conditions of our urban centers. Do we have time to reverse our environmental peril? How do we do it?

The green movement also teaches us that the environment has tremendous capacity to cleanse, heal, regenerate, and revitalize itself. And it is up to the human beings on this planet to help this process. The diminishing window of opportunity is upon us. One thing we can do is to have a festival, the Venice Eco-Fest, which is really a big networking of community concerns and talents on the theme of our common ground, our sacred Earth. This is the ultimate purpose of the Eco-Fest—to help move the planet from greed to green.

As one of the leading progressive communities in our nation, Venice can take the lead in going green. The purpose of the festival is to honor the Earth and all of life, as well as to:

- Promote solutions to global warming, such as having individuals, businesses and communities becoming carbon neutral.
 - Educate and raise awareness of the many environmental issues that affect every being on earth.
- continued on page 11

The Poverty of the Soul

By Stephen Longfellow Fiske

An infection plagues the land a pandemic permeating the pores of the human condition a poison seeping into the heart hardening the arteries of vision - A blindness unable to see outside itself festering in a famine of foresight a blight of beneficence a calamity of clarity a cancer of consciousness metastasizing through repeated histories encoded in generational identities ignoring the pleas for generosity destroying the vestiges of dignity corrupting the tenets of equality it feeds the already satiated gratifies the already ingratiated bleeds the already bleeding steals from the desperately needing serves the already self-serving denies the despaired and deserving hardens the crust of the callous prostitutes the principles of the pious padding the pockets of power seizing the profit of the hour climbing on the backs of the oppressed enslaved to this disease of the obsessed a barbiturate of false identity it seeds the saddest of travesties leads to the greatest of poverties The poverty of the soul... Greed.



Last of The Great White Walls

Photo & comment by Wendy Reeves

Ever since the adjacent building was razed to make room for a savings & loan parking lot, the exposed east wall of the 3/4-century-old St. Charles Hotel at 25 Windward Avenue has been calling like a siren to our visually-conscious community.

"Be a great place for a mural, wouldn't it?" was a comment heard almost daily walking along Windward. Now Terry Schoonhoven, mural artist with the Los Angeles Fine Arts Squad, is busy painting the huge windowless wall.

Currently an almost magically luminous patch of blue is emerging from an impressive storm-cloud sky. The lower portion of the mural will be a mirror-image of the buildings looking east on the Avenue from the St. Charles.

Terry is being funded by the California Arts Council.

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Venice Neighborhood Council

Town Hall on Community Safety

Join us on Thursday, June 5th and help answer the question:

Do you feel safe in Venice?

- Do you worry about drug dealers or street people?
- Are you concerned about police excesses?
- Do you lose sleep thinking about natural disasters?
- Do vehicles that disregard safety rules make you anxious?

Or maybe you do feel safe in Venice...

After all, police statistics say we're one of the safest communities in the city.

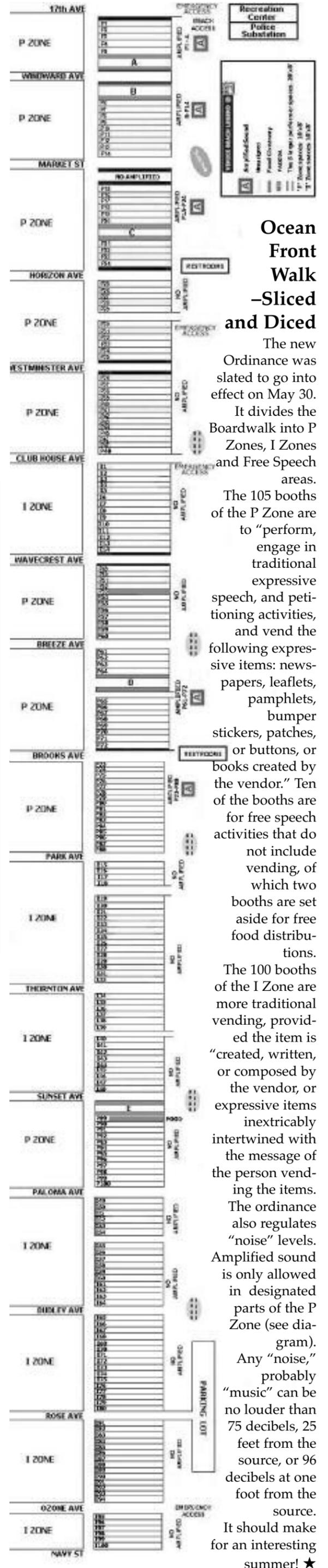
Share your concerns with representatives of the police and fire departments and officials from other city, county, state and federal agencies. Let your voice be heard!

Date: Thursday, June 5, 2008 **Time:** 6:30 PM
Location: Westminster Elementary School Auditorium,
 1010 Abbot Kinney Blvd, Venice, 90291

Snacks and coffee will be provided. There is no charge for this meeting.
 For additional information, write info@VeniceNC.org or call 310-606-2015.

VENICE neighborhood council

It's YOUR Venice!
www.VeniceNC.org



Ocean Front Walk - Sliced and Diced

The new Ordinance is slated to go into effect on May 30. It divides the Boardwalk into P Zones, I Zones and Free Speech areas.

The 105 booths of the P Zone are to "perform, engage in traditional expressive speech, and petitioning activities, and vend the following expressive items: newspapers, leaflets, pamphlets, bumper stickers, patches, or buttons, or books created by the vendor." Ten of the booths are for free speech activities that do not include vending, of which two booths are set aside for free food distributions.

The 100 booths of the I Zone are more traditional vending, provided the item is "created, written, or composed by the vendor, or expressive items inextricably intertwined with the message of the person vending the items.

The ordinance also regulates "noise" levels. Amplified sound is only allowed in designated parts of the P Zone (see diagram).

Any "noise," probably "music" can be no louder than 75 decibels, 25 feet from the source, or 96 decibels at one foot from the source.

It should make for an interesting summer! ★

The Venice Carnevale Is Coming, June 7

The sixth Venice Carnevale! will be held Saturday, June 7, at Beyond Baroque, 681 Venice Blvd. from Noon - 9PM. Costumes are encouraged in the tradition of the famed Carnevale in Venice Italy, the inspiration of this colorful festival. Admission is free

Our Carnevale, produced by the Venice Artists Forum in association with the Venice Chamber of Commerce and sponsored in part by the city of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs, will feature an all-day lineup of live entertainment from the local area and will conclude with its traditional fiery finale.

"We are very excited to be moving our festival to the Beyond Baroque Literary Arts Center, located in the old City Hall. There could not be a more appropriate historical location,"



Jauchem said. "It will be an added treat that the old jail next door which houses SPARC (Social & Public Art Resource Center) also will be open for the festival that day."

