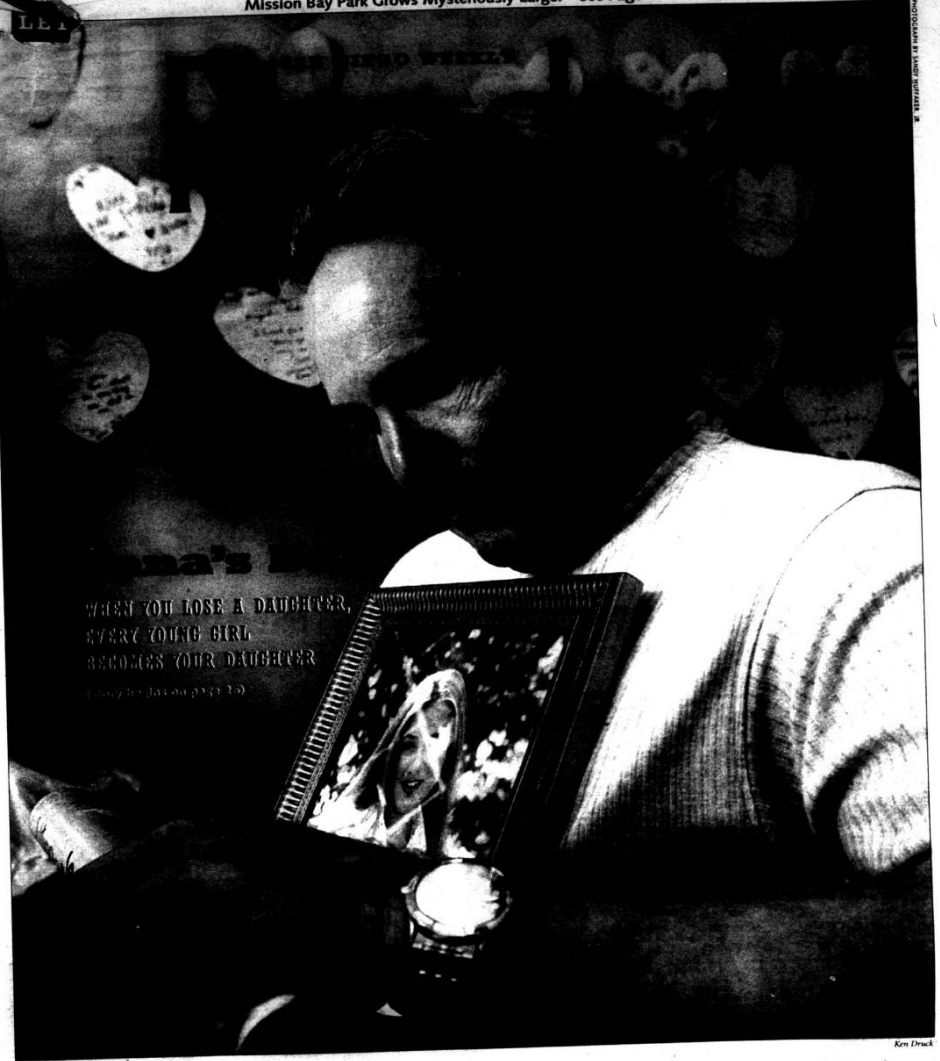


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LEA
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When you lose a daughter,
every young girl
becomes your daughter

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LETTERS

We welcome letters pertaining to the contents of the Reader. You may phone them in by calling 619-235-3000, ext. 460; address them to Letters to the Editor, Box 68803, San Diego, CA 92186-5803; e-mail them to letters@sandiegoreader.com; or fax them to 619-231-0489. Please include your name, address, and telephone number. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

Damn Thing

Thank you for your coverage of the local music scene. However, one column infuriates me every time. My gripe is the CD review in the "Blurt" section, and his name is Richard Meltzer. Mr. Meltzer is a good example of how even though you can be proficient in the English language, it doesn't mean you have a damn good thing to say. Every week Mr. Meltzer wastes a perfectly good review space to invoke folly and waste the reader's time. Not a damn thing in his column has told me anything about any of the albums he has ever reviewed. Refer back, let's say, to the article on *Tigers Temple* (September 28), a local hip-hop compilation. He spent the whole article drooling over a girl on the cover in a pubescent high school manner. What was that? Now Poydecar is another good example (January 4). Not a damn thing about the album except for one song title. What's the point?

See, San Diego artists need a good push from the local media, and Meltzer wastes space with these irrelevant ramblings. So Mr. Meltzer, we think you're whacked and you should stop, and Reader, you should find somebody more proficient in reviewing CDs. Maybe give Mr. Meltzer an article to write instead of something about CDs.

Common Touch

I always thoroughly enjoy Ed Bedford's down-to-earth reviews, but just had to let you know how much fun I had reading about his La Valencia experience ("Tin Fork," January 4). He's truly one of us common folk, and I guess that's why his column is so much fun!

Café Cumbrousome

I miss Max Nash! I never thought I'd miss Ed Widner, but I am starting to. So far, I have not enjoyed Naomi Wise's reviews. They are very cumbrousome.

In the last paragraph of her last article (January 4), she laments that there are only two Abyssinian restaurants in San Diego. On the very next page is a coupon for Grangit's, an Ethiopian café. Hmmm... Your prior restaurant reviewer,

Happy Hour

A belated welcome to San Diego to Naomi Wise. As ex-San Franciscans who have been extremely disappointed at what passes for restaurant criticism in San Diego, my wife and I appreciated her frank review of Prado (December 21). During Christmas week we stopped there for drinks, arriving at approximately 4:50 p.m. We were given a drink and appetizer menu in the bar. After we had ordered and been served, we were presented with another drink and appetizer menu, this one labeled "Happy Hour." It said happy hour was from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. The prices were about one-third of the first menu presented. Although I wouldn't have ordered anything different, my belief is that most people would have, based on the happy-hour price. While we were there, I noticed that the happy-hour menu was delivered to several other tables that had already been served, even though happy hour had already been in effect for almost an hour. Was this an oversight or is this the restaurant's policy? I inquired at the reception desk, and David Cohn claimed it was an oversight. If it was, it was an oversight that affected at least a third of the tables in the bar while I was there.

Michael T. Lynch
La Jolla

Naomi Wise responds: *Funny, the exact same thing happened to me when I arrived at the bar at precisely 5:00 p.m. And had I been given a choice, I'd have "taste-tested" the cheap happy-hour house margarita instead of a pricey custom-made number.*

Access Trouble

I am writing concerning the restaurant reviews in your publication and the lack of any comments about the reviewed location's handicapped accessibility. When Ms. Naomi Wise started writing her reviews, I wrote to welcome her to your publication and to compliment her on her excellent first article on the top ten chefs of the San Diego area. I also suggested that she might include some comment about how accessible the reviewed restaurant is and even offered to personally visit the site and make comments on the reviews. Each week I eagerly open my latest edition of the Reader and quickly turn to her review to see if this problem has been kept. I am sad to say that each week brings added disappointment.

There is nothing more frustrating than to read a good review and to rush out to the location only to find a set of stairs or a non-accessible toilet. This often means having to leave the area and go home. Your prior restaurant reviewer,

Reader

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

Golding handshake

While she was mayor last year, Susan Golding picked up more than a little spare change on the side. According to her leaving-office disclosure statement filed last month, Golding collected greater than \$10,000 from MP3.com, the Internet music outfit. Under "consideration for which income was received," Golding wrote "Signing Bonus Contract." Until recently, MP3.com was partially owned by Luce Communications, the Atlantic-based company that owns a cable television system here that receives its franchise from the city and has contributed heavily to the campaign of mayor and council candidates, including Golding. The outgoing mayor also said she got more than \$10,000 from the Surebeam Corporation in what she said were "promised stock options not yet exercised." Surebeam is a pending spin-off of Titan Corp., another Golding backer... The "Partnership for Student Achievement," that group of local fat cats — including Padres owner John Moores — who unsuccessfully attempted to oust school board member Frances Zimmerman in the fall election, have reported other members of their ranks. According to a post-election filing with the IRS, Manpower of San Diego, the temporary-help firm owned by Phil Blair and Mel Katz, loaned the campaign \$100,000. Other late contributors to the group's attack ads against Zimmerman included Peter Deane, a LUC regent (\$500), and Susan McNell, listed as executive director of San Diego Reads, a book-donation effort started by district superintendent Alan Bervin and financially backed by Union-Tribune owner Helen Capley. A Washington, D.C., foundation called Essential Information added \$50,000, bringing its total up to \$100,000. As of November 27, the Manpower loan was still unpaid, as were bills from political consultant Larry Remer's Primacy Group (\$2,500), the Santa Monica polling firm Fairbank, Madin, Noulis & Associates (\$15,000), the Chase Group (\$5,000), and Alexandria Virginia's Murphy Putnam Media (\$6,000). Through the most recent filing period, the partnership reported it spent a total of \$722,399 on its anti-Zimmerman effort.

Here we go again! The year is less than two weeks old and the campaign-fundraising machine at San Diego's city hall is already in high gear. Next month's special election to fill the Eighth District seat of **Juan Vargas** elected to the state assembly in November, attracting the most immediate attention. Leading the pack among fundraisers is former Vargas chief-of-staff **Ralph Inzunza**, who has been piloting up money for more than a year by working Democrat Vargas's tired and true list of lawyers, politicians, and corporate lobbyists. Campaign finance filings show that, just through last June, Inzunza picked up more than \$91,000 in \$250 increments from such donors as **Stan Foster**, wealthy downtown land-owner and father-in-law of San Diego Unified schools superintendent Alan Bervin. **Ed Lopez**, a San Diego Unified board member who also serves as a lobbyist for Car Communications, several members of downtown's high-powered Luce, Forward law firm, which has frequently litigated on behalf of the city council, and employees of Burris and Edos, the city's biggest trash haulers. Meanwhile, a sign on the fence of the City Walk condo construction site at State and G Streets downtown lists all eight members of the city council, including the name **Barbara Vucich** for the empty Eighth District seat.

School daze A new charter-school outfit headed by would-be San Diego school reformer **Eugene Raffin** is facing rough seas in Sacramento. According to an account in the Sacramento Bee, Raffin's organization, Good Schools for All, planned to open the Nehemiah Leadership Academy Charter School in the North Sacramento Elementary School District last month. But school officials blocked the move, saying that the group didn't provide the requisite criminal-background checks on employees and hadn't submitted complete financial information. "Trying to open the school would have been a clear breach," **Timothy Cary**, the school district's attorney, told the paper. Raffin also runs the School Futures Research foundation here, another charter-school operation funded and largely by billionaire Wal-Mart heir **John Walton** of National City.

Contributor: Matt Potter

The Reader offers \$25 for news tips published in this column. Call our voice mail at 619-235-3000, ext. 440, or fax your tip to 619-235-3096.



Something Fishy in Paranoia Bay

By Justin Wolff

Despite a recent scolding, the city, some watchdogs say, continues to disrespect Mission Bay Park and those citizens who care about it. On April 18, you might remember, a San Diego County grand jury released a 21-page report, *The Truth About 'False Bay'*, that detailed the city's mismanagement of the park's resources and finances. After a ten-month investigation, the grand jury faulted both the park and its supposed stewards. At the time, Barry Newman, the grand jury's deputy foreman, said, "Mission Bay, as neither being maintained nor protected against pollution." The report pointed to the high number of contamination notices in 1999, and in particular to one pointing at Campland on the Bay that was up for 33 days. The report also reprimanded the city for failing to live up to its own

mandates. The park master plan adopted by the city in 1994 called for \$71 million in improvements. Why, the report wondered, had only \$3 million been spent? Among the recommendations made by the grand jury were that the city designate a water quality coordinator, add a volunteer service to help patrol the bay for potential polluters, and develop a plan to improve water circulation. Most notably, the grand jury requested that the city stop development in Mission Bay Park until it conducted a survey to determine the exact acreage of the park. Such a survey was necessary because both a city charter approved by voters in 1987 and

five or other concerned citizens say the survey and the new parcels are more like a lumpy bit of coal in the public's stocking. First, the solicitation for survey bids predetermined that marshlands be counted toward the total amount of leaseable land. That definition of marshland, Frye explained before the city council, was based upon a 1988 memorandum by the city attorney rather than normal standards for surveying wetlands, which should include hydrology and soil studies. Equally troubling, as *Union-Tribune* columnist Don Bauder reported on November 10, was that four days after the city contracted Project Design Consultants, to conduct the survey. For \$426,000, the firm would determine once and for all how many acres were in the park. The survey, which was completed on October 5, counted some parcels that had always been in park boundaries but never designated as park land. On October 30, the city council voted unanimously to designate the new 26.84 acres as part of Mission Bay Park. City officials and some press reports have declared the absorption of these new parcels. Look, they say, the park is bigger than anyone knew.

But environmentalist Donna



Class Warfare in City Heights

By Suzy Hagstrom

Julie Vaughan remembers the first installation of portable buildings at Central Elementary School during the 1960s, when she was a pupil there. That those temporary classrooms eventually became permanent reminds Vaughan that the San Diego Unified School District has long neglected children at inner-city campuses.

To ease overcrowding, the district plans to build an elementary school within three blocks of Central, at 4063 Polk Avenue. The construction site most favored by the district would displace more people than other potential spots. "No one is disputing that we need schools," said Vaughan, who two years ago voted for Proposition MM, a \$1.51 billion bond issue to build 14 new schools and repair 154 existing schools by 2009. "But you need to consider people. It's human people. We're not cattle." Much of the ambitious program targets the gritty community where Vaughan lives, City Heights, northeast of downtown San Diego.

Under Proposition MM, the San Diego Unified School District will destroy more than 800 homes, including apartments. City Heights' annual median household income of \$23,394 compares with \$42,244 for the city of San Diego. Jay Hellerich, a homeowner in City Heights, is skeptical on hearing talk of using Proposition MM schools as tools to preserve owner-occupied homes and bulldoze run-down buildings and so-called blight. "People talk of trying to reduce density in the area. Translate



Julie Vaughan



John Stamp (center)



Kids leaving Morrow Clark Middle School



Jay Hellerich

that as: We want to get rid of the apartments and the people living in them," Hellerich said. "That smacks of class warfare to me!" City Heights is home to 5 percent of San Diego's population, yet it contains about 22 percent of the city's low-income housing, according to estimates gleaned from San Diego Housing Commission maps. San Diego City Schools' 1998-99 Long-Range Facilities Master Plan reports what is common knowledge to make ends meet: families double and triple up in City Heights' apartments and homes. Although the community has seven existing elementary schools, they are inadequate for the burgeoning population of children, the master plan states. "Several Mid-City elementary schools doubled or



Jay Powell



Michael Sprague

DISPLACEMENT IN CITY HEIGHTS

School Project	Number of Homes	Number of People
Central Area Elementary School	163	489
Euclyd Area Elementary School	211	633
52nd Street Area Elementary School	210	630
Edison/Hamilton/Parks Area Elementary School	145	435
Rosa Parks Elementary School (opened 1997)	117	351
Monroe Clark Middle School (opened 1997)	152	299

Other Projects in City Heights

Interstate 15	570	1,710
Police Station and Community College	26	78
City Park and Library	56	165
Widening Wightman Street	26	78
City Link Shopping Center	141	423
Trans West Offices and Town Homes	34	102
Regional Transportation Center	19	57

Schools Outside City Heights

Adams/Fairfax Area Elementary School	179	537
Brookline/Kimborough Area Elementary School	7	204
Kimborough Elementary School (opened 1997)	87	228

Sources: environmental impact reports, consultants, and San Diego's redevelopment agency

tripled in size during the late 1980s and early 1990s. Growth in the Mid-City area has continued."

Real estate agent David Nelson is among neighborhood volunteers who say the overcrowding of children in temporary classrooms and antiquated buildings is so bad they could easily win a discrimination lawsuit against the San Diego Unified School District. Pointing to John Marshall Elementary School at 3550 Alhambra Avenue as an example, Nelson said, "It's almost criminal the way they cram these kids in here." With an initial capacity of 600 pupils, Nelson said, disputing the district's estimate of 600, John Marshall now has an enrollment now total 997 at Euclid and 1161 at Central, but both schools have accommodated more.

School districts — unlike public redevelopment agencies, such as San Diego's Center City Development Corp. — are under no legal obligation to replace housing they eliminate. About five years ago, the San Diego Unified School District destroyed 269 homes and evicted 650 people to build two schools in City Heights. Financed by Proposition Q bonds, Rosa Parks Elementary School, at 4510 Landis Street, and Monroe Clark Middle School, at 4388 Thorn Street, represent the district's first experience with building in populated urban neighborhoods.

WITH POLK AT DISPOSITION

PHOTO BY MATT POTTER FOR CITY LIGHTS

Paranoia bay

feel that they're over the 25 percent now. We're so paranoid and skeptical and cynical that we simply do not trust the government to make these decisions for us anymore. It has never worked. The city council has a micro view of things, and if they see income, that's all they can look at. The park is disappearing.

Catherine adds, "We have graduated from suspicion to paranoia. God knows what they'll do. They could bring in downtown San Diego and call it Mission Bay Park and I wouldn't be surprised."

But what most appals Frye

and the Stroblins is that — in Al's words — the new parcels are "useless land." It would be one thing if the survey happened to give park users additional recreational land, like beaches or greenery. But besides some grass around the visitors' center at the north end of the park, the new parcels have no redeeming value. In short, the acres profit the city and not park users. Included, for instance, in the 26.84 acres are just over 4 acres in the middle of Sunset Cliffs Drive and almost half an acre in the middle of Friars Road north of the San Diego River Channel. Neither is a place for soccer.

And there's a half-acre parcel on the access road along the south bank of the channel, on which sits an ugly cinder-block

pump station. In her testimony, Frye stated that she did not understand the rush to dedicate portions of the roads and the pump station as park land. "It seems that this is nothing more than an attempt to increase the amount of land that can be leased for development," she said. "It is also unlikely that there is any demand or public interest for a picnic area at a pump station."

Jim Peugh, coastal and wetlands conservation chair for the San Diego Audubon Society, shares Frye's concerns. "Transportation corridors and high ways should be omitted from the countable acreage in the park," he says.

Even though the city council approved the incorporation of the parcels on October 30, city

officials refuse to admit that the amount of leasable land has increased. The day after the designation, a *Union-Tribune* article reported that former mayor Susan Golding added a provision urging that the acres not be used in calculations for park land development. The sentence is misleading because, in fact, all Golding said was that some of these matters should be discussed in a future meeting of the Natural Resources and Culture Committee. A city official, wishing to remain anonymous, said that that won't happen until the first quarter of next year at the earliest.

When asked about this, Rick Grenell, the mayor's former press secretary, chastised me, saying it was the first time in his tenure at the office that the

reader had ever called him. He refused comment and referred me to the city manager's office. Tim Rothman, an assistant to the city manager, says there's no reason for concern. He says that the city council instructed his office to use only the numbers from the master plan when calculating leases. His statement implies that the new parcels cannot inflate leasable acreage.

Will Griffith, the city's real estate assets director, says, "All we did was dedicate parcels that should have been dedicated a long time ago. We saw this as a housekeeping kind of thing. Without those parcels being dedicated they could have been built upon. The dedication protects the parcels." Griffith says that the 11.8-acre parcel near the visitors' center "could potentially

fit a hotel." Now, he says, it's safe from development. He adds that the parcels had long been considered park land and that all the survey did was incorporate them officially.

Golding's suggested provision, Griffith adds, was "part of the motion to dedicate the parcels and to direct questions about policy issues to committee for public input."

Despite the dizzying spin coming from city offices, it's not hard to set the record straight. The bottom line is that a provision is not binding; it's as feeble as any given council. The city charter, however, is law. And what the section of the city charter regarding Mission Bay Park says clearly is "notwithstanding any other provision of this Charter to the contrary," the to-

tal leasable land is 25 percent. No matter what provisions the city council wants to bandy about, today, under law, there are an additional 26.84 acres that can be counted toward the lease total.

"It's a done deal," Frye says. "I'm not waiting for it to be thrashed out later. The immediate effect of the dedication is that you now legally have acreage that can count toward leasing."

Some of the parcels in question are in Councilman Byron Wear's district. According to Wear, "The fact of the matter is that everyone knew when we went into the survey that it was going to come up with a number. The number is accurate. The number is the number. Everyone knew all along it could come up with additional acreage. And of course it should be dedicated park land."

It's just so happens," Wear says, "that the survey didn't turn out the way that some people hoped it would turn out. I think what you need to ask the people who are complaining is, 'Do you support the Mission Bay Master Plan?' Does Donna Frye support the plan? Does Al Stroblin support the plan? If not, then what's the point?"

Some argue the master plan might need a second look. Jim Peugh agrees with Frye that these new acres, though under policy discussion now, can become a problem later — especially when the city council could do whatever it wanted with the new parcels. But even more urgent than the political wrangling over the survey, Peugh says, are long-term philosophical questions regarding the park. "The population of San Diego is increasing," Peugh says, "and so then is the need for park land. But the city seems to care only about the needs of tourists in the park. The commercial use has to go down as the population goes up." Peugh ponders revisiting the master plan. "Maybe," he says, "the 25 percent needs to be brought back to 20 percent, or 15 percent."

City Heights
continued from page 5

rather than open vacant land in the suburbs, Rosa Parks was over capacity by several hundred children the day it opened in 1996.

Michael Sprague said a depressed real estate market in the 1990s softened the impact of dislocation. A higher vacancy factor — at times exceeding 8 percent, according to the San Diego County Apartment Association — enabled people to move elsewhere within City Heights. In some cases, relocation expenses and rent-differential checks offered by the school district gave renters a head start on home down payments, he said. At the same

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CITY LIGHTS CITY LIGHTS CITY LIGHTS CITY LIGHTS CITY LIGHTS

fordable housing, views the MM schools as an opportunity to implement thoughtful urban planning. Powell envisions converting Polk Avenue, which borders three existing schools and possibly a new school, into a greenway where kids could safely walk. Installing photovoltaic cells on roofs would enable campuses to generate some of their own electricity. Designing buildings to double as community centers would better integrate schools into neighborhoods. Such innovations, described by Powell in letters and public meetings during the past year, have not generated firm commitments nor wild en-

thusiasm from school or city officials. Powell is concerned the district may build City Heights' four to six elementary schools without regard for their impact on one another. "What we need is a comprehensive approach," he said, "not incremental planning." Powell warns that estimates for the number of City Heights residents to be displaced by new schools could be low, noting the environmental impact reports use a multiplier of only three for each home to be demolished.

Despite complaints about its lack of vision, the school district is preparing another report seeing a bit more responsible and accountable to the

population of children. Only by word of mouth did Vaughan learn she lives in the path of the new Central Area Elementary School. If her location remains "the preferred site"—as it is designated in the environmental impact report—Vaughan and her husband would have to vacate the apartment they've occupied 14 years. But self-preservation isn't the only reason Vaughan speaks passionately about upcoming demolitions. As the property manager of a 16-unit apartment building on 39th Street, she is aware of San Diego's housing shortage, skyrocketing rents, and low turnover of tenants. Despite having an unlisted telephone number, Vaughan hears regularly from people looking for a place to live. "People move to San Diego every day. You need to take down a minimum of homes and apartments. The kids have to have a place to live as well."

Julie Saxauer, a City Heights homeowner, said the demolition of residences is only one factor to be weighed. Although the Central Area Elementary School's "preferred site" would displace more people than two other sites, Saxauer said, its proximity to the YMCA, a new park, and a proposed Boys & Girls Club would anchor a complex dedicated to children. "I support the primary site because it's the best use. I'm sorry about the loss of homes, but these

schools are going to be here 50 years or more. As a taxpayer, it's important to me to see the school in the best place," Saxauer said. "There's a reason housing is affordable in City Heights. Much of it is significantly deteriorated with decades of deferred maintenance."

Traffic considerations are paramount, Nelson said, noting children should not cross busy streets, such as University or El Cajon Boulevard. "The schools need to make sense for the kids." At the same time, Nelson prefers spots that would rid City Heights of substandard housing and blight, which may include homes as well as apartments. But Hellerich dismisses such strategies for revitalization as "social engineering" with a hidden agenda. In the case of Central Area Elementary, there are two alternative sites that would displace far fewer people. "Why is the school district taking the site that costs two to three times as much and disrupts more lives?" Hellerich wonders. "Instead of dispassionately looking at the numbers, the school district and the neighborhood planning groups are co-conspirators in deciding which homes are worth keeping and which are not. It's bad economics, and it's a bad philosophy. Today it is the apartments we don't like, they will be torn down because we think it will make our neighborhood prettier. Tomorrow, what will be

next? Maybe someone doesn't like the way you decorate your home."

Some City Heights residents can't help but feel overwhelmed. The San Diego Unified School District's long-range plan calls for the construction of middle and high schools in the same neighborhoods where Proposition MM's elementary schools will be built. "Soon we'll be able to walk from school to school by their rooftops, they'll be so close together. You'll see a school on nearly every corner," predicted John Stump, a lawyer who has lived and worked in City Heights 25 years. Describing himself as a "concerned resident," Stump thinks the school district should replace some of the homes to be destroyed. "Just because they're not required by law doesn't mean they can't have a policy," he said. "You're not charged by law to give to charities, but you do because it's the right thing." Stump likens new schools to invaders from outer space. "The elementary schools are just the robot explorers. Each one requires two full city blocks. That's ten blocks out of City Heights," Stump said. "But they're not the battle cruisers. One high school alone will take five or six city blocks. The high school will be the starship Enterprise or the Battered Galactica. Are we landing a spacecraft or are we building a community?" ■

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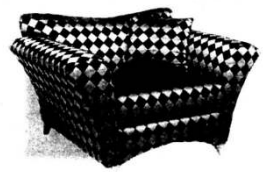
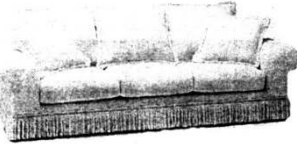
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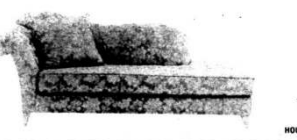
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SHEEP AND GOATS PLACES OF WORSHIP REVIEWED

A nun laughed at me when I called and asked if her largely Anglo parish had planned anything special for the Epiphany.

"Ha. ha. It's just business as usual as far as we're concerned."

Last Sunday, however, before 9:00 a.m.

Mass at Our Lady of the Rosary in Little Italy, three teenage boys, counterculturally dressed as the Magi, stood in the crowded narthex.

They fussed with their sparkly hats and gold and yellow robes. As the Mass began, the handsome cousins, looking a little self-conscious, marched to the altar and presented their gifts to three-month-old William Staples who, in white waddling, portrayed Baby Jesus. William's mother, Cindy Staples, dressed as Virgin Mary, cradled the miraculous child in her arms. Throughout the hour-long liturgy, he was silent.

After Mass, when asked what she'd done to keep William so quiet, Staples said, "Absolutely nothing. He's just a fantastic baby."

Out of modesty, Our Lady's Sunday-school director declined to give her name. But the woman did say that her parish has done the Three Wise Men procession for at least the past 40 years.

"It's just one part of what we do for Christmas. On Christmas Eve we have a very big Nativity Pageant with more than 30 costumed actors from the parish. It's a lot of work, but we don't mind. We do it as a present for Jesus, because he's given so much to us."

Earlier in the week, when I called Saint Maximilian Kolbe Polish Mission in Pacific Beach, Father Kowalski told me that on the Epiphany he'd be "blessing the chalk like I do every year."

Since I didn't recall chalk playing a significant role in the Epiphany story, I was glad to run into Krystyna Saling, St. Kolbe's librarian, before last Sunday's 11:00 a.m. Mass. Saling, who writes articles on Polish history and politics for the *Washington Times*, said the blessing of the chalk was a very ancient custom.

"Poland was Christianized in 966 AD," she explained. "And the country wasn't Christianized very easily. Saint Wojciech, the Czech monk who brought the Gospel to Poland, was martyred for his efforts. You also have to understand that Christianity at that time was still very Latin. The pagan Romans had a god who did nothing but watch over doorways. Doorways were important in Latin culture. So, the early Polish Christians developed the Epiphany custom of taking chalk and writing 'K+M+B' over their doorways. The letters

stand for the names of the three Magi—Kaspar, Melchior, and Baltazar. It was like a code, a secret message. A Christian passing by a home that had 'K+M+B' written over the door knew that Christians lived inside and that he'd be safe in there."

According to Saling, St. Kolbe is "a large family, with all the loves, dislikes, and passions that you'd find in any large family." The St. Kolbe family includes many doctors, physicists, and architects, as well as the nephew of Ignace Paderewski, the great pianist and Polish patriot, and Count Ostrowski, who 30 years ago approached Buddy about establishing the parish.

"At first the Bishop wasn't enthusiastic about the idea," said the Count. "But when we later told him that the Polish National Church, which had broken away from the Roman Catholic Church in the 19th Century, was going to establish a parish in San Diego, he gave us permission to start St. Kolbe immediately. There'll be no heresy in my diocese," he said.

"So, here we are. The blessing of the chalk is just one of the small customs we keep that reminds us of home. I remember several years ago, after the Epiphany, when three Jehovah's Witness ladies came to my front door. Through the peep hole, I watched one of them put her big finger on the doorknob button. She rang and rang. I didn't answer. Suddenly, the three of them noticed the 'K+M+B' written over the door. They must have stood there and studied it for a full 30 minutes before they walked away."

Father Kaziski blessed the chalk immediately after Holy Communion. He dipped what looked like a miniature broom in a bowl of Holy Water, and waved it over a basket containing bits of chalk wrapped in white paper. After the service, the parishioners took a chalk packet before they filed downstairs to the church social hall.

I counted 16 kinds of cake and pastry arranged on one long table. In the center of the room, another table held cold cuts, salads, soups, deviled eggs, wine, and vodka. The Count and Krystyna Saling worried that I wasn't eating. "Please, young man, at least have a slice of cake!" On the far side of the room, St. Kolbe's children prepared to give a talent show.

As I was leaving, Saling grabbed my hand. "Please tell everyone that they're welcome here. All the time. Not just on special days like the Epiphany. We have a lovely church. We have lovely customs. We even have weekly Polish language classes!"

—Abe Opatcar



CINDY STAPLES AND THE BLESSING OF CHALK

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Dear Aunt Trudy,

Yesterday afternoon my father passed away. I was told it was a massive heart attack. Weirdly, I cannot seem to show or feel any sorrow. He was never really there for any of us kids when we were growing up. He wasn't much of a father. He seemed more interested in other things, other people's children, even, than us. I do plan to go to his memorial service and pay my respects, but because I know what he was really like, I think it's going to be hard for me to sit through a service where he will probably be eulogized as some kind of great father and husband and model citizen when I know that these things are not even close to true. I am concerned that I will be expected to show some deep sorrow over his passing that I just don't feel. Is there something wrong with me that I'm not terribly broken up about his death? I am a gay male, 41 years old and living with AIDS.

CONFUSED ABOUT NOT BEING SORROWFUL IN
CLAREMONT

Dear Confused,

Please accept my condolences, both on the death of the man who sired you, and about the sad fact that he was never a real father to you. Despite that, you sound like a truthful and brave soul. Unfortunately, we don't get to choose our parents. You had to suffer through growing up with (and without) a neglectful, self-centered father who ignored you and made you feel insignificant, when he should have been treasuring you. Since you left your problem message on my voicemail, I can say that your voice sounded gentle, sincere, and sane — the voice of a survivor, someone who has endured calamity with courage and has triumphed. That is something to be very proud of, and if I am right about you, you became that kind of man with no help from your dad. You have nothing to feel bad about. Go to the memorial service and listen quietly to other people doing what they need to do. Forgive them in your heart, if you feel you can, when they sweep the truth under the rug or try to prettify this man's character because they cannot bear to face the ugly reality. Keep your own counsel and marvel at the proceedings. You know who your father was. Attending his service doesn't mean you agree with one word of what's said there. Showing up at the memorial is just a respectful gesture to the rest of your family and, hopefully, a move that will give you some sense of closure. That's supposed to be one of the uses of funerals — I've never made up my mind whether they really fulfill that purpose.

Your "dad" is free now and you are free of him. Surely there is some kind of grace in

that. Take care of yourself at this difficult time. Get counseling if you feel uncomfortable with your reaction or lack thereof to your father's death. It would be only human to need someone to talk to at this difficult time. If there are things you want to resolve about your relationship with quote-unquote dad, a good psychotherapist can do wonders. Perhaps a trusted friend could accompany you to the memorial service, one who knows the score about your father and can provide loving support. You may be interested to know that when I looked in my favorite dictionary of quotations under "mourning," the majority of the entries condemned big shows of grief. Tennyson said, "I count it a crime / to mourn for any over-much." And the ancient Roman historian Tacitus observed, "None mourn more ostentatiously than those who are rejoicing most." You will be guilty of none of these crimes. Your job is to take excellent care of yourself physically and spiritually and to go on living in the best ways that you can dream up. I will be rooting for you.

Confidential to the woman who returned from being out of town caring for her sick parents to discover that her landlord had sold the home she was living in without notifying her.

Your landlord should be put in the stocks and flogged. That's an unconscionable thing to do. If it's not too late, call a lawyer. There are regulations about this kind of thing. If you're a low-income person, as many of us are, try Tenants Legal Center of San Diego. The number in my phone book here at the library is 858-571-7100. They also list a line for 24-hour free legal info: 858-571-1166. They're under "Legal Clinics" in the Yellow Pages. You do have rights. Find out what they are and exercise them.

Write to Aunt Trudy c/o the San Diego Reader, P.O. Box 85803, San Diego CA 92186-5803; call her at (619) 235-3000 ext. 413; fax her at (619) 881-2401; or e-mail to trudy@sdreader.com

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tip of my TONGUE

Tangled in sweaty sheets, I writhed in my overheated London hotel room. Outside, bitter rain fell. Inside, the radiator hissed. The night before, I'd eaten at a restaurant named Grumbles. Hours after my meal, the first waves of nausea hit. They raged until morning. Weak-kneed, clammy, I had a train to catch. I was going to visit my friend Leorah and her family in Manchester.

Leorah and I had worked together for several years in Jerusalem. She was an intelligent, passionate girl. In the cause of Russian Jewry, she'd chained herself to several Soviet embassies. She'd offered, "If we're ever in England at the same time, you have to come visit my family in Manchester. It'll be fun."

Leorah's father greeted me at the door. Lush gray eyebrows shaded his keen brown eyes. He had an eagle-like, raptorial air.

"In case Leorah didn't tell you," he said, rubbing his palms together briskly, "ours is a vegetarian household. We eat no meat of any kind. We hope you'll respect that."

He gazed at me as if the suspected I had a standing rib roast hidden in my backpack. I, on the other hand, suspected he was as crazy as a shithouse rat.

The Talmud teaches that land has character, a personality bound in its very soil. Land imparts its character to those who live and work upon it, which is why, for example, New Yorkers are different from Boston-

nians, Frenchmen from Italians. Since the early 19th Century, Manchester has been a hotbed of ardent vegetarians, who eat only windfallen fruit. (They're careful to spit out the seeds so as not to interfere with the life-cycle of the plant.)

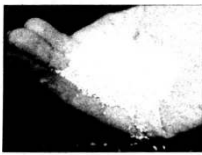
Like lead in old plumbing, Manchester had leached into Leorah and her family. Her mother took my coat. "Let's feed you some lunch. How about a nice big bowl of my famous raw-fruit bran muesli?"

We sat around the kitchen table. In front of me sat a nice big bowl of the stuff. Leorah's mother had whipped up in her food processor. Pineapple, carrots, apples, oranges, walnuts, and plenty of bran. (But no honey. "It's stealing from the bees," Leorah's father hissed.)

Leorah and her mother and father stared at me. The frothy, pulpy muesli was so rich in fiber that even a termite would have had a hard time digesting it.

"That's a boy," Leorah's father said. "Eat up. There's plenty more!"

Bran is essentially the husks of wheat that are removed when making flour. Bran contains a great deal of fiber. The entire point of fiber is that it is indigestible. It scours the intestines like steel wool. Had I, on all fours, grazed an entire meadow, I couldn't possibly have consumed more fiber than was contained in one bowl of



by MAX NASH

Leorah's mother's muesli. The effect was immediate.

My scalp tingled with cold sweat. "Let's take a walk," Leorah said. Bundled in coats and scarves, we wandered through hard Manchester rain. We wandered through working-class neighborhoods, where wan children munched bags of greasy potato chips. The rain, always the rain. The muffled rumbling wasn't thunder but bran muesli moving through my gut. We visited Leorah's old high school, where I raced to the bathroom. I pressed my forehead against cool tile and silently prayed. "God, help me. Please help."

The walk back to Leorah's house was perhaps the longest in my life. We arrived in time for dinner. Vegetable soup. A salad of raw cauliflower and carrots. And many heavy thick slices of toasted bran bread.

We retired to the overheated living room. My belly was distended, taut. I undid my belt. I leaned far back on the couch. Rain pelted the windowpanes. Leorah's father began to speak.

"I'll never forget the day I watched a lamb being led to slaughter. So docile. So innocent. So entirely unaware of what was about to happen."

Remembering how earlier in the day I'd innocently approached this gentle-

man's home, I sympathized with the lamb. Leorah's father waved his hands in the air. He called meat "corpse." He wanted to know why I ate corpse, why anyone would want to eat corpse. I looked to Leorah for rescue. I looked to her mother. They were both caught up in the father's evangelical hysteria. An enormous gas bubble, I could feel it distinctly, was making its way through my intestines. I was pale with pain. I leaned farther back on the couch. The bathroom, I knew, was only a few yards away, but it might as well have been in Brazil. Leorah's father continued to rant about corpse. Disgusting, vile, repellent, nauseating corpse.

"And you eat the violence," he wailed. "When you eat corpse, you eat fear and violence."

I certainly felt as though I'd eaten plenty fear and violence. If I didn't eat fast, a lamb being led to slaughter would hardly remain the most frightful thing Leorah's father had ever seen. With a whoop, I stood and bounded to bathroom, unslipping my pants as I ran. I didn't care. I slammed the door and experienced blissful, explosive relief.

The next morning I was fed another big bowl of raw-fruit bran muesli. I knew if I did not leave, I would surely die. I made some excuse to go back to London. Leorah and her parents hated to see me go. It was while I was on the train, chugging through more dense drizzle, each lurch of the car agitating my overstimulated gut, that I discovered that Leorah's mother had given me a farewell gift. When I wasn't looking, she'd tucked into my backpack a loaf of fresh bran bread.

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I was turned down for a dishwashing job when I was 18. I stood in the rank kitchen of a Chart House in Newport, Rhode Island, with my application still in hand when the manager told me no. I was able-bodied, sound of mind, and humiliated. It was not enough, I suppose, that I had washed dishes at home every now and then since I was 10. I felt dejected and afraid. I owed my father \$300 for a bunch of Grateful Dead tickets I had purchased for myself and some friends with his credit card several months before. I was having a hard time collecting from my friends and paying him back.

"Get a job," my father said. It took some time, but I did. I spent the weekend nights of my senior year in high school washing dishes at a French bistro just up the street from the site of my rejection. The onion soup was popular and I muttered curses under my breath while I scoured baked-on cheese from the crocks. The pretty waitresses who wouldn't give me the time of day kept piling the dishes in the window. My fingers were cut and wrinkled white from the water. My clothes stank.

