

7th Annual Women of Venice Edition

INSIDE:

- Letters - 2
- Permit Parking - 3
- Lucy Parsons,
Holiday Venice - 4
- Assata Shakur, City Election - 5
- Month in photos - 6
- Farmer's Market - 7
- Witch-hunting,
Int'l Women's Day - 8
- Poetry - 9
- Cityhood,
Open letter - 10
- Calendar - 12



Venice Couple Lives Happily Ever After -Thanks to Fawn Walenski

VENICE WOMAN TOSSING TERRA COTTA PLANTER, HITS GUNMAN

By Philomene Long

Fawn Walenski's aim is as true as her love.
—Evening Outlook

"Mind my bullet wound."
I've just finished hugging Fawn Walenski
because I love her
It is the first time I have ever heard those
words—
"Mind my bullet wound."
Before she would explain she needed one more
word
To complete her acrostic puzzle
"What is a four-letter word for Zen paradox?"
she asked
"Koan," I answered
Now, this is her story as I understand it:

At the door of their basement apartment in
Thornton Tower
The gunman hollers
"GIMME ALL YOU GOT! I AX YOU GIMME
ALL YOU GOT!"
Jonathon Thays replies
"I've got a dollar."
In the narrow basement hall
Gray white walls, one bald light bulb
Fawn watches from the door—
Jonathon, his cold cheek against the cold cement
floor
His eyes become blank as the beginning of time
The only color, the blue of Fawn's t-shirt
With REO SPEED WAGON written in bold print
"Go inside," Jonathon tells Fawn, thinking only
of her
The barrel of the gun now at his head, execution
style

Fawn goes inside. She closes the door
The image of his face is before her
"Like a lamb led to the slaughter," she thinks
"Gentle innocence."

Then she sees a planter of terra cotta
The one she had been trying to give away to everyone
Even to me, the last time I saw her

She picks up the terra cotta planter
Feels the silky smooth cast of the pot
Knowing it could cut like a knife
She has never felt such peace
Not even when she cleaned the church until it crackled
"I can do this," she says. "I can do this."

She opens the door
She sees the gunman's foot against the small of
Jonathon's back
The finger tense around the trigger
Her fingers loose around the terra cotta
She has never felt a cast so smooth
Her balance is perfect
She has no fear
"I'm not going to let you hurt him," she says

The gunman turns, aims at Fawn's heart
Again, she says, "I'm not going to let you hurt him."
Her hair is the color of terra cotta
Through her throat a tawny river of lions flows.
The gunman's eyes are like startled mice
The terra cotta released becomes a stampede of red
hot horses
Becomes a thousand lilies on fire
A long thin wind of flame



Fawn Walenski and Jonathon Thays in their Thornton Towers apartment. Photo by Martha Brown-Andrade

Which follows her gaze, its blade, a ruby red
On her fingertips the light is solid
In her right eye she sees the graceful terra cotta
Hit the gunman's shoulder
In her left eye she sees the flash of his gun

The bullet which pierces her chest
Moves like a skipping stone through her flesh
As if unwilling to harm her
Avoids even the smallest of her bones
Darts past her heart, her lungs
Vaults out of her back to shatter
Only the plaster behind her

Later she will suspend an empty picture frame
Around the bullet hole in the wall
Receive the Carnegie Medal for Heroism
(That year only eight would receive it in America),
And with the award money buy exercise equipment
And she will give me a fragment (this time I will take it)
Of that clay planter which now happily sits
On my altar upon the Buddha's lap

But what happened to the gunman?
And what did he do with his dollar?
He picked the wrong immortal couple
The wrong terra cotta

This incident occurred in 1995. Fawn and Jonathon are still living in the same apartment.

CASUALTIES IN IRAQ

4,251 U.S. Dead

31,054 U.S. Wounded

Iraqi Dead: 1,311,696

Cost: \$600+ Billion Source: costofwar.com

AFGHANISTAN

660 U.S. Dead

Sources: justforeignpolicy.org • icasualties.org • antiwar.com

Celebrate International Women's Day with Beachhead Women Writers and Poets



at Beyond Baroque

7pm, Sunday, March 8 • 681 Venice Blvd. - \$10 donation

Including: Krista Schwimmer, Jessica Aden, Lynne Bronstein, Amy Dewhurst, Susan Hayden, Hillary Kaye, Peggy Lee Kennedy, Erica Snowlake, Suzanne Thompson, Suzy Williams, Emily Winters and Antonieta Villamil

The
collective staff of the
FREE VENICE
BEACHHEAD

BEACHHEAD COLLECTIVE:

Karl Abrams, Amy Dewhurst, Carol Fondiller, Don Geagan, Peggy Lee Kennedy, Mark Lipman, Lydia Poncé, Krista Schwimmer, Jim Smith, Erica Snowlake, Alice Stek. Intern: Jessica Aden

The FREE VENICE BEACHHEAD is published monthly by the Beachhead Collective as a vehicle for the people of Venice to communicate their ideas and opinions to the community at large.

The Beachhead encourages anyone to submit news stories, articles, letters, photos, poetry or graphics of interest to the Venice community. The staff reserves the right to make all decisions collectively on material published. There is no editor on the Beachhead. The printing is financed by ads, sustainers and donations. The articles, poetry and art work express the opinions of the individual contributors and are not necessarily the views of the Beachhead Collective.

To submit material, include your name and telephone number. Anonymous material will not be printed, but your name will be withheld on request. No payment is made for material used.

Mail: P.O. Box 2, Venice, CA 90294.
Web: www.freevenice.org
Email: Beachhead@freevenice.org

The Beachhead
is printed on
recycled
paper
with soy-
based ink.

**Beachhead Sustainers:**

Richard Abcarian • Karl Abrams
Eric Ahlberg • Linda Albertano
James Bambrick • Beyond Baroque
Jennifer Baum • C. V. Beck • Sheila Bernard
Big Daddy's & Sons
Chuck/Terry Bloomquist
David Brooks • Rex Butters
Steve Clare • Cosmo • Maureen Cotter
John Davis • Fred Dewey • Bob Dolman
Steve Effingham • Douglas Eisenstark
David Ewing • Lisa Ezell
Ed Ferrer • Peter R. Force
Della Franco • The Fruit Gallery
Nadine Gallegos • Don Geagan
Linda Levitz Goodman • Meredith Gordon
Joseph Gross • Pamela Gruber
Susan Hayden • Jeffrey Hirsch
Ted Hajjar • Arleen Handler
Dawn Hollier • Joel Isaccs
Maureen Jacobson • Hillary Kaye
John Kertisz • Mark A Kleiman
Joan Klotz • Ira Koslow • Donna Lacey
Larry Layne • Danise Lehrer • Janet Lent
Jay Levin • Michael Linder • Karl Lisovsky
Pegarty Long • Linda Lucks
Stash Maleski – ICU Art • Eric Mankin
Michael McGuffin • Debra J. Miller
Michael Millman • Susan Millmann
Tina Morehead • Sandy/David Moring
Anne Murphy • Carmen Navarro
Earl Newman • Barbara Palivos
Peter Pearce • Sherman J. Pearl
Lydia Poncé • Chicago Red
Karen Reeves • Nancy Raffaelli Richards
Gail Rogers • Cristina Rojas • Ron Rouda
James Schley • Krista Schwimmer
Linda Shusett • Jim Smith
John Stein • Alice Stek • Mike Suhd
Surfing Cowboys • Ted Tannenbaum
Carol Tantau • Swami X
Suzanne Thompson • Venice Grind
Venice Originals Skateboard Shop
Venice Peace & Freedom
Sabrina Venskus • Carol Wells
Simone White • Nancy Boyd Williamson
Emily Winters • Fabiola Wright

Annual Sustainer: \$100.
Individual Subscriptions: \$35/year
Institutional Subscriptions: \$50/year

Send to: Beachhead
PO Box 2, Venice, CA 90294

**I Say No to Permit Parking**

Dear Beachhead,

On purpose, at almost Midnight, I am listening to Scott Joplin's Rags..."Solace"...

On purpose, because it is what I used to listen to during long nights typing as a translator

(being a piano and accordion player, and absolutely hating the old noisy typewriters, I fantasized...).

That was back in the heady days of the late 70's, when I lived in the Chicago Mexican American neighborhood of Pilsen.

Now I live between our Venice, and, as tonight, in the Swiss mountain valleys of my childhood.

Snug as a bug in a rug in the studio I rent on the ground floor of a Swiss peasant home, facing the snowy fields for their cows in Summer, at the foot of pristine mountains crowned with grey rocks out of which I watched the yellow almost full moon rise into the dark clouds late last night...

So, what does any of this have to do with the Permit Parking debate in our Venice?

It has to do with why I have the point of view that I do.

And, as I see it, "Pilsen and Venice are Culturally, Politically, and Humanly, Soul Neighborhoods".

In Venice I rent, as was the case in Pilsen. I have no assigned parking...no Permit Parking!

Most of the time, I walk about 4 blocks home, across the beautiful canals, often finding some happy surfer parking right in front of my house, or at other times, some beachgoers, or late at night, who knows who...

Now, as I consider the possibility of buying a place in Venice, I started to think that this was not such a cool arrangement...I mean, what is this BS? I would be paying taxes and yet have no assigned parking?

And then there is the really uncool aspect of the late night vandals I have written about in these pages a while back. Hummm...maybe this Permit Parking starts to make sense....

And then, the experience and example of Pilsen hit me full force !!!

While I lived in Pilsen, we started hearing of nearby neighborhoods "suddenly" having a wave of drugs and firearms raids, and watched news reports of homes burning down and residents shivering outside...followed by urban renewal, and the creation of lovely new safe neighborhoods to replace the ever so old and dangerous ones.

At the time we called it "Urban Removal": where did all those original residents have to go?...

I moved from Pilsen, for reasons out of my control, much to my regret, as I really liked living there, and then heard that the "Urban Renewal/Removal" scenario was beginning in Pilsen.

I went back on purpose this last Spring, back to see the house we lived in on Leavitt, a half a block from the El which made the entire house shake every time an El passed !!! and it was all still there as when we lived there ! Holes in the sidewalk, potholes in the street, and all !

You see, Pilsen stood up !

Because Pilsen is not just holed side walks and pot holed streets.

Pilsen is a vibrant self respecting Mexican American community, with a notable Mexican American Cultural Center, and many related and independent cultural artistic centers blooming ! If one moves into Pilsen, you take it as it is, and that is why you move there !

If you want to change it, then maybe you should move elsewhere !

I feel that the same goes for our Venice.

Yes, there are multi-million dollar houses, and the Beach.

However, there are many miles of Beach along the Coastline of California, but only one Venice !

Like Pilsen, Venice has a rich History Culturally and Politically, a vibrant Cultural and Political Present. But also like Pilsen, it is not in its essence, a rich people's community.

Beach Front and Marina del Rey notwithstanding.

While Pilsen is a basically stable community, Venice has ever been an ultimate haven for social

Anti, anti-OPD

Dear Beachhead,

I live on a street that has an OPD. I'm certain that all the neighbors for our number of blocks that got this in the last couple of years are wildly in favor of them, frankly it has been a godsend. Prior to having our OPD, we had numerous serious problems with people living in vehicles on our street.

Since we have the OPD, there have been none. Yet the Venice Beachhead only seems to represent the voice of those in Venice who are opposed to OPD's.

Would you give voice in the Beachhead to those of us who not only are in favor of the OPD's but in favor of a democratic process for neighborhoods such as ours to be able to go through a legal process given to all legal residents in Los Angeles to achieve this?