"We have some of our usual, fantastic performers" said Miriam More, Co-Producer, "and some fabulous new talent." Featured groups will include the Venice Drum Circle, Street Smarts, Kathy Leonardo, Wadada, Hillel "Mr. Balloonman," and many other performances



ranging from Baraka bellydancing to Italian opera, ending with a pyrotechnic bang furnished by DMT and the Phoenix Group fire dancers!"

Co-Producer Brady Walker, the other who has been handling relations with the city, praised Councilmember Bill Rosendahl's office, "His staff has been extremely helpful in working out the details for use of this city facility.

We could not have staged the Carnevale without their help."

The festival will include a variety of performances on the main stage, plus arts and crafts vendors, food service, the Masquerade Bar and Lounge with DJ Fatfinger from Project Alma, and guest DJs all day. Parking is available in public lots on the east side, behind the Pacific Resident Theater.



Further information is available at www.carnevale.us or via e-mail at celebrate@carnevale.us. ★



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Art Walls May Close July 1 Due to Lack of Funding

By Stash Maleski

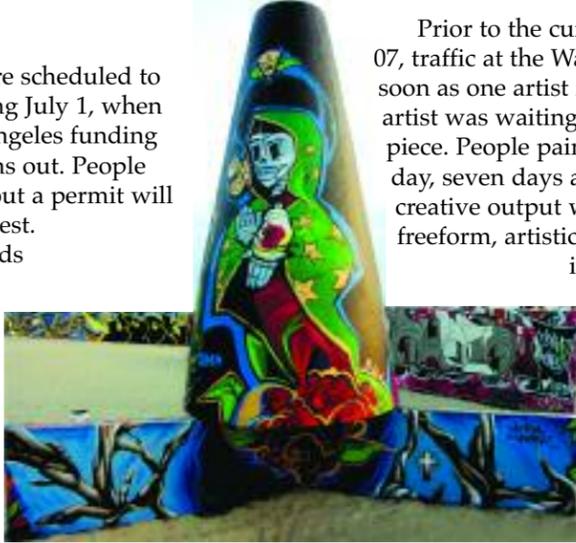
The Venice Art Walls are scheduled to be closed to painting starting July 1, when the last of the city of Los Angeles funding for the current program runs out. People painting on the walls without a permit will be subject to tickets and arrest.

In an effort to raise funds to keep the walls open for painting, ICU Art is presenting the Venice Art Walls Benefit Art Auction. The auction takes place 6-9PM, Tuesday, June 3 at the G2 Gallery, 1503 Abbot Kinney Blvd. More than 40 artists are donating work for the exhibition. Many of the artists are well-known graffiti artists that also do work on canvas. Others are Venice-based artists that have a connection to the Walls or just want to support the cause. Some have become up-and-coming "art stars" featured in exhibitions around the world.

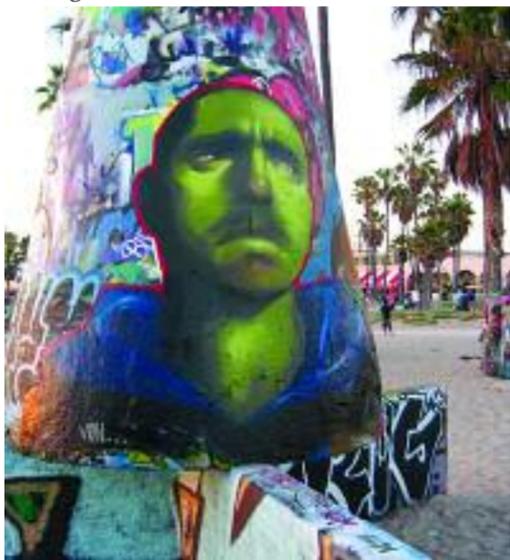
ICU Art is a Venice-based arts organization that has been curating the Venice Art Walls as a service to the artists of Los Angeles and the residents of Venice. ICU Art helped to save the Walls from removal in 1999 and has been curating the walls since 2000 when it first became legal to paint graffiti in the area. In the past year, ICU Art has successfully implemented a free permit program that allows artists to paint on the Walls on weekends and City of L.A. holidays. (This permit system is not related to the permit system for Boardwalk vendors.)

Although the city of Los Angeles considers the current program a success, due to the extreme nature of the city's budget crisis, all funds are being cut to the program. ICU Art will attempt to keep the program running using funds donated by private donors and area businesses. Hopefully, city funding of some sort can be found for the program.

All of the funds generated from the Auction will go to pay the on-site supervisors that issue the free permits to artists when the walls are open. These supervisors are generally young artists that direct traffic on the walls, inform people about the permit program and work to keep the area clean.



"Saint" by Asylm and "Mi Vida Muerte" by Vyal painted on Dia de los Muertos. Photo by: Asylm



"Portrait" by Von Photo: Stash Maleski

Prior to the current permit system in 2006-07, traffic at the Walls was so heavy that as soon as one artist finished their work, another artist was waiting to go over it with another piece. People painted on the Walls 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The sheer volume of creative output was impressive and the freeform, artistic expression was refreshing in a way. However, there were problems and the area was out of control. Eventually artists were less willing to put a great deal of effort or time into a piece knowing it would be painted over so quickly. Most of the pieces were basic and simple. Many of the established graffiti artists feel there was an overall decline in the quality of the artwork during this period.

Some of the residents and businesses in the area complained of rampant illegal vandalism, and they attributed it to the people painting in the Art Walls area. There was a movement by these residents to shut down the Walls and to have them removed. In an effort to mitigate any negative impacts that the Walls might have, ICU Art proposed the current permit system.

With the new system, the area is only open for painting on weekends and holidays when the supervisors are present to issue the free permits. Because the Walls are closed to painting on weekdays, the last pieces painted on Sunday stay up for the whole week.

In 2007, Councilmember Bill Rosendahl secured city funds to cover half the cost of implementing the permit program. ICU Art contributed an equal amount of funds and all administrative services for the Walls under the new system. The program included a comprehensive effort by residents, businesses and city departments to remove illegal vandalism quickly, have more police patrol the area and to inform the artists using the area that illegal vandalism would not be tolerated and was endangering the Walls.

Since the permit system has been in effect, illegal vandalism in the area has gone down. Most people including Bill Rosendahl's office feel that the program is a great success. The quality of the artwork has steadily increased, as more established artists return to the walls to invest more time and effort into elaborate pieces rather than just quick tags. The area remains a major cultural draw and is used often as a location for filming and events.

The time has come for Venetians to let their government know that funding for the Venice Art Walls program should be found. Contact Arturo Piña in Bill Rosendahl's office, Jon Mukri at the Department of Recreation and Parks or Olga Garay at the Department of Cultural Affairs to encourage them to find funding for this program. People can contribute directly to the program by attending the Art Auction on June 3, volunteering time or spreading the word through www.VeniceArtWalls.com.