The "senior" dishwasher and I shared the duty of closing up the restaurant. Each Sunday night, en route to the Dumpster at the end of the wharf with the last bag of trash, he told me he was quitting.



From www.word.com/work

"That's it for me," he would say. "Tonight's my last. It's been real, Wolff." He was always off to warmer climes — California, the Keys, "the Tropics." But each Friday night he was in his apron before me.

"Next week," he would say. I quit the job before he did, and for all I know he's still there scrubbing dishes and chopping parsley. Work, I decided early on, was not for me.

My girlfriend is looking for work. She's a skilled graphic designer. She's heard all the usual dismissals, and some new ones, from prospective employers. One criticized her work for being "too clean." Another said condescendingly,

"Obviously you're classically trained." A third told her in all seriousness, "In California we like our design funkified. We like jazzmatassaz."

She's taken to saying, "I hate work." Thomas Jefferson, more than anyone else, shaped the smarmy positivism that pervades employers' attitudes regarding work in this country. Jefferson was a utopian (how dare he?) and imagined work as something other than what it is. He had visions of a bustling nation full of whistling agrarians digging furrows and hauling loads. He pictured a future full of happy traders, each swapping their valued productions. Our reward, he told us, would be a job well done.

"Let us, then, with courage and confidence, pursue our...republican principles."

"Let us, then, with courage and confidence," he said in 1801, "pursue our...republican principles." What more is necessary, he asked while blessedly secure in his hilltop home, than "entertaining a due sense of our equal right to the use of our own faculties, to the acquisitions of our industry...resulting not from birth but from our actions." Even during the decades before the Civil War, the moment of the country's excruciating

transition to a capitalist economy, Jefferson's message had its quixotic standard-bearers. In 1838, William Ellery Channing, a Boston minister and mentor to Ralph Waldo Emerson, said of man, "Every blow on the anvil, on the earth, on whatever material he works upon, contributes something to the perfection of its nature." Emerson and Thoreau followed with their thoughts on action and work as the necessary antidotes to complacency. Walt Whitman went berserk on the subject of work. "The boatmen and clam-diggers arose early and stopt for me," he waxed in "Song of Myself." "I tuck'd my trouser-ends in my boots and went and had a good time! You should have been with us that day round the chowder-kettle."

At the same time, there were dissenters. In 1850, in "The Custom-House," his introduction to *The Scarlet Letter*, Hawthorne dealt a strong blow to the myth of the jolly boatman. "Uncle Sam's gold — meaning no disrespect to the

worthy old gentleman — has, in this respect, a quality of enchantment like that of the Devil's wags. Whoever touches it should look well to himself, or he may find the bargain to go hard against him, involving, if not his soul, yet many of its better attributes; its sturdy force, its courage and constancy, its truth, its self-reliance, and all that gives the emphasis to many a character."

Hawthorne's associates — gray-haired lifelong bureaucrats — "spent a good deal of time...asleep in their accustomed corners, with their chairs tilted back against the wall, yawning, however, once or twice in a forenoon, to bore one another with the several thousandth repetition of old sea-stories, and moulty jokes, that had grown to be pass-words and counter-signs among them."

In Bartley, who was "pallid, motionless, lethargic," Melville gave us the world's most wasted worker. "For long periods," his boss remembers, "he would stand looking out, at his pale window behind the

screen, upon the dead brick wall." Even writing, Melville told Hawthorne in an 1851 letter, offered no respite from the exactions of work. "Dollars damn me," he wrote, "and the malicious Devil is forever grinning in upon me, holding the door ajar." Looking back, even Whitman and Emerson wandered from Jefferson's carefully plotted course. Whitman was a self-confessed loafer and Emerson frequently retracted some of his aphorisms regarding hard work, replacing them with aphorisms about the necessity of at least a latent disobedience.

"Let a man know his worth," he wrote in 1841, "and keep things under his feet." So the two American attitudes regarding work became one layered, sometimes paradoxical posture. Reducing it to a maxim far less elegant than those Emerson drafted, one might say that Americans work hard, but work harder at complaining about it. And this, I believe, is a great thing. Though ridiculously

far from, say, Woody Guthrie's progressivism, our cries against work are tinged with what's left of American liberalism. In 1974, Studs Terkel — Bronx-born, Russian Jew, son of a tailor, beneficiary of Roosevelt's Federal Writers Project — published *Working People Talk About What They Do All Day and How They Feel About What They Do*. Terkel was a voice for the defunct Popular Front, what Marshall Berman in a review of *Working* called the international communism from 1934 to 1946 that emphasized liberalism over revolution. Terkel's people, Berman said, "are present in all the full radical and frightfulness of their individuality. He is confronting all the explosive psychical realities that the Front generation did not care — or could not bear — to see."

In the book, Mike Lefevre (Terkel's subjects are pseudonyms) comes out swinging and touches on some of these paradoxes. At the time, he was a 37-year-old steel worker, and at first he blames intellectuals for denigrating

workers. Then he turns on himself: "A mule, an old mule, that's the way I feel." He said, he was mad that his son "lacks respect," but even so, "I want my kid to be an effete snob... I want him to tell me he's not gonna be like me."

Less class-conscious but more poetic are the words of Babe Secoli, a supermarket cashier. "I look forward to comin' to work. It's a great feelin'," she says. "I enjoy it somethin' terrible."

Though Terkel is still

in the wings to coax them out, today's soliloquies on work lack the political punch they had in 1974 and tend more toward what we might call a Homer Simpsonesque rhetoric. But read for yourself what the waiter, the Kinko's "co-worker," the transvestite prostitute, the brick carrier, the stunt double, the pet groomer, and the juke-joint owner, among many others, have to say about it. My weekday's over, so I'll just point the way —

www.word.com/work ■

— Justin Wolff

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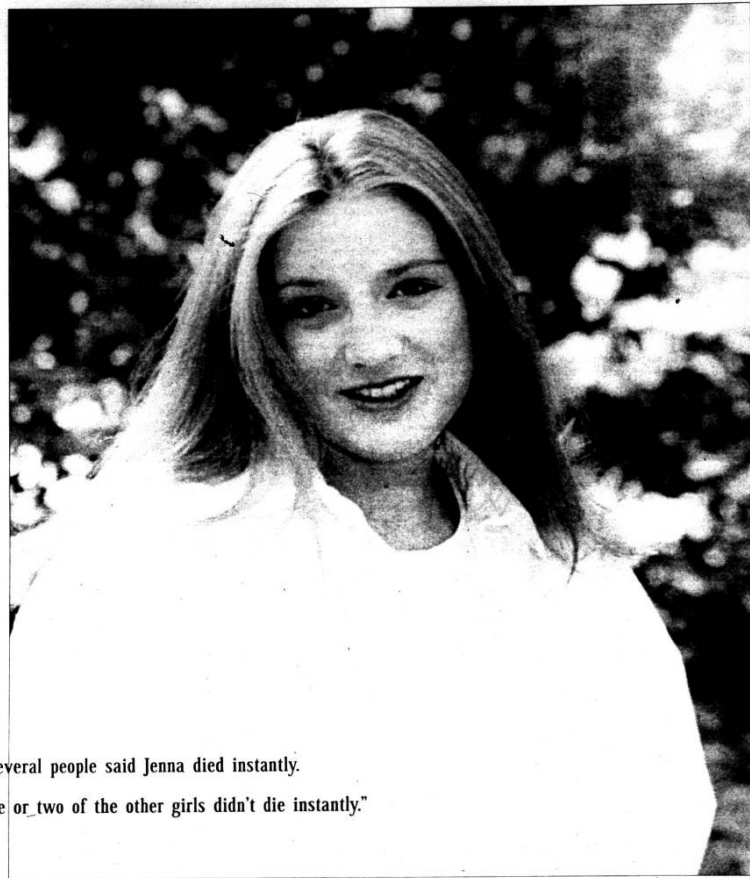
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JENNA DRUCK © CALIFORNIA PHOTOGRAPHY

"Several people said Jenna died instantly.
One or two of the other girls didn't die instantly."

Jenna Druck

Jenna's Dad

WHEN YOU LOSE A DAUGHTER, EVERY YOUNG GIRL BECOMES YOUR DAUGHTER

Last spring I had only begun to follow the renowned psychologist Ken Druck and the grief he bears for losing his 21-year-old daughter, Jenna, when he called one day to say he was with two dads he wanted me to meet because their kids, roughly the same age as his, had also died. He said if I aimed to tell the whole story of families and the horror of losing their children, there was no better way than to hear it from these men, who were "raw, brutally honest, and in constant pain." He emphasized *men*, because I'd be close to their psychology and, a father myself, I might "get" (understand) some of their sorrow. Druck had "got" it, full fathom. He had lost Jenna, whom he calls "the finest human being I have ever known," while she was studying abroad with Semester at Sea, a cruise-ship campus that voyages to various sites around the world. Beginning in the Bahamas, crossing the Atlantic to Africa, then on to the Far East, the ship docked in Madras, India. There she and a group of 55 students flew to New Delhi to take an overnight bus south into the mountains. Their destination: the Taj Mahal, the world's most beautiful monument to love. But the sleep-deprived driver lost control of the bus after passing a slow-moving vehicle on a curve. The bus rumbled over the edge and careened down an embankment. Jenna and three other female students were killed. To honor his daughter, Druck has built his monument to love, the Jenna Druck Foundation, where he leads — and participates in — support groups that help parents, grandparents, and siblings grieve their losses.

When we met, Druck hugged me, then I shook hands with the two dads — Ralph, whose daughter died violently last year, and Kevin, whose son overdosed on drugs 18 months ago. (Both men's names have been changed and some identifying details of their children's deaths have been left out at their request.) "He overdosed, killed himself," said Kevin. His face was careworn, his look distracted. We sat in floral-patterned wrought-iron chairs, painted creamy white, in a corner of the Casa de Bandini, San Diego's colonial Mexican restaurant. For two hours, the four of us devoured chicken quesadillas, chiles rellenos, chips, salsa, flan, drinks. Nothing prepares you for interviewing three fathers who've lost their kids. Though I felt lucky to be the odd man out, these men are the ones who "don't fit." They are cut off from a world whose norm is intact families, laughing, strolling, argu-

ing together, god-awful-apparent everywhere these dads go. The most devoted man I have ever met is Ken Druck. The most anguished would be, after one evening in his company, Ralph. A middle-aged workhorse, he owns his business, travels, and plays golf as often as he can. After quick hellos, he pointed a finger at me: "You don't ever want to know what I know, you don't ever want to stand in my shoes. And, funny thing, I can't blame you. If I knew someone like me, someone going through what I'm going through, I'd run the other way."

Kevin and Ralph mostly made statements, asked few questions. When I settled into their pace, I risked a statement myself. How awful it must be, to be in Old Town, with its cantinas and mariachis presiding over dozens of families. Surely there weren't three other men talking about their dead children here, tonight. Ralph said he understood, agreed with me, to a point. "There probably aren't three men talking like we are. But I guarantee you, there is a mother or father here who lost a child once and is dying inside. Faking it as we speak. Who's put on the mask. The clown face?"

"But it looks to me as though the loss is written on yours," I said. "Are you kidding? I wear the clown's face all the time," he said. "Nobody knows I'm dying."

Earlier that afternoon, Druck had taken a call from Ralph, who told him he didn't want to live anymore. "The act cracked," Ralph told Druck. "What's the use?" After 14 months, he wasn't getting any better, and no one unless they've experienced what he has understands him. There's no possibility of dating or romance. Ralph is divorced; he talks to his other daughter five times a day. "What's the use?" Druck had ended our chat and tended to Ralph, one of many limps for whom he is the crutch.

"My life used to be balanced and steady," Ralph told me, gliding a flat-line hand through the air. "But now it's a roller coaster of schizophrenia," and the hand began undulating in steep dips and rises like a day-traded dot-com stock. Now, at 8:00 p.m., seven hours after calling Druck about ending his life, he'd changed his tune. No, he really didn't want to kill himself. He loves life, loves beautiful things, loves hitting the shit out of the golf ball, loves being with his friends. Much of the time. Today was just another day when the pain had so exhausted him that he couldn't get out of bed. The only recourse was to call Druck. Druck got him going — get up, take a shower, brush your teeth, find some clothes (don't worry if they're dirty or don't match), find your keys, and meet me at.... Ralph pointed that finger at me again and said, "Ken, here, has saved my life. This man's a savior."

He said when he first met Druck, a man with whom he knew he had a horror in common, he wanted confirmation. "Don't lie to me," Ralph said, pissed and angling for a fight. "Tell me the truth. I'm fucked, aren't I?"

"You're fucked," Druck replied. Now pointing that Gothic finger at Druck, he said, "That was the best god-damn thing you could have told me."

Kevin and his son had lived together, ate dinner out most evenings. But the

closeness didn't choke off the drugs: The first time his son smoked crack he was addicted. Kevin was told by friends and counselors that crack was almost impossible to beat. Intervention would help, but he believed that a father's love for his son would be the major antidote if the kid was to kick the habit. Kevin remembered one person telling him that "an addiction was not possible to control. But I'm a man, a father, and that's what fathers do. We fix things, we make things right for our children. I thought I could save him." Not long before his son suicided, Kevin said his boy came to him and confessed, "Dad, you can't save me." I said, "What do you mean, we can lick this." A few days later he was dead. I thought I could save him. But I couldn't. And he knew it."

Ralph and Kevin described lives not totally



Julie James

tanked in sorrow. For instance, their minds often slip into a "brain-hole" for forgetfulness, misplacing keys, letters, credit cards. Each carries at least one cell phone and makes frequent calls, usually to another son or daughter. They can forget

the trauma when they're sleeping and dreaming. (Ralph has been on sleeping pills since his daughter's death.) Kevin told us of a recent dream. Lying in bed, he saw a baby floating in space, which was slowly swaying down toward him like

the free-floating feather in the beginning of the film *Forrest Gump*. The baby at last landed on his chest. He felt an immensely powerful softness, a balm and a mystery. "What do you make of that?" he asked us. Or else they forget their trial when they

see a baby in a stroller, a child running by. On occasion, they trick themselves, imagining that over there, that one, the long-haired buoyant young woman is my daughter, and she's turning around in her chair, and now she sees me, she's recognized me and here she comes, look how she's filled in in the four years since she's been away and look how mature a woman she's become. Oh, yes, yes, this has all been a nightmare and at last I'm waking from it. The longer the men grieve, the less their children come back and play in the pretend.

Sometimes there's humor. To women, "we're ridiculously unavailable and undependable." Who in the world would ever go out with them? This "joke" quickly turns serious because these single men say their darkness is too much of a burden to wish on any woman and, thus, the only woman possible would be someone who

knew, firsthand, the gravity of their loss. Can only grievers love grievers? Druck said he has led sessions for parents of lost children and their new partners, that is, people who have married the bereaved. At one workshop Druck looked at the new spouses in attendance and said, with irony, "What is wrong with you people? Do you have any idea the kind of misery you are marrying?" One day Ralph and Kevin found themselves at the convention center, watching young women assemble for a Jazzercise exhibition. They called Ken and told him, "Hey, you'd be proud of us. We're doing grief therapy. There's 500 in-shape women in black leotards walking by us right now."

Sorrow takes a brief holiday when they dwell on faith. "Twenty years ago, I got spiritual," Ralph said, "and if not for that I'd be a dead man now." All three said

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they believe in life beyond this life because that's where they hope to reunite with their children. They don't associate it with a "better place," with heaven, certainly not with hell. Hell after this life would be a mere continuation. Living on for the sake of dying is a paradox, the one hope in their hopelessness they can point to that softens loss. The possibility of a reunion is the root of their faith. Kevin expressed it like this. "I'm at this train station. And I'm waiting for a train that I know is never coming in. But I'm there and waiting for it as if it is coming in. I think of myself as always standing there and waiting. And when I die, I'll still be waiting at that station, and then the train will finally come in. And on it will be my son."

It grew late, and they started swapping titles for this article. Ralph's was "It Should Not Have Happened," a phrase, he



Scott Johnson

repeated, a phrase, he repeated all the time. "Kevin said I should call it 'How Is It Possible?'" Druck offered "The Dark Night of the Soul." Then Kevin added, without malice, "I bet you're already trying to come up with some horrifying story you can put

up front and really grab the reader's attention." He was right. I was. How well he knew, dear reader, our compact!

Do you ever get tired of talking about the pain and the person you've lost?

"Never."

"Never." They chorused the word. print can't render it. There is no such thing, they say, as their overpossessing grief. It comes at them, wave upon wave, tsunamis under gale-force

winds. The onslaught Druck calls "choiceless." What is "choice-full" is what they choose to revisit and remember. To never grow tired of talking about it is the most choiceworthy choice they can make. If nothing else, the talking holds them upright, through another day of waking up, surprised fingers and toes still moving, ready and not ready to face 16 or 20 or 24 incompressible hours through which they can never grow tired of talking about it.

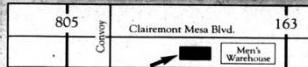
Ken Druck didn't know he would start a foundation for bereaved parents. Not until four days after Jenna's burial when, he tells me, he was on his knees, asking her for guidance. He didn't want to live; he had nothing to live for; he was pleading with her: "What do you want me to do?" He remembers being in an "amazing" state of shock. Clear as Baja skies. All filters fell away; he could "see" everything exactly for what it is." He describes filters as screens that allow us to watch violence on television and in movies with immunity. Such defenses evaporated. "My daughter was on the news every night, on CNN. It wasn't somebody else." That day Jenna spoke to him. "Dad," she said, "never stop being a dad to the daughters. Too few of the dads stay connected to their daughters. Too few fathers have a hand in their daughters' lives. It's so important for a father to mentor his daughter. Dad, you believed in me, and that meant everything to me. On the basis of that belief, your hanging in there with me, your seeing me through the times where I felt I couldn't go on, all this [means] I was able to fly. Don't stop doing that, Steffie." — Druck's other, younger daughter — "needs you. And don't ever stop being a dad to all the girls."

Joining his plans for a foundation was Joelle James. A vibrant, teen-focused organizer who had mentored Jenna as a young girl, James heard Druck wanted to honor his daughter with some tangible tribute. She sought him out: "When do we get started?" Druck remembers James "propping him up" for the first year or two of the foundation's existence. She helped him set up file cabinets and sharpen pencils, some days just listening, talking, catching the tears. Within a year, the pair launched the first Young Women's Leadership Conference, a daylong event to recognize and encourage high school girls who show leadership skills in uncommon ways. The conference was one of Jenna's many dreams. Eventually, in the foundation's third and fourth years, Ken Druck began using his background in men's psychology to form support groups for the families of some 600 kids who die in the county each year. (Ralph and Kevin are part of a dad's group that Druck facilitates.) Dads, grandparents, siblings, young adults, Druck understands the whole program as

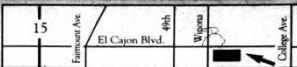
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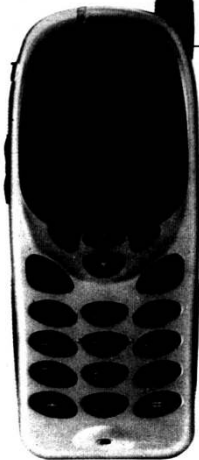
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Families Helping Families. In groups, grievers learn to help one another "from within" and not rely on traditional therapists, the "well-meaning" clergy, or so-called grief counselors, often opportunists drawn to an airline crash or a school shooting more for the action than to help.

Druck says the untrained bring a "sickening array of positive-think, of 'get over it,' of 'follow the grieving process' as though the 12 steps of a recovering alcoholic can solve any problem." Grief can't be quantified into recovery. Grieving adheres to a process that is organic for each person or group of persons who listen to and support one another's deepest sorrows. In the last two years, Druck's work for bereaved parents and siblings has expanded. He was one of the first people called to Columbine. Declining the invitation, he told them that the families would really need him once the camera crews left, once the politics of guns took a backseat, once the shock wore off. He was right. "Their grief has only begun to unfold a year after the killings," he says. Including

his first visit in July '99, he has held three workshops in Littleton and returned last August.

Druck formed the foundation to honor his daughter and to deal with his pain. For the latter, he himself received little help. He recalls groups and facilitators that, though "well-intended," knew nothing about the white-hot and gray-numb emotions of sorrow. "People had this idea that we could somehow think our way out of grief. But it's not in your mind," he insists. So much in bereavement psychology is bull, an over-intellectualized cabal of wounded healers and dealers, the "one-size-fits-all mentality." He says it has taken him four years to understand his own path and how to respond, to let alone how to help, others. Grieving families are best at helping one another, Druck says, because their loss is wild and dangerous, follows no medical model (doctors "really don't get it," he says), and requires something our society refuses to face — the "twin conspiracies of silence and sanity." In America "deep grief is too scary, too dark,

so we keep silent about it by telling people to get on with their lives." Sanity is another burden. Our economy relies on a productive workforce, and an ongoing sorrow cancels efficiency. Ask people who've lost a child how long it takes to gain back half of their original concentration.

Kevin remembered one person telling him that "an addiction was not possible to control. But I'm a man, a father, and that's what fathers do. We fix things."

Grievors, Druck says, "have to go a little crazy as part of their pain." Druck tries to balance his pain and his continuing life, such as it is. Acknowledging that others may see in him a "grief-crazed, driven father," he lists (in a 300-word e-mail) the things he is grateful for, that are equally impor-

tant to him. Karen Druck, Jenna's mother, with whom his marriage of 26 years ended not long ago, remains his best friend, the "person I would call if I were on my deathbed." An intimate circle of friends, the staff and volunteers at the foundation (especially Joelle), his monthly

izing. He's Sisyphian and Emersonian — everlasting travail mixed with fanatical self-invention. He is far more than you bargain for, especially since you wouldn't bargain for what he's been through.

One day last April he wanted the U.S. women's soccer team to autograph a ball and dedicate it to the young women for whom Druck puts on his annual conference. "Listen to this," he said when I arrived at his Hillcrest office, which doubles as an art room for the sibling group. He was talking to the women's coach, a man, training the team in Chula Vista for the 2000 Sydney Olympics. The coach said sure they'd sign it, just bringing him a ball. Druck rifled the Yellow Pages and phoned the Sports Authority. They didn't have the means for "that sort of thing," the manager said (Druck was holding the phone up for me to hear). Something about an in-store bureaucracy that didn't allow... "He's blowing \$15,000 worth of free advertising," a fact Druck didn't bother the manager with. He went to the next

number under his thumb and got a commitment from SportMart. We rushed over and picked out a top-of-the-line \$39.99 Nike. Druck met the generous donor with "Hey, come here! I want to hug you." The bewildered man fell sticklike into Druck's linebaker arms. Every thank you — if Druck can get away with it — possesses such bigness.

Druck is a champion polyphaser. I watched him move at a breakneck pace, helping others grieve while still toiling the turtle walk of his own sorrow. He'd speed the freeway in the fast lane, take phone calls from parents, read directions out of his day planner, plus tell me in Homeric detail of the pain of losing his daughter — all like a shuttle diplomat. At our first meeting, he came toward me with a limp; he had just wrenched his knee in a competitive soccer match. At 51, he's got a body whose exercise appears to be all lower limb. My felicitous mother would have called Druck's rotundity "husky." His limp draws my concern, but he brushes it aside. "I'll be all right." Druck

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beyond," she paused, "into the grieving. The families felt a great deal of bonding with him. He's very open about his pain and his grief, which many men are not. He's very comfortable with that, and it comes through in what he does." Druck called his two-day workshop "How to Survive the Loss of a Child." Lightner said, "Those attending believed Druck related more directly to their trauma and pain," while she brought laughter, asking them to remember the funny, oddball things about their children. She also brought answers. "They asked me a lot of questions about 'How did you get to where you're at?' How long did it take? Will we ever laugh again?"

My presence meant you do get better."

When her daughter was killed, Lightner got angry, formed MADD, and didn't grieve. About this, she said, she "cautions" Druck "constantly," fearing he may put work ahead of sorrow. "What happens when you immediately get involved with a movement is it tends to keep the child alive. And you tend to postpone aspects of your grieving process. You may deal with your anger aspect for the next five years because that's what works for you. Or denial, or whatever. In my case I was so immersed in MADD that I didn't have time to grieve, and it sort of postponed the pain. Grieving the death of a child is

one of the most god-awful pains you ever want to go through. I'm not one who's gung ho about pain. It wasn't until the man who killed my daughter was arrested again for hitting another young woman [who wasn't killed] that a lot of this came back to me and I found I wasn't functioning as well. One of the reasons I made the decision to leave MADD [in 1985] was that I realized that I needed to grieve for her."

In the six weeks I spent with Ken Druck we agreed that I could ask him anything so long as I took no "cheap shots" at him or his work in print. Even if I wanted time to grieve, and it sort of postponed the pain. Grieving the death of a child is

and other-imposed—of his work. An afternoon in Arizona with an aged and frail Elizabeth Kubler-Ross; Druck is surprising her with a gift she's always wanted, a dog. Meetings in Washington, D.C., with the offices of Senators Kennedy and Kerry and members of the State Department on behalf of safer international road travel. An hour confab with Senator Danne Feinstein on behalf of a friend whose daughter was murdered. A speech to 3500 students, faculty, and staff at La Costa Canyon High School entitled "Lessons Learned from Columbine" given with Azim Khamisa, whose son Tariq was killed in North Park while delivering pizzas in 1995. A workshop

at Barona Casino to help tribal elders confront the loss of one of their colleagues' children. Plus me shadowing him. Throughout lunches and soccer games and air travel and errands (the first time I accompanied him on an errand I offered to drive, but Druck said, "No, let's take Jenna's car," a dark green SUV he says he will never sell), the aggrieved father remembers her with a devotion that is relentless like a jet-spray sprinkler on a fair way. There is — and it's no cheap shot but one of many contradictions Druck himself identifies — a great deal of life for him in his daughter's death.

By all accounts Jenna Anne

Druck was an extraordinary girl and young woman. Born in Colorado, in 1975, she and her family moved to San Diego's North County in 1979, where her father continued his practice and her mother became a psychotherapist. Right off the bat, Jenna stood out as a leader. Her sister Stephanie recalls Jenna "putting herself in so many situations of having to lose." These included running for class president and captain of her soccer team. "She wanted to prove that she was number one," Stephanie says. "And she was." Jenna always sat in the front of the class, cultivated relationships with her teachers, even in first grade. She "took pride in connect-

ing with people." Stephanie, who came up through the schools some four grades after her talented older sister, heard this regularly: "You're Jenna Druck's little sister? She was my favorite student." At 9, Jenna was named San Diego's Young Woman Entrepreneur. At 12, she joined Joelle James's Super Camp program, designed to encourage achievement and leadership in young women. James recalls the girl's possessing a "vibrancy and an ability to connect that's unusual for a young person. She seemed to have that ability that older, wiser people have" — to be direct and focused. Jenna wasn't scattered but "present. Even if it was for a few seconds, it caused

me or anybody else to feel special. That's an incredible gift." The preadolescent Jenna wanted to help those who didn't have "the opportunities she had had." James shared Jenna's passion, so the two bonded.

Reminiscing about that bond, James points to a two-foot-wide pine board, displayed on a shelf above her desk, on which Jenna had Magic Markered her "breakthrough words," those states she wanted to achieve: balance, freedom, true happiness, strength of heart, confidence, hope, a powerful soul. When Super Camp ended, Jenna broke the board in two, symbolic entry into adolescence.

Jenna got started on

mentoring others with Stephanie. She helped her sister, who was "scared, scared, scared" whenever she had to make the transition from one school to the next.

the registration office and up to the counter — she knew exactly what to do," stepping over a huge set of ropes and poles for keeping people in line. Stephanie was

experience with college. I just covered my face and ran out." Jenna was "pissing in her pants, laughing. She thought this was the funniest thing she'd ever seen." Jenna comforted her crying younger sister and told her something that Stephanie says she'll never forget: "She got that 'angry older person look' and told me to 'pull it together. This is good. You're so lucky this has happened to you. The hardest part is over with. I hope something like this happens to you every time you're in a hard situation in your life.'" The incident has been a metaphor for Stephanie's life whenever she's had difficulties, the worst of which is losing her sister.

Jenna's desire to lead continued at Torrey Pines High School, where she was a class officer and an honors student. Jeanne Jones was her counselor. Jones remembers Jenna as "full of life and full of love. She gave herself completely, every minute she touched feel like he or she mattered." Jones said the teen's sensibility was a nurtured "Druck family value." Jenna also had "an innate radiance that defined who she was." She possessed a "very unusual combination" of "exuberance and love." She was "selfless," refusing activities and allegiances that would merely look good on her application to college. Jones said. This enthusiasm

She told her dad about meeting Madonna or "getting hit on by the [Red Hot] Chili Peppers."

The toughest incident came later when Jenna, about two months before Semester at Sea, took a college-bound Stephanie to look at the University of California at Santa Barbara. "She went right into

holding back but came forward when Jenna beckoned. Suddenly, Stephanie tripped over one of the ropes and then seven of them fell down, "clang, clang, clang," she tells me. "This is my first

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to give to others was "part and parcel of her being. She had no other choice."

At Torrey Pines, Jenna, her friend Pilar McLellan, and two other girls sought the assistance of Joelle James to form a new leadership program. As college-bound seniors, they wanted to mentor girls two or three years their junior because the older girls had benefited from such programs themselves. They called their program LEAP: Learning and Excelling to Achieve Performance and planned it as a two-day affair in Idylwild. McLellan, who now works for Andersen Consulting in San Francisco, remembers Jenna as unusually dedicated to her friends. Her greatest trait was loyalty. She recalls Jenna at college sending her "the most amazing poetry-letters on flowered paper that I'd put up all around my room," McLellan says once they had a falling out because she forgot to call Jenna when both were visiting in San Diego. Jenna was direct: "You've got to regain my trust," and the thought still haunts McLellan, even though she and the time they reconciled. She

describes her as one of those unique friends "who demand a lot more because they give a lot more."

James says Jenna's best trait was her sympathy for "what adolescents go through — trying to figure out who am I as a separate individual," even while she, Jenna, was an adolescent. Everyone I spoke with said she had individuated unusually fast. Jenna seemed to escape the fate of many young girls who avoid science and math, over-focus on diet and beauty, love athletics behind. She played soccer, was a superb student, and, as her father recalls, placed "boys on the side." Jenna's adolescent quagmires were minimal, though Ken Druck said there are stories about her vulnerability he is telling in his book.

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books. Jenna began giving out pencils and succeeded in setting off a near riot: Far more children than pencils, the children started fighting each other for possession. Though Jenna's generosity was chastised by a teacher, she began, back onboard, writing letters to influential Americans and to her parents to help these kids. Among those she wrote to were the presidents of Coors, Celestial Seasonings, and Pier 1 Imports. They responded with donations. She also enlisted the aid of her sorority at the University of Colorado, which kicked in money and supplies. In Eagle, Colorado, a teacher continues collecting school supplies for Africa in what's called the Jenna Druck Pencil Project.

Before the Explorer docked in Madras, India, students had chosen one of many in-country field trips that the program sponsored. On these trips they'd learn about the culture, the economics, and the history of India. They'd also receive credit. Jenna's trip, with 55 other students, included a stop in Varanasi, a flight to and tour of New Delhi, and another plane ride to Agra. There they'd tour the Taj Mahal, the 17th-century white marble monument, an emperor's tribute to his wife who died in childbirth. In New Delhi the students discovered their evening flight to Agra was canceled because it had been overbooked. Ken Druck believes this is where the tragedy began. He now understands that student-abroad programs routinely hire local companies that, as a rule, overbook flights and reschedule them with cheaper alternatives. To this end, the in-country tour company hired two buses and, allegedly, two drivers who hadn't slept in 48 hours. Druck says the head of the tour company decided these drivers would go all night so the students would get to Agra on time. This was, for Druck, the high point of stupidity. He says that had he, had any of the other parents, had someone responsible at Semester at Sea known about traveling at night from New Delhi to Agra on the most treacherous road in India, "any reasonable person" would have insisted that the students get a hotel room and wait, either for daylight

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or for another plane.

There were two buses, and the 55 had to get on one or the other. Morgan and St. Clair talk in hushed tones as they recall having been in the bus ahead of Jenna's bus, the one that flipped over. Morgan describes how she had got on Jenna's bus but then "heard a voice in my head say, 'Get on the other bus.' That bus was too full." The buses moved out for the six-hour ride. They began maneuvering what is perhaps the most heavily trafficked, narrow mountainous road in the world — the New Delhi-to-Agra highway, also known as the Grand Trunk Road. Even at night the road is packed with luxury cars and diesel trucks jockeying for position with donkey carts and bicycles. The noise, the exhaust-spewing trucks, the pothole-covered road combine with drivers who push overfired tourist buses to the Taj Mahal as fast as possible. As one writer notes, "Basic rules like stopping at a flashing red light or yielding to oncoming traffic when attempting to pass are routinely ignored — or simply

unknown." With such danger it's no wonder 65,000 people die every year on India's highways.

What's worse is that on this one highway 1600 deaths occur each year. Of this road's record, the young people on the two buses had no idea. On the first bus with some 35 students was St. Clair and Morgan; on the second bus behind them was Jenna, Sarah Schewe, Chere Lauhere, Virginia Amato, and others.

On the way, there were several near misses when the bus passed slower vehicles on curves. At one point one of the boys on board stood up and yelled out for the driver to slow down: "He's going to kill all of us!" Along the ride, Jenna was writing in her journal about the day she'd spent in Varanasi, "experiencing" Druck says, "the cycle of life and death, watching children be born on the Ganges, watching bodies be buried on the Ganges." (Druck has the journal Jenna was writing in and will reveal its contents in his book. He remembers, and the moment is for him one of choking despair, that his daughter's writing literally records—in

loops and drops and swerves of the pen—the madness of the ride.)

The bus driver kept pushing, passing more vehicles on curves. Trying to get back in his lane, he swerved to miss yet another vehicle, was blinded in the headlights, and lost control. The bus careened down an embankment, overturning in a ditch. Seven people were crushed

"No one has ever stepped up and said, 'Your child died on our watch. I'm so sorry.'"

to death. Five Americans: Jenna, Sarah, Chere, Virginia, and John Wilson, husband of an educator at the University of Pittsburgh. Two Indians: the driver and a tour guide.

"It's debatable whether they died instantly," Druck says. "Several people said Jenna died instantly. One or two of the other girls didn't die instantly. Many were injured. It was a horrific

scene. One of the boys named Andrew — the others were too afraid it would catch fire — crawled back in the bus and pulled the bodies out. The parents later met with Andrew, to thank him. He tried to resuscitate all the girls. Unsuccessfully. Four dead girls, one of them still breathing. But, in bad shape. There was a disaster scene. There was no hospital anywhere

woman named Bridget. She told the Drucks that Jenna, ten minutes prior to the wreck, had exchanged her seat, farther back in the bus, with Bridget, who was sitting in the spot up front. This was the seat in which Jenna died.

Druck and his family got the call from the program but from the parent of an injured daughter. When the person said Jenna had been hurt, he says he knew she was dead. In that moment, "That's when all life stopped."

"My daughter's death was preventable," Druck says with fury. "My daughter's death was the result of negligence, of people putting money over safety. My daughter died on the watch of the University of Pittsburgh Semester at Sea program. Shame on me if I don't do something to prevent one family from going through what we went through and what we continue to go through — shame on me for not doing it." Druck describes the program's response to the accident as "nothing less than despicable." One week after the

deaths (the bodies had been flown back to the United States), the families of the wrecked and the young women received in the mail an announcement to "Meet the Kids" in Seattle at the end of the voyage. When the bereaved parents asked how the wreck occurred, the Semester at Sea people became defensive. "It got litigious," Druck says. He recalls sitting "across from the director of the program in deposition, who when asked if they'd do anything differently said they 'would do nothing differently. Accidents happen,' he said. There's not one change planned or proposed in their program."

About pursuing a lawsuit, Druck says, "The parents wanted safety standards to be implemented. That was what we wanted. We didn't want money. A million dollars is not going to bring Jenna Druck back. A million dollars doesn't mean shit." He seethes at this thought, his voice anchored on a lead-weight tone. "No one has ever stepped up and said, 'Your child died on our watch. I'm so sorry. I'm sorry. I know your family will live

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with this every day for the rest of their lives. Jenna's life is lost to her. I will never forget this. I will work and devote the rest of my career and profession to making sure that this never happens again, inasmuch as that is humanly possible." Here Druck pauses and raises praying hands before his chest: "I would say, Thank you. You honored my daughter. Good-bye." But I won't ever get that. So my guess is that it will go to trial.

Druck and the other parents who lost daughters sent a warning to every study-abroad program in America. "We've been told that what we've done has changed the face of 'study abroad,' if for no other reason than the fear of being sued." However, the parents also feel they're partly to blame. "We made dangerous assumptions about the safety considerations afforded our children," the families wrote in a July 1997 letter. "Every Parent's Worst Nightmare." Though some say the Semester at Sea program continues to thrive, Druck and other parents have joined forces with a new organization, the Association for Safe International Road Travel. On their behalf Druck spent a week in Washington working the State Department and the offices of Senators Kennedy, Kerry, and Feinstein.

That afternoon, when Druck tells me the story of his daughter's death, we are on the veranda of the Hilton Hotel looking onto Mission Bay and the concrete paths beside it. We pause as a young girl goes by, wearing a purple crash helmet, fast-peddaling her bicycle and tilting side to side on the training wheels. It's then that Druck ends the story by saying that was "the day all time stopped." The moment he knew she was dead "not only changes things for all time in this life. If there is such a thing as other lives, it changes for all time in a soul [and] in lives of all souls. So the magnitude of what happens cannot begin to be known. Your nervous system would never care to know it. Such is the death of a child." Druck says he believes if science could measure what happens in the instant a parent hears that his or her child has died, then "I can guarantee you'd see a major structural change in a person's cells. Every cell

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in the person's being is transformed. Part of the cell dies, part of the cell is shocked. That shock is a buffer to another part of the cell which needs to find a way to live on because it's programmed to live. There's a recoding that comes over every cell of your being."

And yet another paradox blooms. "Just as your child's life has been lost to them, just as your life has been lost to you, you're suddenly faced with the moment-to-moment, day-to-day, year-to-year challenge of reconstructing something in its place. Which is not particularly what you wanted to be doing. But that's what you're going to be asked to do. And then to somehow justify that you're continuing to live although your child has died. You're going to get to go on? How is it that I get to go on and she doesn't, just doesn't make sense. I've lived my life. I had marriage, kids, a career, traveled the world. Her life was just blossoming. How can that happen? It's just not right."

At this point, I have to respond. "Never have I had

to think about justifying my life. My life is justified. It doesn't need to be justified."

One indication of how far apart Druck and this ear are. "I have to give purpose to my life," he responds, "in a way that honors my daughter, that moves the beautiful agenda she had in this life forward."

"Is that the justification?" "It allows me to get up every morning." After a long pause, for which the wind over Mission Bay clicks its heels, Druck's eyes are a quivering glaze of tears. "It never stops hurting," he says. "I'll never stop missing her. You resolve that that is the way it is, and you resolve to do what's next. It's the price of loving somebody so deeply, so completely."