Sincerely, Ty Allison

Beachhead responds: Au contraire, Ty Allison. Last month the Beachhead published Casey Bowen's views which were decidedly in favor of permit parking. Problem is, most proponents have not been interested in a debate, whether in print or in public.

outcasts, be they outcasts politically, socially, intellectually, artistically, financially...THAT has been Venice's Mother Lode.

The people who can afford to come into Venice and want to change it, can afford to go elsewhere, and not change a thing!

It will not even cost them more in the long run!

Because, by the time they would change/upgrade Venice, the tax basis and all the services would skyrocket, and they would suddenly wonder: what happened? as they found themselves paying as in any more expensive neighborhood, having destroyed "the charm" which attracted them to Venice.

"The charm"...the Mother Lode....blown away like Autumn Leaves...

At this time, it is only talk and plans of Permit Parking, but on the heels of the Oakwood "drug" raids last year !

It is yet another step in changing that very Character and Spirit of Venice that people all over the world come to experience....

Just like similar drug and weapons raids and fires were the prelude to Urban Renewal/Urban Removal in some Chicago neighborhoods whose longtime residents were blown away like Autumn leaves...

Pilsen was/is unique, and, as a community, it stood up !

Pilsen not only survived quietly, (the streets have not changed since I lived there in 1978, potholes and all !) it thrives Culturally and Humanly !

My Swiss Alps sense of neatness and order leaned heavily towards Permit Parking and keeping Venice clean and safe.

I would still like Venice to be clean and safe, but not at the expense of its Character and Soul !

So, I say no to Permit Parking.

-Cristina Rojas

The

BEACHHEAD

Needs You**• Become a Sustainer****• Become an Advertiser****• Become a Correspondent****• Become a Distributor**

Beachhead@freevenice.org

PO Box Two, Venice 90294

www.freevenice.org

Founded: Dec. 1, 1968

Coastal Commission, Neighborhood Council Wrestle With Permit Parking

Coastal Commission Agrees with OPD opponents - Will Hold Hearing in June

By Jim Smith

It only took the Coastal Commission a couple of minutes, Feb. 4, to derail the city's rush to implement parking permits in Venice. The 12-person Board sided with appeals of the OPDs (Overnight Parking Districts) by Peggy Lee Kennedy & Coastal Commission Executive Director, Peter Douglas et al, in determining that the permits constitute a substantial issue for coastal access. In all, 33 appeals were received by the Commission.

Because of this determination, a hearing will be held on the matter, during

the regularly scheduled Commission meeting on June 10-12. According to Charles Posner, the South Coast Manager, a location has not been selected. Possible venues include Marina del Rey, Long Beach and Orange County.

It was after 4pm before the Commission got to item 22, Venice permit parking, on its agenda. Most of us had been waiting since 9am at the Huntington Beach City Hall. Joining two van

loads and several cars of opponents were a handful of permit parking supporters and their high-priced lawyer, Sherman Stacey (who has appeared before the Commission more times than any other attorney).

Bill Rosendahl, our peripatetic city council person, tried to do his usual ploy of getting the meeting to rearrange its schedule so he can talk and leave. The Commission was having none of it, having hosted Mayors, Senators and Governors in the past. So Bill and his staff had to cool their heels until 4pm.

Also spending the day in Huntington Beach were LAPD Captain Joseph Hiltner, Officer Theresa Skinner and an unidentified detective. Presumably they were present to testify in favor of OPDs. This reporter wondered how they were able to spend the day waiting to testify on a policy decision, when their mission is law enforcement. However, a few days later, Chief Billy Bratton popped up on TV campaign for city political candidates. A definition of a police state is where a political police force secretly supervises the citizens' activities. Apparently in Venice and Los Angeles, it's not a police state since the supervision is done in the open.

At 4pm the Chair, Bonnie Neely moved to the Venice OPDs. Two of the Commissioners copped to having talked with Attorney Stacey, and one, vice-chair William Burke said he had been contacted by Rosendahl. Nevertheless, a motion to regard the OPDs as a substantial issue was passed without objection. Because there were no objections, no speakers were permitted to the regret of many of those who had spent the day in the arena. When the hearing is held, there will be speakers, but they will be limited to those who filed appeals and those who had filled out speaker cards at this meeting. But a big turnout of those who want unrestricted coastal access will certainly help.

NEW AND COOL
Get breaking news
in Venice
from the Beachhead.
Check our Twitter site:
www.twitter.com/VeniceBeachhead

Irregularities Charged in Venice Neighborhood Council Vote

By Peggy Lee Kennedy

If you didn't already know, the Venice Neighborhood Council (VNC) held an election Saturday, February 21 at the Venice Abbot Kinney library. The election and the ballot counts consisted of more irregularities ever seen before in Venice and maybe the world.

The VNC web site claims that the vote is now certified, but exactly when do the two people who conduct an election - unseal the ballot box at the polling place to start the vote count, then put ballots



Part of the crowd waiting to vote on permit parking.

in three smaller flimsy boxes, take these boxes full of ballots to their home, actually be the only two people who conduct the final ballot count the next day, and also be the same people who officially certify the election results?

The election stimulus (no federal money involved) for this Venice Neighborhood Council vote was an initiative petition, a provision of the VNC bylaws, submitted by Mark Lipman on December 16. The language of his initiative was meant to rescind the Neighborhood Council's support of Overnight Permit Parking Districts (OPDs) in Venice, but some people felt that it was hard to understand.

The Overnight Permit Parking District law or OPD law, LAMC 80.54, is a law put through City Council in 2005 by Councilperson Bill Rosendahl and it is being used to remove those living in vehicles

"Supporters of permit parking failed to achieve the 2/3rds majority that will be needed on each street in order to impose fees on residents."

from affluent areas, including Venice. The Venice Neighborhood Council, whose president, Mike Newhouse, is a real estate attorney and whose board is mostly white homeowners, support the OPDs.

Subsequent to Lipman's initiative petition, Mark Ryavec and Stewart Oscars, both well known for Venice Neighborhood Council involvement and for supporting criminalization of homeless people, submitted an equally confusing opposing initiative petition the following month stating that permit parking is a right.

Overnight permit parking is in neither the U.S. Constitution Bill of Rights nor the U.N. Declaration of Human Rights. Nonetheless, the Ryavec/Oscars initiative states that it is a right to have permit parking. What followed was a well-funded campaign based on fear, hate, and the pretense that permit parking is a public safety issue, an ideology which ensued up through the election day.

A group calling itself the Venice Stakeholders Association, which Mark Ryavec admits to be part of, paid almost \$4,000 for Argonaut newspaper ads in favor of overnight permit parking. First, a 3/4 page advertisement appeared on February 12, which "was filled with unproven allegations, inaccuracies,

-continued on page 10

Permit Parking Vote Targets Venice Homeless

By Michael Linder

"Best fledgling democracy this side of Baghdad" quipped a resident after his first voting encounter with the 5 year-old Venice Neighborhood Council. "We've got long lines, confusing ballots, screaming matches. Now, someone's taking the uncounted ballots home for the night. We've got everything but purple ink on our fingers."

No sectarian violence either as stakeholders turned out in record numbers Saturday, approving initiatives that would expel the motorized homeless from their 'hood. Voters refused to overturn an earlier neighborhood council endorsement of overnight permit parking districts.

Some Venetians said they were driven solely by parking frustrations and reluctant to impact the already hard-hit homeless. Still, the measures they approved would drive homeless vehicle-dwellers from Venice streets under threat of heavy fines — without offering parking alternatives. Voters also affirmed the rights of residents to set parking restrictions for individual blocks.

Voting Results - Initiative A

868 NO; 634 YES; 9 ABSTAIN

Text: To Fairly Represent Venice, the Venice Neighborhood Council (VNC) Must Rescind any VNC Board Approval of Overnight Parking Districts in Venice and Transmit a Letter Stating Such to the Los Angeles City Council Office, the Bureau of Engineering, the Department of Transportation, and the California Coastal Commission.

Initiative B

891 YES; 608 NO; 13 ABSTAIN

Text: Venice Stakeholders re-affirm that Venice residents have the same democratic right as other L.A. residents to establish, by 2/3rds petition signatures, OPDs for their blocks to preserve parking for residents and for night-time security, and call upon the VNC to communicate affirmation of this right to pertinent governmental bodies.

Lines of voters stretched for blocks on three sides of the Los Angeles Public Library's Venice branch for much of the afternoon, some waiting 90 minutes or longer to weigh in on the issue.

Council president Mike Newhouse defended the narrow three-hour voting window that began at 12:30 p.m. saying it created a low-impact day that encouraged volunteer participation. Volunteers we spoke with, however, said they were fully prepared to stay as long as necessary. Some said they had earlier urged the council to lengthen the voting. Critics dismissed the vote as flawed, failing to accommodate absentees and working Venetians.

Many voters said they were flummoxed by the wording of the initiatives. "Nearly half looked at the ballot and wanted to know what the referendums meant," said one volunteer. "The way the issues were written was really hard to figure. I had no choice but to tell voters that we were not permitted by law to explain anything. I'm not sure how many

-continued on page 10

Alan Goldberg
The Community Wizard
an Electrical, Plumbing Specialist

Pager-310 495 2531

Lucy Parsons – A Life Dedicated to Justice

By Caeli Thibeault

History has a way of forgetting to mention common people when great discoveries or revolutions are discussed. Only the elite tend to be mentioned, but history was forced to remember one woman who would not be ignored, one woman who fought with an intense passion for what she believed in, justice for the working class. Lucy Gonzalez Parsons was not only a member of the working class, she was a woman of African American, Native American, and Mexican ancestry. It was through her powerful speeches, radical pamphlets, and brave marches that she will forever be remembered as one of the most committed and dedicated women to her cause.

Not much is known of Lucy's younger years; she was a very private person. However, it is known that she spent time in Waco, Texas, with her husband, Albert Parsons, a white radical Republican. The circumstances surrounding their marriage have been questioned. It is said that they may not have been officially married. Still, they were ostracized by Texans because of their interracial marriage. Waco was the scene of intense racial brutality. Perhaps watching this kind of injustice lighted the spark of fire that eventually raged in Lucy.

Lucy and Albert moved to Chicago in 1873. They lived in a number of small, poor working-class apartments with their two children, Albert Jr. and Lulu. Albert worked as a printer and became actively involved in the Social Democratic Party of North America, the Knights of Labor, and the Workingmen's Party. The Chicago group of the Workingmen's Party met at the Parsons' home. It was here that Lucy became intimately involved with socialist politics and began the long and demanding road to justice for the working class. She became a writer for the Alarm, a radical workers' paper edited by her husband. The paper addressed such issues as the eight-hour work day and racial persecutions. Lucy also led a series of revolutionary marches, the most popular being the May 1st march in 1886, when the whole city of Chicago was shut down for a strike in support of the eight-hour work day. Lucy and Albert led the masses of peaceful singing demonstrators down Michigan Avenue. Three days later this peace was disrupted at Haymarket Square by a riot that ultimately resulted in the death of her husband. Lucy's whole world was turned upside down.

Lucy Parsons is probably best remembered for her involvement in the Haymarket tragedy. Her husband and with six others were hanged for starting the riot, and became affectionately known as the "Haymarket Martyrs" by supporters. They were blamed for the bomb that was thrown at the policemen on the scene. As Albert sat in prison waiting for his execution, Lucy was busy writing and selling pamphlets titled, "Was It a Fair Trial?" After looking at all the options, both Lucy and Albert agreed that he must die as a martyr, rather than sign any letters asking for mercy, as some of the other Haymarket Martyrs had done. Knowing this, Lucy still continued to maintain a good attitude and even joked with reporters: "If it is true, I know how [the bomb] got there. They were placed there by the jail officials, who would do anything to stem the tide of public opinion which is now in favor of commuting the sentences of the Anarchists. Why didn't they do a better job to make the conspiracy complete? They should have put a bomb in Lingg's cell, a fuse in Fischer's, dynamite in Parsons' and percussion caps in Engel's. That would have been a good job and would have made a complete conspiracy."