The Venice Art Walls are a symbol of the artistic spirit of Venice and an outlet for free expression. The area is a cultural historic landmark that should be preserved and cared for. Without the proper support for the program that curates the walls, the walls are in jeopardy of being removed.

Please attend our benefit art auction! See announcement to the left.

Stash Maleski is Curator of the Venice Art Walls. ★



Folksinger U. Utah Phillips has Died

By Karl Abrams

Bruce "U. Utah" Phillips, storyteller and tireless political folk musician for more than 40 years died in his sleep on May 23 at his home in Nevada City.

Called the "Golden Voice of the Southwest," Phillips was a political activist and socialist who dedicated his life to protecting the rights of working people everywhere and speaking out against war every time he performed. The heart felt songs and humorous stories he shared on stage about his hobo life hopping trains and his passion for supporting labor unions and peace groups across the U.S. will not be forgotten.

As his heart condition got worse in the last few years, he turned his energies to starting a folk music radio show and a highly successful homeless shelter in his favorite Sierra Nevada town where he died at age 73.

The Beachhead had the great privilege of interviewing him just before a breath-taking musical performance at McCabes Guitar Shop in Santa Monica to a standing room only crowd (See March 2006 Beachhead article at www.freevenice.org). ★



"Untitled" by Mario Photo: Edizen Stowell, Venice Paparazzi

ICU ART presents **VENICE ART WALLS BENEFIT ART AUCTION** TUESDAY JUNE 3, 2008 6-9 PM

ARTISTS
 Axis • Robbie Conal • Swank • Slick • Asylm • Haste The Mac • Trek Kelly • Terrell Moore • Toonz • Eye Emily Winters • Eric "Cre8" Walker • Retna • Kofie Erick "Duke" Montenegro • Randy "Relic" Legaspi Edizen Stowell • Steve Grody • Mandoe • Siner LTS Ezra Li • Juan Carlos "Heaven" Muñoz • Sen • JoeX2 Tasha Grantham • Nuke • Mark Sadlek • Keo • Mear Man One • Dytch • Michael Rababy • Sonji • Miner Duce • Jennifer Kaufman • Crayone • Emma Ferreira Zender • Dash • Mike Steele • Pose 2 • Sano • Zuco Andrew "Nomor" Huerta • Thanks • Ruth San Pietro Dustin Otterbach • Kilno Villand • Judy Baca • Vyal

Auctioneer: Richard Montoya (Culture Clash)

The Venice Art Walls need your help. The program that issues free permits to artists to paint on the walls is in desperate need of funding. City of L.A. funding for this program is being cut due to the pending budget crises. Come help to preserve this important cultural and historic landmark and the spirit of free expression in Venice.

\$10 Admission at the door
 ICU Art: (310) 359-5108
jeanna@icuart.com

Info line: (310) 535-7729
 The G2 Gallery is located at: 1502 Abbot Kinney Blvd. Venice, CA

www.VeniceArtWalls.com

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VOTE TO SAVE RENT CONTROL ON JUNE 3 NO ON 98

By Jack Neworth

In my many years living in an apartment, my experience with landlords it that 4 out of 5 of them are, for lack of a nicer term, greedy. The percentage is actually higher, but I didn't want to appear biased.

I mention this because on June 3rd we'll all be going to the polls and there's a ballot initiative that's pure greed. To be accurate, only about 25% of us will be going as primaries draw notoriously low turnouts. And this year there's so much at stake. Prop #98, (the "greed is good" initiative) puts an end to rent control. As a renter, this isn't exactly heartwarming.

The initiative movement in California, that originated in 1912 with reformers, is now dominated by special interests. How special? Approximately 87% of Prop 98's \$7 million campaign budget comes from apartment building and mobile park owners. So, for now I'm packing my seashell collection and taking a wistful look at my life near the beach.

When I first moved here in 1975 my neighborhood was hardly upscale. My apartment complex was built with low-income HUD financing. Rents started at \$245. Today they start at \$3,000 and go up to \$5,800. (Giving new meaning to the term "low-income.")

Suddenly everybody wanted to live at the beach and rents skyrocketed. Each month waiting in the mailbox, there was another rent raise. Residents, especially low-income and the elderly, panicked. (At the time I was neither but I still panicked.)

Shameless, most landlords felt that in a capitalist system supply and demand should always prevail. (Except for Chrysler or sub prime mortgage companies.) With talk about rent control laws, the landlords figured they ought to gouge while the gouging was still good. As a result, the rent control laws passed. And ever since landlords have been trying, by hook or crook, to overturn it. (Prop #98 may be both.)

When Prop 13 passed, the landlords promised renters would share in the savings. (And something about the tooth fairy, as I recall.) Then in 1999 statewide vacancy de-control went into effect. But the landlords weren't satisfied. Greed is insatiable. It is, after all, one of the seven

deadly sins. (Along with: lust, gluttony, sloth, wrath, envy, pride and not getting my jokes -- okay, the last one I made up.)

For a while things have been quiet. But, just when you thought your apartment was safe, like a bad horror movie, "The Landlords Are Back." On June 3, Prop. #98 will be playing at a polling place near you. I'm giving it two thumbs down.

I have to hand it to the landlord lobby. They're like rust, they never sleep. Lest you think I'm being partisan, the biggest backer of #98 is the Apartment Owners Association USA. In their March newsletter they referred to rent control advocates as "terrorist bombers." Ouch. Now whose style does that remind you of? Actually Bush/Cheney/Rove and the proponents of #98 have a lot in common. The neo-cons used 9/11 as an excuse to invade Iraq and AOA is using "eminent domain" to wipe out rent control.

The proponents of #98 assure rent control residents they'll be allowed to stay. Why thank you, Milord. But after seven years of WMD's and "we'll be greeted as liberators," such assurances are as comforting as "the check's in the mail."

In addition to ending rent control, #98 would stop cities from zoning to limit height and density, and would end the state's environmental protections on the use of land. Just what we need in the era of global warming. Don't wealthy people have to breathe the same air? Or, maybe they've got something up their sleeve?

In my opinion Prop #98 is so onerous that it's no wonder there's a long list of those against it: the Venice Town Council, the League of Women Voters, AARP, environmental and tenant groups, labor unions, League of Cities, the California Chamber of Commerce and even Governor Schwarzenegger who issued a statement, "While eminent domain is an issue worth addressing, Proposition 98 would undermine California's ability to improve our infrastructure, including our water delivery and storage."

Fortunately there is hope. Prop 99 does address eminent domain abuses and without a hidden agenda. If #99 passes and gets more votes than #98, it will become the law. The editorial boards of 85% of the newspapers in the state have come out against #98, and most are in favor of #99. Now if only the "No 98/Yes 99" had \$7 million in the bank like the landlords.