A support group for parents who have lost their children is what Ken Druck calls "a club nobody wants to join." The Lenka Druck Foundation sponsors several such groups — one for grand-children, one for siblings (teenagers and younger), one called "Living Losses" for parents whose kids have not died but whose lives are

lost (drug addicts, runaways, criminals doing time), and one soon-to-be-launched program, organized by 22-year-old Stephanie Druck, for young adults. All these groups are private, their confessions confidential. Druck, however, did approve my

One woman speaks of meeting the man who now carries the donated heart of her son, of laughing and crying simultaneously when she placed her ear on his chest and heard her son's pounding presence.

coming to one adult meeting. Before my visit, he introduces me to the ongoing physical and psychological nature of their grief. The pain, once the first half-year of shock wears off (this is also the time nongrieving people think the parent begins

"to heal"), Druck calls invisible. "You've been devastated and shattered. Since it's not physically measurable, others don't understand when you're truly in crisis. You've got an invisible broken heart." Druck says the griever often wishes

to die out of sheer inertia. He says such sorrow doesn't sink in with the parents because no one has testified to it enough so that as a society we "get it." "The medical equivalent of what they're going through would [be] tubes going in and out of

their bodies in the emergency care unit, trying to save their lives. They don't realize they're in absolute red-alert crisis. But nobody's telling them that and there's no sign." Deep grief produces breakdowns in people's immune systems, biochemical transformations, like depression. Physical signs include loss of concentration and appetite, terrible disturbances in sleep and mood, hypersensitivity followed by periods of numbness.

Druck believes the only effective way to face loss is via a group that possesses an "organicism," developed within and by the grievers themselves. This process, different for everyone and every group, can neither be taught nor institutionalized. It can be learned, and then, only by the grievers on their timetable.

At a North County church every two weeks, a parents' group meets for two hours. In a newly built wing, next to the day-care play area, is a clean room, half-carpeted, half-tiled. Most of the parents bring their surviving children for a con-

current sibling meeting run by Scott Johnson. In another building, the kids do different activities — artwork and games in organized blocks of time — that concentrate on the loss.

I watch as parents arrive, at and past the starting time. (Each is wearing the pinched look of grief William Hurt wore in *The Accidental Tourist*.) "Welcome," Druck says, and soon I'm hearing from 12 women and 1 man about losses that range from ten weeks to four years. Teen and young-adult deaths come in car wrecks, one from road rage, suicides, murder, a brain tumor. Two younger deaths — a 9-year-old, an 11-year-old — are from leukemia. Druck asks that I introduce myself, then listen and observe, take no notes. I should open up about my feelings too. Which I do by saying that the hardest part for me is never knowing what to say to a person who's lost a child. One woman's advice is not to offer any to the griever. "Say instead that you can't know what the person is going through, but you can listen and you can withhold

judgment."

Druck asks each person to tell his or her story briefly, then respond to this question: If this group were being held solely for your benefit, what would you ask the group for? As they go around, the women haltingly or confidently tell their tales; they don't look to him as guide even though he is guiding them. Druck prompts them with questions; congratulates their courage for coming and speaking; asks others if, on certain points, they'd like further discussion; seeks levity with an occasional story, like the one about the bereaved parents' picnic that revolts passersby because the group seems to be drooping all over the food.

The women speak, their fear and anger liberated from rumination. One woman says how "ripped off" she feels, it's just like rape. One woman blames herself for not having acted soon enough to save her daughter from a viral infection. One woman speaks of meeting the man who now carries the donated heart of her son, of laughing and crying simultaneously when she placed her ear on

his chest and heard her son's pounding presence. One woman describes her loss as "unthinkable, unspeakable, inconceivable." One woman recounts her struggle to get her daughter to the kids' group because she continues to act out in school. One woman blurts the one truth that ironically sustains her: "I know he's always going to be dead!" One woman — whose teenager was pursued by her own front yard by a road-rage maniac who slammed his vehicle into hers and killed her — says that when she saw her current home she was certain that this was the house she was meant to live in, so how is it possible that three weeks later "after I picked it out, my child would die there?" One woman warns us of people who are open to remembering the good aspects of her kid but not willing to hear how horrible things are now. Which is why she keeps coming back to the group. To voice the monstrous thoughts that nobody else wants to hear.

I feel invisible, though hovering. My function is to help pass a new box of tis-

sue. At odd, vacant-eyed moments, we watch the tissue box bobbing like a puppet against the floor while each tearful person pulls and pulls, trying to free the tissue from its boxed-in folds until, finally, each takes hold of the box with the other hand and frees the sheet, first one, then another. Later I read the product's ad pitch: "Softly tissue is made in a special way with soft fibers on the outside and strong fibers on the inside."

I wonder where the men are. Druck reminds me later of the dad's group, in which the men are "learning how to surrender." Here, however, several women talk about being "doubly ripped-off" by unavailable men: Their job, so think many men, is to get over the loss and get back to work, back to normal. One husband after a month of grieving told his wife that she'd turned into a bitch because all she did was cry about the dead child. Four of the 12 women tell about the breakup of a marriage or a relationship; for these four, the lost child was not related to the husband or partner. Women

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not in relationships express fears of being alone. What men would want to date these women once they know their stories, their fragility? They label themselves "damaged goods." How often do they victimize themselves by putting on the mask that says "I'm getting over it," when, in fact, they aren't?

Several women say that to avoid sorrow they have flung themselves into work and created successful businesses. And yet they know this has been an avoidance. The more work replaces grief,

the worse grief gets. Perhaps the most plaintive are those who remember a murdered child. They are sickened by the thought of watching the "piece of shit responsible" be defended in a criminal trial. One woman testifies that such a burden, though real, is ultimately a side issue. No burn of revenge returns the child, no hail of justice makes up for missing him or her. It seems that for people who "forgive" those who've killed their children, it is done not out of goodness but exhaustion.

Druck the facilitator usually tells about his week, but this night the group's size and long stories leave him no time. Instead he is present in the questions he takes notes on and summarizes at the end.

How do we react to any superstition or premonition that continues to haunt us about the death? How do we deal with the feelings that the child's life had only so many years in it based on some power, good or evil, to take it away? How do we feel about recognizing that

we weren't the ones with that power? Where are our children? Are they here, with us, in the room? Have they gone elsewhere, where we'll never find them until we die and join them? How do we want to join them right now? Why is there so much mixed up in our heads between remembering the child alive and dead? And then these even heavier emotional questions for which there is also no clear answer: What do we do when we know others who've lost children are showing a deeper,

more incomprehensible pain than we are? Is it true, the greater the pain, the greater the love? What happens if we feel guilty for getting on top of our grief? Must we always suffer because suffering is the only sign of the love we bore a son or daughter?

In the meantime, Scott Johnson is letting the kids in the sibling group out to catch up with their parents. Johnson, who joined the Jena Druck Foundation last summer to organize a child and adolescent bereavement

program, has a seven-year background in hospice work at Grossmont Hospital. He uses art and play activities as a means to get kids to express feelings about loss. A kind, rueful man with a silver-gray beard, Johnson tells me that when he first counseled parents about a dying relative during house calls: he noticed the children were always absent. Where were they? "Oh, we sent them next door while we have this talk," the parents would say," Johnson felt the young ones' pain was being

ignored, locked behind a "taboo about death and kids." Bereavement counseling for the young, 100 years ago, he says, "wouldn't have been necessary. We had role models teaching us about grief. Often when someone died, they'd lay the body out in the hall. If you had a large family, invariably one of them would die every few years. You'd be familiar with death. It would be okay to cry, to be upset, to be angry—all the different ways to grieve." He notes perhaps the one good aspect of managed care is to return death

and dying to the home, where all of us, as it were, must be outpatients.

In the kids' room, I read the sign-in sheet: Name, Who Died, and When. The young ones have been continuing an art project, drawing the name or a picture of their departed siblings, which a church group is going to transfer to cloth for a group remembrance quilt. Johnson says during his sessions he gets the kids "to do something with their hands, so they can talk." The activities help them express a love, even a happiness, about

their survival. It's not a contradiction for Johnson. "Play helps normalize them," he says. "Otherwise they're going crazy because they miss their sister or father who's died." The talk and the play lead children to express locked-up emotions but, Johnson believes, there's something of a world which doesn't make sense because that world took a brother or sister. He says bereavement for a young child is more cognitively difficult than it is for an adult because the child's

understanding of death is simple: If a young boy has had thoughts about his older sister, who then dies in an airplane crash, the boy will connect the two and blame himself. Often this blame is terrible because most children feel they are at the center of a caring universe. How do surviving children fit death into the positive feelings received from parents who have loved and protected them, especially when they think, Johnson says, "one, that I'm special, and two, if I'm special, then I'm exempt from ever having to die?"

Johnson cites several new studies that suggest 90 percent of adolescents in trouble identify a loss or a death—family member or friend—concurrent with that trouble. To escape grieving a loss, the "solution" is drugs, crime, alcohol, promiscuity. These, Johnson insists, are the consequences of "not having grief support." The loss that manifests itself in adolescence is Johnson's newest venture. He has begun training counselors with techniques spelled out in an eight-week curriculum he's written on teen bereavement.

"Teenagers," he said, "are very comfortable with death issues. But not the adults who work with them."

Stephanie Druck, who's worked with all the foundation's sibling groups, believes it's important (as does Johnson) to separate young kids, teenagers, and young adults. Those ages all together "don't work," she says. Little kids giggle and ask "too many questions." Older kids sit in the sorrow more comfortably perhaps because they have fewer responsibilities than adults do. Stephanie echoes Johnson when she



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Amy Ringler: One of the times I work with met her husband through the Reader Matches. They've been together for six years and they have a baby now. But I didn't know this when I started looking through the ads. I just wasn't finding the right person. So I figured, "What do I have to lose?" Karl: I received about a dozen calls and met several women, a dentist, a personal trainer, and a woman who worked at a baseball card trading company. They were all nice, but I kept playing phone tag with Amy. Amy: I was the last person he met. We took a long walk along Mission

Bay on a Friday after work. If things went well, we had plans to join his friends at a bonfire on the beach. But we went out for ice cream instead. We didn't want to show our evening with anyone else. Karl: The very next day we got together, and the day after that, too. I don't think we've spent many days apart ever since. It doesn't take long to know when you've found a relationship you want to pursue.

Amy: I moved in with Karl three months later. Friends were telling us to slow down and my parents came out from Michigan rather quickly to meet him.

Karl: I didn't have to tow a banner behind a plane to propose to Amy. We both knew it was going to happen.

Amy: Still, I thought he should officially ask me. So he did, about 13 months after we met. It was late at night and we were sitting on the sofa, laughing and crying at the same time.

Karl: My father, who's a minister, is going to marry us on April 3. The wedding is going to be very low-key.

Amy: We've already made the commitment to each other. Now all we have to do is celebrate it.

Karl: I always thought you had to compromise when you get married. Maybe you'd find 80 percent of what you were looking for in a mate. But Amy comes pretty close to 100 percent.

Amy: I'm thankful he was so picky.



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says teenagers are somehow less frightened by sorrow. In contrast, young adults are "in the real world [where] you have to pay your rent, your bills, go to work." Such distractions keep the grief at bay. Thus, the foundation is trying to cover every age and relationship possible. Their acumen is remarkable. These programs have sprung up from the families' efforts. No model has been used. If anything, the Jenna Druck Foundation is writing the text for a set of procedures that may become the standard for bereavement. And yet it would seem that one of the text's premises is that grieving can be an unteachable thing that resists methodologies, conforming instead to the wishes and regrets of the grievers themselves.

Robin Anderson hands a poem she's just written about her son Trevor Gilbert, who was killed more than two years ago in a car wreck about a mile from their home in Encinitas. Over lunch in her backyard, aglow with spring flowers, the attrac-

tive woman with tawny brown hair says she's not a poet. To write it took all of ten minutes. Yet she likes the page-long verse because it touches on the "duality" that all bereaved parents feel. At once there's a "darkness" that threatens to envelop me / but it's because of this darkness / that I think I can see." She begins with the intangible, trying to define how losing a child can bring about unknown, spiritual consequences. She next pulls out a photo of the shrine at her son's crash site. It shows a cross, draped with ball caps, neckties, angel wings. Some-one trailed "TG Forever" in candle wax on the pavement. For months she haunted debris that remained at the site—ash trays, pulverized glass, steel-and-tire slush marks on a concrete culvert, a smashed fence. She often stayed "to sit and cry, talk to him, listen for him." Trevor was killed in October 1998 when he clipped the curb and lost control of his car on Rancho Santa Fe Road. The car swiveled around, flipped over, and reeled down

into a culvert. Skidding on its roof some 75 feet, the car was "completely crushed." Trevor hadn't been drinking. Her son and his friends, Anderson says, "were always good about not drinking and driving." But he loved cars and loved driving them fast. "Typical Trevor, in his fast little Honda... Oh, we hated that car." That night was no different; he'd been speeding—"between 85 and 90."

Anderson has two other sons, Rory and Erik, seven and nine at the time, from a second marriage. Their reaction to the loss of their older step-brother has been unpredictable. During the funeral, Erik ran from the service and locked himself in a bathroom. On a school trip to the mission at San Juan Capistrano, Erik lit a candle in the church, knelt, and said a prayer for Trevor, and cried. "And we're not Catholic," Anderson says. Both boys are doing well in their sibling support group. There they can talk about the loss, an impossibility with their peers. Anderson says her children grieve differ-

ently from her. They don't want to talk about it because it will make her sad. They do, though, remember Trevor every day—his sayings, his mannerisms, his jokes. "What would Trevor do? Funny things he did and everyone cracks up. He used to put peanut butter on Erik's stomach and make the dog lick it off." Anderson laughs heartily. "We tell stories about him to keep him alive."

The older boy has also had a hard time in school. "People expect children who are grieving to be sad," Anderson says, "but they don't act sad. They act out." Nearly one year after the loss, Erik (who's always been a "straight-A student") began the school year by being disruptive. He talked all the time and stressed out about his assignments. Anderson, also noticing that Erik was not sleeping at night, took him to a child psychologist, who said (in Anderson's mime), "Duh-hh, he's grieving." She then conferred with the boy's teacher, asking her to use more positive reinforcement. The teacher

replied that the boy was an annoyance, pure and simple. Anderson countered that Erik was still grieving the death of his brother. "Oh no," the teacher shot back. "I don't think this has anything to do with grief." By this time, Anderson had connected with Ken Druck and asked him to intervene. Druck, school officials, teachers, Robin Anderson, and her husband had a summit meeting. Anderson recalls that Druck talked about aspects of children's sadness that are still not understood. For one, psychologists are now estimating that grief takes eight years to work itself through a young child's emotions and behavior. Teachers, like others, believe people should "be over it" after a year or two. And kids don't grieve as grown-ups do; kids take breaks and compartmentalize whereas few adults can push it away. The pain children feel has to be respected and never threatened. If it's not respected, then a young kid's learning development will suffer, while in older kids, their sense of

purpose and self-esteem slides away precipitously. Anderson says the problem may get worse because, in later grades, teachers will not be aware of the student's sorrow. Unless the teachers are educated. She remembers telling everyone assembled that "I can't keep my children alive, but I can be their advocate. And I will." Her other son Rory has had a great year in school, largely, she believes, because the teacher is compassionate. Which is really all Anderson expects.

Compassionate was Anderson's first impression of Ken Druck, with whom she spoke twice a week after Trevor's death. She would tell him, "My God, I just can't stand it anymore. I'm used to feeling bad and then brushing myself off and doing something else. I can't do that now." Druck, she says, would "listen to whatever I was ranting about. There was never anything I would say that would shock him." That first year of the loss, she says, was the worst. "Very little made sense." Even though I have a wonderful,

surviving family—I read one time in a book, a woman said it was like being in the middle of a river, in a boat. You've got one [dead] child on one side and the other surviving children on the other; and you feel like you have to choose which one

you want to be with. There isn't a choice but you feel like there is. You're pulled apart. You can't imagine having joy in your life because you've lost your child. You're glad you have surviving kids because at least they give you a reason to get out of bed

every day." More duality frames the wall of how one should grieve. "On one hand I don't want to be around other people because I don't have the energy to talk nonsense anymore. And yet if nobody would call me, that would

upset me." Pulled thus, she said fine, then called the next day. She says, surprisingly, that "if anyone is doing the abandoning, it's mostly me." As to her marriage, Anderson says she's aware that many don't survive the loss of a child. She credits her

husband's empathy because she has not been the "ideal mate" to live with. She often doesn't feel like doing anything for him. He has accepted her up-down feelings, her consuming pain, and because of his acceptance they have grown closer.

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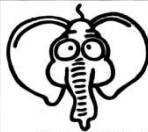
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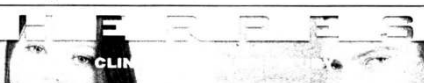
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Anderson, like other griever, says grief has a constant palpable presence. She says, using her hands as props, the sorrow covered her face for a year and now has moved onto her shoulders. "I can kind of go around it, whereas I used to not be able to." Time and distraction, a new job, have allowed this change.

Anderson finds that a schedule is good because otherwise she would find herself "circling the drain, feeling sucked into a black darkness I can't get out of."

Remembering Trevor is never a distraction. When he was eight, a neighbor couple used to take him out to the movies or for pizza because they liked his company. Once, Anderson recalls, they were eating pizza, and there was "one piece left and they were all eyeing it. Trevor leaned over and spit on it. And said, 'Anybody want

that last piece?' That kind of story brings the joy back." She also remembers how his friends — many tattooed, some with pierced tongues — hailed him at the funeral as being "nonjudgmental, accepting, and kind. How loving he was. My son affected them, which was an overwhelmingly powerful feeling. A side of your child you don't see." A couple of Trevor's friends wanted to tattoo on their stomachs "In Loving Memory of Trevor Ryan Gilbert." When Anderson got wind, she asked them not to; they might regret it one day. But his friends went through with it anyway. She says they told her Trevor helped them make the right choices in their lives. "Now when we look down and see his name, we'll remember to make the right choices again."

Closing our conversa-

tion, Anderson returns to duality. "Losing a part of my soul and a part of me, and being so wounded that you wonder one day how you're going to get up. And the next day it's like you've been given

"People expect children who are grieving to be sad," Anderson says, "but they don't act sad."

They act out."

this gift to see maybe what it's all about and maybe help change somebody else's life."

"Yes, somehow. But it's not the gift I asked for."

That afternoon there's a message on my machine.

"This is Robin Anderson and I just wanted to clear something up, when I talked about the gift that I'd felt like I'd gotten. I want you to know that that's, like, one day. That's on a good day. On a

Nearly 400 girls, aged 15 and 16, attend, usually selected by teachers or counselors in their high schools. Last year's keynote speakers were Sandra McBrayer, San Diego's legendary Teacher of the Year, who began America's first school for homeless kids, and Sunniva Sorby, one of four women who ski-slided across Antarctica to the South Pole on the first all-female expedition. The girls choose among a half-dozen workshops, whose titles include "Reality Check" and "Act and Be Confident." They are also feted at a mentor luncheon where in small groups the girls talk with some of San Diego's professional women leaders. The eight-hour conference is Druck's way of continuing what Jenna and several friends in high school had planned, a leadership conference that would give to others what they had enjoyed. The most innovative part — Jenna's idea — was to invite girls not chosen through the traditional means of student achievement in academics, government, sports, or clubs. Thus most would be acknowledged as leaders for the first

time.

One example of the young girls in attendance is Chelsea Schmid from La Costa Canyon High School. There the junior organized a chapter of SAWE — Students Against Violence Everywhere — and did fund-raising for Children's Hospital. The hard but rewarding part, McLellan tells me, is to return each year and feel again "like I am responsible for living my life and achieving as much as I can, not just for me, but for [Jenna] too. People look at me and think, 'Wow, you've got a great job, you've done so much at such a young age,' but" — and here her voice strains with a burdensome wisdom — "they, you

bad day it's Xanax and a bottle of wine. I didn't want you to think that I always felt that way. Every day can be different. I didn't want to make it sound like I feel like I'd gotten a gift, and I'm all happy about that — and I don't think you really got that, but I wanted to make it clear."

On a Saturday each spring, the Jenna Druck Foundation hosts the Young Women's Spirit of Leadership Conference at UCSD.

Joelle James plans and runs the event; Ken Druck presides over it with his usual intense yet beaming love and encouragement. Druck nominated her to the conference. Joelle James plans and runs the event; Ken Druck presides over it with his usual intense yet beaming love and encouragement. Druck nominated her to the conference. Joelle James plans and runs the event; Ken Druck presides over it with his usual intense yet beaming love and encouragement. Druck nominated her to the conference.

career possibilities that the eight-hour conference then taps.

Pilar McLellan has presented workshops every year. An athlete, she rallies the girls by running the theater's aisles and getting the girls to talk into the microphone. The hard but rewarding part, McLellan tells me, is to return each year and feel again "like I am responsible for living my life and achieving as much as I can, not just for me, but for [Jenna] too. People look at me and think, 'Wow, you've got a great job, you've done so much at such a young age,' but" — and here her voice strains with a burdensome wisdom — "they, you

know what? I'm living for two people. Two of us are here. I've taken that on as my own little spirit-flame that I owe Jenna."

With testimonies of "what I learned today" that flood the room in the afternoon, the young girls seem to be initiated into a world of caring more about themselves and things larger than themselves. One girl speaks — a coltish voice that high-fives every "so" — of personal transformation: "In just a few hours I've learned so much about myself. I've peeled off the eggshell. I've met so many people here today that I'll remember for the rest of my life. Not their

names but that they were so open and so sweet and so wonderful. We're going to rock in the future. This is the greatest thing I've ever done in my whole, entire life, thank you." Cheers, whoops, applause. Another with precocious sagacity states that "no matter how much planning we do with our lives, how much we want to go to this [or that] college, we have to also leave our hearts open to the opportunities that are given to us each day. I learned today that life isn't about making these exact plans. It's about living for the moment. It's about the people and the experiences you get to —

that you have the honor and the pleasure of experiencing every second of life. So it's about living for the second." More hollers and claps. One of the last girls to speak says she's "heard a lot about Jenna... I'm glad she's still around for everyone."

One of their take-home prizes is a certificate, signed by the person who nominated the girl to the conference. Under the nominator's signature it reads this individual "believes in your leadership ability." When the girls discover who chose them, it's often a surprise.

Throughout the day I marvel at the intermixing of girlhood and womanhood.

For example, during a lunch of fruit and croissant-wiches, the girl who lives in most of them seems swallowed up or pushed aside by the initiatory formality of the event. At each of the tables girls busily eat; some in fact seem very hungry (how many are dieting?). But most are eating with more care than normal. They're more polite, more careful, aware that the day is not only about them but also about the expectation the conference and its

leadership focus have for them. Though starving, they're trying not to chew too rabidly. One I watch is chewing with adolescent fury. But her hand masks her mouth, which, of course, draws more attention to the fact that those jaws are working like a Ferrari piston. The sound in the vast ballroom over lunch is hushed — no shouting, no laughter, no giggles. It's serious. This is adulthood. Initiation into the pros means first to act

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like one. Besides, I don't know when I've seen so many 16-year-old girls being waited on by male busboys who utter in embarrassed voices, "Are you finished, ma'am?" It occurs to me, from my perch, that the conference is saying to these girls that the

society, the professions, the families, the companies you will lead and organize in the future will include you in a defined role but also as an individual. Druck and James have caught these girls, even for a day, as they leave one body for another. The

strongest sense of the event is this: These young girls are suddenly in transition. One of the mentors, Deborah Lindholm, who began the Foundation for Women, tells me later that those at her table wanted most to know about her personal life, what

decisions she made, especially why she left corporate business to run a foundation. When I pull back and see Lindholm and her troop of girls sitting so grown-up with her, I'm struck that this conference is giving something to Ken Druck that he

may or may not realize. His conference is embodying the stages of womanhood, from called-out young leader to mentor to workshop leader to Teacher of the Year, that Jenna herself perhaps would have gone through. This father's daughter is

never far away. At the door to the theater where the hundreds of young women enter for the plenary events, there's a fresh bouquet of pink roses — Jenna's "Strength of Heart" flower — with Jenna's photograph leaning on the vase. In it she seems

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erates something larger than girlhood. Several young women hold Ken's hand during the day, and one, I hear, tearfully says, "It is so nice that you're doing this for your daughter."

The most poignant moment comes when the 370 young women, many in heels and tight sweaters and lip gloss, giddy-to-prim with excitement, assemble on the steps of the Price Center's inner courtyard for a photo. At the center, down in front,

is Jenna's dad. At the sight I think of Druck's oft-told line, "When you lose a daughter, every young girl becomes your daughter."

Outside Ken Druck's dark-stained wood home in Del Mar, a half-mile from the Pacific Ocean, sit two four-foot-tall concrete Buddhas. These statues and Druck's front-room window overlook the broad, reed-filled Peñasquitos Lagoon, fed by the aptly named Soledad

Creek. Under the driveway's lean-to and in sharp contrast to the Buddha is a canvas-covered Harley-Davidson, which Druck bought in 1990 and uses as his "warrior toy."

Having worked predominantly with male psychology, Druck believes men are "slowly domesticated, taught to be good boys and nice guys, so it's hard to keep the little boy alive, the playfulness, the brattiness, the obnoxiousness. As well as a sense of adventure and free-

dom." Thus, the hog is his "antidote to the domesticated man."

The bike is another means to remember Jenna. When he first brought the Harley home, a kidding Jenna jumped on the bike, throwing her legs around the seat. Her boot heel dented the gas tank. "I was so upset with her at the time. My new Harley. Today I cherish that dent. Every time I look at it I smile." This was her warrior moment. Druck rides the Harley to the cemetery. "Can you imagine what a Harley sounds like in the middle of the cemetery? There's an edge of reverence that I know Jenna connects with."

Druck bought his Del Mar home (post-separation from Karen) on the first day he went looking. It took him five minutes to decide on this place. "For the longest time I felt like I was in a marsh. I was no longer a land creature, no longer a water

creature. I was of neither world. Living next to the marsh is like, yeah, this is where I should be." Often Druck goes out in his kayak, a "grief gift" from his sister, and watches the birds and fish, the freshwater family meeting its saltwater cousins.

Most significant is that Jenna is buried a few miles up river, along the stream that passes him every day.

Trilled by the ailing gray-muzzled Rascal and a new Labrador puppy named Angel (a gift from Stefie), Druck shows me his home,

its open-earth fireplace, its two wall-tall-and-wide mirrors that expand and loft the hexagonal, beamed ceiling. In his office there's Jenna memorabilia. "Here," he says, switching on his computer monitor, "is instant joy." A screen-saver picture

of his two daughters, cheek-to-cheek, snugs on in brilliant color. There's a photograph of him with Jenna and Stefie at MTV's Beach House in Malibu, where Jenna worked one summer: "That [photo] was [taken at] the happiest moment of my life." There's

an overhead shot of his 5000-square-foot home in Del Mar Heights — the "family home." Druck calls it, the site of his near-perfect life that ended nearly five years ago. On a bookshelf is one of three ten-inch-thick scrapbooks of cards, letters, art-

work, and mementos that have accumulated following Jenna's death. (Druck says the cards and letters — the most treasured is one from Mother Teresa — keep arriving to this day. He notes the pile now would fill another three volumes.) In

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the living room is a soapstone image of two abstract figures whose limbs and heads join one another in a circle of entanglement. This was to be the surprise gift from Kenya that Jenna told her father on the phone she was bringing him. "That's what arrived back with my daughter's body." Her backpack also returned; he shoulders it whenever he goes to the foundation.

He stares out the picture window at the shining wind-dappled water in late-afternoon sun. Calmed, he says, "One of the metaphors for how I see the rest of my life has to do with the river of life. Moving down the

river of life, I took a huge, unexpected turn. Now it's caused me to look to the end of the river. My daughter's river ended. Where the river met the ocean. Here I am living not at, but somewhere close to, the end of the river of life. My greatest image of joy and death is a picture I have of reaching the end of the river of life, looking out to the crimson sunset, and Jenna's hand is reaching to me. I take her hand with the greatest joy. I don't pretend to know what happens when we die. Sometimes I believe in a spiritual afterlife, other times I feel I'm staring into the abyss. I can't tell you what is true. But that image

gives me tremendous joy, the possibility of reuniting with Jenna."

I ask him what's kept him from going there, from

Druck and James have caught these girls, even for a day, as they leave one body for another.

drinking himself. "I've died over and over again in the crash," he says. "I've been in the crash a thousand times, every microsec-

ond with her. I have died. My life as I knew it died. A great deal of the joy I anticipated died. The ability to connect with my daughter on

motions, work, having a job. It's also in those moments, cultivating love. What Jenna calls the "normity."

"When I heard Jenna saying things to me—'Jenna? Are you here?'—I had a choice: to believe in accord with my profession that I was becoming delusional or psychotic, or that something in the medium of telepathy, something we don't have a word for, was happening. I compare it to the idea of cyberspace 100 years ago. If I had said we could communicate intimate thoughts in this space that doesn't exist 100 years ago, I would have been locked up. I believe it's possible we may discover spirit space, a realm in which people communicate through the veil of what we call death." Druck thinks once we discover spirit space, we'll then link up technologically with the dead. Receive, as it were, Jenna's e-mail from beyond the veil.

Spirit space has been "validated" by her passing. "I think we all have interesting fantasies that we're too scared to talk about. We talk to God. We pray. We're delusional characters. We talk to forces that we know don't exist and can't confirm. Even those people who don't believe in God talk to God." Soon after her death, he wanted to hurt God, to, he says, go out and "kill one of God's children. See how he likes it." But, Druck envisioned "a tear" in God's eye. He remembered then that in the "lore of Christianity," God himself had also lost a child. "And God loses children all the time."

Druck wants to stay in the spirit space, palming the coin of Jenna's "normity." "I made the decision to take everything I hear Jenna say seriously. So when I talk about the 'normity,' it is what Jenna would have me behold. 'Dad, the enormity

this plane died. I have also lived—possibly been more alive and awake than I've ever been, in the last four years. So paradoxically I have died and in that dying become more alive than ever before. I have a keen sense of what is real and what is filler. What's real is the love, the love that passes between us. That's the only thing that's real. The rest of it is going to the movies, going through the

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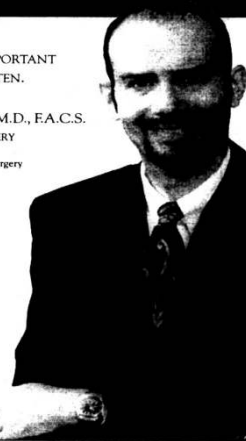
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is—Dad, don't look at the three-dimensional world of bumping into doors and driving to work. Try to see the bigger picture, try to feel your way into what this is."

Part of "what this is" for Druck and everyone who has lost a child is the difficult marriage of publicizing or dealing with the loss in public while one is grieving it. I asked Candace Lightner, who founded MADD right after her daughter's death, if grieving in public can be done. "Sure," she said, "as long as you're not consumed with it." Lightner said bereaved parents must guard against becoming professional victims, which occurs when "you're not dealing productively with other children in the family, you center your whole being on the loss of that child. Yeah, I think it's not the best thing to do. You can be public about your grief, but if you're constantly in the public eye, you don't have time to grieve. You have to take the time."

About Druck combining his loss with his work, Lightner said, "Ken has the advantage of having been there and still being there in many ways, and also knowing how to facilitate it from a professional point of view. Not everybody can do that comfortably, and he can. I also believe that it's important for whoever is doing the facilitating to somehow relay that—how can I say this? I would be concerned if participants in a workshop were looking at Ken and thinking, 'Gee, it's been so many years since his daughter has died, and he is still feeling such pain. God, I hope I'm not at that point.'"

I asked Lightner if—and when—she had gotten on with the rest of her life. "When I knew I was getting over the anger—because you have to understand, in my case, the anger was all-consuming, far more than in Ken's situation from the way we've talked. That's what started MADD was anger. I can remember waking up one morning about 18 months after I started MADD and thinking, 'My God, I'm not angry anymore. I'm not filled with all this hatred toward this system.' I still believe the system is more responsible for letting the man out [of jail] so much. And I remember feeling this great relief that I didn't have

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all that anger in me. That was a positive and a negative for me. It was a positive for me and a negative for MADD," and Lightner pealed off a bowl of laughter that pushed the phone from my ear. "Because it was raw to get up all that passion and anger every time I did a press conference. It took a lot out of me, let me tell you."

No longer mad enough to rally her troops, Lightner moved to Malibu. "I'm big on the ocean — it's a heal-

ing thing. I can remember going down one morning, after I had seen a psychologist [for six months], and I was sitting on the beach, thinking about the vastness of the ocean and putting Carrie, my daughter, out there into the ocean — this may be a hard thing for you to grasp, perhaps. But just placing her out there and thinking of her in this vast, all-encompassing way, as ongoing spirit. Learning to accept her loss and incor-

porating it into my life. The upside of that was I no longer focused on how she died. I began to focus more on how she lived and the joy she had brought to our family. That was a major, major turning point. I wish everybody could go through that. If I could wish anything on people who've had this kind of pain, it's that they could get to that point sooner rather than later. It's a very freeing experience. It may have taken me longer because I was so

focused on activism and everybody else's grief, instead of my own."

As part of his eulogy at his daughter's memorial service, Druck said this: "Jenna lived a fuller 21 years and has left a clearer legacy than most of us do in a lifetime." It was, considering the time and considering Lightner's latter-day remembrance, a prescient moment. Druck was already, four days after Jenna's death, focusing not on how she died but on how

she lived. And yet I also wondered if he, with his foundation, had enlarged his daughter in death to some heroic or mythic status that may conflict with who she was and how she lived.

"Have I created a Jenna museum? Have I idealized her?" he rephrased it.

"Yes." (It bugged me that I, too, might be giving idealization legs by retelling the saintlike stories I had heard from those who knew her, whose tears were ever-

present and could not be faked.)

Druck, to my surprise, had thought this through as well. He said in writing a book about her he'd been afraid of making her into "the Second Coming." Presenting Jenna to those who didn't know her, who would believe a teenager could be "this insightful, loving, aware?" I pulled back," he said. "I talk [in the book] about the very real aspects of her being a kid. Her struggles, her fears,

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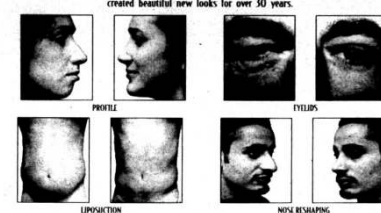
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her being a drama queen. She would call me down to her room, this, my strong and independent kid, and she'd say, 'Dad, I'm scared.' There was a very human, vulnerable side to her."

Whenever Druck mentioned his fears of hero-worship to Jenna's friends, they reminded him that she really was unusually devoted and gifted. Minimizing her is unfair. She needs to be maximized because that's who she was. Her sister Stephanie, who admits her bias, agrees. "Jenna had an aura. People wanted to talk to her, be around her. You just can't glorify her too much."

Stephanie believes that "there wasn't enough here for her to do. This earth was not enough. She had everything going on in her life, and [it was] never enough. She had too much to offer for this life." Stephanie says her sister is with her. "Where is she?" I ask. "On my shoulder. Not all the time because she's got a lot of other things to do. But she's here. She's my angel. I don't have to say, 'Jenna, I'm going to have a hard time, I need you to be there for me.' She's there even before I think it."


And so, for the bereaved parent, there's no simple shield to wear against the diminution or the amplification of a child's memory. "You're screwed either way," Druck said. "If you remember a way your child suffered in his or her life — they say that a parent is only as happy as his unhappiest child — or remember some wonderful triumph, they got you coming and going. Because it's all gone. Parents go back and forth with the need to memorialize their children. What's not as well understood as the process of idealizing a child is the de-idealization of a child. Because — I have three huge notebooks filled with thousands of cards, and I couldn't read them. It was too painful for me to read them. If I wanted to idealize and embellish and go on and on about my daughter, it was too painful.

"I have had to learn how to disengage from the Jenna who was in that life. I have had to reengage with the Jenna — who she is, where she is — now."

"Where is she?" I asked. Druck patted his heart. "Right here." — Thomas Larson

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LETTERS

Continued from page 7
 Ms. Widmer, wrote to me and told me that it would be too much trouble to include such information and this decision was supported by her boss. I would like to point out that the phrase "temporarily able-bodied" is quite accurate.

It would have been nice to include in the most recent review of the Prado Restaurant that there is no toilet within the actual restaurant and that their lift to the patio level does not accommodate electric scooters and that you have to get assistance from the front desk to use the lift.

I would think that shining a light on inadequate accommodations might prompt the restaurant in question to make changes. As an example, how many of the able-bodied customers of Tapenade would tolerate having to dodge linen carts and other stacks of supplies to get to the toilet, as those requiring an accessible toilet do? Might not the owners be prompted to make the needed changes if I were pointed out to them? You reviewers are never reluctant to make suggestions on improving the quality of food or service. Why are you reluctant to include information that

might make it possible for some people to access the site in question? Thank you for taking the time to review my suggestions. My offer to review the locations being reviewed still stands.

Dr. Bill Casper
Niomi Wise responds: Since receiving Dr. Casper's first (unpublished) e-mail, I've been looking at every restaurant I've visited for overt access difficulties and indicating any problems in the "Need to Know" sections of the review and at the beginning of the capsule. At Prado, I observed numerous tables at street-level level, with gentle ramps between the restrooms and Prado's doorway, so my review noted no access problems.

Without specific expertise in medical issues and equipment (e.g., the varying requirements of wheelchairs, scooters, crutches, canes, prostheses, etc.), I can only follow this "eyeball" approach to disabled access. In most reviews — especially emphatically in the case of the ever-packed Prado — I urge readers to call restaurants for reservations, rather than just "rushing out" and possibly waiting hours for a table or even being turned away. The same call can be used to ask the staff specific questions about physical barriers that might affect the individual's access. As for inviting Dr. Casper along as a co-reviewer, I don't work far enough in advance to do this (our

would I want to, given the potential distraction from my primary task of assessing food and the likely hazard to my anonymity). There is, however, a dining-out website that he began to solicit detailed feedback about disabled barriers at restaurants: <http://home.digitalcity.com/sandiego> (or AOL keyword San Diego). I would like that readers with disabilities regularly register their restaurant experiences there.

Brainwash
 I must respond to Lauren Hynde's criticism (Letters, January 4). My wife and I have a child, so I find it puzzling that Ms. Hynde can state that I don't know anything about children because I'm a man. I may not have actually given birth, but I know a little about the care and feeding of children. By her own reasoning, if Ms. Hynde hasn't held public office, she isn't qualified to have any political opinions, and if she's not an ordained member of the clergy, she shouldn't be entitled to any religious views either. Anne Albright seems to be able to lead her family; the demand that she not have any more children because "we can't feed everyone on the planet" smacks of totalitarianism. Ms. Hynde doesn't address my main argument, that Albright shouldn't starve her kids, leading me to conclude that she is a victim of the brainwashing promulgated by the fashion and diet industries and thus was unable to comprehend my argument.

Larry Benjamin
 Kearny Mesa

Fat Phobia
 As a woman, I am disappointed in Lauren Hynde's ignorant, sexist, and smug letter (January 4). While it is undeniably true that Larry Benjamin is a man, it was bigoted and incorrect of her to assume that he wouldn't know about having children. As his wife and the mother of our son, I can assure you that Larry is a skilled, involved, and loving father. He even shares the tasks of shopping for, preparing, and cleaning up after delicious and nutritious family meals. I find her presumption that she should have a say in the size of another woman's family shocking and inappropriate. She also failed to respond to the main point of Larry's letter, which confronted Jill Fehlman's vicious fat phobia. So, Hynde, it turns out that you are the one who is wrong!