Lucy could still joke about the antics of the police on November 6, five days before the scheduled executions. On November 11, before a crowd of two hundred, Albert Parsons was silenced forever. But Albert's death did not stop Lucy. After an intense period of mourning, she was more determined than ever to fight for freedom for the working class.

Lucy spent most of her life after her husband's



Lucy Gonzalez Parsons

death fighting police over her First Amendment rights. She was known as being "more dangerous than a thousand rioters" by the Chicago police and for good reasons. She was a forceful and articulate radical speaker and writer who spoke and wrote with terrifying intensity when the occasion demanded it. Her speeches on anarchism, industrial unionism, and labor defense were dramatic and persuasive. The police knew the power of her lectures and were eager to break them up. Even thirty years after the Haymarket Riot, the chance to hear Lucy speak was treasured. On one rare occasion Lucy was allowed to speak to thousands of unemployed at Metropolitan Hall in Chicago. She began: "Now is my harvest time. I attempt no concealment of the fact that I, with other true hearted anarchists, will take advantage of your present condition to teach you the principles of the true faith. You are the sole producers; why should you not consume? . . . Your salvation lies in stirring you to desperate action. The present social system is rotten from top to bottom. You must see this and realize the time has come to destroy it."

Lucy loved being active in anything that had to do with the cause. She wrote, "Owing to a misunderstanding and the slow exit of the large audience, I missed being with the 'mob' of marchers. I have been kicking myself about this ever since." She became a familiar sight at workers' demonstrations and Chicago street corners selling her publication of The Life of Albert R. Parsons, Famous Speeches of the Chicago Martyrs, and other revolutionary and anarchist papers.

Among other things, Lucy, known as "Queen of the Hoboes", helped form the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), led the march on the new Chicago Board of Trade (known by some as the Board of Thieves), started two of her own radical papers, Freedom (1891) and The Liberator (1905), and continued to sell pamphlets and papers anywhere she could. And all this while she worked her fingers to the bone sewing to support her two children. With Albert gone, Lucy was now a single parent.

Lucy Parsons' struggles and accomplishments were evidence of the passion this woman had for justice and what she believed in. The dedication and commitment she had to the working class will not be forgotten. She was the one who gave them pride and encouraged them, the one who told them, "Shoulder to shoulder with one accord you should rise and take what is yours." Lucy Parsons was a firebrand who knew what it took to get a reaction. As she said in a 1937 issue of The One Big Union Monthly, "Oh, Misery, I have drunk thy cup of sorrow to its dregs, but I am still a rebel!"

Her dedication is to be admired and followed.



Threat to Holiday Venice Sparks Oakwood Vigil

More than 200 low-income families from the Holiday Venice Apartments held a march and rally in Oakwood, Feb. 19, to protest the loss of affordable housing in Venice.

The vigil was held on the first anniversary of "Operation Oakwood," when 300 LAPD and federal officers kicked down doors and terrorized seniors in an early morning para-military operation. The police claimed they were looking for gang members but found mostly elderly women, children and babies (see March 2008 Beachhead).

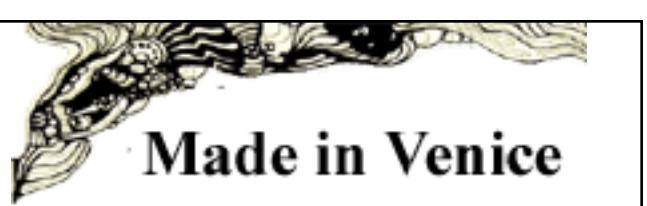
The 246 units at Holiday Venice represent the last multi-family project based Section 8 development within the coastal zone of California. "These buildings have always been for the working-class black and Latino families of Venice," said longtime Venice resident Pamela Anderson. The project was financed by the federal Dept. of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and built in the early 1970s to provide low-income housing to residents in need.

The project's for-profit owner, Gregory Perlman (GH Capital), has requested to prepay his HUD mortgages and lift the restrictions guaranteeing low-income affordability. HUD has given initial approval to the plan, despite the objections of Senators Barbara Boxer and Dianne Feinstein, Representatives Jane Harman and Maxine Waters, Councilperson Bill Rosendahl and L.A. Mayor Villaraigosa.

"We were expecting a policy shift at HUD after Obama took office, but we're not going to just sit around waiting for somebody to save us," said Holiday Venice Tenant Action Committee (HVTAC) President Kendra Moore. Tenant leaders have developed a plan to buy the project with the help of a non-profit developer.

"We want to keep the apartments affordable to low-income families forever" said HVTAC member Ollie Jones. If HUD allows the for-profit owner to prepay the mortgages, there will be no guarantee of long-term affordability and the tenants' leverage to buy the apartments will be severely compromised.

In 1996, the average price for a 2-bedroom apartment in the Oakwood area of Venice was \$550. Today, a two-bedroom apartment in Oakwood can rent for around \$2,700. Roughly 15 percent of Oakwood residents still live at or below the federal poverty line. The Holiday Venice Section 8 contracts allow tenants to pay 30% of their income towards rent with HUD offsetting the difference.


Made in Venice
HOTMALL1.com
Hecho en Venice

Interview with Rebel Woman Assata Shakur

By Margot Pepper

Assata Shakur, (godmother of Tupac Shakur) is a former convicted Black Panther who fled to Cuba in 1984. There is a million dollar bounty on her head. I met Assata in 1992, when I was working in Cuba as a journalist and translator along with my partner, aka "Guillermo." The following is an excerpt from *Through the Wall: A Year in Havana*, a memoir about the post-peak oil Special Period.

The sea, imminent. Even in the weeds growing in the driveway. A house by this sea. Modest. Simple. White Grecian walls, low ceilings, but airy. Guillermo and I marvel at the indoor jungle. Rubber tree, elephant ear, spotted Pothos and red and yellow coleus springing from flower boxes to claim the room.

"This used to be a carport," Assata explains, "with bars. I couldn't stand to look at them."

Building her own house Cuba's hands are clean. It will be a house for all, a beautiful and simple house, a house for bread and water, a house for air and for life, wrote the Mexican poet, Jaime Sabines.

It's satisfying to see Assata Shakur here in Cuba after what she's suffered. If only all the other U.S. prisoners of conscience like Mumia Abu Jamal could get the same justice.

She leads us to the living room. Guillermo takes a seat on the white couch, fumbles for his note pad. Assata smiles. It's difficult to believe this exquisitely beautiful, high-cheek-boned former Black Panther seated on a throne of white wicker, her crown of flowing braids woven with pooka shells; this calm woman with a college education and the dimpled laughter of a child, has been shot, tortured, forced to give birth in chains, then separated from her daughter, for merely sharing the same ideals as the eight-year-olds I teach. One would think she'd look positively haggard.

The United Nations Commission of Human Rights defines Assata Shakur as a U.S. political prisoner. According to the report, she belongs to a "class of victims of FBI misconduct through the COINTELPRO strategy... who as political activists have been selectively targeted for ... false arrests, fabrication of evidence...."

Assata became the most wanted woman in the States. Officers on T.V. news vowed to "shoot to kill on the spot."

New Jersey State troopers pulled her and two other Black Panthers over and fired into her back and under one of her two arms raised in surrender. She was arrested and chained to a hospital bed, where she was repeatedly hit and jabbed with shotgun butts. Once detectives began interrogating her, the torture was confined to things that left no traces, like Nazi slogans and burning substances applied to her eyes. A German nurse took pity and gave Assata a button to ring whenever tormentors appeared.

"One of the worst cases," the UN Commission of Human Rights report elaborated, "is that of Assata Shakur, who spent over twenty months in solitary confinement in two separate men's prisons subject to conditions totally unbefitting any prisoner." (The report was issued by seven jurists in response to a 1978 petition to The United Nations Commission of Human Rights by Lennox Hinds on behalf of the National Conference of Black Lawyers and other organizations)

When activists made known the abominable conditions of Assata's confinement, she was moved to a high security women's prison with Aryan Nation inmates who had an inclination toward setting the cells of minority women ablaze with alcohol.

One day, Assata's Grandmother traveled from North Carolina to tell Assata the strange dream she had. "You're coming home soon," she told her grandchild. "You're getting out of here." Not long after, miraculously, mysteriously, Assata was broken out. Perhaps she was aided by the same white dove that landed on Fidel Castro's shoulder just after the revolution triumphed, the one the Santeros say indi-

Another Election, March 3

Triumvirate set to take over Los Angeles

By Jim Smith

Three closely allied politicians may rule Los Angeles after the March 3 elections. The three amigos are Wendy Greuel, the favorite to win the Controller's race; Jack Weiss, the leading candidate for City Attorney, and Antonio Villaraigosa, who looks like a shoe-in for a second term as Mayor.

Is this good or bad for Venice, L.A. and the world? It's bad. These three close friends will be able to wield enormous power in the city. Just suppose that our Councilperson, Bill

Rosendahl, takes a position that the Mayor doesn't like. He can sic the Controller on him to audit his books, or turn the City Attorney lose to investigate his public/private connections.

Even worse, the LAPD Chief, William Bratton, is starring in commercials for the election of los tres. How peculiar that the head of the police is attempting to say who his civilian bosses will be. When did they stop enforcing laws and ordinances and start making them?



Art by Rip Cronk, on
Danny's Restaurant wall,
23 Windward Ave.

cates Fidel is protected. Assata followed this dove to Cuba primarily because she admired the revolution, as did so many people of color around the world. "Well I'm here," she laughed. "What you all gonna do about it?"

As I glance around Assata's simple, elegant white living room, I recall her words to a Global Exchange tour late last year. "One of the first things the Cubans did when my daughter Kakuya arrived in Cuba was suggest therapy for us both. Until then, I'd never stopped long enough to concentrate on

myself. I feel secure, probably for the first time. The Cubans have taken me in and cared for me the way no other society ever has."

"Moving here was difficult," Assata told the group "I had to adjust my expectations. I remember," she laughed, bringing to life dimples many have probably found irresistible, "when I first arrived, I expected to see everyone walking around in guerrilla uniforms. Like Fidel—"

"Now that you've lived here a while, how does the racism compare?" I ask leaning forward on the couch. Racism in Cuba has a unique twist. Because on the surface it appears as though everyone has equal opportunity to education and jobs, any shortcomings in the social standing of Afro-Cubans is sometimes misattributed to genetic inferiority.

Assata shakes her head vigorously. "At least in Cuba, racism's not institutionalized."

She has a melodic way of speaking, her intonations and cadence as compelling as her message.

"How do you feel about armed struggle?" Guillermo's got to know.

Armed struggle shouldn't be stressed over educating and politicizing the population. Guerrilla fighters can also become totalitarian leaders. Armed struggle is not the most important strategy, though it might be necessary, when all else fails.

She gets up suddenly, uneasily. "Would you like to eat something now?"

She leads us toward the back of the house, into a small, narrow dining room, green with plants. A seafood medley with squid, fish and vegetables is placed before us. It's the most sumptuous dinner we've eaten since our arrival. Royalties from Assata's autobiography sales and talks are good, but not enough to pay for this kind of meal often. Like a typical Cuban, she's offered us, near strangers, the best, perhaps the last, of what she has.

