



Photo by Santa Monica Closeup

THE TRUTH ABOUT THE HOMELESS SITUATION IN VENICE. WHY PLACING THE UNHOUSED IN MOTELS FOR THE SECOND TIME MAKES ABSOLUTELY NO SENSE. ALLOW ME TO EXPLAIN.

By Gary Featherstone

I'm going to cut right through the bullshit. In my opinion, placing the unhoused in motel rooms is a good idea, if the city plans on doing what is necessary. Let me tell you what's necessary.

All this is supposed to lead to permanent housing. The first thing society must understand is that 75% of the unhoused in Venice suffer from a substance addiction. Out of the 75%, 35% of those suffer from some form of mental illness. You cannot place either one in an apartment suffering from either of these illnesses.

What the city has done is give the unhoused a place to live while they continue their drug use. The problem is not being addressed. The city must make an effort to provide these individuals with drug treatment, and mental health evaluations. How can we feel comfortable with placing drug addicts and mentally ill people in apartments? We have to offer these people treatment before we offer them an apartment.

Listen to me. The unhoused, right now, are sitting around in motels doing nothing. These motels should be equipped with Professional Drug Programs, and Mental Health Doctors. Don't tell me it can't be done, because I have seen it in action. If you really want help solving this problem, you should come to those who know what they are doing.

My problem is, I think the city and all its supporters are not serious about the problem. Allow me to explain. The Mayor's intentions are good, but the Mayor can only act on the information she is provided with. After placing the unhoused in motels last year, it was a total failure, with the exception of the motels supervised by St. Josephs, the Adventurer, and the Cadillac Motel.

My main concern is with this bandage approach. After you clean the streets and all the unhoused are in motels, then what? Where do we go from there? A plan should have been established before you went out and confronted the unhoused. I'm looking
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The Venice Place Hotel and the California Coastal Commission

by David Ewing

On Dec. 15th, the California Coastal Commission voted unanimously to approve Dan Abrams' Venice Place hotel mixed-use project with few conditions. Thus ended a ten-year battle by the community to stop or reduce the project, which occupies nearly the entire block between Electric Ave. and Abbot Kinney, from Broadway to Westminster Ave..

Several community groups, including Citizens Preserving Venice (of which I am a member), Save Venice, Keep Neighborhoods First, POWER, and others, along with Unite Here Local 11, have opposed the project as a major driver of gentrification and displacement, particularly in Oakwood, which it faces along Electric with a block-long, three-story wall, as well as for its size, consolidating most of the block into one lot, the expansion of a single restaurant's liquor license to serve the entire property, including a liquor store, and for traffic impacts on that very busy section of Abbot Kinney and the neighborhood, not to mention the parking problems it will create. Several other major projects on that section of AK, including another hotel mixed use project that's already broken ground where AK meets Main St., will all exacerbate cumulative impacts on the neighborhood, especially Oakwood, from traffic to late-night noise to liquor sales to schoolchildren's safety. (Westminster Elementary School is right across the street from Venice Place.)

Regardless, the City waved the project through hearings by the ZA, the West Los Angeles Area Planning Commission hearing, the City Council's Planning and Land Use Management Committee (PLUM), and the City Council itself.

The only City official to stand up for the community was Commissioner Esther Margulies, on the Area Planning Commission, who discussed the many problems with the project and cast the lone City vote against it in the entire City process.

Councilmember Bonin told project opponents he was undecided about it, but public records turned up an email he wrote early on, assuring the project support. Bonin did briefly sidetrack the project in order to collect \$700,000 to extend the life of some Section 8 housing in Venice, but that was it. And to put things in perspective, that was less than Abrams paid his City lobbyists.

At PLUM, Chair Marqueece Harris-Dawson spoke eloquently about the gentrification of Venice:

"Given that this seems like a very sensitive project in one of the most impacted neighborhoods in the United States, frankly, the Venice Beach community, the his-
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THE TRUE STORY ABOUT THIRD AND ROSE

By Jon Wolff

The following is from a YouTube video interview with Laddie Williams about the recent police action ordered by Councilmember Traci Park against unhoused people in Venice. The video is produced by Margaret Molloy.

Jon Wolff: Laddie, what's your background? You're born and raised in Venice.

Laddie Williams: Born and raised right here in Venice.

JW: So you may know some of the people who were affected by the special action performed by Traci Park.

LW: I knew many of those people that were affected by the mayor's plan for safe living, or however it's phrased.

JW: Can you say something about what happened the other night?