Before I go, I have to be totally candid. I don't have a sea shell collection. I suppose with only 10 days until the election, I'd better hurry up and start one. Until then, remember, "Hate 98, 99 is Fine." ★



Venice, 2007

By Alexa Hilal

i opened my eyes this morning to an empty mess of sheets beside me and the fat black cat lola basking herself in the same sun that blinded me. she is still laying on my left foot (which is still asleep). it's monday, i deduce from the garbage and recycling and horticulture trucks rumbling and the street cleaners whirring zirring zeeeeeeeeeeeeeee like the drill at the dentist down the street...stirring up dust that floats in front of my eyes dancing in the same stream of sunlight that is baking the cat. windows shake as the trucks roll by reminding me how close my bed is to the street/the rumbling/the dirt and i sink back down deep feeling safe warm cozy and full... september 10, 8:25am

michael lives in the abbot kinney memorial library parking lot where you have to know someone to get in and be able to squat. red flannel and suspenders denim linty hair clean shaven face combat boots on 90 degree summer days thick smudged lenses gummy smile. he sits on the stoop next door where no one lives for a few hours every afternoon. i sit on my front porch shielded by dirty white lattice and my socioeconomic standing watching the same world go by day night day- neither of us has anywhere to be. no real obligations at the pressing moment. i asked him if he had any plans for the day and he told me he was just going to get a beer later from the liquor store on the corner. i stood waiting for more and realized that was all i was going to do too... september 10, 1:15pm

feeling sated. almost decadent. finished long dinner with rob and am beginning my third glass of wine- jug wine reminiscent of sundays at sacred heart chapel watching the nuns tip the chalices back after everyone else had tasted the sacrament. a sharp ensemble of clothes is laid out on the hope chest for tomorrow's interview and i can hear it begging for validation acceptance approval. i ignore it and sit on the couch facing a wall full of framed faces we no longer see and rob pounds away on the piano lost in the music that heats my soul and the cat is finally moving off the bed where she has laid all day. she saunters off the bed and stretches long with eyes squinting shut only to jump onto the hope chest to settle deep into my clothes and asleep... september 10, 9:49pm.

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Douglas Eisenstark salutes the Beachhead for its coverage of the Lincoln Place crisis.

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Mobile Home Park and Apartments Owners Are The Primary Funding Sources for Yes on 98, Californians For Property Rights Protection

TOTAL CONTRIBUTIONS: \$6,528,640.11

Apartment Owner Interests: \$2,285,977.40

- \$653,500.00 from California Association of Realtors, IMPAC whose directors and members are tied to various apartment associations.
- \$425,524.95 from Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association's Committees, whose officers and key staff represent apartment interests
- Apartment Owners Association PAC: \$528,218.40
- Individual Apartment Owner Interests: \$466,967.91
- Orange County Property Rights PAC: \$100,000.00
- Homeowners For Property Rights: \$35,000.00
- Apartment Association of Greater LA PAC: \$27,266.14
- Other Apartment Associations: \$49,500.00

California Farm Bureau: \$339,644.69

Other: \$520,483.88

Mobile Home Park Owner Interests: \$3,382,534.14

- Individual Mobile Home Park Owners Interests: \$3,049,857.00
- Western Manufactured Housing Communities Issues PAC: \$205,677.14
- Manufactured Housing Education Trust PAC: \$92,000.00
- Sonoma County Park Owners Association: \$35,000.00

Sources: Secretary of State's Political Reform Office, Californians For Property Rights Protection's Forms 460 filed from Jan 1, 2007 to Mar 24, 2008 and Forms 497 (late contributions) Mar 28, 2008 to May 16, 2008.

Paid for by No 98/Yes 99 - a committee of city and county associations, taxpayers and environmental groups, League of California Cities and Californians for Neighborhood Protection, a coalition of conservationists, labor and business. A sponsored committee of the California League of Conservation Voters - 1121 L Street, #803, Sacramento, CA, 95814 - www.no98yes99.com

I have become earth

By Jim Smith

Tell me the truth, Don was saying,
 Could you live downtown
 in one of those new condos?
 I shrug. I am a Venetian. It's not a fair question.
 How could I live away from the Lady,
 from the smell of the sea.
 Here, every house has a history
 every street has a resume.
 I'd be an ant in an anthill downtown
 I am not just this body and mind anymore
 I have become a place, a smell, a sound,
 I have become earth before my time.

Don't ya hate it, he taunts,
 when they put up another big, ugly box.
 I cannot hide the truth.
 Yeah, it's like a punch in the nose,
 a stab in the heart.
 They're taking me apart
 one brick at a time, I say.

This land is my soul
 I cannot write when I go away
 The Muse deserts me
 because I have deserted her.
 I return and lay on the sand
 to beg forgiveness.
 She is merciful this time.
 She tells me to arise
 and sing her praises.
 The center is restored
 I am in my home once more.

Crossing

by hillary kaye

No more
 does it move itself
 it is seen in springs
 of golden light
 it is felt in rivers
 that call its name
 it is not where
 it should be
 it is lost
 to itself and will
 not be found
 again

Venice Beach

By Slim Diamond

Welcome, one and all
 to the great Venice beach,
 new home of "One Love"
 and freedom of speech.

Where souls are rich
 and art depicts life,
 true sense of purpose,
 Bohemian's delight.

Rainbow of people
 come from far and near,
 leave astounded by the joys
 that are only found here.

We're all just strugglin'
 for a piece of the pie
 just being creative,
 simply tryin' to get by.

These very real people
 doin' very real things
 at peace with themselves
 real visions, real dreams.

Writing's my true love,
 expressing myself,
 though my pocket's on "E",
 my heart's full of wealth.

Love and harmony reigns
 amongst the chosen ones
 spreading joy and big fun,
 best under the sun.

Bad apples? No doubt.
 Of course there's a few,
 up and down the beach
 you'll find a crew, or two.

Now I ain't one to judge,
 hell, I've been there
 myself.
 Crazy dope fiend life
 wasn't good for my
 health.

Despite all that,
 the beach is paradise,
 the joys and pains
 just part of our lives.

Piece by piece,
 the powers that be,
 tryin' their best to take
 away
 our civil liberties.

It ain't gonna happen
 'cause it's not their
 choice,
 there's a much higher
 force
 behind the people's
 voice.

No need to worry,
 spend some money, have
 fun,
 peace and love's
 supreme
 out here under the sun.

Let's all have a good day
 and practice what we
 preach,
 enjoy the sunshine and
 your stay at Venice
 Beach.

Poems by John Haag

History Lesson

That little ape that came down from a tree
 and used a stick on his enemy
 and called aloud to his family
 to show what a great brave ape was he
 made followers out of you and me.

That little ape that got caught in the rain
 and used some branches to cover his brain
 and thought up gods for rain and for tree
 to explain away the mystery
 made worshippers out of you and me.

That little ape that had more than enough
 and didn't know what to do with the stuff
 and instead of handing it out for free
 put others to work for a salary
 made employees out of you and me.