Christi Carter
 Equality Now!

As a San Diego resident, I find "City Lights" (December 21): "Council Winks at Boy Scout Gay Ban" by Justin Wolff reports that Mr. Cox, scout executive and CEO of the Desert Pacific BSA Council, told him "that after the suit was announced he received a lot of community support in the form of phone calls, letters, and money, including a generous check from a local businessman." It seems to me that it is these supporters who should begin to pay a fair market value for the BSA's leases on public lands, not all taxpayers.

It is irrelevant whether or not the majority of the boys involved in scouting are "under the age of puberty," as Mr. Cox says. They will grow up, and be expelled from the group they've grown up within. They will risk losing all their friends. They will risk being unable to continue the outdoor and volunteer activities they were involved with. Both options are cruel because the ban is not for inappropriate behavior but for who one is. BSA likes to say they don't kick out boys. Instead they wait until their 18th birthday when they officially become an adult leader and do their dirty work there.

One only has to check to

see which religions have the most boys in scouting, which religion has adopted scouting as their "official youth ministry," to understand why the BSA fought so hard for the gay ban. When one religion becomes dominant in any national organization the result is that that religion's beliefs become policy. I mourn for the BSA of old, when there were good men of many beliefs in control of the organization.

It is my hope that the city council will do some research into National BSA, their surplus of \$56 million in 1997, the last time their fiscal information was made public. Find out who is really in control of the BSA, how decisions are made, whether members are allowed input, whether there is truly local control or whether it is bureaucrats in Texas calling the shots.

P.S.: I am mom to one gay son, one daughter reluctantly in Exploring so she can do search and rescue, and a husband, 27 years in scouting, who sent his Eagle badge back to National this summer.

Wendy Martes
 Woodville, WA

Raise Standards
 Why must you allow every pornographer trying to sell her or his music videos or films to slather their titillating, half-naked female images all over your music and film sections?

I know sex sells, and I know we humans are highly exploitable, but it makes me feel unhappy, exposed, insulted, and disrespected to see women being so blatantly used, especially when I'm just sitting on my living room couch trying to relax, reading what I thought was the cool paper in town.

Please, show me and my sisters some respect and exercise a little self-restraint. Please elevate your standards (i.e., non-exploitative) (i.e., non-sexually explicit) (i.e., non-discriminatory) (i.e., non-in your face, here's your female butt up in the air, or your tits out, how about that) (i.e., sell the beer, would ya, you dumb broad?!). For your paper's advertisements.

Daniel Ward

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Life After Starball
 Premiere Planetarium Show

You can blame poets' metaphors for our distorted sense of the night sky. That so-called "canopy" of stars? It's not a canopy at all. Blame yourself, too, because humans can't see depth beyond a certain distance, and what resembles a domed ceiling is actually three-dimensional. Finally, blame planetariums. Their traditional simulations are flat. Orion, Cassiopeia, Ursa Major, and the rest have long been presented as connect-the-dots configurations, because the technology wasn't available to show them otherwise.

Now, San Diegans have one less reason to believe the two-dimensional fiction. At the Reuben H. Fleet Science Center, Digistar II is about to be premiered, replacing the 28-year-old Spitz Space Transit System.

LOCAL EVENTS

Unlike the mothballed "starball" (Spitz's nickname), whose celestial illusions were created with light and lenses, Digistar is a real-time computer-graphics device that uses cathode-ray-tube technology. As with many things called progress, it comes with a price. "CRT technology is not as crisp and clear as the old machine systems," says astronomer, Dennis Mammama. Nor is Digistar easy to operate. "On the contrary," says Mammama, "it's horribly difficult."

"I've been in this business close to 30 years. I've been doing planetarium work since college. I could walk into any traditional planetarium in the world and within five minutes be able to operate a show." Not so with Digistar. "I'm one of the programmers who tell it what to do and how to do it. But programming isn't intuitive. It's a completely different way of looking at planetarium projection. It's a whole new way of looking at astronomy, in fact. You take that three-dimensional universe takes some getting used to. There's a learning curve, and we're riding it."

It's not complaining, although puffed up. "They prefer the optical system (to the computerized one). I'm someone who wants both technologies. We can certainly see the very northern part, the North Star, the Big Dipper, and so on." What we can't see is the Southern Cross, nor the Southern



Dennis Mammama and Digistar II

Milky Way, which Mammama says is "absolutely glorious."

Times to which we may want to journey are times of comets—for example, Halley's, in 1835, 1910, and 1986. We may also choose to go forward to its next appearance, in 2062. Another option is a preview of a newly discovered comet. "It's coming toward us, and could possibly be very bright," says Mammama. "I underline possibly," he adds, sensitive to those disappointed by Halley's last pass. ("But it didn't fizzle," he insists. "It behaved perfectly normally—for a comet. The trouble was, people's expectations were too high.") The new comet is known by its

designation, C/2000WM1; its name will probably be Comet Lineae. "We could put Lineae's coordinates into the computer and actually watch it move through our skies as it might during Christmas next year."

Christmas conjures the magic and what they saw. "It certainly winks out a star. What we saw can't explain astronomically. So the theory is that it was a collection of planets that meant something astrologically to the magi, who were astrologers, not astronomers. Now, with a couple of keystrokes, we can re-create that sky, and watch how the planets moved and what the magi might have seen."

For Digistar's opening, the planetarium will re-create the current night's sky in San Diego. Then participants will go outside and see it in actuality. Telescopes will be available.

"What I want people to take away from the experience is that the universe is accessible and understandable," says Mammama. "It's there—the very laboratory that astronomers use. People a hundred years ago had a better understanding of the sky and how it behaved than we do, he laments. "That's where we got our calendar, how we did our farming," he points out. "It's a wonderful clockwork mechanism."

Mammama often imagines how different we humans would be if we had evolved in a world with constant cloud cover. "Today we might as well have cloud cover, because we're indoors so much. Right now, the star Sirius is getting obvious over in the eastern sky. Soon my phone will start ringing, because Sirius is bright and appears to twinkle wildly. It's been there for billions of years and will be there for billions more. And yet my phone will ring. I never saw this before!" Well, you know, get out and look at the sky. —Janne Schinto

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Calendar LOCAL EVENTS

EVENTS LISTINGS

HOW TO SEND US YOUR LISTING: Contributions must be received by 5 p.m. Friday the week prior to publication for consideration. Do not phone. Send a complete description of the event, including the date, time, cost, the precise address where it is to be held (including neighborhood), a contact phone number, and a phone number (including area code) for public information to READERS EVENTS, Box 83800, San Diego CA 92186. Or fax to 619-881-2401. You may also submit information online at www.SanDiegoReader.com by clicking on the events section.

BAJA

You're Getting BAJA, Brazilian Hypnotist Taurus do Brazil is back in town, appearing through January at the Tierras Cultural Center. Performances begin at 6 and 9 p.m., starting on Friday, January 12. The center is located at Paseo de los Héroes and Mina Street in the Zona Río. For more information, call 011-52-66-87-9600. (MIJAMA)

The "Challenges" mountain bike ride for beginners is held on Saturday, January 13, at 8 a.m., at Pista Costa Coronado. For details, dial 011-52-66-30-3496. (PLAYAS DE TUMANA)

A Beginner's Tennis is held on Tuesdays from 7:30 to 9 p.m. on Thursday through Sunday, January 18-21, at the Rosarito Beach Hotel. The pros begin playing at 8 a.m. on Friday, January 19. For more information, call 011-52-66-12-1111. (MICHETTO BEACH)

"The Extreme Zone" is screening at the Christmas Theater in the Tierras Cultural Center, showing Tuesday through Friday at 2, 4, 6, and 8 p.m., with additional screenings at noon on Saturday and Sunday. Amazing costumes, with screenings starting at 3, 5, 7, and 9 p.m., as well as at 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. on weekends. The center is located at Paseo de los Héroes and Mina Street in the Zona Río. For more information, call 011-52-66-87-9600. (MIJAMA)

OUTDOORS

Highway Monthly Roadkill totals in San Diego are most likely to occur in January and February (about 1.9 inches each on average), according to weather service statistics. If the storms are accompanied by low temperatures, there's a chance of some snow in the mountains and foothills. Only during the months of December and January have traces of snowfall been recorded on the coast at Lindbergh Field.

Tree Aleses, the familiar succulent plants with red-hot-poker-like flower clusters, are at their showiest this month. Large clumps of aloe can be seen at La Jolla Cove, Mission San Diego de Alcalá, and scattered along the embankments overlooking Highway 163 to Palomar Park.

The Habbled "Green Flash" at sunset or sunrise can sometimes be seen on crystal-clear days in January. At the instant the sun's upper rim is last visible at sunset, and also at the instant when it is first seen at sunrise, a flash of emerald-green color may be observed, especially on a flat horizon. Physicists explain this peculiar phenomenon as due to color-dispersion (as in a prism) and scattering of sunlight through the earth's atmosphere. Binoculars (or a small telescope) are helpful in spotting it. For green-flash hunting at sunset, any site with a view of the ocean horizon suffices. For the sunrise green flash, any spot overlooking the low desert (Sunrise Highway in the Laguna Mountains, for example) is good.

Flash Side-walks, winding streets, and interesting homes set Burlington apart; explore this area during a Friday-fripped planning by Walkabout on January 13. Participants will wander around for up to 1.5 hours to see how the community has aged since 1912. Meet the group at 9:45 a.m. at 30th and Laurel for this flat, moderate walk. Free. For more details, call 619-231-7663. (MOLINA BEACH)

Look for Golden Eagles, mountain blue bird, vireo sparrow, and Lawrence's goldfinches when the Audubon Society hosts a field trip to Puma Valley on Saturday, January 13. Meet at 9 a.m. at the far northern end of Puma Road. Bring a lunch and water; there are no restrooms. Expect considerable hiking of a moderately strenuous nature. For more information, call 619-280-7710. (PUMA VALLEY)

Lave Those Echinacs, learn about the uses of the plant known as the Del Mar Fair-ground and turn left on San Diego Lagoon Road. Follow Racetrack View Drive, and meet Blynn at the gate at 8 a.m. Bring water and binoculars. 858-538-8082. Free. (DL MOUNTAIN)

Take a Strenuous Hike and start the year off right with a workout led by Susan in San Diego River Park on Saturday, January 13, from 8:30 to 10 a.m. Expect four-mile hike. Dial 858-674-2275 x5 to make the mandatory reservations and obtain directions. Free. (MACHO BERNARD)

Migratory Birds and the native plants they depend upon are the focus for a nature walk hosted by the San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy at 9 a.m. on Saturday, January 13. For directions, call 760-436-3944. Free. (CAMPDOR-3946)

Nature Walk, the San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy hosts another "Second Saturday Nature Walk" through the ecological reserve on Saturday, January 13, beginning at 9 a.m. Meet at the Rio Avenue trail head. Free. 760-436-3944. (MOLINA BEACH)

For the Birds, head out to Teocote Canyon Open-Space Park on the second Saturday of every month. (MISSION POINT)

Learn to Trek Mountains, hikers, and other native species with experienced trackers from the San Diego Tracking Team and then sign up for a wildlife-monitoring survey during a volunteer training workshop on Saturday, January 13, from 9:45 a.m. to 4 p.m., in Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve.

Meet at the Adobe Beach House in the preserve. To reach the spot, take Canyonside Park Drive off Black Mountain Road and follow the signs to the ranch house. For information, call 858-472-1120. Free. (MACHO PENASQUITOS)

Learn the Old Stagecoach Route, the old immigrant trail leads in Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve when Mike Kelly leads an outing on Saturday, January 13. Participants will walk portions of the old route and learn about the campaign to designate the route as a nationally historic.

Learn in Treck Mountains, hikers, and other native species with experienced trackers from the San Diego Tracking Team and then sign up for a wildlife-monitoring survey during a volunteer training workshop on Saturday, January 13, from 9:45 a.m. to 4 p.m., in Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve.

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Calendar LOCAL EVENTS

and Google. The search for sacred art, at 8 p.m. at D.C. Villa Sigilla (7601 Grand Avenue). Free. For details, call 858-456-1800. (LA KJLA)

A Intentionally Accurate Portrait of Berkeley's Yee Fung Cheung is painted by actor/scholar/writer/illustrator/teacher Charlie Chin for the Storytellers of San Diego on Saturday, January 13. Cheung came to the U.S. from China in 1850. While practicing in Sacramento, he produced a "famous cure," helping to restore Governor Leland Stanford's wife to health after she nearly died from a severe pulmonary disorder.

Chin will present the program in Chautauque style, with a scripted performance followed by a question-and-answer period with the historical character, and then Chin will answer questions from a modern-day perspective.

The concert begins at 7:30 p.m. in the auditorium of the Manchester Conference Center on the campus of the University of San Diego (5998 Alcala Park). The program is suitable for all ages. Tickets are \$10. For more information, call 760-757-2121 x620. (SOPHOMORE)

Get Outta Tewel! This benefit for Michele Lundeen and Blues Strakz off (958-8988) which they head to 958-8988. The benefit for the 17th annual International Blues Challenge is set for Saturday, January 13, in Temple's Hall in Old Town Park (14134 Midland Road). Tickets are \$10. Call 858-566-4040 for reservations. (JONNY)

Postperformance the 'Yens, a very open reading is planned at the Rendezvous Cafe at 6:30 p.m. on Sunday, January 14. Read your poetry, short fiction, or screenplay, or even a Shakespearean monologue. Find the cafe at 6644 College Avenue. 619-285-7287. Free. (SOPHOMORE)

A Concert Dedicated to the Memory of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. is planned by the UCSD Gospel Choir on Monday, January 15, at 8 p.m., in UCSD's Mandeville Auditorium.

Brazilia (combining mainstream jazz and Brazilian sounds) plans a concert at 8 p.m. on Saturday, January 13, in the MiraCosta College Theatre (One Barnard Drive). Tickets are \$10. For more information, call 760-757-2121 x620. (SOPHOMORE)

Celebrating of Classic Art Music, world music, jazz, and pop are in the repertoire of the Peter Puppig Quartet. Enjoy a concert by Puppig's group and fingerstyle guitarist Jim Eary at 7 p.m. on Saturday, January 13, in Temple's Hall in Old Town Park (14134 Midland Road). Tickets are \$10. Call 858-566-4040 for reservations. (JONNY)

Events on January 13 run from 3 to 6 p.m. at the Luke Joint Café (327 Fourth Avenue), with music by Lundeen and Blues Strakz. Events on January 13, 14, and 15, at the Luke Joint Café (327 Fourth Avenue), with music by Lundeen and Blues Strakz. Events on January 13, 14, and 15, at the Luke Joint Café (327 Fourth Avenue), with music by Lundeen and Blues Strakz.

Events on January 13 run from 3 to 6 p.m. at the Luke Joint Café (327 Fourth Avenue), with music by Lundeen and Blues Strakz.

People Love Blues or Hate Blues, but few are ambivalent about musician/guitarist Spalding Gray, who plans performances on January 12 and 13, at 7 p.m. each night, at the San Diego Sports Arena. Tickets are \$6 to \$8 general admission, with \$25 box seats and \$50 corporate. For more information, call 619-542-1400. (SOPHOMORE)

An Encyclopedic Look at the Desert, Diana Lindsay plans to show slides and sign her new book, *Ana-Berger's A to Z: People, Places, and Things*, at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, January 16, at Uptown Crow (855 West Harbor Drive) 619-231-8555. Free. (SOPHOMORE)

Busy on Tuesday! Lindsay will sign and discuss her work at 7 p.m. next Thursday, January 18, at Barnes and Noble Bookstore (7610 Hazard Drive) 619-220-0175. Free. (MISSION VALLEY)

Author and Poet Imoyne Adams makes her first San Diego appearance for Poetic Brew on Tuesday, January 16, at 8 p.m., at Café de Lune (2906 University Avenue). Open-mike readings precede and follow Adams; sign-ups begin at 7:30 p.m. Free. 619-688-9645. (NORTH PARK)

Adventure Traveler Graham Mackintosh walked with a burro 1000 miles from the U.S. border to Leno in to celebrate the 300th anniversary of the founding of the Loreto Mission. Mackintosh will share some stories and sign copies of his *Journey With a Burro* at 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday, January 16, at Bookstar Costa Verde

(8600 Geneva Avenue) Call 858-457-7561 for details. (LA KJLA)

Both performances begin at 8 p.m. on Friday, January 12, and 13, at 7 p.m. each night, at the San Diego Sports Arena. Tickets are \$6 to \$8 general admission, with \$25 box seats and \$50 corporate. For more information, call 619-542-1400. (SOPHOMORE)

To the Lightships, join San Diego Bicycle Touring Society riders for a jaunt to the Coronado Ferry and the Cabrillo Point Lighthouse on Saturday, January 13. The 45-mile ride starts at 8:45 a.m. at the 11 Street boat launch parking lot. For more information, call 619-275-6623. (SOPHOMORE)

Marine Mammal Keyholes the waters of La Jolla are a great spot to view a variety of marine mammals including seals, sea lions, dolphins, and migrating gray whales. Explore the La Jolla coastline and its resident mammals during an adventure hosted by the Birch Aquarium-Museum and Ocean Enterprises Express on Saturday, January 13, from 8 to 10:30 a.m. (for those ten and older). The fee is \$40. To make the required reservations, call 858-534-7336. (LA KJLA)

Tennis for Kids, the 24th annual Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Tennis Tournament is slated for January 13-15 at the University of San Diego (5998 Alcala Park) and Martin Luther King Park (6153 Skyline

SPORTS

Hoop! The San Diego WildFire hosts the team from Tampa Bay on Friday and Saturday, January 12 and 13, at 7 p.m. each night, at the San Diego Sports Arena. Tickets are \$6 to \$8 general admission, with \$25 box seats and \$50 corporate. For more information, call 619-542-1400. (SOPHOMORE)

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Drive). For details, dial 619-224-5746. (ENCANTO, LINDA VISTA)

Ken King's Kulture Kollective bicycle through the Sunset Collection on the UCSD campus with the Knickerbockers on Sunday, January 14. This 25-mile ride for interurbans begins at 10 a.m. at the Mandel Weiss Theatre (at La Jolla Village Drive and Torrey Pines Road) and includes a campus cruise and a swing down the Biological Grade. Bring money for picnic lunch from a deli. For more details, call 619-450-0373. (LA KJLA)

Up for a Score-Off The San Diego Orienteering group hosts its second Buttes Pan Score-Off on Sunday, January 14. Participants attempt to find as many mapped features as possible within a set time limit, with the more distant and difficult features awarded higher point values. Registration and instruction begins at 9:30 a.m., with

starts until 12:30 p.m. and finishing by 2 p.m. Orienteering is the art of navigation through unknown terrain using a map and compass. Beginners are encouraged to attend.

To reach the spot, head out on I-15 to Scripps Poway Parkway, and head out to Highway 67. Go north past Ramona onto Highway 78 through Julian to the desert; continue 1.5 miles past the junction with Berro Springs Road. Look for orienteering signs, pink streamers, and the dirt road to the left. For more information, call 858-578-9456 or 858-453-9174. (ANACAPURGO DESERT STATE PARK)

SPECIAL

From Tin to Tiffany, over 300 antique dealers from the United States will be exhibiting at the Del Mar An-

tique Show and Sale, running January 12-14 at the Del Mar Fairgrounds. Organizers promise glass, crystal, jewelry, art, silver, furniture, and more. Now this time: an antique and collectible identification booth; the charge is \$5 per item.

Show hours are 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Friday, 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. on Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Sunday. There will be glass, rug, porcelain, pottery, and jewelry repairs offered on site. Admission is \$6, good for the duration of the show. For more information, call 760-443-7500. (DEL MAR)

Russian Novelist, Playwright, and short-story writer Mikhail Bulgakov's *Mother and Margarita* is the topic when the Del Mar Great Books Reading and Discussion Group meets at 7 p.m. on Friday, January 12, at Barnes and Noble Bookstore (on the Del Mar Highlands

Town Center, 12835 El Camino Real). Free. 858-756-4296. (DEL MAR)

Marching Bands and Flutes are promised when the 21st annual Martin Luther King Jr. Day Parade takes place on Saturday, January 13. The theme: "Living the Dream — Let Freedom Ring." The parade starts at 10 a.m. at G Street and Harbor Drive. Viewing is free.

The parade will be followed by Multicultural Festival 2001, with live entertainment, exhibits, and food from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at 585 Harbor Drive. Admission is free. For information, call 619-533-7146. (DOWNTOWN)

Expanding Minds and Universes! When the Great Books Reading and Discussion Group gathers on Saturday, January 13, the subject is Arthur Schopenhauer's *Essays in Four Books*. The discussion starts at 7 p.m. in the second-floor meeting room at the San

Diego Public Library (820 E Street). 858-755-8978. Free. Free newcomers are welcome. (DOWNTOWN)

Legendary Self-Taught Mexican Artist Juan Quezada has been showcased in the "Magic of Mata Ortiz" exhibition (closing on January 21) at the San Diego Museum of Man. Master potter Quezada will be joined by his son, Nico Quezada Olivas, and daughter-in-law Betty Quintana de Quezada — both potters themselves — for pottery demonstration and sales from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday, January 13 and 14. The appearances are included in regular museum admission. 619-239-2001. (MUSEUM)

Is It Dance Yet? Not quite. But it will be in January. To prepare for a "per-

formance sculpture" to be "built" in conjunction with the staging of a show called *World City, Dance* Dance Theatre and Palomar College are seeking donations of "useful technology" — technicians that doesn't work anymore or is outdated or otherwise just taking up space.

Drop off old hi-track tapes, the computer you played Ping on, broken phones, and floppy disks that can't be read by any known machine anywhere. Get rid of it, Saturday, January 13, from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.

In North County, they'll be glad to accept your donations at the Howard Brackbe Theatre on the Palomar campus, 1150 West Mission Road. Call Michael Mutton with questions: 764-1150 x2436. (San Marcos)

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READING

Can't Take My Eyes Off of You



Crown Publishing, 2000, 288 pages, \$23.95

FROM THE DUST JACKET: "Man on Upper West Side Attempts Foolhardy Stunt. Read All About It."

In the tradition of Charles Siskin's classic book on the state of television in the 1960s, *Seven Glorious Days, Seven Fun-Filled Nights*, Jack Lechner recounts what it was like to lock himself in his West Side Manhattan apartment for a week and plug in to the new multichannel universe, watching 12 TVs for 16 hours a day.

The obvious question is: Why? In the 33 years since Siskin's famous experiment, the quaint world of three networks and a handful of independent stations has morphed into a surfeit, endless sea of infomercials and entertainment, A&E and MTV, occasional brilliance like *The Simpsons* and *The Sopranos*, and a waster-than-ever wasteland of Jerry Springer, wrestling, soap operas, and other mind-numbing fodder. The world and television have changed a lot since 1967, and a week of television immersion at the turn of the century proves to be equally revealing about the state of American popular culture now.

With his pet pug Cosmo's unflinching emotional support, his wife Sam's more tentative forbearance, and advice from "experts" who drop by to be five-year-old for the scoop on Poke-

mon, for instance, Jack Lechner plugs himself down in his New York apartment and, in brave human guinea-pig tradition, lets everything from *Meet the Press* to *Xena: Warrior Princess*, from beach volleyball to Bob Dole's erectile-dysfunction, have its way with his impressionable psyche. As the weeks progress, he explores the limits of the media universe — watching all three network news shows simultaneously, diving into the bizarre waters of public-access programming, and even conducting a playoff between the Disney Channel and the Playboy Channel. His observations are perceptive, surprising, and dead-on.

By week's end, Lechner emerges bloody but unbowed, thankful he survived. "I was like the proverbial guy who banged himself over the head repeatedly with a hammer because it felt so good when he stopped. Watching a week of television isn't a mental health regimen I'd recommend to anyone, but it worked for me." This book is his lab report — hilarious and a little bit scary, a trenchant comment on our media-soaked society.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Jack Lechner was born in 1962 in Arlington, Virginia, just outside Washington, D.C. "Arlington," Lechner said on the morning that we talked, "is very much a suburb and a company town. Almost everybody works for the government. Except my mother who worked in local television, and my father. She's still doing it. She's been working on the same show for, next year it will be 40 years." Lechner attended Arlington public schools and then went on to Yale, where he studied film.

I asked Lechner if he knew when film became a subject in which one could acquire a college degree.

"But in terms of undergraduate film, right when I was in college was one of the real turning points, because the year that I graduated, I was a film major, and I had to put together a special divisional major from different departments. The year after I graduated, 1985, they actually made it a full major."

After Yale, Lechner moved to New York City and worked a variety of jobs. Worked at *Games* magazine, doing puzzles. And worked at a publishing company and transcribed radio interviews. "I was trying to find a way to the film industry and finally got a job as an

apprentice sound editor on an independent film. Then worked as an assistant at a film-production company. Everyone else in the company quit or was fired and I became the studio editor. I did that at Columbia Pictures in 1987. So I moved to California and worked at Columbia."

I asked if Columbia Pictures still used the torch-bearing lady as its icon.

"You bet. Sure. The lady with the torch will never die. We've actually updated her. She's sort of a digital lady now."

"Does she have bigger breasts?"

"No, no, she looks pretty much the same. The image now is multilayered." About his work at Columbia, Lechner went on to say, "I really had a glorious year at Columbia Pictures, heading up a program for new writers and directors. And then we all got fired. Which is pretty much how every Hollywood story ends. So I was out of work for a year. I went on *Jeopardy!* to keep eating. I was married by that time, so my wife was working as a manager at a bookstore, but it wasn't quite the style to which we had become accustomed. Basically, every 12 years I'm out of work and I go on a game show. I went on *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire* this February. I won \$125,000. The \$250,000 question that I didn't answer? It was, 'A losing player in this year's Super Bowl earned how much for the game?'"

I said that I couldn't have answered that either.

"Well, I sure couldn't. And I used one of my life lines, and then I called my phone-a-friend, who was my cousin, Larry, who works for the NBA, and he couldn't answer it. So they still live in the '50/50, but it was useless to me because it would have been a pure guess, and I was going to risk \$95,000 dollars on a guess."

"Not," I said, when you're out of work."

"And in this case," Lechner said, "I had actually left my job. I had resigned from Miramax, where I'd been for three years to write this book. Shortly after being on *Millionaire* I started my current job, at Radical Media — spelled *radical*.media."

"I grew up on television because my mother was producing local television in Washington, and my father, as a politician, was always on television. So I grew up watching lots of it, watching the

making of it, being very aware of how it was made, and that it was not always being made terribly well. Whenever my father was on TV news, they always got his name wrong; they always misrepresented whatever it was he was saying that day."

"But, like a typical American kid, I just gobbled down sitcoms and cartoons and whatever else there was. However, over the course of my adult life, as I found my calling in working in the film industry, I just have less and less time for television. When I left my job at Miramax, I was feeling completely burned out after three years of working on 75 projects at once and being in this intense, hot-house atmosphere. I thought, *What am I going to do? I want to do something that will help me reconnect with America, really, and reconnect with the mainstream of America.* I'd been working on some movies that were box-office successes, like *Good Will Hunting*. But also I worked on a lot of smaller art-house movies, and I was struck by the way that whenever I took a flight from somewhere that was not New York or Los Angeles, to somewhere else that was not New York or Los Angeles, inevitably I would be reading a screenplay, and the person in the seat next to me would say, 'Are you in the film industry?' I'd say, 'Yes.' And my seat mate would say, 'Can I just talk to you about the language you use in your movies?' Every single time. The more time I spent at Miramax, the more I became aware that working in the film industry in New York or Los Angeles you're in this little bubble. And what goes on inside that little bubble doesn't have that much to do with what America is thinking or America is caring about. I realized that television is the prime medium of entertainment for most of America. That's where most of America is getting its news, that's where most of America is getting its entertainment, getting its sense of community. I was detached from that."

"I had always loved the Charles Siskin book, *Seven Glorious Days, Seven Fun-Filled Nights*, in which he did this in 1967 with six televisions. When I was four years old, because my mother knew Siskin, we had the book sitting around when I was a kid, and I really loved it. So it just came together. And I thought, *That's what I'll do. I'll update the Siskin book and really try his experiment again at the turn of the century, when television is at a complete crossroads.* It's beginning to morph into this new medium

that has elements of television as we know it, but also elements of the Internet. Now you have hundreds of channels, and soon you'll have thousands of channels. It's a really different world. It seemed like the perfect time to take another snapshot of the state of television before it turned into something else entirely."

I asked if the 12 television sets made Lechner's living room hot.

"They did, yes. Because not only do you have 12 television sets going, but you've also got 12 cable boxes going. Not only do we have to completely rewire the living room — and rewire our apartment, to keep from blacking out the city — but I also had to have a couple of electric fans going and the windows open."

Lechner writes in *Can't Take My Eyes Off of You* about the change in television's presentation of news now that CNN, Fox, MSNBC all broadcast 24-hour news. "For me, the real sea change in television news was when television news started to be seen by the networks as a profit center. When you think back to the glory days of Ed Murrow and Walter Cronkite and Huntley and Brinkley, news was seen as a public service. The point of news was to tell people what they wanted to know, but also what they needed to know. It's really in the late '70s, and then the '80s, with the inception of CNN and now the other news networks, that people see news as a form of entertainment. So that news is driven by the same thing that drives television entertainment, which is, you want to hit the most sensational stories, you want to hit the stories that will keep people coming back, so that you can build a story into a great big media circus, as we see, again and again. That's the perfect kind of news story for a 24-hour news network. You can examine it from all the angles and keep going by dredging up new things. It doesn't actually matter if the story is significant. The Jon-Ben Ramsey story, it's sad, but you know, it's one little kid going in one town, and you don't know why she's dead. That's not a gigantic news story. It's not. But this is what it's come to. And because now you have competition between CNN and MSNBC and Fox News, it's gotten to the point where they can't afford to be the odd network out. They don't want to lose their standing with advertisers, they don't want to lose viewers. So you get this insane pack mentality in which all the news networks and news shows on the regular

networks all are chasing the same stories. The fact is, there isn't that much news that fits into that narrow perimeter that works for them. There's plenty of news in the world they don't even touch."

"Here's a perfect example. This really gets beyond news to the rest of television. I mention in the book that one of the days I was watching three talk shows in a row that were all dealing with the issue of teenage prostitution. And, as I say in the book, sure it's sad. We can all agree teenage prostitution is a bad thing. But nevertheless, I couldn't help but notice the lack of show addressing any other form of exploitation of teenagers. You were not seeing three hours of shows on teenage migrant workers. Or teenagers who are being paid appalling wages in the fast-food industry. Or teenagers who are working in sweatshops. Television crows that exploitable edge. We've just seen it in the treatment of the election."

"You get this insane pack mentality in which all the news networks and all the news shows are all chasing the same stories."

"The Fight for the Presidency," I asked Lechner if he knew when that titling began.

"That really started with *Nightline* on ABC, which grew out of a show called, 'America Held Hostage.' This was ABC's nightly coverage of the Iranian hostage crisis in the late '70s. That was the first time they put Ted Koppel in that situation. It worked so well that it's still on the air. But that was the first time I remember giving a title to a news event. And treating it like a TV show. Now, of course, every news event worth its salt is titled. And, again, it's part and parcel of the way news is being packaged as entertainment. You could really see that with the election story, the biggest, best television show ever. I must say I didn't find it. I was much more interested in the nuances I got in the story from reading the newspapers, than in the kind of insistent, repetitive drone that

(continued on page 70)

More than 80 automobiles and motor-vehicles from horselessriages to future prototypes are included in the museum's permanent collection. Find the museum near the Stratlight Bowl #19-231 2886-3436/3438. Fax: 3436-3438.

San Diego Historical Society Museum, a display of formal portraits and informal photos illustrates the highly personal connection we share

through the treasured images of loved ones and relatives in "Faces of San Diego 2001," continuing through Sunday, March 18. The exhibit features nearly 200 photographs dating from the 1890s through the 1990s, contributed to the Historical Society for inclusion. The show is the proud of Mesa College honors professor's collection of over 17,000 objects.

Stop on roller skates, a fun program that plays real-time, a mechanical bank, Victorian dresses for boys and other children's clothing dating back to the 19th century, and more are featured in "It's a Child's Place," continuing through January. These toys, toys and bags are from the society's extensive costume and cultural collection. Featuring this exhibit.

of what childhood has been, and that for the last two centuries.

"Out of Our Vault II," a rotating art series, features artifacts from the society's collections of fine art, decorative arts, furniture, textiles, tools, instruments, photographs, architectural drawings, documents, and ephemera. The exhibition changes periodically through Sunday, September 2, drawing from the society's archival collection of over 17,000 objects.

The role of professionalists and photographers in processing the San Diego region's centrality is commemorated in the ongoing "World San Diego: Capturing the Pulse of a Life" — Photographs from the collection that "Narrate, Record, and Define." Along with nearly 200 photographs, "World San Diego" features museum artifacts, sound files, and documents, including showing an often-cited San Diego Curator's report, J. DeBlasio is also attempting to show how history, data, captions, and maps that are being used in 100-year-old maps appear almost poignant or funny.

"The museum is located on the

Casa de Balboa building, 619-232-6203. (BALBOA PARK)

San Diego Hall of Champions, the artist who's been called "the undisputed king of baseball biography in the world." In the *Los Angeles Times* he is called "the most important living Tom Hawk in flight." The exhibit includes action shots of this San Diego native by Thom Vollenwider and J. Grant Brittan, artifacts, and a video based on the "Tom Hawk Legends Skatepark Tour." See the show through Friday, February 9.

The Hall of Champions, dedicated to promoting, recognizing, and preserving athletes' achievement — is located at 2131 Pan American Plaza, call 619-234-2444 for information. 96/08/08/08.

Case of Blackbeard himself, and original paintings by Ben Murr. Movie memorabilia includes the original cut worn by Errol Flynn in *Captain Jack*, along with costumes.

for Bart Lancaster and Charlton Heston, prop costumes and pistols, a display of characters from *Maverick*, *True Blood*, and small statues from which the robotic inhabitants of the

Plates of the Garbanos ride at Disneyland were created.

An exhibit entitled "Submarines: A Camp of Silent Service" from displays aboard the USS Intrepid.

through the year. Live components make up the show. "The Oregon" (early history), "WWE and WWII," "The Cold War to the Present," "Sub Base San Diego," and "How a Sub-

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CAN'T TAKE MY EYES OFF YOU

JACK LECHNER

(continued from page 69)

you get from television coverage. And the hysterical tone that creeps up in television coverage. On television, they keep trying to push at that edge. There's this very popular show now in Russia called *The Naked Truth*, in which the news is read by beautiful young women who take their clothes off. It's a huge success in Russia. And it's only a matter of time before someone does that here.

During one of his television-watching days, Lechner turns to PBS's *NewsHour* as "refuge." He finds the discussion "actually interesting" but asks himself, why would I want to sit there and watch it? Why Lechner asks himself this is that he notes that *NewsHour* is really illustrated radio, visually dull. I asked him about this.

"I hate to pick on the show because that's one show that is actually trying to represent real news that isn't on the other networks and that isn't being covered elsewhere. But it's just so dull. I listened to it with my eyes closed, and you don't miss anything. There's no information being conveyed. They completely seem to neglect that the exciting thing about television is that it brings pictures into your living room. That's the definition of television. Otherwise, you might as well just put on the radio. In fact, there are some NPR stations that play the *NewsHour* as a regular show. And, yet, if you listen to the *NewsHour* on a radio and then you listen to *All Things Considered*," it's another world. The NPR shows, of which I'm a gigantic fan, are just done with such wit and flavor and style. I don't think there's a news show on television that can touch *All Things Considered*.

"One of the ways that television news works is different than the way that any successful television show, no matter if it's fiction or nonfiction, works. It works on familiarity. It's bringing these people into your home, every day or every week, and you

get to be familiar with them. You get to like having them around. They become a part of your family, they become a part of your community."

You begin, I suggested, to want to see them.

"That's right. And when you see, for instance, *The Today Show*, you begin to realize that *The Today Show* is a very successful family show, in which Katy Couric is everyone's adorable kid sister, who's cute and funny and bright as a button. And then Matt Lauer is the handsome leading man, and Al Roker is the cuddly comic relief. I think they've been very deliberate in casting it in that way. It's no surprise that Jeff Zucker, the producer of *The Today Show*, has just become the head of NBC Entertainment. Because he's shown that he can produce a more entertaining sitcom on television than most of the sitcoms in primetime on NBC. And when you see the TV news shows that don't get like, for instance, the line-up on *Good Morning America* right now, where they've got serious, intelligent news people — Diane Sawyer, Charlie Gibson — trying hard to fake that kind of jocularity and family feeling, and it just isn't taking because that's not who they are.

"One of the themes of the book, of course, is the way that so much of television is just about other television. Never was that truer than in the way this election played out, where television became an integral part of the story, the way that on election night, the networks called it wrong twice. But it was the second wrong call when they actually declared Bush the winner, that was the more devastating. That's what caused Gore to call and concede, which, of course, he later retracted. It's what created this illusion of legitimacy around a Bush victory that was never there. It was directly led to everything that's happened since, including the ascension of George W. Bush to the White House. I think it would have played out very differently — it might have had the same result — but the process would have been different if the networks hadn't called Bush the winner on election night."

I said that I thought Bush did better on television than did Gore, that Gore's style was more that of what Lechner described as "illustrated radio."

Lechner agreed. "This election's been a funny thing of the old Adlai

Stevenson/Hubert Humphrey tradition. He's great in person; he's thoughtful, he speaks in sentences and paragraphs. He reads books, he writes books, but he's never been able to make the sound bite, and he's never been able to make himself a cuddly TV character. And George W. Bush just came out of the box as a cuddly TV character. In fact, it's funny, the TV news shows and news comedy shows, like *The Daily Show*, instantly pegged him as a sort of classic figure. He's like the bumbling dad. He's like Tim Allen on *Home Improvement*. And, as such, he fits right in. But they don't have any place to put Gore in. When they compared him to any television character, they usually compared him to Mr. Spock on *Star Trek*, the alien. He was never able to define himself in a television-friendly way. Once again, television helped decide this election in a way that's actually kind of disturbing.

"When you read interviews with Gore and pieces like that wonderful *Nicholas Lemann New Yorker* profile of Gore, you see that Gore is simply not in tune with American popular culture and with America's news apparatus, which are determined to reduce everything to its simplest components."

Lechner really did watch television for seven entire days, from early morning to late night. He watched everything. I said that that part of the charm of his book was that one rarely read about the everyday kind of programs that so many viewers regularly watch.

"That's exactly right. And that's one of the reasons I thought this book was worth writing, because most professional television critics are only looking at a tiny sliver of what's on television. They're looking at the premieres of series, they're looking at TV movies, and they're looking at specials and things on PBS. They're watching socially conscious television, which is just a tiny percentage of what's on television. Nobody watches what I watched. The wrestling, the infomercials, the Home Shopping Network, the soap operas. One of the guilty secrets of this book is that for everything I've written about in the book, I watched two times, three times as many shows. You should see the first draft of this book. You couldn't take it. No reader could take it. I couldn't take it as a person. I watched a lot more than I write about."

— Judith Moore

San Diego's Colorado Territorial, the tuna fishing industry, and the military. The museum features artifacts of the two park tour of India, the 1906 San Francisco earthquake, and the 1910s Southern steam train. There are also exhibits on the ship carpenters, model building, shops in bottles, wood carvers, and a complete research library.