Suddenly, we're plunged into darkness. But the blackout's romantic, Assata says, lighting candles. She begins speaking to us as though to trusted

Free Venice Beachhead • March 2009 • 5

Of course, the election of the three would be very good for Villaraigosa, who has his eye on the Governor's office in Sacramento. Not only can he put the screws to office holders, city workers and lobbyists to get behind his campaign, but with Greuel and Weiss on the job, he will be able to keep his thumb on them even in far-away Sacramento.

Not since the First Triumvirate of Gaius Julius Caesar, Pompey the Great and Marcus Licinius Crassus got together to rule Rome in 60 BCE, have the spoils of a city been so available for legal looting.

What can you do about it? Go to the polls on March 3 and vote for anyone running against these three. It doesn't matter who you vote for as long as Greuel, Weiss and Villaraigosa are kept under 50 percent of the vote. That will force a runoff. If you're already fed up with the city government, then work for Venice Cityhood. Venetians could be counted on to make sure no one, two or three people gained so much power.

For more recommendations from the Beachhead, see last month's issue at:

- The March 3 Election – A real snoozer Go to: <http://tinyurl.com/ccjug3>
- Solar Power to the People? What's Wrong With Measure B Go to: <http://tinyurl.com/cs9rjt>

BONUS: Parking restrictions to be relaxed within one block of a polling place. No need to plug the meter.



Tupac's aunt, Assata Shakur

friends. No, the government didn't educate the population sufficiently. They used to have more open discussions in party cells. They used to precede films with the political and historical context, followed by discussion. There's not enough debate on TV. With rectification they pointed fingers here and there, but didn't point them at the Party. Rather, they covered their mistakes up. Nonetheless, mistakes are bound to happen. Non-tribal, industrial socialism's only been on the planet, what, 80 years? Cuba's a miracle, really, considering what it has achieved. Isolated revolutions are up against too much. We have to fight back at an international level. That's why talk of Latin American unity is music to the ears.

Guillermo is nodding emphatically. There's something about this visionary woman that renews people's joie de vivre and inspires thought-crimes.

Should humanity one day overcome the self-destructive aspects of our present global economic system and global warming, it may wonder how the majority of us consented to fork over most of the wealth on the planet created by our own labor to a handful of colorless men, when our basic needs weren't even being met. I like to think by then that terms like "colorless" and "of color" will reflect our cultural and class alliances, instead of skin color. "Colorless" could be used to describe those whose primary identification is with corporate culture; "of color" for identifying cultural or working class alliances. Thus it would be possible to have a person of color of European descent, like Howard Zinn or Noam Chomsky, and a colorless person of African descent, like Colin Powell.

But how do you stop our lemming's march toward self-annihilation? The effects of a corporate economy is like Frankenstein's monster, who is not only defecating on all of us "little people," it's defecating in its master's bed. "This is hell," the founder of Union Carbide admitted, referring to the damage the corporate monster they had created is wreaking on the entire planet, including the monster's creators.

"How do you reach people?" Come on Assata, we've broken through the blockade to hear your answer.

"It sounds corny but think globally, act locally," she says. "International strikes. But you can't talk at people with Marx and all that archaic, boring dry exclusive political rhetoric that is so devoid of humor," she says, pointing out that she's had to read plenty of Marx to write her book. "Talk to me in a way I can understand you."

Margot Pepper is a former Venice poet, now living in Oakland.



Photo on left by Calvin Moss, others by Jim Smith

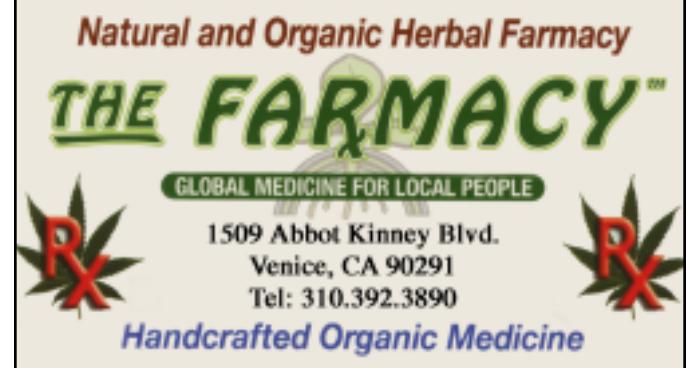
LAPD officers block entrance to Abbot Kinney Library polling place during vote on permit parking, Feb. 21.



Coastal Commission says, "Not so fast, L.A." They vote unanimously for a hearing to consider impact permit parking would have on coastal access.



Part of the crowd, Feb. 17, at the debate on the Solar Power initiative, Measure B. Opponents say it was put on the ballot without adequate vetting by the public and the neighborhood councils. Supporters say we need solar power now. The at-times heated debate was moderated by Councilperson Bill Rosendahl and included pro-Measure B panelists Brian D'Arcy, Business Manager of the electrical workers union, IBEW Local 18; David Freeman, former General Manager of the DWP; and James Provenzano, President, Clean Air Now. The opponents panel included Nick Patsaouras, former President of the DWP Commission; Ron Kaye, former Editor, LA Daily News; and DeDe Audet, President Emeritus, Venice Neighborhood Council. See last month's Beachhead - <http://tinyurl.com/cs9rjt> - for more information on Measure B.



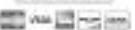
Who Reads The Beachhead?

Edizen Stowell, Venice Paparazzi

Be like Venice's hardest working photographer:

- Sustain: Become a Beachhead Sustainer. For \$100 a year, you can become a Beachhead Fat Cat. The free press you save may be your own.

Now you can donate on-line. Go to www.freevenice.org and click the [Donate](#) button and use your favorite credit card.



- Advertise: Promote your local business in the Beachhead. Our ad rates are the lowest in town, and reach the most Venetians per issue of any newspaper. Check our website for details.

- Subscribe: For just \$35 a year, you can receive the Beachhead in a plain brown wrapper in the privacy of your own home.

- Circulate: Distribute 100 Beachheads on your block. We'll deliver a bundle to your door.

- Report: Send us news of your neighborhood. Write a complete article or just tip us off about a newsworthy event.

- Recycle: After you've read the Beachhead in a coffeehouse, restaurant or bar, pass it on to someone else. You'll make friends and help build our community.

Please list me as a Free Venice Beachhead Sustainer! (mail to:
Beachhead, POB 2, Venice CA 90294)

Here's my check for: \$100 (one year); \$50 (6 months);
 \$8 monthly (electronic check)

Name:

Address:

Phone:

Email:



*Be on the look-out for camera-packing Edizen Stowell, and friends.
www.venicepaparazzi.com*

Diana Rodgers and the MV Farmer's Market

By Erica Snowlake

For this special Women's Day feature, I choose to honor one of my favorite Goddessess, Gaea, (pronounced Gee-uh), our beloved home planetary Being, who guides our harmonic destinies in her nurturing role as the Garden, and one of her eco-conscious, devoted mid-wives, Diana Rodgers of the Mar Vista Farmer's Market Association. This vibrant market takes place every Sunday from 8:30 am to 2 pm, at the corner of Venice Blvd. and Grandview.

I first met Diana in the summer of 2006 when we applied to run a booth for the raw, vegan, 100 per cent organic restaurant Leaf Cuisine. She set me up in a great spot next to Tom from Dramm and Echter's flower farm, Dick the french bakery chef, and Harry's Honey! It was a fun Sunday gig, albeit early! lively neighborhood yadayada amid groovy music, yummy, prepared exotic foods, and farm fresh produce. I enjoyed the supreme pleasure of opening coconuts for 'kids' of all-ages, admiring and catching Diana's enthusiasm, by witnessing her genuine heartfelt stewardship for the community's seed vision sprouting into the fruit-bearing tree of abundance the market is today.

Sunday, February 22. Wow! This market's happening! Hundreds of people are inter-relating, eating-on-the-go, carting bags with bouncy leaves sticking out, kids clutching pink daisies are whizzing by, dancing in their pajamas, amid folks exchanging green pleasantries, farmers, community activists, Oaxacan-Americans, I even spy Councilman Bill Rosendahl making the rounds, coaxing the sun out with his thousand-watt smile. Diana takes a moment to chat with the Beachhead on her busiest day of Co-Creation.

Beachhead: Tell us about yourself, green-eyed Lady!

Diana: My family goes back to Pennsylvania Quakers in 1640, my heritage is Brit. Isle mutt with some Swedish and French. Dad's an anthropologist, Mom's a Jungian analyst who was out there practicing yoga and buying bulk soy beans in the sixties. I'm a hybrid of Santa Monica and Philadelphia, and attended UCLA as a world arts and cultures major.

Beachhead: How'd you get involved with what I call the Real Market economy?

Diana: I managed the Main St. Sunday market for ten years from 1995-2005, moved to S.F. for a couple years, and when I returned a coalition of Mar Vista business and community leaders asked me to share my experience here. This markets into 2 1/2 years going strong with 45 - 55 booths, depending on the season.

Beachhead: So you like hosting what comes down to a feast, a festival, and a general party for thousands every weekend?

Diana: You can believe it! The farmers themselves say this is one of their most favorite markets in their busy schedules, which averages 5-6 markets a week. The community's involvement and feedback of appreciation keeps everyone going, a lot of open-mindedness and ingenuity, reflecting this eclectic neighborhood of helpful, interested, and super-positive people, 70 percent Oaxacan, with a Korean church, and a healthy smattering of Mar Vista and Venice hipsters. A very down-to-earth vibe, all in all. I particularly enjoy being part of the Flow.

Beachhead: Tell us some of the unique features of this market. In addition, of course, to Empanadas, Peruvian Hungry Inka, Cafe Laurent Omelettes, Larry's Grill, Kettle Korn, and Crepes Duisigne, to name a few of the multilingual blessings.

Diana: Our organization is non-profit and has been sustaining itself from the beginning. We recently opened a dog-sitting booth, (we both look over to see six pooches of varying pedigrees totally chilling out). I'm really proud of our weekly donations of produce to the Neighborhood Youth Association for

cooking classes and after-school snacks. We've expanded to three tented dining areas, we've got a central meeting space for the Mar Vista Council, an on-hand Green Committee, and an Arts Camp for kids run by SmartSpace.

Beachhead: Paul Herzog of the Green Committee came up with a cool three R's plan for water conservation, along with the sustainable trilogy of Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle, he's promoting Retain the water, Recharge the aquifer, and Replant with native species.

Diana: And they'll tell you just how to do it! We've also thrilled with our three live DJs on rotation, including the Imaginary Army, Mmumberonederful, and Ameet Mehta, currently spinning today's ambient tunes and world music beats.

Beachhead: We've been listening to an Air/Beatles remix, now we're bopping along to the latest David Byrne/Brian Eno collaboration. Ameet confided the Oaxacan grandmothers took a while to get used to the pulse of the urban electronica, before totally coming around to dig it!

Diana: Things really get hopping on our three fiesta dates each year - Cinco de Mayo, the anniversary of the Market on the first Sunday in August, and our Halloween celebration complete with the Super Heros Brass and Tin Marching Ensemble. A local Arts and Crafts Collective has specifically formed for the market, showcasing their wares the first Sunday of every month. Demetrios of the Venice Grind and Ian Votteri, both on our Board of Directors, have recently set up a wireless internet link which works inside the market. These fine gentlemen, along with Lorraine Wells, our resident firecracker and co-member of my green team, Allison Copeland, and Jonie Chitwood of Soaptopia, were instrumental in coming together as the initial visionary force of the market.

Beachhead: How do you describe the relevance of the market to the average citizens who buy their produce at Costco every week?