That little ape that schemed and planned
 and put a fence around some land
 and told his followers they'd be free
 if they fought his next-door enemy
 made soldiers out of you and me.

That ape whose stick is his bravery
 whose ignorance makes theology
 whose avarice makes wage-slavery
 and makes a cause for nationality
 makes monkeys out of you and me.

Venice as Mecca or Jerusalem

I sit here on the sand,
 a holy place on sacred land,
 remembering the tribes and clans
 that gathered here, took counsel
 and dispersed; foreseeing all
 the ones that will arrive,
 drink our blessed water and survive,
 only to disperse in turn
 to spread the word
 amongst a disbelieving world.

Take heart, my heart,
 for here is never lost
 anything forever (but the soul
 at times sent wandering
 along some other plane).

It too returns home safely
 found like a cache of nuts
 the squirrel lays by against
 a cold day in hell, forgets,
 then comes upon in time
 of need.

Rejoice!

The promised land is here;
 The time is near at hand.

Dawn Over Venice

The sun, like henna,
 bleaching the night away,
 orange-gold glancing
 off back windows

Making the chrome shine
 on passing cars
 then filling the sky
 with its golden copper

Fire-ball, the people
 half-asleep, walking
 to Winchell's for do-nuts
 and coffee, starting

The good
 morning
 with
 hesitant
 conversa-
 tions.



The Venice Beat Poets

-The Great River Outside the Mainstream -

JOHN HAAG

By Jim Smith

In many ways, John Haag was a typical member of the Beat Generation in that he forsook a career in Academia or Madison Avenue, for a life dedicated to poverty, poetry and his community. But he was different in one important respect - he was political.

The Rochester, New York native studied Italian Literature at Harvard University. After graduation, he traveled to Rome where he met, and married, Anna Ricci. John soon became intrigued with rumors of something new coming out of Venice, California. He and his new wife moved here in 1959 and they soon became fixtures at the Venice West Cafe, which had been opened by poet Stuart Perkoff.

When Perkoff got tired of running the dusk to dawn coffee house, he passed it on to John Kerivan, who in 1962, sold it to the Haags for a couple of hundred dollars.

Between John's good humor and Anna's Italian dinners, the place filled with poets, artists, and other rebels.

Unfortunately, it attracted the attention of the right-wing Santa Monica Evening Outlook which railed against the "bums and hobos." The city of Los Angeles and the LAPD also took a dim view of the poets and their poetry. The Venice West was closed by police in September, 1964, for allowing "performances" (people reading their poetry) without a cabaret license.

At about the same time, Karl Rundberg, the L.A. City Councilmember for Venice, introduced an anti-bongo motion to prohibit drumming on the Ocean Front. It passed 11-2, with the notable opposition of Councilmember and future Mayor, Tom Bradley.

Haag recognized the assault on the Venice West, where poetry had been read for years, as part of a gentrification effort. A move was afoot

to create an urban renewal zone which would wipe out Venice, just as much of neighboring Ocean Park had been bulldozed.

The fight to save poetry at the Venice West awoke John's talent for organizing. He led a campaign for free speech that ultimately won the support of the courts.

Next came an eviction notice from the landlord, Eugene del Genio. Haag again mobilized supporters and got the eviction withdrawn. By 1966, John and Anna decided the time had come to close the doors.

Meanwhile, Haag in 1962, had published a newsletter, the Spectre, that combined arts and community involvement. He also formed a Venice chapter of the ACLU, participated in the Venice Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), and long before it was popular, he was the co-chairman of the Los Angeles Committee to End the War in Vietnam.

John Haag went on to found a political party, the California Peace and Freedom Party, and a newspaper, the Free Venice Beachhead. He set the tone for a Venice variety of political radicals - soft spoken, poetry spouting, anarchistic and lovers of community.

He remained active in his beloved Venice through the 1980s, until ill health made him retire. For more than 25 years, there was scarcely an issue of concern to Venetians in which John Haag was not involved. He was a ceaseless organizer for progressive causes, running for lieutenant governor and state controller. He was instrumental in the 1972 third-party campaign for President by Dr. Benjamin Spock.

At all times, Haag considered himself a poet, and continued to write in the thick of struggle. He died on March 29, 2006.

Read more about John Haag in the Beachhead's memorial issue, May 2006, at www.freevenice.org. See a 2002 talk by Haag at Google Video (search on "John Haag"). This concludes our series on Venice Beat poets.



John Haag

Photo by Larry Sullivan

this paper is a
 poem

Another Kind of Life

—continued from page 1

just across Ocean Avenue at the edge of the park. Now relieved, I took in the varying rich hues of green found in the leaves of palms, bushes and lawns. The men resting on the lawns wore old clothes, older than mine. They weren't in Santa Monica on vacation. Together we inhabited two different universes. Although, that's the wrong way of looking at it, isn't it? If someone lives in another universe, it's much easier for me to ignore him.

Four pretty women in shorts, sandals, and loose tops walked past me and turned down the nearby staircase, their slowness a result of the measured way of life in Santa Monica. The broad beautiful beach below waited for them. The women would have a lot of space to rest. Summer was months away and with it the promise of thousands of near-nude bodies, some only inches from one another, others touching pleasurable skin to skin.

I listened to the excitement in the women's voices as they moved down the stairs and across the bridge over the Pacific Coast Highway. They were sharing the joy of the moment with one another. The only way I could share my joy with my fiancée was through a text message, which I sent to her English mobile phone, hoping that my digital words would convey the saltiness of the air and the warmth of the California sun.

I had to taste the ocean, feel it on my feet and hands, take a dip in it if I could; although, there was barely a soul bathing in the water. But the sand was warm and soft. I sat in it and luxuriated myself, removing my sneakers and letting the waves tenderly caress my feet. That's when it occurred to me that I was relaxed. I had entered another frame of mind; I was at peace, unworried and without a bother.

My trip wasn't finished, however. Mom and Dad were a few miles away at a hotel in Venice Beach. I began walking towards them with my shoes off, dangling from pack. Every so often, I ran into people – parents with overweight kids rolling in the waves making sand-pies, a slender teenaged girl in a white bikini jogging for the life of her, and a few others. Mostly I was alone with the Pacific and its steady purifying breeze.

At one point, it occurred to me that if I kept to the ocean, my ocean, I would end up missing my parents' hotel. Thus, I started to cut across the beach and into the arms of humanity. Its unified life-affirming pulse began to pound harder and harder. This was Ocean Front Walk in Venice Beach. I knew right away – as unbelievable as that may sound – that I had entered a real community. And I don't mean people simply living together in one place. This sort of setup exists wherever one goes. On Ocean Front Walk every person, be it a tourist or local, belonged to Venice Beach. This belonging created unspoken relationships between all the people in town, but placed no pressure on them to conform. Knowing this was delightfully liberating. The muscular man in black briefs, the reggae band, the tourist with a camera hanging from his neck, and everyone else – including me – was a member of a happy collective, nonjudgmental and welcoming.