The museum is located at 1306 North Harbor Drive along the Timbarado at the corner of North Harbor Drive and Ash Street. Tel: 619-231-8153. (containing)

San Diego Museum of Man, located on the hillside of San Diego, features a variety of exhibits including the 1906 San Francisco earthquake, the 1910s Southern steam train, and the ship carpenters, model building, shops in bottles, wood carvers, and a complete research library.

The museum is located at 1306 North Harbor Drive along the Timbarado at the corner of North Harbor Drive and Ash Street. Tel: 619-231-8153. (containing)

San Diego Railroad Museum, located on the hillside of San Diego, features a variety of exhibits including the 1906 San Francisco earthquake, the 1910s Southern steam train, and the ship carpenters, model building, shops in bottles, wood carvers, and a complete research library.

The museum is located at 1306 North Harbor Drive along the Timbarado at the corner of North Harbor Drive and Ash Street. Tel: 619-231-8153. (containing)

San Pasqual Battlefield State Historic Park, located on the hillside of San Diego, features a variety of exhibits including the 1906 San Francisco earthquake, the 1910s Southern steam train, and the ship carpenters, model building, shops in bottles, wood carvers, and a complete research library.

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Calendar CLASSICAL MUSIC

He Took the Right Model

There was scarcely any applause for the Schoenberg.

The La Jolla Chamber Music Society's invaluable Discovery Series offered a spectacular double discovery in the concert by violinist Axel Strauss and pianist Andrew Russo. Both are artists of technical brilliance and emotional intensity. They were superbly matched collaborators, and their joint recital was thrilling.

The Discovery Series takes place in the middle of Sunday afternoons. Perhaps concertgoers don't care for the hour, or perhaps they are wary of the title "Discovery," which for some may imply taking a gamble on quality.

As for myself, I find it pleasant to come out of the concert hall just in time for an early dinner, instead of as the last effort of a tiring day; and experience of this series has convinced me that much of the Society's most exciting music-making is to be found there. The Strauss/Russo concert added another resplendent confirmation.

A minor example of how good these musicians are together was the final encore, Kroll's *Rump and Fiddle*. This playful bit of Americana is a showcase for the violin, and Strauss performed it with great zest and easy command of its quick switches from arpeggio to pizzicato. But I had never before noticed that it is also a showcase for the piano. Without stepping outside his role as accompanist, Russo executed the keyboard part with such liveliness of phrasing that I found myself paying attention to both instruments, and thereby appreciating the composer's deft wit all the more.

Rump and Fiddle was a favorite encore piece of Jascha Heifetz, who made it famous. Axel Strauss has evidently had Heifetz in mind during

his own musical formation, and his own way of playing has a good deal of Heifetz's direct, concentrated focus of tone, and variety of color. As if to underline the affiliation, he also included in the program Heifetz's flamboyantly virtuosic arrangements of the three Gershwin piano concertos, which Strauss played with a European-born fiddler (Strauss grew up in Germany but lives in New York) asserted his mastery of a quintessentially American style; both violinists revealed, and idiomatically, in the jazz manner and blues devices of Gershwin's artful compositions. At Sherwood, Strauss also had a good time with a suite from the incidental music to *Much Ado About Nothing* by Erich Wolfgang Korngold (another composer associated with Heifetz), giving just the proper degree of Viennese sentiment and lyricism to these lovely but slight pieces, and playing with a delectably sly timbre.

The Sherwood Auditorium audience did not perhaps react with appropriate enthusiasm to the beautifully played Korngold music, since the *Much Ado* suite had the ill luck to be programmed immediately after Arnold Schoenberg's *Phantasy for Violin with Piano Accompaniment, Opus 47*. This is one of the most horrible pieces by one of the most horrible composers, and in spite of committed playing by both Strauss and Russo, the Sherwood audience, a bold move indeed, for such a performance exposes the price difference of a violinist's technique and musicianship. Strauss must have thought he had no weaknesses to hide, and he was right. Heifetz, too, would not have hesitated to begin a program with such confident self-assertion; and here is a worthy successor to that greatest of all fiddlers.

Strauss played one work without his collaborator, the famous Chaconne from Bach's *D Minor Partita for Unaccompanied Violin*. It was, in fact, this piece with which he introduced himself to the Sherwood audience, a bold move indeed, for such a performance exposes the price difference of a violinist's technique and musicianship. Strauss must have thought he had no weaknesses to hide, and he was right. Heifetz, too, would not have hesitated to begin a program with such confident self-assertion; and here is a worthy successor to that greatest of all fiddlers.

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AXEL STRAUSS, VIOLIN; ANDREW RUSSO, PIANO

Sherwood Auditorium (La Jolla Chamber Music Society Discovery Series)

Bach, Chaconne from Partita No. 2 in D Minor for Unaccompanied Violin, BWV 1016; Beethoven, Sonata No. 1 in A Major for Violin and Piano, Opus 25; Schoenberg, Phantasy for Violin with Piano, Accompaniment, Opus 47; Korngold, Suite from Much Ado About Nothing, Gershwin, Three Preludes (arr. Heifetz)

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Axel Strauss

PHOTOGRAPH BY JIMMY HARRIS

PHOTOGRAPH BY JIMMY HARRIS

Calendar
CLASSICAL MUSIC

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CLASSICAL MUSIC: Box 8801, San Diego, CA 92186. Or fax to 619-881-2801. You may also submit information online at www.SanDiegoReader.com by clicking on the events section.

From "El Siglo de Oro"—the "Golden Century" of the Spanish Renaissance—the male-vocal sextet known as the Concord Ensemble will present music of the leading masters of the period for the San Diego Early Music Society on Friday, January 12. The program alternates between the refined polyphony of the great sacred works of Victoria and Morales and the livelier secular styles of Vazquez and Flecha.

The music begins at 8 p.m. at St. James by the Sea, 743 Prospect Street. Tickets are \$18 general. Dial 619-291-8206 for reservations. LA 06LA

Concellanour Series, the San Diego Symphony Orchestra and British conductor Nicholas McGegan plan concerts January 12-14. Later for excerpts from the ballet *Nais* by Rameau, Bach's "Brandenburg Concerto No. 2," the Handel "Symphony No. 59 (Ficc)," and "Music for Royal Fireworks" by Handel.

Concerts begin at 8 p.m. on Friday and Saturday and at 2 p.m. on Sunday in Copley Symphony Hall (720 B Street). Pre-performance conversations are presented by the conductor 45 minutes prior to each performance. Tickets range from \$15 to \$70. For reservations, call 619-235-0884. 06N07096

Concert Pianist Lin Hong plans a recital at 7 p.m. on Sunday, January 14, for the La Jolla Presbyterian Church Concert Series. Find the

church at 7715 Draper Avenue; 858-454-0713 x321. Free. LA 06LA

"Second Sunday at Seven," the series presented by the San Diego Performing Arts Association continues when pianist Alok Karis and cellist Charles Curtis present selections by Debussy, Di Fuja and other composers on January 14 at 7 p.m. Enjoy the concert at Shulman Auditorium at the Carlsbad City Library (1773 Dove Lane). Tickets are \$15 general, \$12 for seniors, \$8 for those 18 years and under. Dial 760-752-5078 for information. (CARLSBAD)

Works by Brahms and Bernstein are promised when clarinetist Robert Marcus and pianist Liana Mysore join up to present a concert at 2:30 p.m. on Sunday, January 14, at the San Diego Public Library (third-floor au-

ditorium, 820 E Street). Call 619-236-5810 for details. Free. (DOWNTOWN)

"Portrait of the Artist as an Aspiring Opera Singer," enjoy a concert by Susie La Russo, accompanied by John Danko, beginning at 3 p.m. on Sunday, January 14, in the Shulman Auditorium at the Carlsbad City Library (1773 Dove Lane). The soprano will discuss her artistic path and perform art songs and arias by Mozart, Schubert, Fauré, Copland, Hagerman, Puccini, Offenbach, and Menotti. Admission is free. For information, call 760-631-6467. (CARLSBAD)

Organ Opus 11 Woodward plans a concert in the Sprinkles Organ Pavilion on Sunday, January 14, at 2 p.m. Dial 619-702-8138 for information. Free. (SALIDA PARK)

The "Adagio" from Rodrigo's "Concierto Aranjés" will be heard when the Benedicti and Svoboda Guitar Duo performs for the San Diego Mini-Concert on Monday, January 15. The program also promises traditional flamenco and original music, based on the Spanish

What does the program offer? Listen for "Repuesta del silencio" from Lucia di Lammermoor by Donizetti, Weber's "Opus 18," the "Ariettes Oubliées" by Debussy, "Repoue les tres arbres," "Second Thoughts," "The Gabbakar" and "Silk Road" by Tan Dun. Fuzer will be joined by USC's musicians including Stefan Walz (piano), Colin McAllister (guitar), Robert Zalkman (clarinet), Ismael Demes (drum), Rick Burkhardt (bassoon), and Ivan Manzanailla (percussion). Admission is free. Call 858-534-4830 for more information. LA 06LA

Pianist and Composer Edward Weiss performs his original composition "La Jolla Suite" at 7 p.m. next Thursday, January 18, at the Earl and Bode Taylor Library (15405 Beach Library, 4275 Cass Street). For information, call 858-274-3667. Donations are encouraged. (PACIFIC BEACH)

and copy style. The free concert begins at noon (bring your lunch) and lasts approximately 50 minutes, at the Loxton Theatre at Horton Plaza, 858-587-8979. (DOWNTOWN)

The Pleasure of Your Company Chamber Music Series continues with a concert by soprano Michelle Latour and guitarist/composer Brian Head on Tuesday, January 16. Their program consists of songs by John Dowland and Thomas Campion, selections from "Lullabies" by Robert Gerhard, "Songs of the Chinese" by Benjamin Britten, and a few originals by Fernando Sor.

The music begins at 7 p.m. at the Scripps Miramar Ranch Public Library (10303) Scripps Lake Drive. The requested donation is \$10. For more information, call 858-538-8136. (UCR/NORTH SAN DIEGO)

Arias, Art Songs, and 20th-Century chamber music is in store when soprano Stacy Fraser presents a recital at 8 p.m. on Wednesday, January 17, in the Royal Hall at UCSD's Mandeville Center.

The music begins at 7 p.m. at the Scripps Miramar Ranch Public Library (10303) Scripps Lake Drive. The requested donation is \$10. For more information, call 858-538-8136. (UCR/NORTH SAN DIEGO)

What does the program offer? Listen for "Repuesta del silencio" from Lucia di Lammermoor by Donizetti, Weber's "Opus 18," the "Ariettes Oubliées" by Debussy, "Repoue les tres arbres," "Second Thoughts," "The Gabbakar" and "Silk Road" by Tan Dun. Fuzer will be joined by USC's musicians including Stefan Walz (piano), Colin McAllister (guitar), Robert Zalkman (clarinet), Ismael Demes (drum), Rick Burkhardt (bassoon), and Ivan Manzanailla (percussion). Admission is free. Call 858-534-4830 for more information. LA 06LA

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Subtitled "Art, Image, and Identity: 1900-2000," the show breaks down the century into 20-year chunks, time-lining images and objects that manifest California's realities and dreams and how artists have responded to them. It's a crash course in that subset of cultural studies, California studies. The 1900-1920 rooms analyze a time when California made a selling point of its agricultural abundance, illustrated by a postcard showing two boulder-sized strawberries on a flatcar, as well as its elegant Spanish heritage. The 1915 Panama-California Exposition in San Diego was an occasion for tooting not only California's wares to visitors—the word "tourists" was coined in California in the 19th Century—but also its historical identity. The Baroque Spanish-Colonial style of Balboa Park was intended to recall a Spanish Imperial past.

The cracks in California's Edenic image widened in the 1920s when the lives of nonwhite populations, whose cheap labor produced more and more of California's prosperity, became visible to a wider public. On the west coast, the boomtown photos, circulated by chambers of commerce left out nonwhite populations for fear they would tarnish the state's image. When Chinese or Filipino culture did appear, it was given a gleaming shellacked surface. The "darker peoples" were

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Deby Kaur, 1915, Larry Fuentre

Made in California, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, through February 25, 52, 857, 0000
presented as endearing local color, not living entities who led often desolate, difficult lives. By the mid-1930s the Real Estate Rush was underway. In ten years 1.5 million people had

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Calendar
ART

moved to the Southland, attracted largely by the oil boom of the 20s. With more work opportunities following the Great Depression came labor unrest and the violent 1934 longshoremen's strike in San Francisco. Venous anti-union propaganda abounded. It's intriguing to see pamphlets shrieking hatred for the presumed Pinko union movement and newsreels of guns breaking heads. The exhibition comes on strong but articulates with some finesse the precedents of the period. It discloses the discrimination and disempowerment that broiled beneath cheerful images of the promised Land, brochures featuring cotton fields and orange groves where there's no human presence, as if the new agrusiness-created abundance were an act of God. Dorothy Lange's austere photographs of poor people seeking honest work; ads in which white workers (Okies, Texans, Arkansas hillbillies, Dust Bowl refugees from Kansas) were featured as more hard working and trustworthy than Filipinos, Japanese, and Hispanics.



Migrant Mother, Nipomo, California, 1936, Dorothea Lange

My favorite is the 1940-1960 section. The most beautiful objects created for the war effort were leg splints and stretchers designed by Charles and Roy Eames, harmoniously streamlined and perfectly functional. My favorite image — though in a show that includes Elier Bichoff's *Two Figures at the Shrine* — is certainly not the greater — is a wartime ad for Cole of California's Swam-glo two-piece bathing suit with lace-up heels (due to wartime restrictions on elastic) "in parachute colors." Because Cole also produced parachutes, behind the Lane Russell-ish

model hang dozens of them in gumpod colors. After the war years came the building boom, especially in Southern California, and car culture. Owing a house was an American entitlement. It signaled independence and self-sufficiency. William Garnett's 1950 aerial photographs document the Lakewood Housing Project, from the grading of the land, through the foundation laying and



Murals of Chicano Park

house framing, to the finished product, hundreds of identical ranch homes that look like Monopoly houses. The cost of middle-class California entitlement was stupefying uniformity. The passage that takes us from 1960 to the present italicizes its arguments, as much art produced in our time has done, but its contents are often wonderful. Lary Fuente's *Derby Racer* ("Car Art") looks like a four-wheeled costume book. Stephen Le Stacker's *Seated Kungaroo Woman* ("Fetters: Body Art") is a stone ring encrusting a mem-

ory of the female form. Chris Burden's *L.A.P.D., Uniforms, 1993* ("Social Unrest Deconstructed") consists of 30 uniforms equipped with real guns and nightsticks flatly lined up along two walls like life-size cut-out dolls, arms and legs spread apart as if to restrain a crowd. Tucked away downstairs near the administrative offices, it's the most unerring thing in the show. Made in California, which runs until February 25, acts out polemics about boundaries, identity politics, gender issues, land and water usage, the na-

ture of representation, and so on. It demonstrates how California as a state, and state of mind, has created a uniquely self-integrating identity. (Pennsylvania don't obsess about the state of Pennsylvania.) It doesn't matter if you lose your way or find the arguments and assertions self-evident. I got so disoriented that I drifted into the permanent collection and looked for a wall label to tell me what a garden scene by Maurice had to say about California. And it doesn't matter if you're uninterested in materials: recent artists have adopted from the space and automotive industries — polyester resins, epoxies, fiberglass, plastics. Made in California is a thick deck you can keep shuffling, dealing yourself different hands, some stronger than others. You have to work through a fair amount of postmodernist bombast and too many one-liners, but it will be a long time before we see another new museum style attempt to mark the limits of something by demonstrating that there are no limits. The whole idea is that California is always struggling to control itself because its nature is to be out of control; that's how it has defined itself and produced its best art. It's a culture that happily accommodates both Wayne Theibaud and John Baldessari.

The mass and variety of stuff is impossible to take in, so you have to pick your pleasures. I got a little queasy over beauties like the photograph of San Diego's explosive Chicano Park murals, Richard Miral's ethereal T.V. Antenna, Salton Sea, California, George Horrell's glamour shot of a deep-sea eyed Ann Sheridan with hair foaming from the side of her head, less hilariously subversive *Tricky*. Gad series, a stout black plastic 1950s telephone designed by Henry Dreyfuss, and Craig Kaufman's 1967 shocking pink and yellow wall relief made from acrylic lacquer on Plexiglas. But also hyperrepresentative of the overload, from the new museum as big-box store. ■

ART LISTINGS

HOW TO SEND US YOUR LISTING: Contributions must be received by 5 p.m. Friday the week prior to publication for consideration. Do not phone. Send a complete description of the event, including neighborhood, dimensions, phone number, and a phone number (including area code) for public information to READER ART, Box 85033, San Diego CA 92186. Or fax to 619-581-2401. You may also submit information online at www.SandiegoReader.com by clicking on the events section.

GALLERIES

"Lost and Found," an exhibit of sculpture by Joseph Bennett, opens with a reception at 5 p.m. tonight, Thursday, January 11, at Art Gallery 999 (3822 Elm Street). Viewing by appointment, 619-226-6720, 999art.com

All I Ever Wanted...take a "Vanguard" with Sean Lowe and view this exhibit of her new work through Saturday, February 10, at Quim Contemporary Art. Meet the talented Lowe during a reception set for Friday, January 12, at 6 p.m. Regular gallery hours are Tuesday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Find the gallery at 7061 Grand Avenue, 858-451-3489. (LA 001A)

Rich and Evocative color photographs by Terry Wolfenbach are gathered in "Certain Days," opening in Sunnyside at the Arts Gallery International with a reception at 7 p.m. on Friday, January 13, in Wolfenbach's visual compositions, much of the pictorial surface is out of focus, and she uses the "depth of field" inherent in glass optics to create a sense of the "intimate." Interested? View the show through Friday, February 25. Find Sunnyside at 801 G Street at Ninth Avenue. Call 619-231-1901 for information. Hours are 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. 020000000

Rock Paper Scissors...an exhibition of architectural art, opens with a reception at 6 p.m. on Friday, January 12, at the Bal Gallery, 1450 La Jolla Village Avenue, at G Street. Twenty-four West Coast architects are included in

the show, remaining on view through Friday, February 23. Regular gallery hours are 11 to 5 p.m. Monday, Wednesday, and Saturday, and by appointment. For more information, dial 619-238-0865. (EAST WALK)

"The First American Folk Art" is a phrase sometimes used to describe Southwestern Hispanic crafts. See "Living the Tradition: Contemporary Hispanic Crafts from the Taylor Museum Collection" when it opens with a reception at 7 p.m. on Friday, January 12, in the William D. Cannon Art Gallery at the Carlsbad City Library. The Taylor Museum has collected works by contemporary artists using traditional methods and materials; this exhibit tracks the evolution of 20th-Century styles from the revival of Spanish colonial crafts to images made by today's craftsmen. The show includes sections on "The Early 20th-Century Craft Revival in the Southwest," "The Virgin of Guadalupe," and "Innovations and Interpretations."

View the show through Sunday, February 25, from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday, hours are expanded to 8 p.m. on Wednesday and 1 to 5 p.m. on Sunday. Find the gallery at the Carlsbad City Library, 1275 Lince Lane. 760-462-2021. (CARLSBAD)

Watercolors Full of Life and Energy by Sharon Hinkey are collected in "La Jolla Light," on view through Saturday, February 9, at the Artins Gallery (2420 Grand Avenue). Meet Hinkey during a reception held for Friday, January 12, at 6 p.m. Regular hours are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday, 858-459-3844. (LA 001A)

Water Resisting Interiors ("Interior Series III"), using Sabli's restroom to "recreate water" that was never entered to create.

Meet the artists at a reception next Thursday, January 18, at 6 p.m. Sabli is located in the Brent Armatore Building, at 320 14th Avenue. 619-235-8448. Gallery hours are now to 4 p.m. Thursday through Saturday, and by appointment. (GASlamp QUARTER)

Exceptionally Focused and intricate artworks of artists, creation are examined in "Obsessions," opening at the University Art Gallery with a reception at 6 p.m. next Thursday, January 18. Sixteen artists working in a variety of media are featured in the exhibition, which continues through Saturday, March 17. The gallery is housed in Mandeville Center on the UCSD campus and is open 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday. On-campus parking permits are required; they can be purchased at the information pavilions at the Gilman and Northview Drive entrances to the campus. 858-234-2102. (LA 001A)

"The Way I See It" features photographs by Peter Fry, who has been refining his photographic technique to create powerful images that fuse light, color, and abstract forms in unique ways. "The show opens at the San Diego Art Guild's Offtrack Gallery with a reception at 2 p.m. on Saturday, January 13, and continues through the month."

The gallery is open daily from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. in the old Encinitas train station, at 510 North Highway 101. 760-942-3636. (ENCINITAS)

The Annual Awards Art Show at the La Jolla Art Association features work in watercolor, acrylics, oils, pastels, mixed media, and graphics and opens with a awards presentation and receptions at 2 p.m. on Sunday, January 14. View the 2001 exhibit through Sunday, January 28. Regular gallery hours are noon to 4:30 p.m. daily. Call 858-459-3001 for details. (LA 001A)

"The Struggle to Be" is a two-person show featuring artists Joseph Bennett and Larry Calver. Opening on Wednesday, January 27, at South Performance and Visual Art, Bennett used only found objects to create "Contemplations," inviting sympathy for "objects once found discarded." Larry's "Clothing Series" consists of clothing mannequins and jammed together, functioning as surreal narratives.

Also on exhibit is Adam Frelin's "Water Resisting Interiors (Interior Series III)," using Sabli's restroom to "recreate water" that was never entered to create.

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ART MUSEUMS

Mingel International Museum of Folk Art, the art of pottery-making in Japan is on Shimokasa — A Retrospective of a Living National Treasure of Japan, offers more than 60 new works created for this exhibition, as well as an equal number from museums and private collections. Shimokasa has "worked hard to make the technique of rope impressed in clay truly my own." See the results of the artist's hard work through Sunday, February 4.

The Mingel is located on the square with the San Diego Museum of Art and the Tanker Museum of Art. For additional information, call 619-239-0003. (BALBOA PARK)

Oceanic Museum of Art, "Double Feature" includes a four-decade survey of work by Keith Ringgold and a traveling exhibition of 19 contemporary quilts entitled "Landmarks" by the Manhattan Quilters Guild. Ringgold, an author/painter/quilt artist, transforms contemporary art through real life stories and historical events. See the show through Sunday, January 28. The museum is located at 704 Perceps Way. 760-721-2287. (OCEANOGRAPHY)

San Diego Museum of Art, the museum's permanent collection of

Asian art has been re-installed in the Asian Court. "Asia Crossroads: Seated Husband and Wife when the couple is also artist and muse is revealed in the photographs by Renee Adolph de Meyer, Alfred Stieglitz, Edward Weston, Lee Friedlander, Masahito Fukase, Seiichi Furuya, and Nicholas Nixon included in "The Model Wife." The museum's permanent collection includes Italian Renaissance paintings, Spanish old masters paintings, American art, 19th-Century European paintings and sculpture, and the Western Gallery of Contemporary California Art. 619-232-7001. (BALBOA PARK)

Tinker Museum of Art, "Every Picture Has a Story: Looking at History Through Art," chronicles the journey of an art masterpiece. In addition to the six paintings, the exhibit features text panels tracing the story of previous owners, sites, and other paintings that once hung with them. Not every work's provenance is complete, but what has been learned by researching these paintings helps to place them in their historical context. The show closes on Sunday, February 18.

The museum's permanent collection includes European masters, 19th-Century American paintings, and Russian works. For information, dial 619-239-5548. (BALBOA PARK)

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Lobby Bomb

"Theater is a lie which reveals the truth."

Duane Daniels remembers it this way: The Fritz had recently opened its storefront theater on Third Avenue. He was sweeping the lobby. A tallish, sandy-silver-haired man in his 60s cracked the glass door open a few inches, poked his nose and mouth inside, and said, in high-pitched Southern cadence: "I don't want to act. I don't want to get paid. I just want to help out."

INTERVIEW

JEFF SMITH

"Great," said Daniels, clueless. "Come back Thursday at six."

The man closed the door carefully. A minute later, he's back.

"What should I wear?"

"Something presentable."

That was San Diego theater's introduction to Dick Emmet, a retired judge who volunteers countless hours to the area's smaller companies.

"Dick's the bomb," says Daniels. "He became one of my best friends and — because the Fritz will be producing again soon — I want him for every show."

Emmet tracks down props, sweeps floors (he cleaned the old Fritz floor at least 25 times), repairs rest rooms, does dramaturgical research. He's been production manager, assistant director, and served as American historian-in-residence for the Fritz, Sledgehammer, Starlight Musical Theatre, North Coast Rep, Diversionary, Actors Alliance, the Playwright's Project, and the San Diego Opera.

"Dick never differentiates between what he should or should not be doing," says Daniels. "He does whatever needs to be done and personalities what it means to be selfless and committed."

Emmet has his own recollection of meeting Daniels. In 1978 Emmet retired and came to San Diego. He spent several years doing nothing. "The only decisions I wanted to make were what am I going to have for lunch and where am I going to have it!" He vowed if he ever had two boring days in a row, he'd find something to do.

"Well, it happened."

In his youth, in Alabama, his mother took him and his sister to every show that came to Montgomery. "I say everything. Shoot, three years in a year'd be a whole bunch!"

Tallahatchie Bankhead's an Alabamian. Brought all her road shows to town for one night. That was a big, big thing. One time she came when I was judge. At the party after, an unsmoker man asked if she had someone with whom to spend the night. "Yes I do," she says, "only I don't know, at present, if it'll be a man... or a woman."

Emmet loves to digress, but not in the usual, cul-de-sac sense, more like unforeseen vaults in a catatomb. Stories grow out of stories, like when he told me about the Cumberland Gap. It was the one place, in east Tennessee, through which early Americans heading west could traverse the Appalachian Mountains. Beyond the gap some turned left, to the South, others, north. But the

Calendar THEATER

people who stayed in the region, unlike those who headed left, never had slaves and remained staunch Unionists.

Tennessee Williams's grandfather Dakin came from east Tennessee. And here's what people don't realize about Williams: They read the Confederacy in him, but that's wrong. He was a romantic Southerner. His background was pro-Union. In 1929 Emmet was born in northeast Alabama, on Sand Mountain, which was also "violently pro-Union during the war."

Around 1990, after back-to-back boring days, Emmet decided to volunteer for local arts groups. A woman at the Habn offices suggested that, right around the corner, a new company might need help. "I knocked on the Fritz door. There was Duane. I said, 'My name is Dick Emmet. I have three qualities: I show up on time, I don't mind taking orders, and, thirdly, I work for free. Can you use me?' That was my introduction."

Since that day, says Douglas Jacobs, former artistic director of the SD Rep, "Dick's probably spent more time at rehearsals than anyone else in town. And he's a sugar-pusher." He's famous for bringing bananas, grapes, and "lethal" sweets for cast and crew. He's also famous for following orders.

"I've reached the stage in life" — he's almost 72 — "where I enjoy working under people, a director, a cast. And they can give me the most menial tasks. I like having limited authority."

Why? "I got elected judge at age 29. That's a pretty heady thing. I thought I knew all the questions and certainly all the answers. Took me 'bout ten years — my life has been no bed of roses — and I wondered if I had the answers. Then later, if I even knew the questions.

"When I started working for theaters, I was unknowingly incompetent. Now I'm probably



Dick Emmet

knowingly incompetent. I've still got a ways yet — some people go round the elbow 14 times before they reach the nose — but it's such a privilege to be part of the process."

One of his favorite tasks is preparing a space for rehearsals: sweep, "bring in whatever," make actors comfortable. "It's no different from setting up a courtroom. Bailiffs, marshal, witnesses, defendant, plaintiffs, lawyers — everybody depends on what the judge says. Same's true in rehearsal. If an assistant can relieve a director of nitty-gritty things, when the director says 'everybody onstage,' there's a stage to get on!"

Emmet sees another connection: "People say a judge must be like being in theater, but it's really the reverse. Theater is a lie which reveals the truth. Courtroom drama is a truth which often staves reveals the lie. In other words, on the stage

you know the actor is playing a character. That is a lie. But the play might reveal some truth about life."

"In the courtroom, everybody is sworn to tell the truth. But you arrive at the truth by eliminating what is not true. That is the art of direct examination and cross-examination. Sounds easy, but it's sometimes kinda hard."

Emmet was a circuit judge in Montgomery, Alabama, from 1959 to 1978. During those turbulent years George Wallace, or his wife Lurleen, was governor. In many ways, Montgomery became a crucible — the most severe test to date — of democracy in America.

It began in 1955. Rosa Parks refused to move to the back of a segregated bus. "Rosa was a seamstress," says Emmet. "She pushed a 15-pound iron across heavy cloth all day. Fifteen pounds! Your back and shoulders ache. It hurts me to hear people say she was put up to it. That is not true! What Rosa did was not a staged event. She'd just had enough."

Park's refusal led to the Montgomery Bus Boycott, headed by 26-year-old Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., whose parish, the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church, was two blocks from Emmet's courthouse.

In the late '50s, Montgomery was a destination for the Freedom Riders and, in the '60s and '70s, a flash point for national media. "Civil rights litigation in Alabama generated so much publicity the press had people stationed there."

Emmet is instinctively self-effacing, but though he insists he was "way down on the food chain, low profile," he was in many ways a central figure. His courtroom, for the first time in a century, flew the American, not the Confederate flag. And, for the first time ever in Alabama — where blacks sat on one side, whites on another — he desegregated his courtroom.

"I just told the bailiff not to make a big deal over where people sat."

Until the mid-'60s no woman had ever served on a jury in Alabama. One of his "proudest accomplishments" was to have the state's first female juror. He also appointed the first woman as foreman of a grand jury in the South.

These are astonishing actions, yet Emmet's memory blurs about reactions to them. "I'm sure lots of people hated my guts. People quite pronounced on racial things'd make a point to avoid me. I just never had a problem with not being accepted. And, anyway, you don't say bad things to a judge's face," he smiles, "you might, have to appear in his court."

One story reveals the reaction. When they were young attorneys, Emmet became friends with Fred Gray, Dr. King's lawyer and assistant minister of the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church. In 1970, after federal poll-watchers oversaw the voting and counting of ballots, Gray became the first African-American elected to the Alabama state legislature.

The chief justice said he was "uncomfortable" swearing in a black man, so Gray asked Emmet to perform the ceremony. "I said, 'Fred, you honor me by asking.'"

Before hundreds of world press, and a line number of Ku Klux Klan protesters (with placards of the typical language), Emmet swore in Gray on the marble steps of the capitol building, one step below the star where Jefferson Davis became president of the Confederate States.

About a year later, Emmet came home one afternoon and all five of his children met him, shouting, "Daddy! Your picture's in the encyclopedia!"

"That yearbook had a little picture — 'What's Happening in Alabama' — and there I was, swearing Fred in. The kids were



Dick Emmet swears in Fred Gray, 1970

That's where the name comes from."

Where did his sense of equality come from? "Can't really say. At a very early age, I had a different opinion than most on the race question. It was no epiphany, anything like that. My parents taught us to treat everybody with respect. We were a religious family, and in God's view everyone is equal, spiritually."

"Somewhere or other I just had a reputation. I don't think people called it liberal or conservative. I don't think those terms even existed, in the South, at that time. I just had a different attitude. And, oh — don't think I was brave in any sense of the word. Never took no bravery. I just did the work in the fashion I thought it should be done."

Though one named one of the "100 outstanding young men in America" by the national lawyers, Emmet's highest

honor, which he didn't recognize at the time, resulted from his reputation. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Dexter Avenue Baptist Church had an annual tradition. They'd invite a lay Sunday speaker to fill the pulpit. In 1972, they asked Emmet to give the sermon. He'd spoken in African-American churches throughout the state and was the only white member of the black YMCA's board.

The moral of his sermon: "Jesus said, 'You only know what you know, you never know what your sowing reaps.' Never feel insignificant. You could make an important contribution to the betterment of humanity."

The sermon, he felt, was "just another request to do something." A few years later, one of the Dexter Avenue deacons told him he was the first white person they'd invited since the assassination of Dr. King in 1968.

If you've been to an opening at the Fritz, or Sledgehammer, or Diversionary, you would have seen Dick Emmet — faded Lewis's one-neck sweater with white shirt collar out — off to the side, performing a last-minute task. About the only demonstrative thing he does is give people big Southern "howdy's." "Other than that, he never parades his past, and you'd never know that the man who today enjoys "limited authority" was once a candidate for governor of Alabama."

"George Wallace dominated Alabama politics my entire career. Sure I knew him. My court handled the state business, and he was a party in various and sundry lawsuits."

Based on his public record, Emmet acquired a loyal following and, around 1970, many insisted he run for governor against Wallace. "Not being egotistical, I was a fairly good politician, a very good public speaker, and I like people, which, in the South, matters most of all."

Wallace rose, of late, to be severely criticized, led to spending too much time outside of Alabama, campaigning for the 1972 presidential elec-

Groundswell support grew. And Emmet's speeches, around the state, took on a gubernatorial tinge. His candidacy was still unofficial, however, the night he and Wallace spoke, at Montgomery's Civic Auditorium, for an Order of the Eastern Star convention. They had assembled to elect, among other things, a "grand worthy patron" and "matron."

Aspirants gave out mementoes: "collapsible rain bonnets, books of matches. One particular man gave everyone a nice little plastic container of toothpicks. On them it said, 'Pick a winner! Pick... whatever his name was.'"

At the time, national press followed Wallace everywhere. Because of his emerging political status, Emmet had "slight speaking acquaintance" with TV reporters. "Didn't know many names, but we knew each other. You know, how in public life you know people you really don't?"

Emmet went first. "I am speaking before 1500 women in an evening dress, about the amazing contributions of early pioneer women. I notice that about two-thirds of them've taken out a toothpick and are picking their teeth."

Halfway through the speech they gave Emmet a standing ovation. "Wallace was behind me, and I'm thinking, 'He's bound to notice I'm having some influence over this crowd. And this should be a staunch Wallace group.'"

Another standing ovation followed, then a third, which rocked the auditorium, when he finished. Emmet returned to his seat on the platform.

"Sitting there, some of the press behind me, and I'm wondering how Governor George Wallace could follow that."

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"I was personally **standard** for my Spanish background," said Danny DeSmidt, 29, a concertgoer who drove down from South

live bands including the Pharcyde, Maceo (from the band De La Soul), and Junior Reid, who flew in from Jamaica. Green maintained in court that sheriff's deputies led to potential concertgoers, telling them the show was canceled.

"I waited three years and three months to present my

said loans from his family were part of the \$70,000 he lost on Camping Trip. "A high school teacher testified that 30 to 40 cars were waiting in line," said Green's attorney, Mike Marrinan. He said the jury was also won over when he proved that deputies harassed the concert site with a helicopter and noisy dirt bikes. "They maintained a checkpoint and illegally searched cars."

Marrinan said he beat back an attempt by the deputies to benchmark the Camping Trip by using the R word. "One of the big issues of the case was the deputies continually referring to it as a rave when they knew it did, not resemble a rave in any way."

"I was raised by my grandparents to respect law enforcement," said Green. "Unfortunately I believed in that. I confided in them. I put everything on the table. I really felt that we had a cooperative relationship. It's hard to understand that law enforcement can do this to you. On certain issues they were clearly wrong."

Green said he was in an "extremely emotional state" after the show, as he tried to get an attorney to take the case. "I must have gone to seven different attorneys. All of them left for me, but they said they didn't want to take on the sheriff's department or the county. They told me it would be hard to win this but that didn't mean I didn't have a case. I never gave up. It never crossed my mind. I learned you have to fight for what is right."

The next step is a status conference February 5 in U.S. District Court. At that time senior deputy county council Kevin Kennedy will give his recommendation. The county can appeal the judgment or recommend to the county board of supervisors that the county pay the \$1.5 million. Part of last month's judgment was that deputy Sgt. Kenneth Prue, who was the officer in charge, was liable to be sued for punitive damages in a separate trial. That additional trial could cost the county even more. Green and Marrinan have agreed to not pursue the Prue trial if the county agrees to pay the \$1.5 million.

"What offends me the most is that the sheriff's department did not even launch an investigation over what the deputies did," said Marrinan. "There were at least four complaints, and they never even looked into it. That is of great concern to me."

"I was treated like an alien," recalls DeSmidt of his Camping Trip experience. "After spending an hour dealing with [a search], I was told to go home because it was canceled. I told them I already had a ticket so I was going in."

Green said DeSmidt was one of only 1500 who made it through the gates. After advertising for six months on three radio stations, in two magazines, and with 80,000 fliers and 5000 posters, he said he expected "a minimum of 5000." This is the largest police misconduct verdict in San Diego County history. Hopefully this will deter any future unlawful activities by law enforcement. Not many cases won over constitutional issues,

specifically the first amendment, which is freedom of expression, speech, and assembly, all without government interference. This affects everyone."

DeWentworth of the Sheriff's Internal Affairs Department responds: "I have not seen a copy of the jury's decision. If we get a copy we will decide where we want to go with this, if anywhere."

"Did you ask to see a copy?" I inquired.

"No. We can get one from the county. I'm sure. When the rulings come down, they send it to our legal department."

Deputy DA Kevin Kennedy would not say whether he would advise the board of supervisors to make the county pay the \$1.5 million or pursue more litigation.

"A couple bad Saturday nights in a row and the clubs...try something else. They either go disco or do anything other than live music. I've seen it over and over again," Grant Daversa says, listing venues where he's worked.

"Schooner's went disco, became Margarita Rocks, Fibber McGee's — became RT's Longboard Grill. Now there's no live music there and it's packed. The Pourhouse — now it's Martin Ranch, they yanked the stage completely. Plum Crazy II in South Bay — live

disco.... Riverfront — shut down.... Now it's the Blue Agave.... Homer's — basically the same thing, just ran into the ground. The Boulevard — they're still doing live music, but it's too small to do national acts. It's a tiny little stage, and most of the bands complain because it's way the hell out in El Cajon. Coors



THE CASBAH: EPITOME OF A MUSIC SCENE

Amphitheater side stages — had those for a season, then the corporations came and bought them up. When the amphitheater first opened up, [the amphitheater's managers] were all kissing the city's butt in Chula Vista.

"We love now, we really want to support the community," so I came along with my local bands, and it seemed like a really altruistic endeavor — but the bands had to bring their own P.A. and didn't get paid a dime.

"The list goes on and on. And then there's Dream Street. I'm there now. I work my ass off...so hopefully it won't go disco. I just decided to put all my eggs in Dream Street, try to get some national touring acts. It's a 300-capacity, legitimate venue, not just some shithole. I think it's a place worthy of a music scene, where people can go hang out."

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Lake Tahoe with two friends to attend Camping Trip. "They pressed my body against my car and frisked me. After a long dog search they found nothing at all. The cop said, 'You're just another one of those pot-smoking kids from across the border.'"

That testimony helped former concert promoter Shawn Green pull off a rare feat: He successfully sued the County of San Diego over the illegal behavior of county sheriff's deputies. After a three-week trial, a jury in federal court last month unanimously decided county deputies broke the law and now the county needs to pay Green \$1.5 million.