Diana: We've got seven booths certified organic, and the market itself is environmentally conscious. We're creating a central square in the tradition of the zocalo, the creation of a transient plaza as a new millennial version of place-making, by and for the community, forming direct links with the land and its caretakers. You can turn off the t.v., come here, and feel it's not all so bad, food for the future is being grown, children, joy, and comfort abound.

Beachhead: What a diversity of vendors! Today we sampled goat's cheese and olives freshly arrived from Greece generously and graciously offered by Alexis of Ari's Foods, and a delectable kale salad

from Urban Green. Red heirloom beefsteak tomatoes are fantastic drizzled with olive oil, on toasted organic whole wheat bread by, say, La Boulangerie.

Diana: Our farm produce ranges from San Diego to Riverside, Camarillo to Fresno. We feature Laotian and Chinese farmers. I'd like to send kudos out to Councilman Bill Rosendahl, he's been a big champion of this market, and of course the Mar Vista Community Council. It's definitely a team effort and always will be.

Beachhead: What other visions do you foresee

Free Venice Beachhead • March 2009 • 7



yourself manifesting?

Diana: (laughing) I'm open to the emergent nature of possibilities. The market may one day host a Trading Post of local garden produce sanctioned by the Ag Commission. I also manage the Westchester Farmers Market on Wednesdays from 8:30 - 1pm in the park on Lincoln across Otis College. My own backyard garden produces apples, peaches, apricots, plums, artichokes, and grapes. I'm developing a new interest by building a passive solar home and farm in Northern Cal.

Beachhead: Well the nature of Creation Goddesses is to pollinate the Cosmos, ye olde 'be fruitful and multiply.' You are called to compassionate service for a global dawning of hope, people more than ever seek to trust and realize the abundance inherent in our birthright on this 16.4 billion-year young Eden of Divinity. Who's your Mama? after all! As any heavenly Gaean being knows, the benefits of a green thumb, clean air and water, and growing up in a peaceful and loving community are the real riches in Life. Thank-you Diana and ongoing congratulations to all!

Diana: Namaste!

All Together Now: Parsley, sage, rosemary, and thyme!



Book Review**The Enemy Within. 2,000 Years of Witch-Hunting in the Western World, by John Demos**

Reviewed by krista schwimmer

The cover of this book, along with the title, is enough to grab the attention of any curious reader. Glossy, embossed black hands circle and point index fingers directly at the title itself. All of this is set against a fire engine red background.

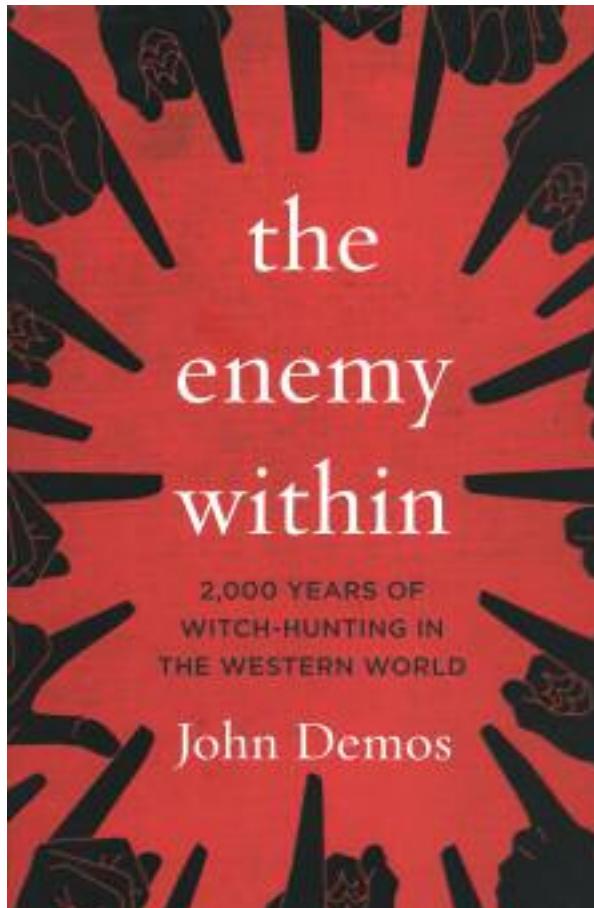
I also was drawn in by the expanse the book covers: 2000 years. Reading the back flap about the author, John Demos, I discovered he is a Samuel Knight Professor of History at Yale University and has written other historical articles and books on witchcraft in New England.

The book is divided into four main parts, working chronically from early "witch-hunting" all the way into the 20th century. Interestingly, he begins with the story of the martyrs of Lyons, in A.D. 177. How the early Christians were demonized, he shows, have parallels with the later demonizing of so called witches.

Part two of the book focuses on early America and witch-hunts; part three, on the infamous Salem period, and part four, on modern American witch-hunts such as the red scare. He ends the sweep of his examination with the Fells Acres Day School scandal.

The book is interlaced with a broad look at the witch-hunts and very specific, often poignant historical stories, such as that of Rebecca Nurse. For me, this has both an effect of educating me about the historical reality, as well as deepening my empathy for the victims. He also seeks to show how the word witch-hunt came about, and how in today's world it means more than the hunting of witches. He suggests, in his introduction that "the key link between literal and figurative witch-hunts is the search for enemies within."

I was also fascinated by the various theories he examines on the cause of the American witch-hunts, as well as a look at the kinds of people most likely to be accused of witchcraft. Although the reasons vary from "divine retribution" to an "acid trip" to "the coming of capitalism," just who was accused does not. John Demos states: "The bare facts are thunder-



ously clear. The vast majority of accused witches were female; the Europe-wide proportion was approximately 80 percent."

Included in his book are also penetrating looks at some of the infamous perpetrators of the witch-hunt movement: men such as Heinrich Kramer, author of the infamous "Malleus Maleficarum" or "The Hammer of Witchcraft," and the Reverend Cotton Mather. It is Kramer's book that becomes a medieval best seller and manual for prosecuting witches. In this manual, Demos says "child-murder and sex are recurrent preoccupations."

What John Demos finds "most striking," however, "is something else again: the flat-out, unblinking misogyny in which the entire work is drenched." (Honestly, folks, if you have never even looked at Malleus, you must! What a woman could do to a man's penis and where she would keep them - incredulous!)

The portrayal of Mather is a bit more complex with Demos showing his early life full of promise. At a young age, Cotton Mather mastered seven different

languages; at 15, he graduated from Harvard. Still, Demos does not let him off the hook, showing his great responsibility in igniting the fuel for the Salem trials and executions.

All and all, I highly recommend this insightful, well-written, historical examination of one of the great nightmares in women's history. Although I initially bought this book because of my interest in understanding the witch-hunts, I realize it has some relevance today at both a global and a local level. For instance, one can see parallels between today's terror against Muslims and the terror ignited by religious zealots such as the Reverend Cotton Mather of Salem. On a more local Venice level, with the escalation of the RV parking problems and the demonizing of some of the poor, this book may help us all reflect on the hidden enemy within before we regret, like Salem community did itself, persecuting those who are not the true threat to our community at all.

Swami X Speaks**Film Review: The Curious Case of Benjamin Buttons & Other Musings**

Movies might be Disneyland's main line addiction. Of all the senses, the eye is the most challenging to control. The eye is connected to the brain, and the brain has a lot to do with everything. *The Curious Case of Benjamin Buttons* is long, thoughtful & emotionally provoking and original. I was moved, impressed and transported. As you may know, time is an illusion, especially if you've done your share of acid. It's all NOW, embracing past, present, future. We are essentially consciousness, which pervades and transcends time, space, causality and the I.R.S., not to go abstract on you; that's just the way it is.

I think this film may cause a segment of society to open their minds to contemplating time in a new light. Christ, I hope so. Of course, I don't know which segment of society will get the hit. You never know!

I also think it might be a good idea to lower the price of movie tickets, popcorn and bordello services. Just a thought! I don't eat a lot of popcorn. I do love movies, however.

I believe it takes a lot of talent, dedication and sacrifice to become a movie star. I love and respect the whole gang of them. The outstanding great ones have my reverence for all the pleasure, excitement, insight and inspiration they've granted us through the years. I could name names, but who in the hell am I. They know who they are, and you might too. When you stop to really contemplate life, you may realize the whole experience may be likened unto a movie. You are the director, you play all the roles and you are also the audience, much like a dream. How do you manage to do that?

However, keep it up.
It's all good and all the best,
—Swami X

Douglas Eisenstark L.Ac.

Acupuncture and Herbs
supervisor at local acupuncture schools
private office in WLA at The Garden
2001 S. Barrington just north of Olympic

some evening hours
Santamonicaacupuncture.com
310-403-7018



reasonable rates - most conditions treated
specialty in Chronic Hep C

International Women's Day

thus International Women's Day was the result.

1911

Following a decision agreed at Copenhagen in 1911, International Women's Day (IWD) was honored the first time in Austria, Denmark, Germany and Switzerland on March 19. More than one million women and men attended IWD rallies campaigning for women's rights to work, vote, be trained, to hold public office and end discrimination. 1911 also saw the famous 'Bread and Roses' campaign.

1913-1914

On the eve of World War I campaigning for peace, Russian women observed their first International Women's Day on the last Sunday in February 1913. In 1913 following discussions, International Women's Day was transferred to March 8 and this day has remained the global date for International Women's Day ever since. In 1914 women across Europe held rallies to campaign against the war and to express women's solidarity.

1917

On the last Sunday of February, Russian women began a strike for "bread and peace" in response to the death over 2 million Russian soldiers in World War I. Opposed by political leaders the women continued to strike until four days later the Czar was

forced to abdicate and the provisional Government granted women the right to vote.

1918 - 1999

Since its birth in the socialist movement, International Women's Day has grown to become a global day of recognition and celebration worldwide. For many years the United Nations has held an annual IWD conference to coordinate international efforts for women's rights and participation in social, political and economic processes. Women's organizations and governments around the world have also observed IWD annually on 8 March by holding large-scale events that honor women's advancement and while diligently reminding of the continued vigilance and action required to ensure that women's equality is gained and maintained in all aspects of life.

2009 and beyond

IWD is now an official holiday in many countries around the world. The tradition sees men honoring their mothers, wives, girlfriends, colleagues, etc. with flowers and small gifts. In some countries IWD has the equivalent status of Mother's Day where children give small presents to their mothers and grandmothers.

The new millennium has witnessed a significant change and attitudinal shift in both women's and

-continued on next page

International Women's Day has been observed since in the early 1900s, a time of great expansion and turbulence in the industrialized world that saw booming population growth and the rise of radical ideologies.

1908

Great unrest and critical debate was occurring amongst women. Women's oppression and inequality spurred women to become more vocal and active in campaigning for change. Then in 1908, 15,000 women marched through New York City demanding shorter hours, better pay and voting rights.

1909

In accordance with a declaration by the Socialist Party of America, the first National Woman's Day (NWD) was observed across the United States on the 28th of February.

1910

In 1910, a second International Conference of Working Women was held in Copenhagen. A woman named Clara Zetkin, a leader of the Social Democratic Party in Germany, proposed that every year in every country there should be a celebration on the same day to press for their demands. The conference of over 100 women from 17 countries greeted Zetkin's suggestion with unanimous approval and

The Women of Venice

By Jim Smith

Venice is a feminine town.
Here, we take time to talk and walk
and admire the beauty that surrounds us.

Women of Venice paint the murals.
Women of Venice help the homeless.
Women of Venice stand up to free Venice.

Venice is a matriarchy.
It is The Lady, not The Man,
who inspires our poets.

Women of Venice sing our songs.
Women of Venice help women in need.
Women of Venice sustain the Beachhead.