My parents' hotel bore witness to this scene of humanity gone right. In the hallway on the second floor just down from our room, I could sit by the open window, feel the presence of the ocean and take hope that maybe in the future humanity would turn out all right.

★

A Guide to Venice for Visitors and Residents

—continued from page 1

Davis Community Center at 610 California Ave. (just off Abbot Kinney). The intricate tiles were designed and painted by the children and youth of Venice in the 1990s. They tell the story of multi-racial, multi-cultural Venice.

If you want a quiet beach experience, head down the peninsula south of Washington Blvd. There are few people on these beautiful Venice beaches. Problem is you'll either have to walk or bike down Speedway to get to them. You can also visit the last remaining Venice pier at Hamburger Square, where Washington Blvd. meets the sand.

Venice is relatively free of chain stores, and we mean to keep it that way. Please DO NOT PATRONIZE them. There are way cool local shops and restaurants on Ocean Front Walk, Windward Avenue, Abbot Kinney Blvd., Rose Ave., Washington Blvd. and Lincoln Blvd. Coffee houses, head shops, speciality stores, small cafes and restaurants abound. Please patronize those that advertise in this community newspaper.

Nightlife

Check the Beachhead Calendar for events this month in Venice. Many are within walking or biking distance.

Getting Around

Driving around town is so unVenetian. Venice, unlike L.A., is a walking city. In addition, timing tests have proven that you can get around Venice as quickly on a bike as by car, when parking is taken into consideration (see Nov. 2002 Beachhead at www.freevenice.org). There's also the Big Blue Bus that has several routes in Venice. The regular fare is 75 cents.

Venice is seedy?

—continued from page 1

more fairly in future and that the next Beat generation of poets can grow, expressing the true diversity of voices in the community. The endowment fund suggested by Lipton's late wife Nettie could be established to meet cultural aims and develop a constructive agenda for affordable, supported social housing serving the most vulnerable in our troubled society. Mental health issues must be a priority as well as respect of older people.

In Fairfax Village yesterday I saw motorists driving over a walking stick - it was tossed about with the traffic - I see that as a symbol of the attitude to vulnerability prevalent in LA.

P.S. Thanks for a great read this month. As an outsider visiting from London I found the paper really helpful and inspiring and was a good intro to the Venice Community which I experience as a vibrant one. It inspired me to write today. ★

Parking:

Residents: Don't even think about moving your car on weekends if you only have street parking. You won't find another parking place until Monday. Do your shopping on Friday at the latest. Plan your weekend around neighborhood stores, restaurants and events. If you stay off Ocean Front Walk, you'll find plenty of room to move around and enjoy paradise.

Visitors: If you're driving, come early, before 9AM if you want to park near the beach. Otherwise, park a mile or more away and catch a bus to Venice. It's a lot cheaper than paying for parking near the beach. If you want to avoid all the hassles let the MTA do the driving for you.

Where to Stay:

No problem for residents, but if you're just visiting, whether you're a transient, traveler, or tourist, check out Venice's hostels. Contrary to popular belief, you don't have to be from another country to stay at a low-cost hostel. Rooms run from \$22 - \$52 per night. All you need is a passport to enjoy the low rates for a bed in a dormitory or a private room. Here's three that are recommended by a friend: Venice Beach Hostel - www.venicebeachcotel.com, 1515 Pacific Ave. - 310-452-3052; Venice Beach Cotel - 25 Windward Ave. - 310-399-7649. The Hostel California, about a mile from the beach has dorm rooms for only \$17. - www.hostelcalifornia.us, 2221 Lincoln Blvd. - 310-305-0250.

If you've got more bucks, the most charming hotel is probably the Cadillac Hotel - 8 Dudley Avenue - www.thecadillahotel.com - 310-399-8876. It's right in the thick of the action. Summer rates are high - \$139 - \$200 per night!

If you're coming in an RV, make sure you move every day to avoid the random irritable homeowner. If you just have the clothes on your back, you should know that it's illegal to sleep on the beach. Look for an isolated spot to bed down. Be aware that there are predators on the beach as well as friendly people.

Little known facts about Venice:

1. Regardless of what you have heard on TV, there is no such place as Venice Beach. It is Venice. While we're at it, there are no such places as Santa Monica Beach or Malibu Beach. At least try to get our name right.

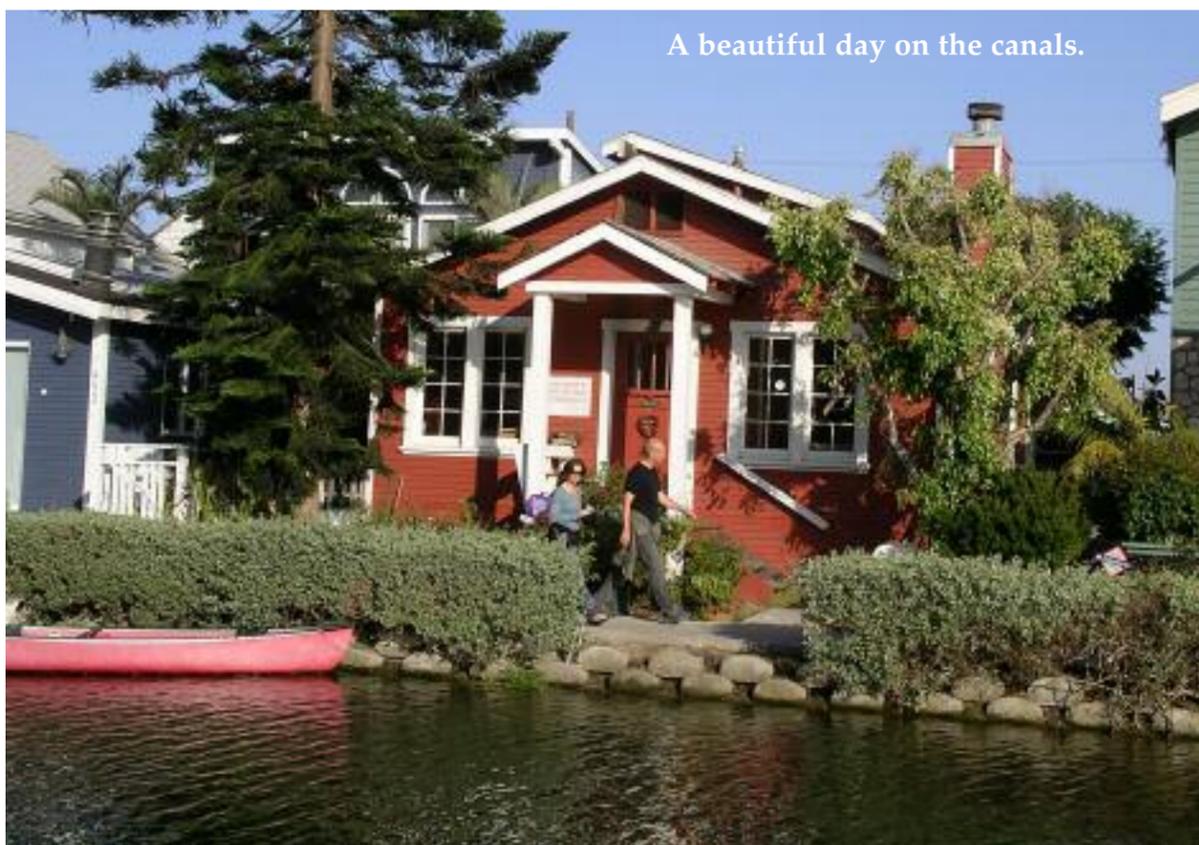
2. Venice has been under occupation for 83 years. John McCain would love it here. We were taken over by Los Angeles in a bloodless Anschluss years ago. There are still insurgents resisting the occupation, who the occupiers call gangs and troublemakers, but in general, tourists are relatively safe. If you see men with guns and uniforms, keep a safe distance.