In September 1997, Green promoted his first major concert event on a 150-acre campus 12 miles east of Julian. Billed as the Camping Trip, Green got all the necessary permits for the two-day rock, reggae, and hip-hop concert featuring 23



GREEN WINS \$1.5 MIL FROM DEPUTIES

large-scale event." Green said he had been promoting live music shows for three years before the Camping Trip. He now works in construction. "I lost my business that night. When I sever business relationships, you are unable to stay in business," Green

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downtown's Casbah, Daversa commends Tim Mays, Casbah's owner, for his ability to create a relationship between the club, the patrons, and the talent. "Mays doesn't have to worry because he has a clientele. He's developed a clientele over 10, 15 years; he's developed credibility. But the coolest thing he's been able to do is have it so that the bands that play at his club hang out at his club," says Daversa. "That is the definition of a music scene."

In his Book of Bad Songs, columnist Dave Barry explains why 1969's "Good Morning Starshine" should be considered as one of the most obnoxious pop tunes ever made. He quotes the lyrics: "Nobby nub nubby, nubby nubby nubby / Giddy giddy glooby, nubby nubby nubby / Giddy glop gloopy nubby nubby nubby / Yiky do dilly, dilly do budy yadda yadda." "Starshine" and other tunes from Barry's Bad Song Survey have been banned

from the airwaves of most radio stations. But two weekends ago — under the guise of "A Number One Weekender" — oldies station KJCY exhorted some doozies, besides "Good Morning Starshine," they also played "The Night Chicago Died," "Billy Don't Be a Hero," and Helen Reddy's classic, "I Am Woman" (*I am still an embryo, with a long, long way to go.*)

"I know a lot of people who are listening to KJCY now just because they are playing cheesy songs that they haven't heard in a while," said David Moyer, who considers himself a connoisseur of bad pop. An editor of the offbeat Wireless Flash (a subscription Web news service), Moyer interviewed Alan O'Day, who wrote "Angie Baby" for Helen Reddy, also reviewed by KJCY.

"How many times can you hear Herman's Hermits?" asks Moyer. "KJCY revived most of Cher's embarrassing '70s catalog like 'Gypsys, Tramps, and Thieves,' 'Half Breed,' and 'Bang Bang.'" "Even in our prior incarnation we would play cheesy music, but apparently nobody noticed," said Dave

Mason, KJCY's assistant program director and morning DJ. "Whether any of these songs become a staple in our library, it's too soon to tell. I think the next number-one weekend will be around April Fool's Day. Maybe we can dig up more, even cheesier stuff. I guess you could say we have the most cheesy songs of any station in town."

"The old k-BEST would have never had the guts to play 'Convoy,' which I did hear on KJCY recently," said Moyer.



SHOW PALACE = 3 X ATLANTIS

Located in a former K-Mart on Mission Avenue near I-5, Needham says the 25,000-square-foot room has a legal capacity of just under 1500.

The Belly Up Tavern in Solana Beach has a legal capacity of 600. 4th & B owner Bob Speth said his legal limit is 1800, "but we hold it to 1500."

Just as the Atlantis opened with promises of being the "new Belly Up," Needham says his Show Palace will bring major names to Oceanside. "We spent over \$1 million on this." The grand opening will be held in late February or March, said Needham. Until then, he said the nightclub is open Saturday and Sunday nights.

Needham's partner in the Show Palace is Saul Gonzalez, who owned the Coco Loco Latin music nightclub in the San Luis Rey Valley in Oceanside. Gonzalez essentially moved that business into the Show Palace, and the pair hope to build on that. "There aren't any [national touring] bands going through now," said Needham. Longtime concert promoter Bill Silva once predicted that as the area grew, North County and South County would emerge as two separate markets just as Orange County and L.A. have. Currently, a nationally touring band like Lit or the Neville Brothers can play the House of Blues showcases in both L.A. and Orange County and sell out both.

4th & B's Speth isn't so sure North County is ready to be its own market just yet. "There's a six million people difference," he said of the discrepancy between greater L.A. and greater San Diego. He said that performance contracts often have limits that forbid artists from playing at any venue in the surrounding area. He said that limit could be 50 to 100 miles. Speth said established venues such as Humphrey's or the Sun Theater in Anaheim may veto a show in Oceanside.

"But I applaud him and I wish him luck," said Speth. "I'm not saying it's impossible [to get big names]. But he can always do local stuff. Anybody that says they are going to do nothing but concerts is making a fool of himself."

—Ken Leighton

Guide to Local Music Sites — Slamm
<http://www.slammid.com>
Publishers who put up website versions of existing magazines face a dilemma if the online material duplicates much of the printed edition — especially if the magazine has a purchase price. The weekly magazine Slamm has no cover price. www.slammid.com is also available for free. Recent articles like "The

Last Word" are lifted directly from the newspaper edition, readable with a click on either "Features" or "Cover Story." More of the same can be searched on a "Back Issues" page with brief descriptions of around 150 issues, all for sale, though you must send a check to Slamm. Listed cover stories include Spike and Mike's Twisted Animation



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Festival, like Turner, the Ruggburns, New Wave of Surfer Girls, as well as multiple cover raves for Blink-182 and Jewel. "Slamm CD's" page pitches local band compilations like *Magic Bananas* and *Elon on Acid*. Clicking on a cover graphic makes it possible to play audio clips from the selection or link to the band's website. A tagline says that proceeds from these sales "benefit elementary music programs in San Diego schools," with no further clarification regarding how and where

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donations are processed. Cost per CD is around nine dollars, but credit cards are useless as buyers must send checks or money orders to the magazine's office address. The "Musician's Resource Guide" page includes an alphabetical list of bands containing contact info, style descriptions, and CD titles as well as links to other resource sites like bandconnection.com (online promotion) and sdsm.com (local bands and venues) and various production companies, photographers, music organizations, agents, managers, and promoters. A wide range of musicians' needs are covered with additional links to sites offering equipment rental and repair, legal services, soundproofing, and professional stage lighting and sound. The "Print Media" section contains only one listing — for *Slamm* magazine. Those with or who know of sites created in San Diego

or that focus on local music are encouraged to forward info/URL links to ja2669@aol.com.
—Jay Allen Sanford

"I don't want to be screwed again. I'll be very careful this time and invest very well."
Ed Tawil of Costa Mesa admits he made a mistake when he agreed to lease his three-story building he co-owns to Ken Kissinger. While City of Oceanside officials favored over the project, Kissinger built his nautical-themed downtown nightclub called Club Atlantis, saying it would put Oceanside on the map.
"They told me they were successful with nightclubs in Las Vegas," said Tawil. "Next time we will check."
Atlantis was only open for two months. Tawil ended up evicting Kissinger and his son Brian the week before Christmas. He said a rent check bounced. Last month the fire department posted signs forbidding use of the building because of ignored health and safety codes.
Nine contractors and vendors have filed liens against the building for more than \$400,000 they say they are owed. "None of us ever got a dime," said one of the contractors. "Every one of us was screwed."
Tawil said he and his ex-wife Barbara Tawil of San



Diego (they each own one-third) are not responsible for the debts of their former tenants. But one neighboring businessman who has been following the Atlantis affair said they are because of the actions of the third partner, Oceanside developer Steve Jordan. Because Jordan got involved with the business of Club Atlantis with the Kissingers, all the owners may now be on the hook for all the improvements made by the contractors, said the neighbor.
Tawil strongly disagrees. "I don't have to pay anybody anything," Tawil said if partner Jordan did have a business relationship with Kissinger et al. "That would be a violation of our partnership."
"You know what's really awful about this is that

Yesterday [January 31] I personally saw Brian there taking all the tables, chairs, chins, pots, and pans," said the neighboring businessman. "He is taking them but doesn't even own them."
Tawil said he in fact did call the police about the removal of fixtures. Oceanside Police Sgt. Young said he responded to a call on a different day and found some removing sound equipment. He said no action was taken.
"The only thing that is a mystery in my mind is why would you hire a plumber if you don't have money to pay him," said Tawil. "They [the Kissingers] blame everything everybody else, but they never blame themselves."
Steve Jordan and Ken

Kissinger did not respond to a request for comment.
—Ken Leighton
CD review: Matthew Stewart, No Stone Unturned, Stoneseed Music MM5001
Dear fans of really good goodmusic:
This is the bestest and finestest goodmusic recording I have heard since August — no exaggeration — and yes, I try to take in my QUOTA of goodmusic, so it ain't my crummy taste which alone has led me to this verdict. To further verify that I am not a "peculiar" individual, Matthew Stewart has been nominated for the mega-prestigious Plopp Ploppin' Ploppop Award (previous winners include Tom Jones, Patti Smith, R.E.M., and Leonard Bernstein).

Really, plopp this in your stereo as fast as you CAN — it is supposed you'll be sending me 30-dollar bills for recommending it.
And if your plans include SCANDINAVIA, Matt will be there until the second week of Feb., so you may surely want to check him out LIVE — which I hear is equally astonishing.
In the meantime, drop me a loin, scuse me, line and let me know what YOU think — and what I can do to aid & abet you in appreciating Mr. S all the live-long day!
—Richard Meltzer

CONTRIBUTORS
Rob Adams, Jennifer Hall (editor), Russell Hunter, Kristen Collier, Ed Tucker, Dave Good, Randy Hoffman, Tommy Lee, Ken Leighton, Richard Meltzer, Jay Allen Sanford, Pat Sherman, Elise Zimmerman

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CALENDAR
MUSIC SCENE

Love Machine

"Nathaniel Cole, Nathaniel Cole. He would never come to class."

He used to get down on the stage and do pushups," remembers Sharon Shufelt, former drummer for the jazz band Tobacco Road.

For 12 years Preston Coleman played bass fiddle, sang, and occasionally did push-ups during "Lovin' Machine" for Tobacco Road. He was 64 when he joined the band in 1982.

Coleman, who came to San Diego with the Walter Fuller Orchestra in 1946, had a reputation for falling asleep onstage. "My job was to keep him awake," says April West, Tobacco Road trombonist. "I don't know if he was asleep, but his eyes were closed. I reach over and pluck a string—he didn't miss a beat."

Coleman played during the early 1940s as a member of Cats and the Fiddle, the house band at New York's Apollo Theater. Last Christmas marks the sixth anniversary of the stroke that ended Coleman's performing career. The 82-year-old, 5'9" Coleman lives at Country Hills Health Care Center in El Cajon. His speech is limited to phrases like "Oh, that's nice" or "Whatever." He attends monthly jam sessions at his friend Jean Down's Lakeside home. Friends drive him to the symphony.

"He can hum harmonies," says Shufelt, who frequently drives Coleman to events.

Although Coleman's speech is limited, his music, and history have been preserved on videotapes and recordings. In 1980, Sue Palmer, Tobacco Road's bandleader and pianist, had 72-year-old Coleman talk about his life for a Tobacco Road promo video. Coleman's quotes for this story are drawn from his interview with Palmer and from a 1991 appearance on *Seniors Speak Out*, a KPBS program that included performances by Tobacco Road.

Coleman was born in Indianapolis on February 9, 1918. His family owned a piano and a Victrola. "I can remember every song that was on there. I was so full of music at that age," says Coleman on the program.

His family moved to Chicago when Coleman was 6. After his father left, Coleman's mother supported the family by selling whiskey during Prohibition. "She couldn't keep the house if she didn't sell whiskey. But next door to us, her friend underlined her business. She took her customers away." So then his mother worked as a domestic, but that paid less and she had to send young Coleman to a Catholic orphanage for several years. Coleman says his mother visited him every month.

In a childhood photo, Coleman wears a suit and holds a violin. Coleman had won six months of violin lessons, and the picture was taken about the time of Charles Lindbergh's 1927 flight from New York to Paris.

The lessons continued and Coleman studied at a music conservatory on scholarship after grammar school. He practiced outdoors in Chicago and discovered "I could make a few bucks playing a guitar." At age 15, he formed the Joy Boys, a group that played songs like "China Town" on street corners. He played Beethoven for churches—"no one would pay me."

Coleman had to sell his violin, and then he worked door-to-door as a Fuller Brush salesman.

Coleman went to Wendell Phillips High School, which was also attended by Nat King Cole. "I was the division manager. I used to call his name—'Nathaniel Cole, Nathaniel Cole. He would never come to class,'" Coleman says. "He was one of the greatest musicians of all time."

Coleman first toured in 1939 with the 12-piece King Perry Orchestra. The musicians toured the South with a Georgia license plate on their bus. "We didn't dare have a bus from the North," Coleman recalls.

When the bus broke down a second time, "We were stranded. We had no place to go," Coleman says that in Valdosta, Georgia. "Whites... gave us a dance.... [The pay] enabled us to get a truck to get back north.... They had a rope going in the middle of the dance floor... black people danced on this side, the white people there."

In Minnesota, someone robbed the band. Coleman walked ten miles from Minneapolis to St. Paul "before I could get a job setting pins. I got hit by a bowling ball. I've still got the lisp on my hand from that bowling ball."

Coleman was 28 when he came to San Diego with the Walter Fuller Orchestra. Down first saw Coleman perform in 1948 with Fuller at Club Romance, the downtown nightclub later renamed Club Royal. Says Down, "I was a young Navy kid in boot camp. I just loved the whole band." The club was razed, and the Westgate Hotel is located on that site. Although Club Royal is gone, Coleman—and Fuller's orchestra—can be seen performing there in *Summertime Command*, a 1952 William Holden movie.

With Club Royal earnings, Coleman bought a house in Southeast San Diego. He looked through the windows before buying it because the white owners wouldn't let him inside.

Feeling that the Club Royal job was "very insecure," he went into real estate during the 1960s. "I had no business going into the real estate business. It's hard to make money when there's poverty," Coleman says.

During the 1960s, Coleman played concerts with the San Diego County Symphony Orchestra. From 1968 through Coleman went to Wendell Phillips High School, which was also attended by Nat King Cole. "I was the division manager. I used to call his name—'Nathaniel Cole, Nathaniel Cole. He would never come to class,'" Coleman says. "He was one of the greatest musicians of all time."

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Tobacco Road's venues included the Belly Up,



Preston Coleman, age 82

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the U.S. Grant, Croce's, as well as a Nike party in La Costa. West says there they watched men in tuxedos run around and shoot squirt guns. NPR's *Car Talk* played Tobacco Road's rendition of "I Bought a New Car."

Recently, Palmer and I visited Coleman at Country Hills. He shiner than in the videos. He produces an album with photos from a jam session and West's wedding. He takes off a checkered hat to display his haircut. Shufelt cut his hair—and he's pleased.

Palmer reminisces about Tobacco Road. The band played at the Organ Pavilion during Jesse Jackson's 1988 presidential campaign, they performed at a fundraiser for former Los Angeles Mayor Tom Bradley, and at a party for former Republican Governor Pete Wilson.

"We played for free for Jesse Jackson, charged the Democrats a bit, and totally charged the Republicans," says Palmer. "If you were having bad [during rehearsal], he'd say, 'You're such a nice person... [implying] that you want to behave better.'"

Tobacco Road's venues included the Belly Up,

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Calendar
MUSIC SCENE

A Bit of Monk

Gentle souls often suffer neglect in the arts, no matter how gifted or even great.

What, you may wonder, does your trusted purveyor of musical perspicacity put on his own CD player at day's end, while he sals the fricassee and his raven-haired doxy mixes a cool libation? Well, you might. And I'll tell you. Of course, it's not always the same thing, quite naturally. "It depends on how I'm feeling," to quote a line from Bob Dylan. But often enough it is those few existing jazz standards of great merit.



Herbie Nichols

Nichols that I choose for my own pleasure. Allow me to recommend them to you as well. His own story is a sad one, even by jazz standards. He was a pianist, composer, arranger, and singer, and his sound among the most distinctive and immediately recognizable, right up there with Miles and Monk and Trane and Duke. You hear a bit of it (along with covers of Nichols originals) in younger players like Gene Allen and Kenny Werner, Benny Green too. And there now exists a spate of discs devoted exclusively to Herbie Nichols's original compositions by assorted groups. He was, poor man, 50 years ahead of his time. Monk heard it. Mingus too. And Alfred Lions at Blue Note recorded him in early May of 1955 at Rudy Van Gelder's Studio in Hackensack, right around the time the "Blues" from Brooklyn were gathering up a head of steam that would take them all the way.

REVIEW
AUGUST KLEINZAHLER

It was one of the two consequential recording dates Nichols played for Blue Note, the second coming a year later with different sidemen. There was a final session in November of 1957 for Bethlehem that is only intermittently in print. Collectively, these three sessions constitute the pinnacle of piano trio jazz, right up there with Monk's Blue Note, Prestige, and Black Lion sides as well as Bud Powell's Amazing sides for Blue Note. So, you may fairly ask, how come Herbie Nichols is never your?

Born in 1919 in New York of West Indian parents, Nichols was the right age and in the right place to be caught up in the bebop revolution. In fact, he was right there at Monroe's Uptown house playing

in the after-hours club with the usual suspects: Bird, Dizzy, Monk, Coleman Hawkins. But Nichols was a shy man, exceedingly gentle and modest, and regarded as something of a square by the boppers—perhaps because he refrained from certain of their recreational pursuits. He was ~~not~~ the type to build his way onto the bandstand and insist on sitting in or engaging in cutting contests. He was big enough to—6'4" of him—but it wasn't his nature. And that sweet, in the end, at age 44, destitute and musically unknown to the broader jazz-listening public.

Gentle souls often suffer neglect in the arts, no matter how gifted or even great. Monk, who was a quiet, psychologically erratic man, was taken up, perhaps because his genius and sound was so pronounced. As a performer Monk engaged in elaborate shenanigans onstage, and many

in the audience regarded him as a clown or a freak. Actually, he was dancing out what he was hearing in his head and probably communicating to his sidemen. Herbie Nichols, who was a brilliant and knowledgeable man—not just in regard to music—was actually the first person to write a serious article about Monk's music and the scale of his achievement.

You can hear a bit of Monk in Nichols, but both men come out of the stride tradition and both were deeply affected by Ellington's music. Both men made ample use of drums in their trio sides, and both recorded with two of the best: Max Roach and Art Blakey. On the Bethlehem sides Nichols has Mingus's drummer Danny Richmond on hand. Insofar as there is a typical Nichols compositional structure, the piece begins with the piano and drums playing a few bars, then the drummer drops some "bombs," then they're into the development of the piece, which usually involves small variations on a central motif fleshed out with the most hypnotically unusual

chords and meters, all of it logical, often polyphonic, always swinging, going to places unvisited (at that time) and circling back at the end where the piece concludes with another series of "bombs" dropped by the drummer.

Nichols had a theory about this; that the origins of jazz lay in the overtones created by the drummer, beginning in the lower register, which complement the other instruments, even pulling them back into tune when they drift. This sort of "bomb" figure on the drums at the top of a tune was often used by the bop pioneers to usher in the band, but nothing like the ~~type~~ Nichols makes use of the drums at the start and in conclusion. Nichols loves "tuned" drums.



Art Blakey

In fact, Nichols's music and sound resembles nothing else in jazz. Every so often one hears a percussive diamond sliver à la Monk, but Nichols is much less a minimalist than Monk. He's something of a full-blown Romantic, if put through some astringent solution and turned sideways. Most of the music he wrote was in AABA 32-bar form with those drum introductions and codas. And each piece tells a story. Here is Nichols himself on his pieces "Wildflower" and "Hangover Triangle":

"Wildflower" tells the story of a diamond-in-the-rough at a social function. It tells about an ordinary dancing girl who suddenly reveals all sorts of charms to an otherwise drowsy male as she passes by. The rich, explosive, ascending melody of the first measure heralds the recognition of unbelievable beauty.

"Hangover Triangle" was composed on a park bench one weekend summer night. The site was really no more than an open triangle formed by converging streets. Everyone around me seemed determined to have a ball far into the night. Too many drank too deeply of the revelry, resulting in a lot of comical antics which, at last, inspired a very funny tale.

Nichols has the best titles for his compositions in all of jazz. He was a poet as well, like Cecil Taylor, and quite as bad. But he loved language. His Bethlehem disc—and a song on it—is entitled *Love, Gloom, Cash, Love*. Other titles include "Riff Primitif," "Cro-Mag at T's," "Orae at Safari," "Furthermore," "Bartok," "Dr. Cyclops' Dream,"

and "Infatuation Eyes."

Nichols also loved dance and dancers. He has several compositions that are homages to dancers, and more than anything else, his music dances. One can go on about the remarkable way in which his innovative harmonies serve his melodies, distinct, always memorable. But his notes do jump around in a dancelike manner, taking shape, and changing shapes, into all sorts of striking patterns and arabesques.

But perhaps the strangest of Nichols's compositions is different from anyone in jazz is that he didn't consider himself a "jazz player" or improviser but a composer. He was classically trained as a child, and his ambition was to become Prokofiev, whose music is distinguished by its lively rhythms and tart harmonies. Later on Nichols fell under Ellington's spell, but his influences were always a mixture of the classical with jazz, and not in the hopelessly doomed way that Third Stream jazz tried to combine the two. Nichols knew the work of Bartok (whose "Mikrokosmos" would have been an influence, as it was with Ornette Coleman), Stravinsky, Piaton, Hindemith, especially the latter's use of polytonality.

Nichols wrote over 200 compositions, most of them lost in a fire. He earned his bread and butter playing with Friedland revival bands and R&B groups right until the end. He was a purist and didn't go in for the sort of behaviors, musical or otherwise, that would have improved his circumstances. No other jazz composer's music so evokes life in New York—especially in the '30s when most of it was written—than Herbie Nichols's: the busyness and vitality, the millions of odd corners, the tiny encounters and interactions. Nor has anyone made all that random energy and mass cohere and dance.

Nichols as a composer is known for just one song: "Lady Sings the Blues," originally entitled "Serenade," and written in August of 1955. And that song is only known because Billie Holiday recorded it. But like Monk, Mingus, Alfred Lion, and the younger generations of jazz artists who now perform his compositions, Lady Day knew what she was listening to. ■

The Complete Blue Note Recordings of Herbie Nichols (Blue Note CDP 7243 39352 2 0) Herbie Nichols, *Love, Gloom, Cash, Love* (Bethlehem 20 3012)

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Black Eyed Peas (425): 4th Avenue James, and **Black Catfish** (425) - *Black Catfish*, tonight, Thursday, January 11, 9:30 p.m., 1444 South LaSalle Avenue, 619-233-9497.

Downcast, Factory 41, Reductive Ash, and Life Moves Me (426) - *Life Moves Me*, tonight, Thursday, January 11, 3:05 Ocean Front Walk, Mission Beach. 658-480-1780.

"Project Safe House Benefit" with Cheryl Hine, Rick Waters, and Trepanner Williams Steel Motors (428) - *Trepanner Williams Steel Motors*, tonight, Thursday, January 11, 7:00 Kettner Avenue, Park-BE. 658-483-7844.

FRIDAY

John Lee Hooker (954) and the Fabulous Thunderbirds (210) - *John Lee Hooker*, Friday, January 12, 8:30 p.m., 1026 Park Avenue, Park-BE. 658-483-7844 or 619-231-4343.

L.A. House (734) and Cradock (734) - *L.A. House*, Friday, January 12, 9:15 p.m., 143 South Carlos Avenue, Solana Beach. 954-481-8140 or 619-720-8497.

Social Distortion (4148) - *Social Distortion*, Friday, January 12, 8:30 p.m., 3105 Ocean Front Walk, Mission Beach. 658-480-1780 or 619-720-8497.

Rocket From the Crypt (232) and Lazy Cowgirls (428) - *Rocket From the Crypt*, Friday, January 12, 9:30 p.m., 2501 Kettner Boulevard, midtown.

Peter Case (418) and Gregory Page (186) - *Peter Case*, Friday, January 12, 9 p.m., 1754 Bacon Street, Ocean Beach. 619-720-8497.

Robert Weissman's Friday, Friday, January 12, 1921 Bacon Street, Ocean Beach. 619-722-4822.

THE VANDERBILT (105)

The Vandervort (105) - *The Vandervort*, Friday, January 12, 9 p.m., 1051 Kettner Boulevard, midtown. 658-271-6000.

John McCorkhouse (772) - *John McCorkhouse*, Friday, January 12, 8:30 p.m., 193 Oak Road, Encinitas. 858-564-0080.

SATURDAY

Rocket From the Crypt (232), Treacher's Pet, and the On 72 (232) - *Rocket From the Crypt*, Saturday, January 13, 8:30 p.m., 2501 Kettner Boulevard, midtown. 619-232-4355 or 619-720-8497.

Gregory Page (186) (see above): *Gregory Page*, Saturday, January 13, 9 p.m., 1954 Bacon Street, Ocean Beach. 619-720-8497.

EXTENSION 0001

Three John (311) and Billy Joel (215) - *Three John*, Friday, January 13, 9 p.m., 1954 Bacon Street, Ocean Beach. 619-720-8497.

"Third Annual Super Bowl Show Fest" featuring the Blue Brothers, The Bad Company, and the Michigan Players (247) - *"Third Annual Super Bowl Show Fest"*, Friday, January 13, 9 p.m., 2501 Kettner Boulevard, midtown. 619-231-4343.

THE BIGHORN (248) - *The Bighorn*, Friday, January 13, 9 p.m., 1954 Bacon Street, Ocean Beach. 619-720-8497.

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Barkley Hunt (800) Iron Joe's, La Habra, Saturday, January 26, 9 p.m., 1956 Bacon Street, Ocean Beach 619-234-6256

Seafarerz (306) Werber's, Saturday, January 26, 1921 Bacon Street, Ocean Beach 619-234-6257

Hopping Madly (314) and the Blue Menagerie: The Latch, Sunday, January 27, and Monday, January 28, 8:30 p.m., 2501 Kettner Boulevard, midtown 619-232-4355 or 619-220-8497

Government Crown (428) and **Head Cap Otis: Belly Up Tavern**, Wednesday, January 24, 9 p.m., 143 South La Jolla

America, Solano Beach 858-481-6140 or 619-220-8497

Tom Meares (200): The Latch, Wednesday, January 24, 8:30 p.m., 2501 Kettner Boulevard, midtown 619-232-4355 or 619-220-8497

R.L. Burdick (935): Belly Up Tavern, Thursday, January 25, 8 p.m., 143 South La Jolla Avenue, Solano Beach 858-481-6140 or 619-220-8497

Roger Williams: East County Performing Arts Center, Friday, January 26, 7:30 p.m., 2101 East Main Street, El Cajon 619-440-2277 or 619-220-8497

Seafarerz Culture on the Skids (266): The Latch, Saturday, January 27, and Sunday, January 28, 8:30 p.m., 2501 Kettner Boulevard, midtown 619-232-4355 or 619-220-8497

Blue Oyster Cult (435): 4th & B, Sunday, January 26, 345 B Street, downtown 619-220-8497 or 619-231-4343

"Masters of Percussion Music" with Mohamed Elza Shakerian (814) and Keyhan Kalbar: Mendocino Auditorium, Wednesday, January 31, USCO complex, La Jolla 858-534-4555

FEBRUARY
Steve Paliz (815): Belly Up Tavern, Thursday, January 23, 8:30 p.m., 143 South La Jolla 619-220-8497

Travis (200): The Latch, Saturday, January 23, 8:30 p.m., 2501 Kettner Boulevard, midtown 619-232-4355

Government Crown (428) and **Head Cap Otis: Belly Up Tavern**, Wednesday, January 24, 9 p.m., 143 South La Jolla



John McCarbone, January 22, San Diego's United Methodist Church

February 1: 3105 Ocean Front Walk, Mission Beach 858-488-1780

"Jazz Piano IV" series with the Jan Meyer Trio: Midtown Music and Arts Library, Thursday, February 1, 7:30 p.m., 1008 Wall Street, La Jolla 858-544-5872

B.B. King (954): 4th & B, Wednesday, February 7, 345 B Street, downtown 619-220-8497 or 619-231-4343

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Mid Sedalia: East County Performing Arts Center, Sunday, February 11, 2101 East Main Street, El Cajon 619-440-2277 or 619-220-8497

"Jazz Piano IV" series with Teate Thelma and Kenny Warner: Afternoon Music and Arts Library, Thursday, February 15, two shows, 7:30 p.m. and 9 p.m., 1008 Wall Street, La Jolla 858-544-5872

Matthew Skipp, William Parker, and Gerald Cleaver: Space Street Forum, Friday, February 16, 8 p.m., 301 Space Street, Barbers Hill 619-295-0301

Jonny Lang (935): Veves, Downtown Show Room, Friday, February 16, 8 p.m., 1000 Wilcox Road, Alhambra 619-445-5400 or 619-220-8497

Eye & Not Vant: The Exquisite, Friday, February 16, 8:50 p.m., New Mesa Boulevard, Mesa Mesa 858-271-4000

The Neville Brothers (946): 4th & B, Sunday, February 16, 345 B Street, downtown 619-220-8497 or 619-231-4343

John Deacon and Pierre Tanguay: Space Street Forum, Wednesday, February 21, 8 p.m., 301 Space Street, Barbers Hill 619-295-0301

"Jazz Piano IV" series with the Bobo Stenson Trio: Afternoon Music and Arts Library, Thursday, February 22, 7:30 p.m., 1008 Wall Street, La Jolla 858-544-5872

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2000 and Two

Either of her two smooches with Eric Stoltz ought to sweep the field for Best Screen Kiss in the annual MTV movie awards.

The spillover from the year gone by — or trickledown, as we in the cultural outback are obliged to think of it — now commences.

The *House of Mirch*, opening tomorrow, is a tasteful, artful, generally faithful treatment of the Edith Wharton novel; and if it naturally lacks

REVIEW

DUNCAN SHEPHERD

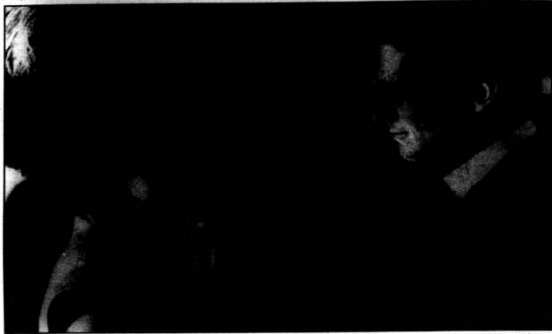
the "personal" quality of Terence Davies's autobiographical work — *Distance Voices*, *Still Lives* and *The Long Day Closes* — it at least earns him credit for having selected a first-rate piece of literature. (On a more selfish note, it earns him credit for having motivated me to read it.) And it does not altogether lack the "studio" quality of, in particular, *The Long Day Closes*, one of the last great landmarks of sound-stage illusionism. Though there is never a feeling of penny in the production, neither is there a feeling of ostentatious display — a fine line to tread in a clear-eyed portrait of New York gentility circa 1905. And wherever there is corner-cutting (e.g., the completely tented-in yacht deck, with only a few spidery shadows

through the translucent cloth to suggest a boat and a bay beyond the deck chairs on center stage), there is always ample imagination to compensate. Always, I mean to say, in matters visual. Storytelling is another matter.

The tragicomedy of the luxury-loving Lily Bart, too spirited to settle for a dull husband and too spoiled to settle for any less than a wealthy one, is here tipped sharply toward the tragic side and away from the comic, and the heroine registers more purely as victim than as equal accomplice. This can be attributed in large part to the absence of the author's tart tone of voice and the substitution of the filmmaker's dolorous temperament. Davies has adapted the novel himself — a tall order by any measure — and there is often a lack of transition, to say nothing of breathing room, between one dialogue and the next, so that the grimness of the heroine's situation and the desperation in her demeanor descend upon us at free-fall speed. Wharton's great achievement was, among other things,

Calendar

MOVIES



The House of Mirch

to make the course of the narrative seem both inevitable and unnecessary. Davies, working his way to a simpler and heavier handed outcome, makes it seem nothing but a crying shame.

And he does so — even to the point of villainizing a character who in the book is the soul of selfless virtue —

without ever quite establishing the heroine as somebody special. Yes, she is trefurately Gillian Anderson, alias Agent Scully (albeit with uncovered mole above her lip), and she wears her clothes well (the most gorgeous wardrobe in many a year), and she reaps numerous accolades in the script

("You're such a wonderful spectacle"), and either of her two tentative smooches with Eric Stoltz ought to have rights to sweep the field for Best Screen Kiss in the annual MTV movie awards. Too, despite an occasional tendency to recite rather than talk, she handles her highly literary dialogue most re-

spectably. (More so, certainly, than the miscast Dan Aykroyd or Anthony LaPaglia; and much more so than Eleanor Bron in a deplorable Wickel-Wich-of-the-West performance. The luminous Laura Linney, on the other hand, provides almost too much competition, even in the looks department. And Elizabeth McGovern is a stand-out also — though as long as Davies was cheapening the novel anyway, he surely missed a bet when he failed to cast Carrie Fisher in the role of Carry Fisher.) And yet. Given this big chance to show what she can do, Anderson is prone to show too much, playing too many scenes at too full a throttle, holding nothing in reserve. But that may be Davies, too, nudging the tragedy of it all.

Opened last week: Steven Soderbergh's *Traffic* — not to be confused with the Jacques Tati comedy of that name. Just as *Chocolat* is not to be confused with Claire Denis's autobiographical first film, just as *Cast Away* is not to be confused with the one-word Nicolas Roeg title, just as the upcoming *The Gift* is not to be confused with a French bedroom farce, or a Mabokov novel, and *Head over Heels* is not to be confused with Joan Micklin Silver's renaming of an early Ann Beattie novel, and *Hannibal* is not to be confused with Victor Mature and a herd of elephants (it is really so hard to come up with original titles!) — holds forth for two and a half hours on the illicit drug trade. One hears that the narrative is "complex," but only, so far as I can see, in the strictly numerical sense of "consisting of two or more related parts" (courtesy of Webster's *New World Dictionary*). Three parts, to be absolutely exact.

The first deals with a morally ambiguous Tijuana cop (Benicio Del Toro), the second with two DEA agents (Don Cheadle, Luis Guzman, a couple of Soderbergh repertory players) in their efforts to safeguard an unwilling witness against a socially prominent San Diego dope dealer, and the third with the newly appointed federal drug czar (Michael Douglas) whose own adolescent daughter is herself ironically, tragically, melodramatically, and mawkishly hooked on drugs.

Only the moral ambiguity of the Tijuana cop, or maybe the general ambiguity of law enforcement in Mexico, attains anything close to complexity in the deeper sense. And the performance of Benicio Del Toro, while no less self-conscious and camera-conscious than usual, no less disposed to posturing and posing and sucking on phantom Tic-Tacs, has accordingly benefited in the reviews. The other two plot strands, unsuccessfully camouflaged by the documentary-style camerawork (jerky pans, a wavering frame), are individually on the level of a TV movie. Or old episode of *Hawaii Five-O*. Some what below that level, even, is the device — shared with the recent *Requiem for a Dream* — of demonstrating the degradation of a well-bred white girl by showing her getting humped in bed by her dimmy black drug supplier. I don't doubt that this sort of thing is common enough in life, but as a dramatic device (held to a higher standard) it can be seen as a teeny bit primitive. Disturbing, what's more, in all the wrong ways.

Further lessening the complexity of the design is Soderbergh's decorative decision to color-code each plot strand: the czar's section, whether in

his hometown of Cincinnati or in the corridors of Washington, D.C., is tinted blue; the Tijuana cop's is all yellow; and the DEA's is blanketed in a whitish-brownish foggy-smoggy haze. Or to say it another way, instead of giving his movie a unifying "vision," he gives it a variety of different "looks" — just what you might want for a cutting-edge postmodern glossy fashion magazine or hip, hot, new gossip show on the E! channel, but not for a hard-hitting, no-holds-barred expose on the drug racket. (With *Erin Brockovich* arriving ten months earlier, the year 2000 was without doubt a big one for Soderbergh's "career," whether or not for his artistic stature.) There is, throughout the movie, a didactic interest in laying out *How Things Work* and *How Things Are*. And it can be recommended as a sort of freshman survey course — *War on Drugs 101* — if still on the level of a TV movie. It is perhaps significant that the source of the screenplay is a British miniseries with the more original title of *Traffic*.

Riffs, at the Ken for one week, latests to reach us, is the French *Asphalt* jungle, complete with equal or greater amounts of sob-sister sentimentality and dilettantish toughness and cynicism. Equal or greater amounts, too, of tension and telling detail: as in its American forerunner, the *Jeux* itself is the film's overwriting centerpiece. (Among many valuable how-to-tips: the closed umbrella poked through a hole in the ceiling and then opened up to catch the falling plaster as the hole is enlarged.) In addition, there always seems to be some unforeseen

bonus to these disinterested cinematic cadavers. For me, it was the nostalgic return to a time when the crooks' commencement was an essential part of the form — a variation on a theme, a challenge to a filmmaker's ingenuity.

The American-born director, Jules Dassin, you will recall, was one of several Hollywood fugitives who — with Joseph Losey, with John Berry, with Cy Endfield — pursued their careers in Europe during the period of the blacklist. (He also appears here pseudonymously in the part of the dapper Milanese safecracker.) Recollection of this can only enhance and enrich the commonplace motifs of the evil of money and its toxicity to a tight-knit collective. What I mean to suggest is that it's very easy to believe in this director's total conviction — his acute consciousness of the metaphorical dimensions of the genre. I tend, rightly or not, to regard the original *Thomas Crown Affair* (1968) as the point in screen history after which crooks started routinely to get away with their ill-gotten gains; and by the time of its remake a year or so ago, the only detectable core of conviction in Hollywood had been reduced to the primacy of money. (A sign of increased honesty? — or sign of shrinking horizons?) Getting away with a pile of it, no matter who or how, thus becomes the epitome of the happy ending: making out like bandits. Of course, our Hollywood-bashing politicians would never dream of scolding the film industry for drying money above the law that would be pinko talk. And you can understand Hollywood's burnt feelings when takes to task for its glorification of violence, drugs, vulgarity, and what the late Steve Allen summed up as "filth."

These, to their purveyors, are of no intrinsic worth whatsoever. They are merely pragmatic stepping stones toward the greater glory of money. What could be more American?

A chronological retrospective of half a dozen films by Robert Bresson (1907-99), heralded in this space some while back, is set to get underway next Wednesday at the San Diego Museum of Art. I feel perhaps I should — to utilize my newly acquired vocabulary and do what a couple of U.S. Supreme Court justices ought recently to have done — excuse myself. I am one of those who is driven up the wall (if not, like Orson Welles, driven out of the theater screaming) by Bresson, or anyone else who is driven up the wall (if not, distilled, and purified Bresson. My notion of the finest of his films, *Diary of a Country Priest*, is not on the schedule; but the first two, *A Man Escaped* (January 17) and *Pickpocket* (January 24), are well within my comfort zone. Knowing how much some people revere him, I would advise all interested parties to begin at the beginning and proceed to the limits of their tolerance.

A thank-you to the several E-mailers who confirmed my impression that the "Dinner with the Mayor" entry on the chalkboard calendar in *State and Main* does indeed magically shift positions. I guess the question now is whether there can be any explanation for this little sleight-of-hand other than the ignominious one of dealing from the bottom of the deck.

I was misinformed, as opposed to just making it up out of my own head, that *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* would

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Calendar
MOVIES

be opening "wide" on my week off (Forsyth O Brother, where art thou?) I hope it hasn't been too troublesome to track down. ■

MOVIE LISTINGS

All reviews are by *Duncan Shepherd*. Premieres are indicated by *one to five stars* and antipiques by the *black spot*. *Special movies* are for new unreviewed.