And it is the women who hear
Mother Earth telling us
to balance our city with nature.

Women of Venice run our stores.
Women of Venice run our homes.
Women of Venice watch over our canals.

We live by the womb of the world.
From the sea we love came all life,
and the female spirit of Venice.

But Los Angeles, built for the Queen of the Angels,
was stolen by men whose greed
and craving for land knew no bounds.

Now, L.A. treats Venice
like the victim in a bad marriage
battered by developers and gentrifiers.

Someday, O someday,
Venice will be serene and at peace
when we men learn to act more like women.

In The City

Wrapped in a coat of concrete and steel,
Glistening oasis on the green expanse.

Invasive the night with chemical lights,
Flickering technological gems,
A glaring evening dress.

An island with windows for eyes,
Gazing at freedom from within impersonal monoliths.

Trapped in the urban prison,
Hidden in tiny speeding cars,
Faceless people lost in the endless maze of cement
and asphalt.

Entranced by an old dress,
Manufactured by the Industrial Age.

Being,
Living,
In the city.

—Lynette

International Women's Day—continued

society's thoughts about women's equality and emancipation. Many from a younger generation feel that all the battles have been won for women while many feminists from the 1970s know only too well the longevity and ingrained complexity of patriarchy. The unfortunate fact is that women are still not paid equally to that of their male counterparts, women still are not present in equal numbers in business or politics, and globally women's education, health and the violence against them is much worse than that of men. And the majority of worldwide religions are still based on patriarchal Gods, provoking their followers to go into senseless wars to defend them.

Today
Annually on March 8th, thousands of events are held throughout the world to inspire women and celebrate achievements. The United States designates the month of March as 'Women's History Month'. So make a difference, think globally and act locally !! Make everyday International Women's Day. Honor the women in your Life.

Four Daughters

By Lynne Bronstein

What says
The wise daughter?
I follow my heart
Into the sharing of the sacred star.
I do not ask
What are these rituals.
I know what they are.
I obey them.
I light the candles. I bake the unleavened cake.
I bless my family.
I offer my arm for the needy to rest upon.
I am my family's shield
And the shade under the tree where they may lie.
What says
The wicked daughter?
Hey why bother doing this every year!
This is old stuff from another century and another galaxy.
Stilted prose and silly songs.
I can be found at the local disco.
No hunting for coins under the sofa cushions for me
when I can find a better Afikomen
who will pay all my bills.
What says the simple one?
The one who hides in the corner
who rolls her big eyes
and makes the family feel shame.
What is this?
What does this mean?
How long does it go for?
I wish I were Moses.
I would like to drink
from the cup of Elijah.
I like the silly songs.
I'm the one only Kid.
I want the macaroons
and the sweet stuff
from the concrete mixer.
And what of the daughter
who wits not to ask?
She is the one
who has stood outside
wondering for too long
if she had a tale to tell
and what was her story within this tale.
For her you must take her by the hand
and say that for everyone
there is an Exodus
a Journey
and a promise.
Yes even for her.
For the saint the sinner and the simple one
will always do the things they must.
But she the daughter who never spoke

Wolf Woman

You will not capture me
ever again. You will not
trap me in your forest traps
while I prowl at night
or take away
my brilliant fangs and dark growl.
This is my night.
And these are my woods.
And there is no stopping me now.
Listen. Hear that howl.
I have sung my song of power
over the bones of a wolf
and set another laughing woman free.

—krista schwimmer



Free Venice Beachhead • March 2009 • 9

Green Shoes

Let me say to you that I know what you want.
You want a pair of green shoes.
Made of grass. Made of leaves.
With soles made of moss and strings made of roots.

Quick! That your legs want to be tree.
That your arms are already branches.
That a nest is knitted with the tip
of your nails and your fingers
are writing the flavor of honey.

Zapatos Verdes

Déjame decirte que sé lo quequieres.
Quieres unos zapatos verdes.
De pasto. De hojas.
Con suela de musgo y cordones de raíces.

Rápido! Que tus piernas quieren ser árbol.
Que tus brazos ya son ramas.
Que con la punta de tus uñas
se teje un nido y se escribe
por tus dedos el sabor de las mieles.

—Antonieta Villamil

20:29 Monday, February 16, 2009, at an unknown location in Venice.....Mysterious, the woman. An unknown, / unrecognized, unheard; descending stone / gives birth to ripples. Never learned her name. / Omnipresent. No two are quite the same, / but sisters, still. An oval miniature, / or electronic billboard, I concur. / Your mystery continues; dare I ask / your true identity? Remove your mask? / Perhaps enough to open wide the door / and let you pass. Or should your grace demur, / let you take leave to simply stake your claim / to your share of the gold, and all the fame / that goes with it. With that, now I am done, / and step aside, content to leave alone....to every woman, everywhere

—RF Wagner

Toe Dancing in the Snow

There is a story,
about this Chinese young woman,
who fought back against her feudal mistress,
refusing to be beaten,
and then fleeing up into the wild mountains.
The years passed,
her hair turned white,
and still she toe danced,
way up there,
beneath the swirling, falling, snow...
In time, the world she had rebelled against and then fled from, was no more,
and when she was found, she came down the mountain to a point a finger at her feudal masters.

In time, her new world was in turn no more,
and one of the very first things the new lords did,
was to proclaim loud and clear,
how idealist to think that a woman would have rebelled against her feudal masters!
There was a time,
when this story was written, acted and danced to wondrous music, and filmed.

Toe danced by women who in previous societies had their feet and spirit bound...
The woman responsible for this creation also rose,
and then was cast down.
How independent, rebel, women are characterized and treated,
has ever been a veritable litmus test as to the genuine politics of any person, group or society.
Tonight, as the snow continues to fall outside in my beloved mountains,
I send you this image of a rebel feudal woman,
toe dancing in the snow storm,
joyous and free !

—Cristina Rojas

Irregularities Charged in Venice Neighborhood Council Vote

–continued from page 3

and misleading statements." (An exact quote of the portion deleted from a letter to the Editor printed the following week.) And it contained hate speech against homeless people, according to local human rights activist Calvin Moss, such as "What is scarier than finding syringes, condoms and pornographic material in your yard, hoping it won't be your children finding it next time?"

This advertisement was written as if an open letter to Venice residents and signed by Georgann Abraham, co-chair of the [pro] OPD committee of the Venice Neighborhood Council.

Two more three-quarter page ads appeared in the February 19 paper; one stating that "Those who live in RVs and vans have proposed an initiative to deprive [the real Venice residents of] their right..." and also a reprint of the previous week's ad.

The Venice Stakeholders Association spread fear with flyers that went through Venice neighborhoods and which were also passed out in the election line! The flyers said permit parking is a safety issue and "LAPD says parking restrictions help keep burglars, muggers, and child predators out of our neighborhoods."

The election process, itself, was poorly planned. Only three hours were provided to vote? The person apparently running the election was unable to maintain any real decorum. People were given multiple ballots to vote with. The ballot box was opened and the ballots went home with someone prior to any vote count.

The complaints so far are:

The LAPD blocked the entrance to the election location by parking their vehicles in front of the entrance of the library and people thought they could go into the lot. No sign was put up telling people to pull around the police car to drop off disabled or seniors.

LAPD officers milled around the election entrance throughout most of the election. Some people felt intimidated by the police presence and did not go vote at all.

The line was so long that people who knew they could not physically stand in line for hours simply did not try to vote.

There was no absentee voting process.

Ivan Spiegel, the person running the election, was yelling at people and some left without voting.

A polling volunteer inside the election witnessed people voting multiple times (they were given more than one ballot.)

A person voting, who qualified as a Venice stakeholder under VNC bylaws, had his or her registration form marked as "Non-Resident" by a polling volunteer.

The place voters marked their ballots during the election, was a small table where groups of people were allowed to mark their ballots together, talk among themselves, and consult each other how to vote.

Someone honest reported being given 3 ballots inside the polling place.

A VNC board officer harassed someone talking to friends in line, accusing him or her of electioneering, while a man was passing out a bright purple pro-OPD flyer to most of the election line right in front of him.

A VNC walking man flyer stating the actual ballot initiatives should have been distributed to Venice addresses. Most people who voted were informed by flyers or emails distributed by the initiative proponents or advertisements.

The VNC election committee decided the votes would be counted on the same day as the election and the count took place in a meeting the following day that was not given sufficient public notice.

No one should have taken the ballots home, especially after unsealing the ballot box.

The vote count and certification is not legal by any standards.

At the polling place, a decision was made by Ivan Spiegel, election chairperson, to begin the count at the library – even though the actual voting ended around 5pm and the library closed at 6pm. (If you were in the line to vote by 3:30, you could still vote and that is how long it took to finish.) There were multiple witnesses in the room. An initial one-time

Permit Parking Vote Targets Venice Homeless

–continued from page 3

knew what they were voting for."

Then came a ballot shortage followed by an emergency Xerox run to print more. At 3:30 p.m., voters were no longer allowed to join the still blocks-long line. But as voting dragged on, prospects for a same-day tally looked doubtful. The council descended into apparent hysteria as it debated its options. President Mike Newhouse was nowhere to be found.

"They were screaming at each other!" said an eyewitness. "They were saying, 'Take the ballots home uncounted? You can't do that!' It got very angry. There were threats — people wanting to throw others out, people threatening to call the police. It was bad."

Ultimately, the council acquiesced to member Ivan Spiegel's suggestion that completed ballots spend the night in signed, sealed boxes at a council member's home. Blank ballots would be sent home with a second member. Sunday morning, three boxes each containing some 500 completed ballots arrived at council headquarters still wrapped in tape with signatures intact. Results were tallied, certified and released late Sunday afternoon.

So who will control parking on Venice's parking-poor streets? If these referendums stick, it's folks able to pay for permits for themselves, visitors and guests. Apart from the homeless, the issue has also pitted block against block, neighbor against neighbor, in a battle over preferential parking.

Those living on Venice's walk streets and Boardwalk are pissed at having been disqualified from any say on where they might find street parking. Permits along Pacific Avenue, for instance, will likely be sold to those whose residences front the street, not to those living on adjacent walk streets.

For City Councilman Bill Rosendahl, the sale of permits and visitor passes along with fines generated by the new parking rules mean a new source of revenue for City Hall, fees that "may soon go up" according to L.A.'s Department of Engineering which says the yearly tab will more than double:

- Resident Permit (3 max per dwelling)
\$34/each, per year
- Visitor Pass (2 max) \$67.50/each, per year
- One-use Guest Pass \$2.50/each

Bottom line: A residence with three permitted vehicles and two visitor passes buys 50 one-time guest permits over the course of 12 months. That's \$338 for on-street parking the year. Rosendahl, who has spent his first term monetizing virtually every available parking spot in Venice, successfully urged L.A.'s Bureau of Engineering to dismiss more than

count of the total ballots was made and a number of 1504 total ballots was announced.

Spiegel then decided that there was not enough time to count the vote around 5:45 pm. Most of the witnesses demanded that the votes be counted and people started to yell and fight. One person, who made some sense, suggested that the ballots be picked up by a Brinks document service. After a very crazy exchange of screaming and arguing back and forth, a decision was made by Spiegel to meet at the Extra Space Storage on Venice Blvd. at 11am the next morning and Elizabeth Wright, the other person on the VNC election committee and the person who was supposed to be working with Spiegel to manage the election, took the ballots home – flimsy boxes and all - in her minivan!

On Sunday, February 22, the Wright minivan pulled up to Extra Space Storage with the overnight ballot guests. The count took place in a small, extremely hot room with people who want to remove the poor people from Venice. Someone described it as Hell. There were three tables of two counters and one witness each. Two of tables had witnesses that participated fully in the tally process of the counts. They did not maintain their witness status at all.