3. Venice is one of the most leftwing communities in California. We compete with Berkeley for that title. In 2004, George Bush got 13 percent of the vote. Visitors will find us open minded and happy to make new friends.

Have a great time:

Residents: Don't hyperventilate about the traffic, all the people and the noise. All things will pass. In the meantime, pretend you're a visitor seeing Venice for the first time.

Visitors: There is nothing like summer in Venice. Whether you're rich or poor, you'll likely be welcomed by Venetians if you are friendly and courteous. The ocean, the coast, and the good times belong to everyone! Enjoy. ★



A beautiful day on the canals.

Swami Speaks

By X Swami X

Did we fall, were we pushed or did we jump. Am I. I am that I am, a soul, a heel or a chump.

Is it reality, a dream or a game; and if so, whose got all the trumps.

Cleopatra whispered seductively and mischievously to Caesar, "What I love about Marc, and the camels, is the humps" (One of my favs. Interesting how language changes).

Humanity's greatest difficulty is failed creativity. Creativity is the secret ingredient of Divinity. Divinity is the essential nature of humanity. Humanity's greatest challenge is actualizing their creativity (Something to contemplate when TV loses its allure).

God is Love, and Love lives in the compassionate heart of a whore. God is Truth, and Truth can pop from the chops of a comedian, putting people on the floor. God is Beauty, and She is filling the earth with that Beauty more and more and more. God is here and beyond, and your mind, heart, and hands are the windows, light, and door. (An atheist is someone who is lost and desperately demanding direction. God bless, and be amused by them).

There are just different levels of absurdity, you know. We're all absurd in someone's eyes.

So, lo and behold yourself in a million different guises; until the soul within ascends, rises, and ends its anguished ordeal; that long, dark nite and comes face to face with God and is lost, and found, in Light (Cute and philosophically valid). Of course, God is just a three-letter word, or dog spelled backwards. How about Light-Life-Love, that is everywhere in everything; onwards, inwards, and upwards. One may deny everything; but one's own existence; and Light-Life-Love have their own complete, endless, compassionate insistence (I don't know, I guess I'm just philosophical compulsive).

Staying in one's moment is to meditate all the time. Here I go again, on my merry way to compose another rhyme. A beautiful, mystical exercise is to perceive in everything, the ever-lasting, loving trine. It goes on forever; so there is always another line (I think we might have something here). ★

From Greed to Green

—continued from page 4

- Raise awareness of conscious consumerism, to support socially and environmentally responsible businesses and organizations.
- Promote the benefits of organic and healthy foods.
- Celebrate life and the arts and bring the arts to the greater public.
- Foster community unity – bringing together the diverse communities of the LA area, especially in Venice and the Westside, under the banner of protecting the Earth.
- Showcase and support the work of our vendors, artists, and sponsors.
- Feature local businesses and organizations that are ecologically friendly.

Festivals, often held during the changes of season and harvest times, have always occurred throughout human history as opportunities to celebrate our collective identity and honor our cultures. Festivals can also exhibit new technologies, innovations, and directions for our society to take. They celebrate the progress and excitement of the arts, science, and industry, magnify the awareness of new discoveries and ideas, and catalyze the momentum of a new collective consciousness.

Throughout history, we have seen the great sea changes taking place as a result of a collective consciousness reaching a critical mass, whether it was the rise of democratic ideals, the movement to end slavery, women earning the right to vote, the ending of apartheid, or the fall of the Berlin wall. We are at a point of creating a great paradigm shift in the course of human history. It is no small thing to move from greed to green. When we come together in a festival, we can feel that critical mass coalescing in the very experience of being there. We know that we are not alone in the movement. Come to the Venice Eco-Fest, Saturday June 28 and let your vote be counted. ★



CommUnity Events — day by day

Sunday, June 1

- 5pm - **Open reading** with RD Armstrong, Julia Bemiss, Peggy Dobreer and Alex M. Frankel. Hosted by Marie Lecrivain. Open sign up 4:45pm, 2 poem limit. Free. Beyond Baroque.

Tuesday, June 3

- 6-9pm - **Venice Art Walls Auction** - This art auction is a benefit to raise funds to support the Venice Art Walls program. Without a program in place the walls may be removed. \$10 fee. G2 Gallery - 1502 Abbot Kinney Blvd. For more information: www.veniceartwalls.com

Thursday, June 5

- 6:30pm - Neighborhood Council **Town Hall Meeting: Public Safety**. Venice stakeholders will answer the question "Is Venice Safe?" Westminster School Auditorium.
- 7pm - Photo gallery opening of art by Cesario Montano. Hama Sushi, on the Venice Circle.

Friday, June 6

- 7-10pm - **1st Friday** on Abbot Kinney. Stores stay open late.

Saturday, June 7

- 8:30am - 1:30pm - **Rummage Sale**. Toys, clothing, appliances, household items, books, and much more! Church in Ocean Park, 235 Hill St.
- Noon - 9pm - **Carnevale!** Costume contest, performances on two outdoor stages, vendors, Spirit Garden, DJs and dancing. Free. Beyond Baroque.
- 7pm - **Cuban Ballet & Dance Exhibition**. Featuring world class cuban dancers. \$10. Blankenship Ballet of Venice. 132 Brooks Ave.

Sunday, June 8

- 4:30pm - Slow Food LA presents: Can one small market save the world? Featuring the documentary **Eat at Bill's** and a discussion with Director. Donation \$7. Beyond Baroque.

Monday, June 9

- 6:30pm - Everything a writer needs to know about **book publishing contracts** in the digital age. Beyond Baroque. Free.