All the Pretty Horses — From the

EDDIE GRIFFIN ORLANDO JONES



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CHECK THEATRE DIRECTORY FOR SHOWTIMES OR PASSES OR DISCOUNT COUPONS ACCEPTED

Cormac McCarthy novel, a post-WWII cowboy movie, not quite a purebred Western, a little like *The Hit List Country*. A little (including in that scope the scrumptious Penelope Cruz), but not a lot. And it is, whatever its constitution, more than director Billy Bob Thornton can chew. The opening stretch, in which a dispossessed Texas teacher and his faithful sidekick drift across the Rio Grande looking for work on a hansom south of the border spread, picking up for part of the way a tag-along teenager with a big hat, big horse, and big gun, is assuredly and convincingly notwithstanding some ominous tremors of artifice. The horses are as advertised, good looking, and Matt Damon and Henry Thomas look good in the saddle. But with the coming of the forbidden romance (the noblewoman and the hired hand, or, to lift the title of an old Gary Cooper vehicle, the cowboy and the lady), and the going into

and getting out of a hellhole penitentiary, the storytelling becomes abrupt, choppy, perfunctory. Sure, blues, and running headlong toward a deadline. Word has it that the movie underwent heavy editing. That word is easy to believe. Lucas Black, Ruben Blades, Bruce Deitz. 2000. ■ **FASHION VALLEY 18, GARDEN 16, GROSSMONT TROLEY 14, LA JOLLA 12, MISSION VALLEY 20, PARKWAY PLAZA 18, RANCHO DEL REY 16, TOWN SQUARE 14**

Antitrust — Peter Howell's computer thriller, with Ryan Reynolds, Rachel Leigh Cook, Claire Forlani, Tim Robbins. **COMIE MOUNTAIN CINEMA STAR 10, CINEMA STAR 13, FASHION VALLEY 18, GROSSMONT TROLEY 14, LA JOLLA 12, MISSION VALLEY 20, OCCASION 16, PARKWAY PLAZA 18, RANCHO DEL REY 16, SWEETWATER 9, TOWN SQUARE 14, UA HORTON PLAZA 14, WEGAND PLAZA 14, FROM 5-12**

Rabbit's Feet — Gabriel Axel's film, from a story by Iak Zinzen, treats of two spunky sisters devoted to Good Works on the Jutland Coast near the end of the last century, of how they came to have a French maid, and of how the maid, after fourteen years of gratuitous service, came to cook them on *you dinner* *franchise* to commemorate their father's hundredth birthday and her own personal wildfowl of fortune. The storytelling during the "how" parts gets in an intriguing *franchise*, and turns for help to an introduced and overly necessary narrator. It affords you, through all of that, plenty of time to wish anew that there were an accepted format for cinematic works shorter than feature-length. But the feast itself and the buildup to it are ample rewards for toasting it out. There is, for one thing, a steadily rising parabola of humor, as the two old Piarrens give their blessing to the maid's project in a burst of Christian charity and then repent their action as an *what goes into you dinner* *franchise* and the nearest thing they can imagine to it in their own experience is a *witches' Sabbath*. And the expansive and expanding emotional scope of the dinner, effecting a true communion and consolation, as well as a meeting up of earlier plot threads, cancels out the difficult path the movie took to get there: the spirit of forgoing, if not forgetting, is precisely the end of the evening, and a viewer can probably be caught up in it. Lastly (and can't be leady) the actual presentation

and consumption of the various drinks and dishes may even have some socially redeeming value — for viewers on diets, say, or on Burger King dining budgets — in much the way that pornography is contended to have for certain other kinds of people. As our date on that sort of issue is impressive, the point must remain moot. Stephanie Audran, Jarl Kulle. 1987. ■ **LA PALOMA 1/14, P.M.**

Best in Show — Christopher Guest's gallery of caricatures of the people at and around the fictitious Mayflower Kennel Club Dog Show turns funny, yet disappointing. Or in other words, not as funny as his *Waiting for Guffman*, and lavishly overpriced in the reviews. It gives reviewers a chance to be funny, in turn, by passing along the jokes. The so-called "mockumentary" technique, at least as practiced by Guest, is too inherently faulty to merit embroilment as a formula. The dog-rigour interview bits, more convincing than necessary, are simply an easy way (a little akin to voice-over narration) to dispense information, tell jokes, etc., without the trouble of constructing servicable scenes and situations. At the same time, or rather at different times, the hand-held camera is privy to behind-closed-doors activities to which no documentary film crew would ever gain access — and without the responsibility of selecting an angle, setting up a composition, etc. It is a technique that yields more accurate results. The cast members — Eugene Levy, Catherine

O'Hara, Michael McKean, John Michael Higgins, Michael Hitchcock, Parker Posey, Jennifer Coolidge, Jane Lynch, Bob Odenkirk, Fred Willard, Jim Piddock, Guest himself, several of whom were also in *Superstar* — are well in tune with the semi-improvisatory comic style, though not free from the occasional overreaching chinker. A special gold star, each to O'Hara as a small-town Norwich owner whose extensive sexual history is forever catching up with her to Willard as the ex-pat TV commentator whose speech is never preceded by thought (not *Carolina*, on the Westminster telecast, would be the obvious model); to Piddock as Willard's (and the British straight man, and his loving girl alongside his prior bloodhound but not for his out-of-character *antiprosocial*). The dogs themselves are a rounded little room to roam, little space to stretch. That, too, is disappointing. 2000. ■ **GARDEN 16, LA PALOMA.**

Billy Elliot — Fluffy and forgettable bit of uplift about an unlikely lad in Margaret Thatcher's England, who drops out of the all-girl ballet class that comes in the same gem, and proves himself (not to the untrained eye, which might concede his potential to a big dancer, but rather to the Olympian-sounding matronly teacher "good enough" at age eleven to audition for the Royal Ballet School. How nice. How very, very nice. The kid, Jamie Bell, is likably lovable, and the smoothness of Stephen Daldry's direction is untroubled, that of Dickens with a sprinkling of coal-town grit. Julie Walters, Lewis Lewis. 2000. ■ **LA OLA VALLE, UA HORTON PLAZA 14**

Corrosion — Terry, Molnar's fantasy, has been Americanized a lot of coin, plus Shirley Jones and Gordon MacRae. Hammerstoned "When we walk through a storm, hold your head up high... and Hollywooded lighter than an ether broader than barn screens, and it endures rather well ("Walk on through the wind, walk on through the rain..."). Directed by Henry King. 1956. ■ **MUSEUM OF PHOTOGRAPHY. SITS: 1, 12 AND 13, P.M.**

Cast Away — Robert Zemeckis, so soon into the indie scene (BAFTA of *Water for Elephants*), returns to his post-Gump presentism. Not so much in what he has to say as *Optimus' Club bumper sticker*. "Who knows what the tale could bring?", but in the lengths he will go to in a two-hour and twenty-minute of high gear or take. Half an hour for a establishment of "starvation" (the *franchise* showed, paper regulated, cellphone-bling, globe-trotting FedEx executive

played by Tom Hanks, or Forrest Gump on benies), and then well over an hour of rudimentary Robinson Crusoe-ish (fishing with a pointed stick, drinking from leaves, cracking coconuts with a rock, a recipe for rapid hairdown), before the hero makes his way back to civilization a wiser and sadder man, with all plenty of time to put his learning into action. Everything in the movie takes longer than it needed, to no slave to the clock, Zemeckis. The spectacular plane crash perhaps seems worth it, but the rest — in fact the plane crash included — is a splendid self-indulgence. With Helen Hunt, Nick Searcy, Chris North, Lar White. 2000. ■ **CINEMA STAR 10, CINEMA STAR 13, CINEMA STAR 6, DEL MAR HIGHLANDS, FASHION VALLEY 18, FLOWER HILL CINEMA, GROSSMONT TROLEY, GROSSMONT TROLEY, HAZARD CENTER 7, LA COSTA 6, LA JOLLA 12, MISSION VALLEY 20, OCCASION 16, PALM PROMENADE 24, PARKWAY PLAZA 18, POWAY 10, RANCHO DEL REY 16, SWEETWATER 9, TOWN SQUARE 14, UA HORTON PLAZA 14, WEGAND PLAZA**

Charlie's Angels — The overhaul of the late-Seventies TV series is, in essence, M.F. 2 plus TSA. The Mission: Impossible element comes clear in the opening sequence when, by and by, the Steadicam goes up running.

the skins of an airborne jetliner and settles down in front of an African garbed LI Cool J, who, after a self-referential grumble about the ill-fight entertainment (*T.I. Hooker, the Movie*: "Another one from an old TV show — I hate that"), peels off a computer-generated mask to expose himself underneath as — *ta-da!* — Drew Barrymore? You know right then and there: it's going to be that kind of movie. To give it its due, it accomplishes pretty much everything it set out to accomplish. The chicks kick butt, dodge bullets (running up the walls in *Marnie* fashion to do so), dish out double entendres (to the mullah: "You can just stick things in my slot"), reveal cleavage, speak in subtitles when they desire privacy, never break a sweat. And their collective tongue, not content to remain in check, is openly and fully stuck out. Any related debate — from the glory days of *Leggys* TV, *Farrar Hair*, and all that — over whether the thing is anti-feminist, quasi-feminist, crypto-feminist, post-feminist, neo-feminist, or what you will, would make more sense of our trinity of "Angels" bore any resemblance to human beings. Nonetheless equates to nonfeminist, a nonissue. On the plus side, Cameron Diaz dies a couple of high spirited and low inhibited dances. That's the extent of the plot. Lucy Liu, Bill Murray, Sam Rockwell, Kelly Lynch, directed by McE (no first name, only that

fragment of a last name). 2000. ■ **GARDEN 16**

Chocolat — Another art house food film: an apocryphal chocolate-maker opens her Little Shop of Temptations during the Lenten fast. Director Lane Linton follows his discreet post-choice propaganda (*The Cider House Rules*) with a strong, complacent, liberal-minded headcase against the smugness, complacency, and narrow-mindedness of a French Catholic provincial village circa 1910. The modest international cast adds to the air of unreality: some do French accents, some don't; Juliette Binoche does one naturally; Johnny Ippig does an Irish. With Lena Olin, Alfred Molina, Carrie-Anne Moss.

Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon — Ang Lee's homage to the martial-arts fairy tales of his heritage, especially perhaps to the splendid period pieces of King Hu, is a beautiful bore. The costumes, the sets, the scenery, the wide-screen photography, the mature leading lady, the China-doll ingenue — beautiful. The lally script, the unforced and unpauciated narrative line — a bore. And although *Ride with the Devil* may have proven that Lee can handle action, it did not prove he could make something credible and compelling of fight scenes in which the combatants go at it like



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SCHEDULED RELEASES
Calendar
MOVIES

Peter Pan. Not does this one prove it. We might have hoped that the act of homage to the ancient mites, and the self-cogitatus mystically would render the action more acceptable, more "aesthetic," than that of a John Woo burlesque. They only render it more remote, more effete, more affected and anemic. The effects of flying, spinning, dancing up walls, skipping across water, hovering in tree tops, etc., are technically well done (yeah), and they sometimes, if only fleetingly, rise to the exalted plane of "dreamlike." "Spectacle," would better describe the remainder of the times.

Michelle Yeo, Chow Yun Fat, Zhang Ziyi, Chang Chen, 2000.
 ** (CAMEL MOUNTAIN; CINEMA 6; FLOWER HILL CINEMA; GROSSMONT CENTER; HILLCREST CINEMA; OCEANSIDE 16; PALM PROMENADE 24; PARKWAY PLAZA 18; RANCHO DEL REY 16; TOWN SQUARE 14)

Dark Days — Illustrating documentary, shot in war-torn Bosnia and white about homeless squatters in a New York subway tunnel. (Shades of the cannibals and anemic. The effects of flying, spinning, dancing up walls, skipping across water, hovering in tree tops, etc., are technically well done (yeah), and they sometimes, if only fleetingly, rise to the exalted plane of "dreamlike." "Spectacle," would better describe the remainder of the times.)

*** (KEN, THROUGH 1/11)

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Chocolat

THE HOUSE OF MIRTH
 EDITH WHARTON

EXCLUSIVE ENGAGEMENT STARTS FRIDAY, JANUARY 12

Double Take — Comedy of switched identities, starring Eddie Griffin and Orlando Jones, directed by George Gallo. (CAMEL MOUNTAIN; CINEMA STAR GALAXY; CINEMA STAR 10; CINEMA STAR 13; CINEMA 6; FASHION VALLEY 18; GALLAM 15; GROSSMONT CENTER; LA JOLLA 12; MISSION VALLEY 20; OCEANSIDE 16; PALM PROMENADE 24; PARKWAY PLAZA 18; RANCHO DEL REY 16; TOWN SQUARE 14; WEGAND PLAZA; FROM 1/12)

Dracula 2000 — Re-arrangement again! Writer-director Patrick Lussier, under the imprimatur of Wes Craven, has done a genuine take to fiddle with Dracula, pronounced "Dra-COOOL-ee," by one who should know, does not register on camera any more than in a mirror. And his invisibility in mirrors, speaking of which, is used against him in a clever trap (a gimmick thrown away in flashback). And the really Big Idea — the revelation of his true identity and explanation of his allergy to the cross and silver — is a whopper indeed. Dracula himself, alas, is a bitter disappointment: a big-haired TV soap-opera type bank, Gerard Butler. And the movie, sleek but slow, buckles under such modern excesses as computers, hard rock, wisecracks, and one of those endless endings. With Christopher Plummer, Jonny Lee Miller, Justine Waddell, Jennifer Esposito, and Omar Epps, 2000.

Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas — A minor touch. The kiddie-to-holiday holiday. "Maybe Christmas doesn't come from a store / Maybe Christmas perhaps means a little bit more..." illustrated in those park sets and costumes (rudely snouts on all the citizens of Whoville save the little heroine, Taylor Momsen, and Christine Baranski). Jim Carrey, as the hairy green Scrooge-come-Sausage, is under so much makeup he might as well be voicing a cartoon. Directed by Ron Howard, 2000.

The Emperor's New Groove — Animated adventure about an elf-absorbed South American monarch (David Spade), straying even when only a voice who is enlighteningly transferred onto a llama.

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THE HOUSE OF MIRTH
 EDITH WHARTON

Mad in the latter-day Disney style — brassy, sexy, mystically "modern" — and on the latter-day accelerated production schedule: thus the simplified graphics and limited cast of characters. With the voices of John Goodman, Eartha Kitt, and Patrick Warburton, directed by Mark DiSoddi, 2000.

Dahe, Where's My Car? — Youth comedy starring Ashton Kutcher and Susan Williams Scott, directed by Daniel Leiner. (CINEMA STAR 10; CINEMA STAR 13; CINEMA 6; DEL MAR; HIGHLANDS; FASHION VALLEY 18; GALLAM 15; GROSSMONT TROLLEY; HARBOR DRIVE IN; MISSION VALLEY 20; OCEANSIDE 16; PALM PROMENADE 24; PARKWAY PLAZA 18; SWEETWATER 9; TOWN SQUARE 14; WEGAND PLAZA; FROM 1/12)

Dungeons and Dragons — Inevitable game of Good vs. Evil (as Milton Bradley might put it; Ages to 10), set in a Medieval fantasyland populated by mages and comports, a sultry teenage empress, a giant red-headed "dwarf," a tall grown-up pony-carved "elf," a British-accented monk, Shakespearean bad guy (Jeremy Irons, destroying any last shred of credibility he once held as an actor), a blue-lipped half-headed bad guy, a purple-faced three-eyed bad guy, a calico vapid fantasy team of good guys, some computer cartoon monsters, a magical scroll, cool scythes, something. We could complain about the darkness and disavowment of the image if this were a cartoon by the complaint that we can make out anything at all. With Justin Willman, Marko Varga, Zoe McLellan, and Thora Birch, directed by James Solomon, 2000.

Erin Brockovich — Ostensibly this has to do with a factual water-contamination case not unlike that of a Civil Action. But more centrally and essentially, it has to do with Julia Roberts's huberto untamed boobies, which are pushed up, pressed together, and popped out — where did these come from? — in an assortment of stalkerwalk outfits which the frantically strapping heroine sees no reason to modify ("I think I look nice") simply because she's landed a charming job as a law office goer. The case — the movie — is all about her, and never mind the victims of the contaminated water. Her personal problems. Her gumption and misde. Her outrage. Her compassion. Her dedication. Her sacrifice. Her reward. It is precisely there, at the very end, that the movie spins off most radically from A Civil Action: a split from the spiritual to the material: seven-digit worth. And hey, it's heart-repeating: her boobies. All of which will no doubt be totally acceptable to the viewer who wants only to identify with the protagonist and to soak up the vicarious flutter. Albert Finney, as the obligatory attorney (i.e., necessary evil on the case, is his usual commanding self, though humblingly subsordinated to Roberts. Director Steven Soderbergh, too, while he oversees some fine shots of tacky, off-kilter, and off-camera, has had to pack up all that nonlinear fanciness he was fiddling around with in *The Limey* and *Out of Sight*. This is his best ever forgo to his Robert's vehicle, and her director must be hobbled down to the straightforward task of emotional conviction. Aaron Eckhart, Marg Helgenberger, Peter Coyote, 2000.

The Family Man — The male and Hollywood counterpart to *Mr. Miyagi*: An alternative really switcheroo whereby a driven careerist, through the intervention of a magical mystical gene, gets to find out how life would have turned out if he had not gone off to London in '87 but had stayed home and married his college sweetheart. As in the earlier *Autumn* film, the protagonist remains fully knowledgeable of "real" life and is granted no knowledge of the alternative one — a built-in consolation of the experiment. (Genre: "I know this thing is really bizarre to you.") There are thus elements of the standard alternate plot (what does he do for a living? how does he have his own office? where is he?) as well as the body-strengthening plot: daughter he never had senses he's a caregiver. The protagonist here, however, is much less effete than to enjoy with the child, or in other words less likely to shove up the shaky premise. Key to that premise is the provision that the hero cannot return to his old life until he learns to fully give up for an unshaky ending, though we have to settle for a merely enthusiastic and unconvincing ending. Tea Leoni, as the would-be love, is an amazingly natural under the circumstances, not the least of which is that she is the trials and tribulations of having to act opposite the boy-look-alike me antics of the self-assured center of the universe, Nicolas Cage. With Dawn Cheadle and Jennifer Lien, directed by Brent Tanner, 2000.

Mel Gibson Helen Hunt

What Women Want

WINNER BEST DIRECTOR
WINNER BEST SUPPORTING ACTRESS
BEST SUPPORTING ACTOR
BEST SCREENPLAY

WINNER BEST PICTURE OF THE YEAR

WINNER BEST DIRECTOR
WINNER BEST SUPPORTING ACTRESS
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BEST SCREENPLAY

5 GOLDEN GLOBE NOMINATIONS
5 BEST PICTURE

WINNER BEST DIRECTOR
WINNER BEST SUPPORTING ACTRESS
BEST SUPPORTING ACTOR
BEST SCREENPLAY

WINNER BEST PICTURE OF THE YEAR

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BEST SUPPORTING ACTOR
BEST SCREENPLAY

DRIVE IN, SWEETWATER 9; TOWN SQUARE 14; UA HORTON PLAZA 24; WEGAND PLAZA

Flirting Forever — Gus Van Sant, reverting to the vein of *Good Will Hunting*, goes all soft and squally (don't be fooled by the actually surface) with the tall tale of another youthful genius, a black high-school athlete and class linguist (diffident newcomer Rob Brown) who finds a mentor in an irascible old reclusé (Sean Connery) that inside a Bronx brownstone — the author of "the great 20th century novel" before he sank into premature silence. The genius of *Flirting*, Matt Damon, puts in a cameo appearance near the end. Sentimental drive, rising together with your gorge to a suspenseful preordained showdown against a prep-school pedant. F. Murray Abraham, Anna Paquin, Busti Rhymes, 2000.

The House of Mirth — Reviewed this issue. With Gillian Anderson, Eric Stoltz, Dan Aykroyd, Anthony LaPaglia, Laura Linney, written and directed by Terence Davies.

Mel Gibson Helen Hunt

What Women Want

WINNER BEST DIRECTOR
WINNER BEST SUPPORTING ACTRESS
BEST SUPPORTING ACTOR
BEST SCREENPLAY

WINNER BEST PICTURE OF THE YEAR

WINNER BEST DIRECTOR
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BEST SUPPORTING ACTOR
BEST SCREENPLAY

WINNER BEST PICTURE OF THE YEAR

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WINNER BEST SUPPORTING ACTRESS
BEST SUPPORTING ACTOR
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WINNER BEST PICTURE OF THE YEAR

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WINNER BEST PICTURE OF THE YEAR

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BEST SCREENPLAY

WINNER BEST PICTURE OF THE YEAR

3 GOLDEN GLOBE AWARD NOMINATIONS
BEST DIRECTOR
BEST ORIGINAL SCORE
BEST FOREIGN LANGUAGE FILM

"THE BEST PICTURE OF THE YEAR!"
 THE MAGAZINE

CROUCHING TIGER, HIDDEN DRAGON

WINNER BEST ACTRESS
WINNER BEST SUPPORTING ACTRESS

WINNER BEST PICTURE OF THE YEAR

WINNER BEST DIRECTOR
WINNER BEST SUPPORTING ACTRESS
BEST SUPPORTING ACTOR
BEST SCREENPLAY

WINNER BEST PICTURE OF THE YEAR

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WINNER BEST DIRECTOR
WINNER BEST SUPPORTING ACTRESS
BEST SUPPORTING ACTOR
BEST SCREENPLAY

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four sides by gloomy, grave, somber, and morose. The pliancy, please understand, is as silly as can be — a comic-book aficionado, nicknamed Mr. Clay for the fragility of his bones (fifty-four breaks and counting), comes to suspect that the sole survivor of a Pennsylvania train wreck is his human opposite, an indomitable superhero destined to save and protect — yet Superman betrays no awareness of, much less awkwardness or embarrassment

over, any silliness. And in truth, the grip of the movie depends far less on narrative propulsion than on atmospheric smack. (At least, that is, until the psychic visions of the suspected superhero assume the place of the ghostly apparitions in *The Sixth Sense*.) That might explain why this movie is a bit less gripping than its predecessor, though not less unusual. Bruce Willis is again loyal for the role, dragging his feet and enjoying not a single minute of it. With Samuel L. Jackson, Robin Wright Penn, and Spencer Treat Clark. 2000.

★ ★ (PALM PROMENADE 24, UA HORTON PLAZA 14, VOGUE)

Vertical Limit — Rescue operation on

the upper slopes of K2, where three survivors of an aborted climb are sealed up in a bottomless crevasse. The clock is ticking — thirty-six hours to painful death by pulmonary edema — and a *Wage of Four Ingredients* is added to the rescuers' knapsack in the form of three canisters of nitro: one false step and KA-BOOM. (Someone at base camp points out the folly of taking six lives to save three, and he is not sought out at tale's end when he could have said "I told you so.") The movie at least pauses the fancy text something that can be sat through without undue wear and tear on the upholstery and the inebrium. The suspense mechanisms are well-oiled, and the setting and situation inspire director

Martin Campbell to a higher-than-average level of compositional solidity, the better to record an angle of ascent or depth of abyss. Somehow, though, mountain-climbing exploits seem less impressive in the CG age (see, also, *Cliffhanger*) than in the primitive period of, say, *The Eiger Sanction*, when you could still believe that Clint Eastwood, sans stuntman, was actually on the precipice before he started to be on. The wisecracking of today's computer-generated imagery is such as to cast doubt even on legitimate stunts: we can never believe our own eyes anymore. Too, this seamlessness encourages and facilitates a kind of cartoonization of the action, a distortion of physical possibilities to a degree that simply sits up further doubt: (Why the hard sell? Why the hyperbole? What is there to hide?) Why the studio fakery is most visually evident: the debarcation of the rescue team from an untidy helicopter nuzzling up to a mountain crag. Chris O'Donnell, Robin Turney, Scott Clem, Bill Paxton, Jennifer Morrison. 2000.

★ ★ (GROSSMONT TROLLEY, MISSION VALLEY 20, OXWIDE 10, PALM PROMENADE 24, PARKWAY PLAZA 18, BANANA TOWN, RANCHO DEL REE, SANTI EDWIN DR, SOUTH BAY DRIVE, TOWN SQUARE 14, UA HORTON PLAZA 14)

What Women Want — The battle of the sexes, raged for the default side. A male chauvinist ad exec, Mel Gibson, cracked up a few notches (receives a jolt of electricity and, miraculously, the consequent power to hear women's thoughts. After a hasty period of adjustment, he settles comfortably into the role of covert agent, using his newfound power for his own advantage, scoring major points with the women around him as he discovers insights into their psyche. Eventually, he makes the leap to the insight that women are people, too. Long, draggy, serious-minded, mildly embarrassing comedy. With Helen Hunt, Maria Tesson, Abby Cadogan, Lauren Holly, and Alan Alda. Directed by Nancy Meyers. 2000.

★ (CAMEO, MISSION VALLEY 20, THE GARDEN CINEMA STAR 10, CINEMA STAR 11, DEL MAR HIGHWAY, FAHRENHEIT VALLEY 18, GROSSMONT DRIVE, INLAND CENTRAL 7, LA GARDIA, LA JOLLA 12, MISSION VALLEY 20, PICO PLAZA, THE PALM PROMENADE 24, VOGUE)

PARKWAY PLAZA 18, POMOY 10, RANCHO DEL REE 16, SANTI EDWIN DR, SOUTH BAY DRIVE, SWEETWATER 9, TOWN SQUARE 14, UA HORTON PLAZA 14

You Can Count on Me — A rarefied chamber piece for a small-town single mom, her penitine little boy, her nomadic, no-account brother (their parents, as we're shown in a childhood prologue, were killed in an auto accident, and there's no indication of who filled that role afterwards), her self-mannered hard-acted new boss at the bank, and a rekindled indecisive lover. The complaint of the heebler about his hometown — its smallness and narrowness — could easily be turned against the movie as a whole. But something he says at another point, under an unweome grilling from the local chieftain — that however unimportant his life may be in the overall scheme of things, it is important at least to him and to those close to him — could be turned to the movie's defense. We the viewers get close to him, he, and get involved. The movie marks its directing debut of playwright Kenneth Lonergan (and, in a lighter mood, screenwriter on *Andie MacDowell* and *The Adventures of Rocky and Bullwinkle*), who seems to enjoy the freedom on screen to compose in fragments instead of in Scenes and Acts, and who is prone to dump an unfair share of the workload onto his musical selections. Bach, Lorena Lynn, a whole heap of Steve Earle. Laura Linney linked on the soundtrack with Lorena Lynn for no apparent reason except the sameness of their names) emerges as a kind of thespian Annie Oakley, quick on the trigger and a dead shot, challenging Mel's Streep's role of a woman who has to make her way in the smallest spaces. Mark Buffalo, while well served in the ways of the dacker "Iki, Iki, Iki," is less so in his position as the harbored brother, held back by his third-generation Brandoisms or second-generation Erik Estradaisms, and, though no fault of his own, by his complete physical disinterest in Lynne's dorky vulnerability to her Nordic, film-with-Melville-problem dependably detestable, pretentious bank manager (defunct on People Skills), Rory Culkin. Jon Tenney. 2000.

★ ★ (GROSSMONT TROLLEY, MISSION VALLEY 20, OXWIDE 10, PALM PROMENADE 24, PARKWAY PLAZA 18, BANANA TOWN, RANCHO DEL REE, SANTI EDWIN DR, SOUTH BAY DRIVE, TOWN SQUARE 14, UA HORTON PLAZA 14)

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Jamaican Thyme

It's lucky there was no nearby traffic at the moment when I first spotted Island Spice: jammed on the brakes, backed up 20 feet, took a closer look and a sniff. A white wood-frame building with its sunny small patio overflowing with a salt-and-pepper crowd, a reggae beat thumping through the air, the aromas of allspice and woodsmoke wafting into the street, it seemed like a replica of my favorite Jamaican restaurant in Trinidad. (I've never been to Jamaica, but Jamaicans have spread throughout the British West Indies.) Inside the restaurant, a panoramic mural turns all four walls into a palm-lined island, and you're Tom Hanks on the beach, surveying the surrounding ocean. Except you won't have to bash up coconuts for sustenance: This island includes an alcove of shelves laden with Caribbean bottled marinades, hot sauces, savories, sodas, and strong soaps for sale, while another front-painted vista frames the open kitchen where the fine aromas originate.

The restaurant opened in 1994, but two years ago Suzette James (formerly a cook there) bought it. "Cooking is in my family," she says. "My father was a cook in Jamaica, at Kingston Airport, and I learned from him. Everybody starts working at a young age in Jamaica. But with cooking, some stay with it, others don't like it and look for something else to do." The menu is a holdover from the previous owner, and Ms. James plans to print a new one soon to reflect the changes she's made. For instance, she's added patatas — the addictive Jamaican snack of dough pockets stuffed with warmly seasoned meat or vegetables.

All entrees come in two sizes: regular and large. Regular is large, so large most mean family size. Many entrees come with deliciously seasoned soft-fried plantains, and all come with rice and peas, plus a green salad with a bottled dressing of your choice or else steamed callaloo. But I'd better do some explaining about these sides, so you won't be looking for something you're not going to get. In Caribbean patois, "peas" doesn't mean English (green) peas, it refers to any sort of legume in local use — for instance, pigeon peas ("panga peas" in Trinidad, or red kidney beans in Jamaica). We're used to the "complete protein" combination of separate scoops of rice and beans from Mexican restaurants, but in the Caribbean, the two mingle in one well-seasoned dish. The first thing into the pot is "browning," a caramel made

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Jamaican Thyme

Island Spice

2820 Market (29th Avenue), Grant Hill
619-702-9309

Hours: Breakfast 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m., seven days; lunch/dinner 11:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. (or until sunset in summer); Sundays to 6:00 p.m.

Price: Breakfasts \$5.50 to \$12; lunch and dinner entrees \$7 to \$10

Need to Know: Location is on overpass over 29th Avenue; use 25th or 30th Avenue to reach Market. Tidy parking lot, ample street parking but beware the long red bus stop. No jerk until 11:00 a.m. For dinner, arrive as early as possible for fresh food, widest selection (or call ahead to have take-out ready for pick-up). No alcohol yet. Restaurant hours are partly Jamaican time: the longer the day (or the more patrons waiting), the later they stay open.

WHAT THE STARS MEAN:

(None) Poor to satisfactory
★ Good
★★ Very Good
★★★ Excellent
★★★★ Extraordinary

Ratings reflect the reviewer's reaction to food, ambience, and service with price taken into consideration. Menu listings and prices are subject to change.

Hundreds of post reviews are available online from the Reader at www.sbnavigator.com

on this menu. (Oxtail stew, a wonderful dish when it's chilly out (or when it isn't), is distinctly different from Euro or Yankee versions. It has a dark, rich gray with a touch of sweetness from the "browning" — caramel, surrounding big, tender hunks of oxtail — lots of meat on dem bones. A mixture of curry goat and chicken has bone-in pieces of each meat rubbed with Jamaican curry powder and stewed in coconut milk. When I tried it, the goat seemed more like kid, fall-apart tender with the mildest caprine flavor. And don't

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forget that islands are surrounded by water, water has fish in it, and Jamaica is an island. Island Spice offers entrees of whole fish steamed with herbs and spices, or fried and dressed with peppers, onions, and vinegar ("escovitch"), or in a "brown sauce," a tangy gravy with a touch of tomato purée and a shot of hot pepper. If you just won't eat fish (or if the kitchen runs out of it), you can get this last savory treatment applied equally well to "brown stew chicken." The one dish I didn't care for here was "bar-b-que" chicken, with a very vinegary bottled red Q sauce.

Early risers (not me, alas) who show up at Island Spice by 10:00 a.m. can usually get the

national breakfast of Jamaica: well-seasoned salt cod mixed with ackee, a yellow fruit transplanted from Africa that cooked looks and tastes rather like scrambled eggs. For several years, the U.S. banned its import because it is poisonous when raw, but the food police finally realized that nobody buys ackee unless they already know what to do with it. Now it's legal again, and you can get it if you really want (but you must try, try, and try). Ms. James goes to a Caribbean-food importer in L.A. to buy canned ackee sauce, she says, it tastes about the same as it does cooked fresh, and it's easier to use. Another classic breakfast here is "run dang" (run-down), salt mackerel cooked in coconut milk with onion, scallion, thyme, and spices. (One of these days I really must get before noon!) Jamaica runs to world fame, but, ironically, you can't

get any alcohol here, at least until Ms. James gets her license. (She's working on it.) There are plenty of interesting soft drinks, though: Jamaican ginger beer resembles ginger ale with real, powerful ginger in it; Ting is grapefruit soda; and champagne kola is more like a cream soda than a Coke or Pepsi. Chartruse-yellow pineapple soda is refreshing, too, although I doubt any pineapple ever came near it. There's also canned Irish Moss, a sweet, white beverage thickened with seaweed (carrageenan) and mysterious "roots" that reportedly help to up one's manliness. Fresh-made (alabaxos) pimento, it's like a light milk shake—but the canned product calls for a spoon rather than a straw.

Along with adding beer and cocktails, Ms. James plans to buy four more umbrella tables for the patio and is considering staying open later,

especially on weekends. (She promises later evening hours during the spring and summer.) Right now, for two hours before closing time, local Jamaicans line up to get take-out. I've found it best to show up as early as possible, since many dishes sell out well before closing. Another tactic, if you're stuck in an office, is to phone a half hour or an hour ahead, ask what they've got in the kitchen, and put in your order, saying what time you'll get there.

IS THIS THE END OF FARGO'S? While Island Spice expands, we may be seeing the last days of casually drop in at the popular Fargo's BBQ (winner of "Best Jamaican Food" in the Reader's Best of 2000 issue). "I've been doing this for ten years, and I'm tired," says owner/chef Elaine Williams. "I'm thinking of mainly doing catering—I make more money

from that than from walk-ins." Hearing this, we hastened to Fargo's (6171 Imperial Avenue, at 61st, in the Trolley Stop strip mall) to order almost everything Mrs. Williams was ready to cook that evening. Already, soups are nearly extinct, and the menu lists several items that are only available by special order: jerked pork, jerked chicken wings, salt fish and ackee, and several vegetable dishes.

Mrs. Williams's style proves close to home cooking. The Jamaican dishes all come with excellent rice and peas, a vegetable, and a chewy, dry white dice of a flour dumpling that helps quench any fires. Her jerk is so spicy, on the third bite your hair starts to smoke! A whole fish comes steamed in a savory mixture of sliced red peppers and onions, sauced with their mingled natural juices. Thick oxtail stew comes with a

lime *deshen* (speckled blue taro root) and small golden flour-dumplings the size of rigatoni. Curry goat has bone-in hanks of an adult animal in a thick, aromatic sauce. The other side of the menu offers American-style barbecue (pork ribs, beef, short ribs, chicken, links) that, at least when we were there, was charcoal-cooked (like jerk) rather than smoked Southern-style. (There are smoker-ovens in the restaurant, but they were idle.) The barbecue sauce is tomato-red, smooth, and tangy.

"I'm closing for three days starting tomorrow," Mrs. Williams said on New Year's Eve, "and after that! I don't know, I may reopen as is or just take phone orders for take-out and do catering." The doors at Fargo will still be open, but they won't be swinging—so if you love Fargo's food, be sure to phone before you go: 619-262-0201. ■

Everything's Real in Oceanside

"I'll give you part of my chicken-fried if you'll split a 101 Burger—plus I'll throw in a cup of chili."

Hi! Carla likes this place already. Why? Because no matter how she bangs the bottle's butt, she can't get the ketchup out. "Heinz 57," she says. "The real thing." She grabs her knife and pushes it up inside. "I'm coming, I'm coming. It oozes like lava, all over her fries. Onto the paty of her '101 Burger.' The one with the secret sauce. She takes her first big bite.

"Oh, baby, that's a real burger," she mumbles. "Everything's real in Oceanside," says this lady at a counter seat next to us. "Oceanside's the nearest thing to Indiana."

"Indiana?" "It's still rural America. Neighboring. Beautiful." Her name's Ann. She's an assistant superintendent of schools up in Anaheim. She's just moved down here. Can't believe the welcome she's gotten. "The owner of this place—101 Cafe—he actually rode over on his bike to my cottage to welcome me the other day. Never met him before. Another neighbor brought over peanut butter cookies. No other place in California would this happen!" She orders up a grilled cheese sandwich with a green salad to go (\$4.75). "And first time I came in here, I ordered their turkey dinner [with cranberry sauce, mashed potatoes, gravy, vegetables, soup,

and dinner roll, \$6.25], and the turkey was fresh-carved. It was literally just like Mom cooked at home." All this is going on in the oldest 101 eating establishment in Oceanside. The 101 Cafe, cooking burgers and fries since 1928 for travelers of the legendary 101, the old Camino Real.

Now officially a historic highway, Carla and I had been driving south in our Chevy Impala. (Don't worry. We haven't won the lottery. It's a rental. An upgrade. Forty-two bucks for the day. But the burf wood on the dash sure gave us a kick.) We'd been up to see where Carla's An- to Spanish ancestors lived, at Rancho Guajome in Vista, U.S. and a zillion other people. Carla's reminiscing about the Days of the Dons when suddenly she says, "Oh look! The 101 Cafe! This is where the Greyhound bus used to stop in the 40s. Right outside. Pop always told me about it. He said everybody leaned out the windows to smell the burgers and longed to get off!" So I pull right into its parking lot. Under a canopy. It looks like it was a drive-in once. Inside, it's 1940s low, intimate, clean with white walls and black-and-white linoleum tiles on the floor and brown booths and green Formica tables, an old-style jukebox (with new-style prices)—three tunes for a buck), and dozens of photos of old Oceanside on the walls.

Calendar RESTAURANTS

"Folks ready to order!" Kristy's waiting with her order pad. We're sitting in the "new" part. The lean-to they added on in 1937. Carla's thinking chili burger ("open-faced burger topped with American cheese and our fresh chili, chopped onions, french fries, \$5.25"). It's breakfast all day here, so even though it's late lunchtime, I've got a craving for their chicken-fried steak and two eggs (with home fries and English muffins or toast, \$6.49). "Dang," Carla says. "Wish I'd seen that first." Then I spot the "101 Burger" with the "secret sauce." "Here's the deal, I say, 'I'll give you part of my chicken-fried if you'll split a 101 Burger—plus I'll throw in a cup of chili (\$2.50).'" "You mean I wait all this time to eat this burger my pop told me about and I have to deal with you on what burger I get!" she says. But she orders the 101. Plus an iced tea (\$1.25). I get a large glass of Coke (\$1.25).

When we get the food and chow in, I remind her of the deal. "Fuggeddit!" Carla snarls, head down. "This is...mine!" Hub. Must be that secret sauce. Finally she tears off a corner for me. Mmm. That sauce...I'd guess Thousand Island? Mayo? Sweet mustard? A real come-on. But I have my own work to do. The crumbed chicken-fried steak is lost under an ocean of creamy sausage-

gravy. Lumps of sausage float across the surface. The taste is porky, chickeny...and then there's the home fries. Big, thick-skinned, tasty. I ordered my eggs over easy, with muffins. Muffins come crisp and butter-soaked. I flip two of them under the eggs. "Put some of this chili on them," says Carla, relenting. "It's sharp. Tex-Mex." She's right. It kicks the eggs into life.