100 appeals filed by Venice residents challenging OPD approval.

And the homeless? Rosendahl talks vaguely of parking zones in industrial and sparsely populated areas, though no such facilities exist now or are planned for the foreseeable future. Currently up for reelection, Rosendahl seems unlikely to side with homeless over homeowners on this emotional issue, especially residents claiming syringes, urine and feces are routinely dumped in their yards by the vehicular homeless. (None have yet offered proof of the alleged points and poo.)

In-vehicle living is illegal in L.A., though difficult to enforce effectively despite accounts of cops rousting the sleeping homeless. Overnight parking zones would require homeless RVs, vans and cars to leave Venice streets — by 2am each morning or face stiff fines — an anywhere-but-here solution.

Regardless of voters' individual motives, Saturday's vote was a wake-up call for a neighborhood council ill-prepared to handle large scale elections and community involvement. Some Venetians are calling for a new vote, though Saturday's balloting is largely symbolic.

The final decision will be made by the California Coastal Commission following hearings in Marina Del Rey in March. CCC has for decades rejected permit parking in Venice, fearful of limiting beach access by the general public. Inside observers feel that position is unlikely to change.

All of this has had me looking into L.A.'s past for historical perspective.

What do you suppose Ma Joad might think of the campaign to boot homeless car and RV-dwellers out of Los Angeles neighborhoods?

After all, the matriarch of John Steinbeck's 1939 novel *The Grapes of Wrath* knew a thing or two about hard times, and how foreclosure — then and now — can force a family into a life on the streets in a rolling, run-down wreck like the Joads' old Hudson truck.

Ma might say not much has changed in 70 years for folks struggling to find a home and steady job. In 1936, 136 LAPD officers were dispatched to sixteen locations along California's borders where they erected legally-questionable "bum blockades" and shooed away homeless dustbowl Okies — anywhere but here.

What's so different today? Chasing away the homeless is no longer a pricey law enforcement budget item. Now, the City of Los Angeles has figured out how to turn homeless-rousting into a municipal profit center. That's progress for ya.

After hours of unreasonable temperatures in the Extra Space Storage room and many confusing recounts of tallies, each table provided Spiegel with their tally sheets. Then most of the counters and the so-called witnesses left. Spiegel added up the tally sheets (by hand), but found out that they were more than 300 ballots shy of the 1504 count from the night before.

Spiegel and Wright then decided to count the votes themselves! They are the people who ran the election and then counted the votes, tallied the votes by hand (no calculator), found the more than 300 missing votes plus 6 more, and, finally, Spiegel announced that he certified the election. Wow! All in all a deeply flawed election

Despite all of the alleged cheating, the misconduct, the police blocking the entrance of the polling place, the fear campaign waged by homeless haters, confusing ballot initiatives, and the lines that no working or disabled person could possibly wait in – the vote in favor of the anti-homeless Overnight Parking Districts still only came out to a 57 percent lead. Considering that Rosendahl insists each block will require a 66 percent approval to get the permit parking put in, then OPDs lost.



From Venice to D.C. – An Open Letter to President Obama

Dear President Obama,

Congratulations on your new job. Now that you have been duly sworn in as president, which is the most powerful position on planet earth, I HOPE you can help some people living in poverty here in Venice, California. I believe that Venice could be used as the roadmap to a real humane solution to the homeless situation.

Unfortunately, our city government is hell bent on criminalizing poor people: sending them to jails or prisons, processing them through costly court procedures, and over bloating the law enforcement budget so it can be used for this non-solution to homelessness. It is much less expensive to actually house poor people and provide them with services. (see Policing Our Way Out of Homelessness? By Gary Blasi)

Recently the proponents of criminalizing and removing poor people from our Venice community have spread sensational mis-information on the local mainstream media, like people living in vehicles just appeared in Venice. Not true. Years of greedy property development (gentrification) led many Venetians onto the street and years of removing the nighttime street parking with street signs created limited locations for vehicle dwellers – resulting in photo opportunities for multiple campers in a small area.

Truth is Venice used to be predominantly low-income, it has always been eclectic with people living in vans or buses, and most long time residents have a deeper understanding of the vehicle dwelling situation. We want some real solutions for our neighbors in vehicles. Not housing people in shelters or jail, not using law enforcement as a weapon on the poor, and not treating people as if they are less than human so it is somehow OK moving them away

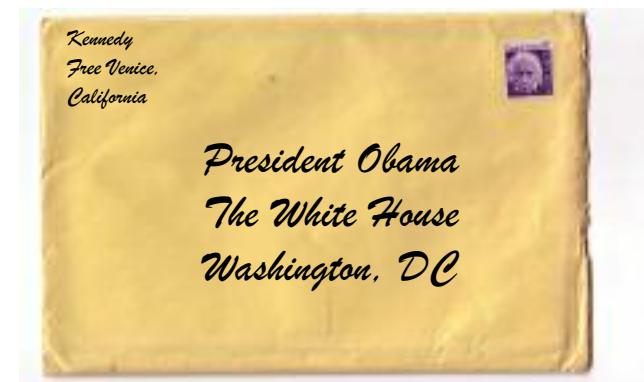
from the unique services that exist in this beach town – services only surpassed by Skid Row.

Another misleading piece of propaganda recently spread is that RV people are peeing and pooing all over Venice - hurting the "quality of life" of the people who have nice homes to pee in. Even though we are known for our homeless issues and are a very large tourist destination, Venice has few public toilets and they almost all are closed at night. In fact, bar patrons are the quintessential public peeing problem.

President Obama, more than half of the people living homeless in Los Angeles are African American – like you. People that qualify as homeless (using the federal definition) are disabled, they are veterans, war resisters, seniors, women and children, or simply people who cannot afford to pay rent, medical, or food - at no fault of their own. The majority of people living on the street do not want to. But their options are extremely limited. A car is far superior to a shelter cot most of the time. We only have a winter shelter system on the west side that will not allow you to bring your belongings or your pet and it is only open for part of the night. The shelter bus does not even have a wheel chair lift, but a considerable amount of our City's budget pays for a beat cop to ticket a disabled homeless person.

President Obama, you might think this is a systemic problem or that we are only one part of the homeless and poverty problem, but you can help. Our Mayor and City Council think that living in a vehicle problem can be solved using the city's Department of Transportation, Bureau of Engineering, Department of Recreation and Parks, and city workers installing street signs that really say "No Homeless" underneath the words "No Parking between 2am and 6am" or "Park Closed at Dusk."

President Obama



Making homelessness illegal is no solution and I HOPE you will take a stand on this issue. We need real solutions. Criminalizing people with unending amounts of tickets they can not afford to pay, putting up street signs to get rid of poor people living in cars, closing parks so people have to sleep on a cold sidewalk, calling on law enforcement to harass people, putting people in jail for so-called "quality of life" offenses, and moving people into internment zones certainly is not the answer. I am calling on your administration to stop giving any federal funds to this kind of activity and to investigate how to use these funds to get people in some decent affordable housing.

We are losing affordable housing at an alarming rate and no one is even tracking this beyond the subsidized projects lost. There is housing and land sitting vacant, enough to take a large dent right now out of our homeless numbers. We can easily put many homeless people in temporary trailers or alternative situations. People are dying on the street. It is an emergency.

The affluent few that rule our corrupt city government should not be allowed to remove or jail increasing numbers of poor people. This includes our Los Angeles City Council, whose members have salaries well over \$150,000 and who voted in favor of giving themselves a raise last go round. Our own City Councilman Bill Rosendahl claims to be a progressive liberal yet he has been pushing for permit parking in Venice, called OPDs (Overnight Parking Districts). This is a shameless effort to remove the poor people living here in vehicles, to privatize city streets next to the beach, and to get city revenue doing it. This big sham is only meant to protect the "quality of life" of the affluent who can afford to live by this now gentrified beach town. This OPD law and the other "Quality of Life" laws are helping to create hate for homeless people (see Hating The Homeless, www.SPLCenter.org). Homeless people are being murdered, some horribly beaten or shot. One was doused with gasoline and set on fire in Los Angeles recently. Something has to be done to stop this trend. We have to change course or it will only get worse – not better.

Obama, give us some HOPE. Please see if you can do something to stop the LAPD from calling Bruffy's Tow Company and taking these poor people's home on wheels. Stop federally funding any project by the City of Los Angeles that is connected to wasting our tax money ticketing, towing, jailing, and torturing homeless people. This money can go to solutions that are more cost effective, such as supportive housing!

Mr. President, many non-profit agencies working with poor and homeless people have done very close to nothing to help protect the civil and human rights of the homeless people being targeted with this horrible law enforced non-solution. Maybe they are afraid of losing their funding. President Obama, give them some courage and start funding some real solutions – with human rights – before it is too late.

Sincerely,

Peggy Lee Kennedy
Venice Justice Committee

**Tarot & Palmistry
Krista & Michael**

**Over 10 Years in Venice
Krista (310) 213-5663
Michael (310) 714-0423
www.mysticraven.net**



**Featured Readers at Bodhi Tree Books
Individual Readings - Events - Instruction**

Response to Annexation of Venice by Jeffrey Stanton Cityhood Then, Cityhood Now, Cityhood Forever!

By Jim Smith

Jeffrey Stanton's piece on the annexation of Venice that ran in the last two issues of the Beachhead (January and February, 2009) was a great contribution for anyone who is interested in the history of our fair city. As I understand it, Stanton is saying that annexation to Los Angeles was a big mistake, but there is nothing we can do about it. I couldn't agree more that it was a big mistake, but I disagree that there is nothing we can do about it.

Stanton says that an independent Venice would not be financially viable, is too contentious to accomplish anything, and anyway, is blocked from seceding by existing law.

1. Could a new city of Venice be financially viable. Yes. I believe Stanton has underestimated the revenue derived by cities from property tax. In its 2008-09 budget, the city of Los Angeles estimates it will derive 32 percent of its total revenue of \$4.48 billion from property tax. The city of Santa Monica, with a much smaller budget of \$14.5 million received 14 percent of its total revenue from property tax in 2005-06. Santa Monica has about twice the population of Venice.

In addition, Stanton is wrong to say that Venice has no industry. It has a growing high-tech sector of digital media and film-related companies. It may not be blue-collar factories, but it is industry, none the less, and could be a growing tax base for Venice, instead of L.A. I believe Stanton's view of tourism is too narrow. It's more than cheap sunglasses, t-shirts and tattoos.

Many more tourist dollars could be captured by the city operating parking lots, shuttle buses, jitneys; encouraging small hotels and bed and breakfast inns; and creating more sites of interest (how about rebuilding Abbot Kinney's pier?). There are already 39 cities in Los Angeles County that have a smaller population than Venice. If they are financially viable, why not Venice?

2. Can't we all just get along? Stanton says that if you go to a meeting of a hundred people, there will be 70 different opinions and nobody wants to compromise. True enough. And often, the city of L.A. will encourage this infighting as Arturo Piña, and others did in 2005 to bring down the then-progres-

sive neighborhood council. Even without the machinations of Los Angeles bureaucrats, we Venetians do get in a tussle from time to time (as we are currently over permit parking). But this is what happens everywhere that a group of people are denied effective control over their own affairs. We are no more contentious than the Palestinians, the Northern Irish, the Iraqis, or countless other examples of powerless people. Give us the power to decide on what's good for Venice and we will come together.

3. Stanton is correct that the current Local Area Formation Commission (LAFCO) law that requires that any seceding area win a vote in the entire city is a huge obstacle. This is what sunk the San Fernando Valley's independence election in which the Valley voted to secede but the rest of L.A. voted no.