Friday, June 13

- 11:30am - Lunch Seminar (brown bag lunch). **Copyright and trademark basics** for writers with Jonathan Kirsch. Free. Beyond Baroque.
- 7pm - City of Venice - Town Council - United Methodist Church Auditorium.

Saturday, June 14

- 11am - **Westside Writers**. Writers meet to discuss works in progress. All are welcome to attend. Abbot Kinney Library.
- 4pm - Books, Audios, Videos & More. **Learn to use the library's electronic catalog** to locate books and materials. Abbot Kinney Library.
- 7pm - **Jazz Funk Fest** - Black Shoe Polish - Spoken word and improvisation. 8pm - Freddy Ginns, Zebra Party play jazzy blues funk. 9pm - Eric Ahlberg's Jazz Workshop. Sponto.
- 8pm - Opening of the **Venice Cabaret Theatre**. The Blankenship Ballet Studio will be transformed into a cabaret for the evening. \$15 at door, \$10 pre-paid. 132 Brooks Ave.

Tuesday, June 17

- 7pm - Venice Neighborhood Council, **Board of Officers** - Westminster School Auditorium.

Friday, June 20

- 11am - Databases - Magazines and Newspapers - **Learn to use the Research Library** (Proquest) and the Los Angeles Times databases.. Abbot Kinney Library.

Saturday, June 21

- 9am - **Book Sale**. Friends of Venice Library Big Book Sale. Thousands of books in good condition. Some collectible. Abbot Kinney Library.
- 5pm - **Summer Solstice** celebrations with Ibrahim, Diane and friends. Live music, dance, art and poetry. Sponto.
- 7:30pm - **Beyond Music**: Night of the Lone Wolf. Solo performances from the members of Michigan's Wolf Eyes. Beyond Baroque.

Sunday, June 22

- 4pm - **Valley Contemporary Poets Anthology**: Sara Maclay, Carine Topal, Douglas Richardson, and more. Beyond Baroque.

Thursday, June 26

- 7:30pm - M.E.S.S Sessions - Gerry Fialka interviews **Orson Bean**, one of the founders of Pacific Resident Theatre. Donation \$7. Beyond Baroque.

Friday, June 27

- 7:30pm - **Poets Phoebe MacCadams and Joanne Kyger**. Beyond Baroque. Free.

Saturday, June 28

- 10am - 7pm - **Venice Eco-Fest** - Music, Arts, Booths, Vegetarian delights - 888-295-8372 www.earthdayla.org
- 11am - 5pm - **Swap-o-Rama** - A giant clothing swap. Bring a bag of unwanted clothes and \$5 and leave with free clothes. 2210 Lincoln Blvd.
- 7:30pm - **Judith Pacht and B.H. Fairchild**. Poets. Beyond Baroque. Free.

Ongoing Events

- 9:30am, Tuesday, June 3 & 17 - **Westside Quilters**. Group meets to quilt, crochet, and knit. All experience levels are welcome. Some instruction is provided. Abbot Kinney Library.
- 7pm, Tuesdays - **Pajama Storytime**. Alphabet storytime continues (weekly until June 24) with Strong "S." Craft project follows storytime. Abbot Kinney Library. Free.
- 2 - 10pm - **Art Exhibition**: We shall not be moved: International graphics on gentrification, homelessness and resistance. 1212 Abbot Kinney Blvd. Thurs-Sun 2-6pm, Friday 2-10pm.
- **James Caprell Gallery** - Trewth - an exhibit "reflecting the veneer of life's obsessions" by James Caprell thru July 5. 1136 AKB.
- Electric Lodge - "**Moo Moo Musica**" - multicultural music and dance activities for babies thru 4 year old. 9:30am Mon; 10:45am and 3:15pm Tues and Thurs; 8:30am and 9:15am Friday. \$16. 1416 Electric Ave.
- **7:30-10pm. First Friday** of every month. Abbot Kinney Blvd. is open!
- **Live Music at The Good Hurt**, 12249 Venice Blvd, See week of events at - www.goodhurt.net
- **10am - 12pm, Sundays** - "**The People's Voice**" - Stand up for freedom of speech. Santa Monica Palisades Park. Ocean Ave at Santa Monica Blvd.
- 8-10pm, every 2nd Thursday - **Live Music at Danny's Deli**, 23 Windward Avenue.
- 6-9pm, Mondays - **Intermediate Conversational Spanish Class**. Venice High School. 13000 Venice Blvd. \$20, seniors free.
- 6pm - Monday and Thursdays - **Hatha Yoga** - Vera Davis Center. Donation.
- 8pm - Sunday - **Open Mic poetry**, spoken word, storytelling & performance. Abbot's Habit.
- 8pm - Sunday and Monday - **Live jazz**. Hal's Bar and Grill.
- 6pm - Wednesday. **Singer/guitarist Evyn Charles**. Sidewalk Cafe. 1401 Ocean Front Walk.
- 7:30pm - Wednesday, **Open Mic night**. Talking Stick Coffee Lounge. 1630 Ocean Park Blvd.

Get your local event listed in the Beachhead. Send information to Calendar@freevenice.org by the 25th of the month. (If you can afford an advertisement, please take one out - \$25)

Location Guide

- Abbot Kinney Public Library, 501 S. Venice Blvd, 821-1769
- Beyond Baroque, 681 Venice Blvd. 822-3006
- Electric Lodge, 1416 Electric Ave, 306-1854, max10@electriclodge.org
- Hal's Bar and Grill, 1349 Abbot Kinney Blvd., 396-3105 - www.halsbarandgrill.com
- Pacific Resident Theatre, 703 Venice Blvd. 822-8392 - www.pacificresidenttheatre.com
- SPARC - Social and Public Art Resource Center, 685 Venice Blvd. 822-9560 x 15.
- Sponto Gallery, 7 Dudley Ave, 399-2078
- The Gathering, 132 Brooks Ave. 310-396-8205 - www.udcworld.org/thegathering
- United Methodist Church and Auditorium, 2210 Lincoln Blvd. (at Victoria).
- Westminster Elementary School, 1010 Abbot Kinney Blvd. (enter auditorium from San Juan Ave.) 606-2015



Earth Day LA and The Venice Chamber of Commerce
present

Venice Eco-Fest 2008

Saturday, June 28th



**Performers and Presenters
on the Solar Sound Stage!**

Eco Booths & Displays

Art Exhibits

Kids & Family Zone!

Vegetarian Delights

**Recycling Center
for Electronic Waste!**

**The Venice Beach Music and Arts Eco-Festival
10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Free for everyone!**

**at Windward Avenue between Pacific & Speedway
across the Boardwalk into the Venice Beach Recreation Area**

*** Fun & Education for our Sustainable Future! ***
Ride a bike, walk, Take public transportation, go carbon neutral!

For Booth and or general info, go to www.EarthDayLA.org
or call 888-295-8372 or 310-310-3177.
Volunteers are needed, call 866-220-2370