"We go through 15 gallons of that chili every week," says this guy, coming out from the back. Turns out he's John Daley, one of the owners. "And we carve 350 pounds of turkey breast a week in summer." "Do you know if the Greyhound ever stopped outside here?" says Carla. "Oh sure," says John. He points to a photo on the wall. Two kids in diapers. "That's me and David Ransom. The other owner. We grew up here together. I'm a third-generation Oceanside guy. Sort of related to the Rancho Guajome crowd." Carla sits up. "You too?" And away they go. Seems they're descended from two brothers way back when California was changing hands. Soon they're off around the walls, pointing to old pix. Relies. I feed a dollar bill into the jukebox. Press "Splash Splash," "Land of 1000 Dances," and "Mack the Knife." Steal a few of Carla's big juicy fries. Settle in. This could take a while. ■

The Place: 101 Cafe, 631 South Coast Highway, Oceanside (760-722-5200)
Types of Food: American
Prices: Two breakfast eggs with three link sausages or three bacon or three ham or two sausage patties, \$5.25; biscuits and gravy with home fries, \$4.25; ABC (avocado, bacon, and cheese omelet), \$6.25; chicken-fried steak and two eggs, \$6.49; 101 cheeseburger on a grilled bun, with lettuce, tomato, onion, pickle, and secret sauce, \$4.75; mushroom burger on a grilled bun with cheese, \$5.25; homemade chili cup, \$2.50; bowl, \$3.50
Hours: 6:30 a.m. to midnight, seven days
Buses: 301, 302, 316, 318
Nearest Bus Stop: Coast Highway and Wisconsin
Nearest Caster/Metrolink/Amtrak/Greyhound Stop: Oceanside Transit Center at Mission and Coast (three blocks away)

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Calendar RESTAURANTS

Unfulfilled Cabernet Dreams

"If we give a gold to a Sangiovese which is maybe 20 percent Zinfandel, we're sending the wrong message to the winemaker."

Years ago, when Jack Jaeger looked at what was then San Pasqual Vineyards, he envisioned a Southern California version of Napa's V. Sattai, a winery noted for its beautiful deli cases and idyllic picnic grounds. He imagined hungry travelers bound for the Wild Animal Park stopping off and lunching amid the splendor of the San Pasqual Valley.

Today, Thomas Jaeger Vineyards has come and gone. The property is named Orfila Vineyards after its new owner, and while there is one deli case near the side door of the tasting room — featuring a smattering of cheeses, bread, and sausages — much of the space has been devoted to a more standard retail lineup. The shelves are lined with grape seeds and olive oils, vinegars, gourmet condiments, T-shirts, books, and glasses. The floor space is dotted with stacks of cardboard cases offering a broad array of wines: besides the Vignier, Syrah, Merlot, and Sangiovese, upon which general manager/winemaker Leon Santoro is staking his vineyard's reputation, I find a couple of Rhône-style blends, Riesling, Muscat Canneli, Zinfandel, Ambassador's Reserve Chardonnay, Coastal Chardonnay, and Coastal Gewurztraminer. And though it's not on the floor, I know he also produces a Pinot Noir from purchased grapes.

Santoro has enjoyed considerable success with his estate vineyards. That, combined with his desire to establish a good reputation for the region, makes me wonder why he brings in so many grapes from elsewhere to release under the Orfila label. "I learned a lot from Robert Mondavi," he explains, "watching him as a colleague. Robert usually tried to have [some vines under his] control, but [he believed] that if there are better grapes grown on the mount, you make a good long-term contract. That's what I do for Pinot

Noir and Chardonnay, and that's what I just did for Zinfandel." The Pinot and Chardonnay come from San Luis Obispo; the Zinfandel, from Cuernavaca. "Having 50 percent of the production under your control makes kind of security blanket. Then with the leases, I can explore other possibilities with wines I love to make."

He has been fortunate in obtaining such leases, using connections he established before he went into the relative exile of San Diego County. "I send wine from down here to the staff [at the Orfila] wine store, so they don't forget us. Pacific Vineyards in San Luis Obispo is a super-premium grower. They sell to [wineries like] Chalone. If they were not friends, they probably would not sell to us. People want to brag that they sell to the top wineries in California, not [unheralded] wineries in San Diego."

While the estate vineyards serve as a security blanket as far as control is concerned, the Northern California leases act as something of a safety net with regard to the scourge of the South Coast, the Pierce's disease-bearing glassy-winged sharpshooter. For years, Tony and Sue Godfrey's Fallbrook vineyard has provided the winery with grapes for Merlot and other varietals. But, says Santoro, "Tony is pretty much out of the business now. The last couple of years, he got hit very hard by Pierce's disease. He lost vines every year, and he did not replace them. I used to get as much as 90 to 100 tons from Tony; this year, I think I got 8, 10 tons at the most. It used to be that 90 percent of the Merlot was from Fallbrook and 10 percent was from our vineyard. Now it's the other way around. Fortunately, we had [the] foresight" to plant enough estate Merlot to maintain production.

Pierce's has long been a problem at the estate vineyards, although it has not yet taken the riparian-dwelling blue-green sharpshooter, which Santoro has not been able to eliminate. "I know that some vineyards in Napa Valley have gone as far as pulling vegetation in riparian areas, which is extremely difficult. You have to work with Fish and Game, the Department of Wildlife — you have to be extremely sensitive to the environment." So, when vines die, he replants — about 5 percent per year. But the glassy-winged sharpshooter worries me a lot," he admits. "We have seen it since 1996, but fortunately, it's been one here, once there — no multigenerational colonies. Besides securing the aforementioned leases, he tells me that "we are taking steps our owner just bought about a hundred acres in Julian, which we could put into vineyards. Slowly, I will develop an alternative source for Merlot."

In the meantime, he presses on with his big four estate wines, trying to overcome the geographical stigma of a county without much in the way of an established industry. He enters competitions whenever possible — blind tastings ensure freedom from prejudice — and has become a member of such promotional organizations as the Consorzio Cal-Italia, there to market his Sangiovese.

It has been a bumpy road, and not just because of his locale. "In my opinion, Sangiovese is having an identity problem — what is a good Sangiovese? I was in San Francisco at the Calla Italia wine tasting, and I was not happy. I'm afraid they're going to kill the category. A lot of the Sangiovese I tasted were pink, tart, and tannic, already bringing on the edge [from age]. That's

ORFILA 1997 SANGIOVESE
FROM THE SOUTH COAST

not good for the category." He liked some, including Swanson, "but I think [the winemaker] puts a lot of Cabernet in it, which presents a different danger to the varietal. "I was on a [Sangiovese] panel with the Orange County Wine Competition, and I made the case with the other judges not to give golds. The Sangiovese were very good wines, but they were not Sangiovese. [Sangiovese is a] light-to-medium body wine; that's the varietal. The argument I made was, if we give a gold to a Sangiovese which is maybe 20 percent Zinfandel, we're sending the wrong message to the winemaker."

His has higher hopes for the Syrah. "Last year, I made a prediction. I said, 'I would love to come back in 20 years and see that Syrah is a better-selling wine in California than Cabernet and Merlot.' It's more flavorful, and it doesn't have some of the bell-curve character that Cabernet sometimes has." (His '98 Syrah offers impressive concentration and depth and is full of plummy, dark-fruit flavors.)

Santoro's first serious wine job was at the Cabernet Mecca of Stag's Leap, and he can't get the varietal out of his blood. "Right now, there is only one dream that remains unfulfilled: Cabernet Sauvignon." A small patch of experimental Cabernet grows near the winery, and it may show itself to be a workable varietal for the colder climes of Julian. "Just this morning, I was looking at temperatures in Ramona and Julian — in the sixties. I might take a risk on Cabernet — five, maybe ten acres."

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RESTAURANT LISTINGS

The Reader's Guide to Restaurants are recommended listings written by our reviewers. Individual restaurants will appear once or twice a month, A complete searchable list is available online at SanDiegoReader.com. Price estimates are based on the table information available for a mid-range entrée, luncheonette below \$10; moderate \$10 to \$15; expensive more than \$22. Please call restaurants in advance for reservations.

NORTH COASTAL

CAPE REVILLA CARLSBAD 3050 Pkwy (off Carlsbad Village Drive), Carlsbad, 760-730-7558. The atmosphere is cozy and pleasant. Dine upstairs for larger tables. Tapas and Spanish inspiration of average competence. Menu will warm your blood. Lunch Monday through Friday. Dinner nightly, to midnight Friday and Saturday. Moderate to expensive.

CALIPSO CAB 576 North Highway 101, Encinitas, 760-432-2832. Located on the border of Encinitas and some-what difficult to find, this lively eatery serves French and Continental cuisines, and Pacific style Thursday. Venue for excellent prices, and live music: Friday and Saturday. Noise is hectic weekenders. Menu is a little better than average. For a less hectic evening, see nearby listings. Dinner nightly. Low to moderate.

DEL MAR PIZZA 111 15th Street, Del Mar, 858-481-8088. If you've heard about, dreamed about, or were merely curious about New York pizza, the best local practitioner is now in Del Mar. It's a bigger wine, a better red wine, but it's not Sangiovese. [Sangiovese is] a light-to-medium body wine; that's the varietal. The argument I made was, if we give a gold to a Sangiovese which is maybe 20 percent Zinfandel, we're sending the wrong message to the winemaker."

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KIM'S CRISPIER STRAKHOUB, DEL MAR 11582 El Camino Road (east Carmel Valley Road), Del Mar, 858-755-1454. First-rate appetizers, steaks, chops, lobster. You can make a meal from the crab cakes and smoked salmon platters. Outstanding desserts. Meats are served for two or more. For more romantic atmosphere, look elsewhere up state. Not as noisy as downtown. All vegetables à la carte. Dine early during racing season. Open 4:30 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. Very expensive.

SBICA AMERICAN BISTRO 215 15th Street, Del Mar, 858-481-1801. The roof garden has an unobstructed ocean view and is especially pleasant for very good American or Mexican buffets. Select simple preparation for dinner-order three entrees for a satisfactory meal. Soups and outstanding and the imperial roll, lemon grass chicken, soft-shell crab, vegetarian rolls, and char-broiled pork do well here. The wine list includes 40 items. First service and aesthetic surroundings. Closed Monday. Lunch Tuesday through Friday; dinner Tuesday through Sunday. Low to moderate.

NEMANS CO Carlsbad Village Drive (corner of Carlsbad Boulevard, Carlsbad, 760-729-4131). The outdoor dining room has been refurbished and looks like a real country place. You know and love it: buffet brunch with all-you-can-drink champagne, minimum, orange juice, and coffee. Traditional offerings include fried chicken. Daily, 9:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Expensive.

PACIFIC DEL MAR 1555 Camino del Mar, Del Mar Plaza, Del Mar, 858-792-0478. Select the fresh fish prepared in the simplest manner and you'll do fine here. The setting and new remains delightful and the service excellent. Walk-ins available. Open daily for lunch and dinner. Moderate to expensive.

PANOLI ITALIAN BISTRO 447 South Highway 101, Solana Beach, 858-755-2525. Italian dishes from every section of Italy are prepared with loving care in time-honored traditions. Specialties are risotto, ravioli, leg of lamb, duck breast, fresh fish. Charming atmosphere with fireplace. Open daily. Moderate.

PROCES FACILITIES OF THE SEA La Costa Spa, 2100 Costa Del Mar Road, Carlsbad, 760-480-9111. This long-established and well-situated restaurant is located at the sea itself, in a gorgeous oceanfront setting. Good dishes include Southwestern-style tapas and appetizers. Soups, seafood, and lunch. Later restaurant of Calisto. This place is always crowded. Open daily for lunch and dinner. Expensive.

BRUTY'S CHRIS STRAKHOUB, DEL MAR 11582 El Camino Road (east Carmel Valley Road), Del Mar, 858-755-1454. First-rate appetizers, steaks, chops, lobster. You can make a meal from the crab cakes and smoked salmon platters. Outstanding desserts. Meats are served for two or more. For more romantic atmosphere, look elsewhere up state. Not as noisy as downtown. All vegetables à la carte. Dine early during racing season. Open 4:30 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. Very expensive.

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VIVAGE Four Seasons Resort Avenues, 7100 Four Seasons Point, Carlsbad, 760-403-6999. The well-prepared food is no more expensive than the offerings in any upscale San Diego restaurant, but it's an experience to dine in such luxurious surroundings. Menu changes seasonally. The appetizer list offers unique selections. For country try chicken in clay pot or daily fish. The Four Seasons lounge is a great place to visit and listen to live music. Go see the hotel. It's worth the trip. Open nightly, 5:30 to 10:30 p.m. diners only. Expensive.

THE FORTUNE COOKER 16425 Bernardo, Carlsbad, 760-431-8958. Moderate. Since 1982 offering the hottest of this Bernardo, once-ambitious Chinese restaurant has somewhat faded in the face of local performance. Chef Yang's creative Chinese menu has devolved into the somewhat heavy Sichuanese and Cantonese-American crowd-pleasers favored by the RG golf and tennis set. Glorious of high skill remain, in the ground beef egg rolls and the sublime soups. Venturesome "regulars" who know how to order can probably still get excellent meals, including delicacies that have vanished from the current menu. The long, small wait list has minimal mark-ups, and there's a rare (for the genre) array of serious desserts.

KARL STRAUSS BREWERY 648 9675 Serrano Road, Sorrento Mesa, 858-587-2739. Belated San Diego Tech building. The garden with bridges, hot pond and outdoor seating are major attractions for summer diners. Cooking is done by first-rate chefs and portions are massive. Try that chicken salad, cream roasted salmon, salmon salad, fish and chips, fish and onion ring. Buffet brunch average. Closed Sunday, 10:30 a.m. Expensive. Open Sunday through Friday. Sunday brunch.

THE HOUSE VINE CRUISE 260 Via Vera Cruz, San Marcos, 760-744-7346. This family-style restaurant ser-

ved and fresh fish that changes daily. Simple but honest preparation, good value. Open daily for lunch and dinner (dinner menu is served from opening to closing on Sunday). Low to expensive.

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Jewel Box Bar & Grill **2 for 1 menu item**

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veered and fresh fish that changes daily. Simple but honest preparation, good value. Open daily for lunch and dinner (dinner menu is served from opening to closing on Sunday). Low to expensive.

THE FORTUNE COOKER 16425 Bernardo, Carlsbad, 760-431-8958. Moderate. Since 1982 offering the hottest of this Bernardo, once-ambitious Chinese restaurant has somewhat faded in the face of local performance. Chef Yang's creative Chinese menu has devolved into the somewhat heavy Sichuanese and Cantonese-American crowd-pleasers favored by the RG golf and tennis set. Glorious of high skill remain, in the ground beef egg rolls and the sublime soups. Venturesome "regulars" who know how to order can probably still get excellent meals, including delicacies that have vanished from the current menu. The long, small wait list has minimal mark-ups, and there's a rare (for the genre) array of serious desserts.

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Restaurant coupons and menus at SanDiegoReader.com

Jake Joint Cafe **Complimentary dessert**
Luhana Beach House **\$1 off appetizer**
O'Masion **Free margarita**
Lips Restaurant **50% off dinner**
Mandar Plaza **2 dinners for \$12.95**
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Nikko **50% off sushi**
Mirage Coffee Company **2 for 1 espresso**
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Palomino Euro Bistrot **Free gourmet pizza**
Pampas Argentine Grill **Free appetizer**
O Papa Shy's Gourment **20% off entrée**
O Passage to India **50% off dinner**
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PB. Thai Cafe **10% off entire bill!**
O Prizza Nova **\$2 off entrée**
Lowe Manna **\$5 off sushi**
Rock Bottom **Free appetizer**
O Roma Mia **Lobster or steak for 2 \$49.95**
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Sanfilippo's **Pizza or lasagne for 2 \$10.49**
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O Sevilla **\$7 off Paella Valenciana**
Shanghai **Mongolian BBQ dinner \$8.50**
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The Surfside **1/2-price appetizer**
The Chada **50% off entrée**
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Hollywood Star Grille **50% off 2nd entrée**
The Time Restaurant **Free dessert**
O Tio Leo's **Free dessert**
Toda! **20% discount for seniors**

Calendar RESTAURANTS

the southeast with fresh olives, and the country sausage. Recipes come from France, Italy, Germany, Czech Sunday. Open Monday through Saturday. **Low to moderate.**

WINE SELLAR and BRASSERIE 9550 Wilton Road #111, 858-456-9557. This is the sister restaurant to Laurel, and the food is a delight to the palate. Lunch on Saturday served by staff or in conjunction with the wine-tasting. Call for directions and specific hours.

LA JOLLA

BARBARIELLA 1171 Avenida de la Playa, La Jolla, California. La Jolla, 858-454-7371. Don't miss this lively place that offers sandwiches, wrap, pizza, entrees. Live music atmosphere. Bib salad and Max's pizza outstanding. Arrive early to avoid wait for tables. Open daily, lunch and dinner. Low to moderate.

BERNINI'S 7530 Fay Avenue, 858-454-5031. This cafe has full service and will provide you with breakfast, lunch and dinner. Lunch and dinner menus are the same and offer four kinds of soups, several salads, including grilled chicken, and pasta dishes. A variety of desserts is available all day. Open daily. Low to moderate.

THE BIRD COCK 646 La Jolla Boulevard, 858-531-4900. Don't miss this small cafe that serves delightful food. Dishes are divided into small, medium, and large plates. Try the fresh orange chicken, tomato, crab cakes, and salmon. Unpretentious but worth seeking out. Patio available for outdoor dining. Entrees Tuesday through Sunday. Moderate to expensive.

CAPTIFANSO 8960 University Center Lane, Aventine complex, 858-450-3355. The decor is smashing and the Pacific Rim food — with influences from Japan, China, Hawaii, Thailand, and California — is beautiful to look at and delicious to eat. For everyone's dining and entertaining appetizers. For everyone's dining and entertaining appetizers. For everyone's dining and entertaining appetizers.

OCTOPUS GARDEN **OPEN NIGHTLY 7 DAYS A WEEK!** **Mon-Fri.**

Now Open For Lunch!

Traditional Italian • Pasta • Pizza • Fresh Seafood

2-for-1

COQUINA

2-for-1

COME WATCH THE NFL PLAYOFFS. ASK ABOUT OUR SUPER BOWL PARTY!

HAPPY HOUR MON-FRI 3-6:30 PM

CASA PISANTE

DAILY'S 8911 Towne Center Drive, Bonita Springs, 858-454-5453. The outdoor setting area is almost always crowded with tea and coffee drinkers who associate, read or chat. Light meals, including breakfast (steamed eggs, bagels, fruit platters) and sandwiches, soups, salads, as well as beverages and desserts are served. It is a well-known hangout and always crowded. Open daily. Low to moderate.

DOGUYAN'S STEAK AND GRIP HOUSE 4340 La Jolla Village Drive, La Jolla, 858-456-6666. Very cozy room and detached service tend to make the experience more enjoyable than relating. Average steaks and chops, though nothing memorable. Popular "in" spot. Closed Sunday. Dinner, Monday through Saturday. Expensive.

LA FONDA 5732 La Jolla Boulevard, 858-454-7111. If you've visited La Fonda Roberto in Tijuana, you'll enjoy their Mexican regional Mexican dishes (no taco, tostitos, or enchiladas). Excellent appetizer, cactus salad, soups, Best entrees, spicy lamb wrapped in banana leaves, shrimp in two salsas, filet mignon, Chile relleno. Romantic room with fountain. However, cooking takes too long. Sometimes excellent, sometimes average. Open for dinner nightly. Moderate.

HOPSI BISTRO AND BREWERY 4153 La Jolla Village Drive (next to Macy's, University Center), 858-587-6677. Hopsi serves the best food in San Diego in San Diego. The menu is creative, inventive, and the atmosphere is relaxed and comfortable. Best dishes are spit-roasted chicken and served with salsa and shrimp. All beers are brewed on the premises. Open daily for lunch and dinner. Moderate.

STAR OF INDIA (LA JOLLA) 1000 Prospect Street, 858-454-3355. The Indian food is good. The best bet is the all-you-can-eat buffet lunch on the Saturdays and Sundays. The food is good. The best bet is the all-you-can-eat buffet lunch on the Saturdays and Sundays. The food is good. The best bet is the all-you-can-eat buffet lunch on the Saturdays and Sundays.

\$10 OFF DINNER

All-You-Can-Eat Lunch

DeLuca's

\$5 OFF

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HAPPY HOUR MON-FRI 3-6:30 PM

CASA PISANTE

TROPICAL STAR 6143 Bolivar Avenue, 858-454-7827. A modest cafe and grocery offers Puerto Rican and Latin American food and groceries. Very modern surroundings, good authentic atmosphere. Closed Sunday. Same menu all Monday through Saturday. Low.

CLAIREMONT & KEARNY AREA

THE GOOD BROTHERS 7403 Bonita Avenue, Escondido, 858-565-6564. The menu offers comfort, gourmet pastas, vegetables, and several different kinds of fish. Freshly spiced fish burgers are available, and for lunch there is juice and a long list of sandwiches. Open daily. Low to moderate.

THE BEACHES

BALEEN Paradise Point Inn, 1404 Vacation Road (off Ingraham), Mission Viejo, 858-900-0363. Very expensive. Reservations recommended. Take a quick trip to the Miami at the local branch of Florida's famed new resort restaurant. Whimsical tropical decor features a monkey from the painting and member play on the speakers. But the unaltered price for chilled fish may make a monkey of you unless you ask before you try. The menu features high-quality seafood and hand-crafted steaks in refined surroundings, including gorgonzola butter linguine, salmon with a creole hollandaise, herb-crusted sea bass, and a hunk of free-range veal. Servers are charming. The wine list is long and rather steep at the bottom end with better values further up the range. **CHATEAU OLEANS** 928 Turquoise Street, Pacific Beach, 858-448-0744. The interior of this Cajun and New Orleans restaurant has never looked better. All diners include house salad, a Cajun stuffed potato, and popcorn. The menu offers delicious prime rib, tri-tip, beef steaks, and Cajun-style chicken, fish, and pasta. Very good prices, excellent service. Closed Sunday. Open Monday through Saturday. Dinner only. Low to moderate.

NEW SHANGHAI 681 Conway Street, Clairemont Mesa, 858-569-4833. New Shanghai is busy, friendly, and does a very good job of "Americanizing" whatever your gastronomic politics. The menu is a mix of traditional Chinese and Western dishes. **SOBBENTINO'S** 4724 Clairemont Mesa Boulevard, Diane Shopping Center, 858-483-1811. Though the main restaurant has closed, Sobbenino's deli continues to offer superb pizza and excellent pasta. Open daily. Low to moderate.

Now Open!

2 for 1 DINNER

Thai Orchid

2 FOR 1 THAI LUNCH & TWILIGHT DINNER

THAI FOON

WORLD FAMOUS 711 Pacific Beach, Pacific Beach, 858-273-1083. Located directly on the boardwalk with an unobstructed view, the casual atmosphere and friendly service is second to none. The menu is a mix of traditional Chinese and Western dishes. **REYNOLDS MICHALGON** 3800 Shelter Island Drive, Point Loma, 619-234-9678. A good place for family dining with children especially well-liked. Open daily, lunch, Monday through Friday. Dinner nightly. Low to moderate.

MIDWAY, OLD TOWN & MISSION VALLEY

CAFE COYOTE 241 San Diego Avenue, Old Town, 619-291-6995. Cafe Coyote is a good spot for a light Mexican meal with Southwestern influences. Best bet is a carne asada black bean chili, served hot with rice and beans. **EL TIGRITO** 6105 Frias Road, San Diego, 619-295-1077. Popular for over a decade, this Mexican restaurant with two seating areas serves Mexican City-style food that is not too spicy and uses 100 percent vegetable oil. Best bet is a carne asada black bean chili, served hot with rice and beans. **ALPINE DIN** 2275 Alpine Boulevard, Alpine, 619-445-5172. If you're a beef lover, try the Texas burger served on a Kaiser roll with steak fries. Stay with beef here. Dark interior with large booths. Very crowded for both lunch and dinner on Sunday. Early bird lunch Monday through Saturday. \$7.95. Call for hours. Open daily. Lunch Monday through Saturday. Dinner nightly. Brunch Sunday. Low to moderate to expensive.

50% OFF DINNER

TUESDAY - THURSDAY

Lahaina Beach House

Mexican Nouvelle Cuisine

Aztec, Maya, Nahuatl meet France, Italy, Spain - Salud!

el bagayo

FABRIZIO CARRI and GALLERY 3166 Midway Drive, Pacific Beach, 858-273-1083. Located directly on the boardwalk with an unobstructed view, the casual atmosphere and friendly service is second to none. The menu is a mix of traditional Chinese and Western dishes. **JACK and GUILLY'S ITALIAN RESTAURANT** 2391 San Diego Avenue, Old Town, 619-296-2074. The food is good. The menu is a mix of traditional Chinese and Western dishes. **RAMON'S SMOKE HOUSE B.B.Q.** 1730 Alpine Boulevard, Suite 118, Alpine, 619-445-1080. Inexpensive. You'll not miss up here, and the mountain air sharpens your appetite. The staff and management are friendly and fresh-cut beef is beyond restaurant.

VALLEY ROAD RESTAURANT 1927 Woodside Avenue (Mission Valley Road between Woodside after Marginal), San Diego, 619-567-7878. You'll find your "home" Tova Burger here — pork tenderloin that's ground, placed in beef, deep fried and served on a bun. It's juicy and succulent. On Wednesday and Friday nights, all you can eat fish and chips are \$8.99. If you like biscuits and white gravy, this is the place for you. Colonial-style decor, friendly service. Open daily, breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Low.

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CENTRAL SAN DIEGO

AMERICA 4433 El Cajon Boulevard (at Fairmount), 619-561-3666; www.america-los.com. Open daily, inexpensive, vegetarian friendly. Cash only. Best rooms not wheelchair-accessible. Can be noisy on weekends. The fare here is extremely (and proves very similar to and uncommonly interesting. The meat combination platter is a terrific array, including top-notch steaks (dishes known as *pe de oro* or an Ethiopian menu), chicken and art with a rich, dark sauce, a similar dish with beef, gongol (lightly seared meat cubes in spicy butter), and lamb of the, a ste tip in a mild curry sauce. From the a la carte choices, consider *cabot* (the chicken, very stable dishes are delicious. You are served communally on a tray held by a person, a *panache*, *corona*, which serves an edible soup and edible tablecloth (not cooked) to your order and associated to your specifications understood that "hot" means seriously spicy.)

LAO B. CHINESE CUISINE 4212 National Avenue, Logan Heights, 619-263-9914. This restaurant is a simple place. Large and open around the front table, but service is unimpaired, home-style Lao cuisine. We highly recommend the fish, a spicy salad with pomelo minced beef, chicken or pork, and seasoned with lime juice, hot pepper, cilantro, onions, fresh mint, and ground toasted rice. This dish is worthy and well-executed. Other tasty dishes include papaya frog (papaya, chili, and tomatoes), iron leaf, and *paed* and *paed* (a rice noodle salad).

GRAND OPENING - SAN DIEGO'S ONLY All-You-Can-Eat Thai Buffet

THAI CAFE

2 FOR 1 DINNER

D'Lish EXPRESS

\$2 OFF ANY PASTA OR PIZZA

D'Lish EXPRESS

D'Lish Gourmet

RESTAURANT CALENDAR

PHOENICIA 3841 Adams Avenue, Normal Heights, 619-282-4120. Fine, creative, to find this tiny restaurant — also featuring regular entry on Adams Avenue — look for a window featuring a color tree, an American flag, and the word "Phoenicia" written in Arabic and English. The inside is craggy, but they have splendid tables too. Try their baked eggplant stuffed with lamb, pure nutmeg, onions, and garlic, or the *halva kabob*, with ground meat, parsley, onions, and the bread. The real treat is the *shabbat*, raw lamb with cracked wheat, onions and sautéing, but you'll need to call 24 hours ahead to get it. Home-made rose juice and Lebanese coffees are delicious too.

UPTOWN

ALEX'S BURGERS 2600 Fifth Avenue, 619-211-2912. Inexpensive. "This is the HOME of the Original Philadelphia Cheese Steak Sandwich!" Bontas Guadagni (pronounced Ooo-aaa-yi) has been dominating it for years. "I import the meat from New Jersey. They're holding up a ten-pound slab of dilute beef from Quality Foods, Canada, New Jersey. It's got to be aged six months. We use one ounce slices of this meat, sautéed bell peppers, onions, mushrooms, and lettuce." Open daily. Moderate.

Free Appetizer

With purchase of 2 entrees.
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Come try some of our fabulous entrees prepared using the freshest ingredients.

P.B. Thai Cafe

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THE BEST IN CASUAL DINING

THURSDAYS 5-10 PM
CRAB FEAST \$10.95 per person
Includes 1 lb. snow crab legs, French fries, corn on the cob and caramel sauce. Each additional pound \$6. Up to 12 lbs. per person.

WEDNESDAYS 5-10 PM
ALL-U-CAN-EAT LOUISIANA PEEL-&-EAT SHRIMP \$12.95 per person
Includes French fries, corn on the cob and caramel sauce.

SUNDAYS 4-10 PM
ALL-U-CAN-EAT RIBS \$9.95 per person
Includes French fries, corn on the cob and caramel sauce.

MONDAYS 5-10 PM
STEAK DINNER \$6.95 per person
Includes top sirloin, Caesar salad & baked potatoes.

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PRIME RB BUFFET 4036 Goldfinch Street in Washington, Mission Hills, 619-285-7635
At the Bahia Resort Hotel 908 West Mission Bay Drive

Available 5:30-9:00 PM
\$12.95
CALL FOR RESERVATIONS
858-439-7635

BAZARCA CANTINA 2667 India Street, 619-248-6388. The menu offers Japanese specialties as well as Mexican dishes. Service is fast, the atmosphere is soothing, and you may dine here as comfortably private. This place is full of surprises. Open daily. Moderate.

BERTRAND AT MISTER'S 2530 Fifth Avenue, 619-298-7901. If you've been searching for a place to have dinner after a movie or other cultural event, keep this delectable cafe in mind. The baker-owned cafe serves artisanal cakes, breads, cookies, and all manner of chocolate goodness. Treat and please are uniformly good. In the summer, the cafe is especially charming. Check out the late hours Sunday through Thursday at 11:00 p.m. and Friday and Saturday through 1:00 a.m.

DOWNTOWN

A KACATE ON KETHAWAY 621 Sixth Avenue, 619-544-1561. This take-out emporium serves first-rate sandwiches, soups, small entrees. Food is delicious and well priced in a \$6.50. The menu is extensive and often frequented by actors and writers, which adds a certain charm. Soup plus half sandwich Monday through Friday. Dinner 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. Low.

AUBURNE 500 4th Avenue (at Island), 619-232-8100. Moderate to expensive. This place has a laid-back, hip atmosphere. Best bets are sandwiches with local beef, meat, egg salad, and salmon. Soup plus half sandwich Monday through Friday. Low.

EL ZAPARO 6642 Park Boulevard, University Heights, 619-492-1632. This stylish little Mexican restaurant on a story stretch of Park Boulevard is proof that not all new food is bad. Try a shredded beef or chicken taco or burrito and you'll know what we mean, with their generous amounts of jalapeño, slow-cooked meat. Many enjoy their unusual scallop burritos, vegetarian potato-filled burritos and rotel tacos, and well-prepared soups. We go for the steamed rice. El Zaparo is dependable, serving Mexican with solid, home-made bread. Open daily. Moderate.

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WHOLE FOODS MARKET 711 University Avenue, Hillcrest, 619-298-2000. For vegetarians on the go, Whole Foods Market is a gem. The store has a wide variety of fresh produce, and a large selection of vegetarian products. The store is well-stocked with a wide variety of fresh produce, and a large selection of vegetarian products. The store is well-stocked with a wide variety of fresh produce, and a large selection of vegetarian products. The store is well-stocked with a wide variety of fresh produce, and a large selection of vegetarian products.

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SOUTH BAY & CORONADO

EL ZAPARO 6642 Park Boulevard, University Heights, 619-492-1632. This stylish little Mexican restaurant on a story stretch of Park Boulevard is proof that not all new food is bad. Try a shredded beef or chicken taco or burrito and you'll know what we mean, with their generous amounts of jalapeño, slow-cooked meat. Many enjoy their unusual scallop burritos, vegetarian potato-filled burritos and rotel tacos, and well-prepared soups. We go for the steamed rice. El Zaparo is dependable, serving Mexican with solid, home-made bread. Open daily. Moderate.

TIJUANA

The prefix for all Tijuana numbers is 011-54. From the United States use the prefix 011-526 when calling Tijuana. When calling Tijuana use only the restaurant's seven-digit number.

ANTONITO DEL PASEO Coronado, 9750 Franciscan Avenue, 619-441-1111. Moderate to expensive.

TIJUANA

The prefix for all Tijuana numbers is 011-54. From the United States use the prefix 011-526 when calling Tijuana. When calling Tijuana use only the restaurant's seven-digit number.

ANTONITO DEL PASEO Coronado, 9750 Franciscan Avenue, 619-441-1111. Moderate to expensive.

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HELP WANTED

NOTICE TO READERS: Businesses advertised in this section are accepted only if they provide services and addresses. All notices are subject to our editorial discretion. We reserve the right to edit or omit any advertisement. Send resumes to: **HELP WANTED**, P.O. Box 1200, San Diego, CA 92112. Fax: 619-231-0881. Email: helpwanted@sdgreader.com

ACCOUNTING/RECORDS: Our top producer earns over \$70,000/year. Average \$140,000-\$150,000/year. Career growth opportunities. Call: 619-231-0881.

ACCOUNTING/EXECUTIVE: AD Agency requires experienced account manager. High commission, base plus bonus. Fax resume: 760-803-8138 or e-mail: adagency@sdgreader.com

ACCOUNT MANAGER: MCM, the national leading magazine publisher, seeks an account manager. Excellent base pay, full cash incentives. Great health benefits. 617-611-1111. Fax resume: 617-611-1111. Fax resume: 617-611-1111.

store to choose from depending on qualifications. Expert company training. Fast advancement. Many a full-time openings. Call: 619-231-0881.

AMC: exciting entry level position. Full-time position. Good benefits. Fax resume: 619-231-0881.

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SANDIEGORADER.COM
CLASSIFIED ADS

BUSINESS ADS

BUSINESS: include paid services or functions, rentals, and profit-making enterprises. For rates and discounts call (619) 235-8200, 9am-5pm, Monday through Friday.

DEAD LINES: Business classifieds are accepted until 6pm Tuesday. For full details, call by Friday for early placement discounts. Ads may be placed by phone using a credit card (619-235-8200) or in person (1703 India Street, Downtown). Hours are 9am-5pm, Monday through Friday, and until 6pm Tuesday.

PLEASE NOTE: The Reader will not be financially responsible for failure to run an ad or for errors in an ad, except, if at fault, to the extent of the cost of the first insertion of the ad.

FREE ADS BY MAIL OR INTERNET

ONE FREE CLASSIFIED AD per week is available to private parties and nonprofit organizations that do not charge for their services.

MAIL: Ads must be printed clearly on 3x5 cards or postcards and are limited to 25 words. Additional words cost 60¢ each. Ads must arrive at our PO Box 37 by 2pm Monday. Mail all ads to:

\$6 ADS BY INTERNET, PHONE, BY FAX OR IN PERSON

QUICK, EASY, AND CHEAP! \$6 ads are available to private parties only. Ads are limited to 25 words. Cash, check or credit cards are accepted. Services, rentals, lessons or any other profit-making enterprises do not qualify for \$6 ads. See instructions for business ads above. Other rules apply to Roommates and Match ads.)

BY INTERNET: Go to SanDiegoReader.com and click on the link to place an online classified ad. Fill out the form and remember to check the box for your preferred billing method.

BY FAX: Complete the form below, photocopy it, and then fax it to 619-235-8200, 7 days a week, at (619) 235-8200. Payment is via Visa, Discover, or MasterCard.

24-Hour Phone: (619) 233-9797, ext. 8055 24-Hour Fax: (619) 233-7907
Deadline: 6pm Monday

Write your ad below, listing the item for sale first, followed by its description (including price) and ending with the phone number. Each phone number counts as one word; ads over 25 words will be worded. Refer to the Table of Contents to determine the classified category you want. If you are unsure, the appropriate category will be assigned. No cancellations accepted. No refunds.

NAME	DATETIME PHONE	EXP. DATE
1	2	3
4	5	6
7	8	9
10	11	12
13	14	15
17	18	19
21	22	23

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CAREERS IN PROBATION

Need extra cash? Alpha Plasma Centers Center will pay you up to \$185 per month. It's safe, easy and you'll be helping others.

Reservations only. Call for details. Offer good with this ad.

CAREERS IN PROBATION

CORRECTIONAL DEPUTY PROBATION OFFICER I

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

- 21 years old • Good physical condition • No illicit drug usage
- U.S. citizen or in process of becoming a citizen
- No felony convictions • High school diploma or GED

SALARY:
\$24,252.80-\$38,438.40 ANNUALLY
Bilingual men/women encouraged to apply

Test dates: **January 20, 2001**
February 24, 2001
Time: **8:00 am or 11:30 am**

Location: County Administration Center
1600 Pacific Highway • San Diego 92101

Testing: first come, first served basis to a maximum of 80 applicants each session. Applications available at the test site.

For additional information, contact the department's
Jobline: 858-514-8558

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HELP WANTED

CLASSROOM AIDES - \$7.75 to \$9.39/hr. to start
Hours: Mon-Fri, 7:30 am - 4 pm • Location: Allied Health and Chula Vista
Duties: Implement IEP's • Follow verbal and written task instructions with students and behavior programs • Record behavior data

COMMUNITY TRAINING SPECIALIST - \$6.06 to \$9.39/hr. to start
Hours: Mon/Wed/Fri, 8 am-2 pm and Tues/Thurs, 8 am-3:15 pm
Locations: Mission College, La Mesa and Chula Vista
Duties: Assist adult consumers in community • Conduct behavioral and instructional programs • Implement consumer schedule

VISTA HILL
Vista Hill is a vital, multifaceted organization which offers a broad spectrum of behavioral health services. We offer an array of employment opportunities specific to education, prevention and treatment.

Immediate Openings:
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Get It Done In 2001!

Resolve To Be Successful!

Join Our Team!

Start at \$10/hr!!

NO SALES - We do market research for research purposes only! Our explosive growth requires new talent and we need YOU!

We are looking for OUTGOING and FRIENDLY people to do telephone interviews.

- \$50 bonus
- Paid parking
- Advancement opportunities
- Medical benefits
- Part-time
- Credit union membership
- Flexible scheduling
- 401(k) plan
- Bonus program
- Profit sharing

Job Hotline: 619-243-8045
LUTH RESEARCH
www.luthresearch.com

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- Bonus program
- Profit sharing

Job Hotline: 619-243-8045
LUTH RESEARCH
www.luthresearch.com

HILGERT, 560. Large, open, beautiful finished 1 bedroom apartment, balcony, shower, vinyl floor, beautiful tile, central air conditioning, security building. Laundry, 2142 5th Avenue. Agent: 819-496-8590.

HILGERT, 561. 1 bedroom, 1 bath. Large upper unit. Walk to shopping. Great location. 3608 12th Avenue. Call: 819-298-2000.

HILGERT, 562. 1 bedroom, 1 bath. 102 sqm condo with nice entrance. Great area. Great underground parking. 619-298-2000.

HILGERT, 563. 1 bedroom, 1 bath. 102 sqm condo with nice entrance. Great area. Great underground parking. 619-298-2000.

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