There is, I believe, a simple solution for Venice to this dilemma. We need one of our state legislative representatives - either Assemblymember Ted Lieu or Senator Jenny Oropeza - to introduce a "buyer's remorse" amendment to LAFCO that would allow any former city to reconsider its vote for annexation, without involving the rest of the city. I would urge a delegation of Venetians visit Lieu and Oropeza and ask for their support. If they refuse, well, both seats are subject to election in 2010.

The bigger question that should be considered is whether the city of Los Angeles is viable. Through the years, the film industry has sold lots of movie tickets for films portraying the rampant corruption in the city and the LAPD.

It may be time to face facts that a city of more than four million people spread over 469 square miles is simply unable to democratically satisfy the needs of its residents. A city of Venice would have the advantage of having a city council, all of whose members live in our community.

Our mayor and city council members won't need a car and driver to get around the city. They can ride their personal bikes. We would have millions of dollars of revenue that can be spent to fix potholes, beautify the Circle, solve the parking problem, and cope with issues like homelessness in a positive and constructive manner.

How about it, Venetians? Venice must be free!

Community Events – day by day



Sunday, March 1

- 10am-12pm - **Lincoln Place Tenants Association (LPTA) Meeting** - All welcome to attend the monthly meeting held at Penmar Park.
- 5pm - **Open Reading** - Leo Briones, and Brenda Petrakos. Free. Beyond Baroque.

Tuesday, March 3

- 7am-8pm - **L.A. City Election** - Mayor, City Council, City Attorney up for grabs. See Page 5 for details.

Wednesday, March 4

- 4:30pm - **Townhouse Bar Hearing** will be held to decide whether this Windward Ave. institution can reopen its basement bar. Henry Medina West LA Parking Enforcement Facility 11214 Exposition Blvd, Second Floor, W.L.A.

Friday, March 6

- 6pm-9pm - **Opening Reception for Cold Feet** - Venice resident J.J. LiHeureux takes an intimate look at Antarctica, focusing on the Penguin, providing insight into their daily activities through her photos and observations. The G2 Gallery, 1503 Abbot Kinney Blvd. info@theg2gallery.com or 452-2842.
- 7pm - 11pm - **First Fridays** on Abbot Kinney Blvd - Come stroll down the late nights on Abbot Kinney Blvd. Drinks, snacks, entertainment and sales.
- 7:30pm- Readings by **Cal Bedient and David Lau** - Beyond Baroque.

Saturday, March 7

- 6:30pm-7:30pm - **Hart Pulse Dance Company Benefit Performance**, Silent auction, donation bar, free appetizers and desserts. The Electric Lodge, 1416 Electric Ave.
- 7:30pm - **Poetry Gets the Blues** presents Sherman Pearl and recent Poet Laureate Imani Tolliver. Music will be provided by renowned blues' guitarist, Bernie Pearl and Mike Barry bass.
- 7:30-10:30pm - **Planet Siqueiros Pena** presents : A Night of Soul and Jazz with Viva Vinson- Socially conscious world music, and spoken word. SPARC\$10 suggested donation.

Sunday, March 8

- 7pm - **International Women's Day! Celebrated by the Free Venice Beachhead women** writers and poets, in a reading held at Beyond Baroque, 681 Venice Blvd. Readers include Krista Schwimmer, Jessica Aden, Lynne Bronstein, Amy Dewhurst, Susan Hayden, Hillary Kaye, Peggy Lee Kennedy, Erica Snowlake, Suzanne Thompson, Suzy Williams, Emily Winters and Antonieta Villamil. Followed by Open Mic for women. \$10 donation for the Beachhead requested.

Tuesday, March 10

- 6-8pm - **Marshall McLuhan-Finnegan's Wake Reading Club** - 4533 Admiralty Way Marina Del Rey. Free. 306-7330 or visit venicewake.org

Thursday, March 12

- 7:30-10:30pm - **Suzy Williams** and Co. - The Songbird of Venice sings every 2nd Thursday at Danny's, 23 Windward Ave. www.dannysdeli.com

Friday, March 13

- 7pm - **Venice Town Council** - A democratic airing of Venice issues, without the BS. United Methodist Church Auditorium, 2210 Lincoln Blvd. (at Victoria). Vegetarian meal at 6:30pm for \$5.
- 8pm - **An Evening with Matthew Mars** and Friends - Beyond Baroque.

Saturday, March 14

- 1-3pm - **All About Penguins** - In a second installment artist J.J. LiHeureux will give a lecture on the five species of Penguins that live in the Antarctic region. Come with your questions and observations, and bring the kids. The G2 Gallery, 1503 Abbot Kinney Blvd.
- 7:30pm - Readings by **Amy Uyematsu and Gary Gach**. Beyond Baroque.

Sunday, March 15

- 7:30pm - **Savior Self** is a one man show/spoken word freak out about life, death, and everything in between. Written and directed by "More Again" (aka Morgan Lane Bennett). The Electric Lodge, \$10.
- 2-5:30pm - **Urban Haiku Workshop** -Beyond Baroque.

Tuesday, March 17

- 8pm - **MESS** (Media Ecology Soul Salon) - Canal Club, 2025 Pacific Ave. Free. 823-3878.

Wednesday, March 18

- 6:30pm - Author/Historian **Elyane Alexander** - Will discuss and sign her Postcard History Series book, Venice. Abbot Kinney Library.

Thursday, March 19

- 7:30pm - **Project Nightlight Benefit** - Musical event with Kathy Leonardo and Vinnie Caggiano. Danny's.

Ongoing Events

Poetry

Free Workshops and Open Readings at Beyond Baroque:

- 5 PM, sign-up 4:45. - 1st Sunday Free Open Readings, except Aug., Sept., Jan. Two-poem or three-minute max.
- 8pm - Monday Night Literary and Experimental Fiction - Bring copies of sections or short pieces. With Angie Kirk.
- 8 pm - Tuesday night Creative Non-Fiction - Bring works of creative non-fiction, memoir, and prose. With Tess Whitehurst.
- 8pm - Wednesday night poetry - A legendary gathering & the West Coast's longest running, free poetry workshop. With Frankie Drayus.
- 8pm - Thursday Alt. Screenplay - Documentary, narrative, art film scripts, actor readings. Independent projects only. With Peter Coogan.
- 1:30pm - Saturday Afternoon Poetry - Bring a poem & 10 copies. With Bob Foster.
- 11am - 4th Saturday Morning Prose & Poetry - Workshop for publication. Bring 10 copies. With Annette Robinson.
- 7:30pm - Every Wednesday Night - Poetry Open Mic night. Talking Stick Coffee Lounge. www.thetalkingstick.net

Spanish

- 1-4pm - Mondays - Burton Chace Park, Marina del Rey - 310-831-2325 - Semester: \$27 (\$7 Seniors).

Art

- 7pm - 9pm - **No Human Being is Illegal** - Center for the Study of Political Graphics - Thru March 7 - Selections from **No Human Being is Illegal: Posters on the Myths and Realities of the Immigrant Experience**. Korean Cultural Center, 5505 Wilshire Blvd. (323) 936-7141

Theater

- 8pm - Fridays and Saturdays / and Sundays at 2pm - March 14 through April 11 - **The Secret Garden**. Based on a beloved children's story by Frances Hodgson Burnett, tells the story of a young girl's journey to England and the discovery of a hidden garden. The Morgan-Wixson Theatre, 262 Pico Blvd. Santa Monica, CA. Tickets are \$23 for general admission / \$18 for seniors & students. Box Office at (310) 828-519 or visiting www.morgan-wixson.org
- 4pm-6pm - **Actors At Play: The 2nd Young Adult Theatre Program** - The program offers youth 12-18yrs.old, to be taught by professional teachers from The Pacific Resident Theatre. The program covers improvisation, theatre games, and scene study. Free to all Los Angeles youth 12-18yrs old. All skill levels welcomed! Program begins March 5, 2009 / Meet every Thursday for 8wks at Abbot Kinney Memorial Library, 501 S. Venice Blvd. April 26th the final performance will be held at the Pacific Resident Theatre 703 Venice Blvd. For more information email actorsatplay@yahoo.com or call Lucille at the library to sign up! (310) 821-1769.
- 4pm and 7pm - Saturday, March 21 & 28 / 4pm and 7pm - Sunday March 22 & 29 - **A Project of Community Partners**- presents **Does He Know-** A poetic one act performance piece for adults, that infuses puppetry, creating a story about damaged relationships and the search for our own path to love. Written and directed by Leslie K. Gray. The Electric Lodge, 1416 Electric Ave. Admission \$20. 823-0710.
- 7pm - Three Sunday Performances / March 8, 15, & 22 - **An Intimate Cabaret Starring Broadway's Carolyn Mignini** -Enjoy Broadway's Carolyn Mignini live in concert. Pacific Resident Theatre. Tickets at the box office or www.pacificresidenttheatre.com

Music

- 8pm - Live music and DJ's Sun-Fri - **The Brig**, 1515 Abbot Kinney Blvd. (310) 399-7537.
- 8pm - Live Music Every Night - Air Condition Supper Club, 625 Lincoln Blvd. Admission varies / Ages 21 and up. www.airconditionedbar.com
- 8pm - **Venice Bistro** - Live music Wednesday - Sunday night. Venice Bistro 323 Ocean Front Walk
- 8pm - 11pm Sunday & 9pm - 12am Monday - **Live Jazz** - Hal's Bar and Grill.
- 12pm - 2pm - Every Thursday- **Live Jazz & Blues**- Enjoy delicious Cajun lunch and music by Joe Banks and Friends. Uncle Darrow's, 2560 Lincoln Blvd.

Kids

- 7pm - Every Tuesday - **Pajama & Toddler Storytime** - Abbot Kinney Library.

Free Food

- 3 - 5pm - **Veggie Giveaway** - Every Friday. Vera Davis Center. Contact Iyonne Guzman 323-867-2705.
- 3 - 5pm - **Food Not Bombs**- Free food on Thursdays. United Methodist Church.

Location Guide

- Abbot Kinney Public Library, 501 S. Venice Blvd, 821-1769
- Beyond Baroque, 681 Venice Blvd. 822-3006
- Burton Chace Park, 13650 Mindanao Way, Marina del Rey. marinadelrey.lacounty.gov
- Electric Lodge, 1416 Electric Ave, 306-1854, max10@electriclodge.org
- The Good Hurt, 12249 Venice Blvd, www.good-hurt.com
- Hal's Bar and Grill, 1349 Abbot Kinney Blvd., 396-3105 - www.halsbarandgrill.com
- Oakwood Recreation Center, 757 California Avenue.
- Pacific Resident Theatre, 703 1/2 Venice Blvd. 822-8392 - www.pacificresidenttheatre.com
- SPARC - Social and Public Art Resource Center, 685 Venice Blvd. 822-9560 x15.
- Sponto Gallery, 7 Dudley Ave, 399-2078.
- Talking Stick Coffee Lounge, 1411c Lincoln Blvd. 450-6052 www.thetalkingstick.net
- United Methodist Church and Auditorium, 2210 Lincoln Blvd. (at Victoria).
- Unurban Coffee House, 3301 Pico Blvd Santa Monica.
- Vera Davis Center, 610 California Avenue.(310) 305-1865. Fax 305-0146.
- Westminster Elementary School, 1010 Abbot Kinney Blvd. (enter auditorium from Westminster Ave.) 606-2015

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



Beachhead T-shirts are back! Only \$18. Men and Women's styles. Send check to POB 2, Venice 90294