LW: Cecil Bowens was born and raised here in Venice. He has some mental challenges that we have been dealing with over on Third Street. Garry Featherstone, Michael Ridley and myself were getting him to remain calm, take his medicine. He was fed three square meals a day. He didn't know anything else but Venice. And the way he was treated to get him to go to Harbor General UCLA was very violent. They came in, it was like eight to ten cars of police. They all surrounded him. He then became very agitated. He became very hostile. They wrestled him to the ground. They zip tied him, hands and feet, lifted him up to the ambulance so he could go. He was screaming. He didn't want to go. We were trying to talk to them and let them know we could talk him down and get him to walk to the ambulance. We were not given that chance. Michael Ridley had promised to run home and get him two hot dogs. This is what he wanted, two hot dogs. And he wanted an iPad and he wanted to take his cell phone. None of this was allowed. He was just wrestled to the ground very abruptly. Hog tied, and put in the ambulance that was waiting down on Rose and Third. He called all our names. It was very heart-wrenching because we have known him all his life and we were helping him. And yes, he had been a hindrance to the community. Don't misunderstand me. Because he has mental challenges. But Cecil was very very very loving towards people he had known all his life. He did not trust people that he didn't know because of whatever's happened to him out on the street, but he knew there was love and compassion and there was us there taking care of him on Third. And we had been doing that for quite some time.

JW: Did the police perform this action under circumstances, heavy circumstances, like it was raining and it was dark and there were alarms going off?

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LETTERS

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How Traci Park conspired and cheated to win the Westside

The recent Westside LACD elections were compromised by interference and trickery by the Traci Park campaign. Traci Park declared herself as a democrat but disingenuously used and continues to use CA-GOP operatives in her staff and personal security entourage. Traci used people of color Democratic party volunteers, who, unknowingly worked alongside these CAGOP operatives. How do we know and prove this alleged fraud? There were three CA GOP sponsored recall campaigns: 1) against our current governor Gavin Newsome, 2) the recent one against our current District Attorney George Gascon and 3) the Mike Bonin City council recall. Westside voters will remember that of the three recalls, two were complete failures and only the campaign against councilman Mike Bonin got enough signatures to qualify for the ballot. Smart Westsided voters were not fooled by these obvious smear campaigns. These same GOP Operatives though, did not roll over and play dead, but instead rolled over to support the Traci Park campaign!

{Let's take a moment to contrast the two candidates. Park's opponent, Erin Darling, is a UC Berkeley graduate, born and raised in Venice, Erin is a civil rights attorney who worked for the Eviction Defense Team and the Impact Litigation Project, which represented the United Farm Workers. He also worked as a public defender before opening his private practice. In contrast, Park, a relative newcomer to the Westside, got inspired to run as city council when a local Ramada Inn near her home was set to be turned into a Project Roomkey by PATH, People Assisting The Homeless and she conspired to block this solution! This is ironically the same Project Roomkey, which she currently toots as a necessary fix for the homeless, but just not anywhere near her home. Quite a dubious beginning, I dare say!} (editor's note)

But what is not just dubious but an outright repulsive scam is that Traci Park used Erin Darling's Public Defender position as a vicious and hate filled smear campaign. She sought to impugn the integrity of his campaign and well endorsed democratic favored candidacy. The repugnant tactics used by Traci's campaign bore many striking and obvious similarities to the failed recall tactics, especially those employed against councilman Mike Bonin which she repeatedly compared him to.

Traci's campaign insinuated that Erin was somehow linked to the defendants that as a public defender he was sworn to diligently represent. Contrast that to lawyer Traci Park's choice to represent and defend a company that was accused of workplace racial discrimination where prolonged use of the "N-word" was openly tolerated by a callous management against the plaintiff.

Traci has never acknowledged her role in choosing to defend the indefensible. Her campaign was very heavily supported by local westside gentrifiers "Silicon Beach" real estate interests, developers, LAPD and the Trump supporter controlled LAFD, as well as many GOP affiliated local businesses. Traci's campaign outspent Erin's campaign by 3 to 1 in millions of dollars.

As previously stated, Traci Park continues to rely on and surround herself with vile GOP operatives, including 'motorcyclists for Trump', 'Truckers for Trump' and the usual GOP interests. These openly visible CAGOP vigilantes and the LAPD are patrolling 3rd and Hampton Dr. to discourage resettling there by the houseless, (who refused to be put in a public storage system, which takes them from the community they have formed and get services from, forbids them to speak or visit with their neighbor in their 'Project LOCK and KEY' and go through a daily frisking coming and going, which limits them to leaving by 8am and returning by 5pm. There are a LOT of rules to abide by, and this is certainly not a

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at the approach to this problem, and it seems as though we're doing the same thing.

I have been singing this song for two years now, and no one is hearing me. We need to go out and secure locations where we can house the unhoused and, at the same time, provide them with a drug program. We have to try and get them off drugs. Same thing with the mentally ill. They need help also. I'm telling you because it works. I've seen it done, and I was part of the team that implemented this program. In our program, we hired a Psychologist to evaluate the ones who were displaying bizarre behavior. We were fortunate because the doctor was able to treat most of the problems with medication.

In my opinion, an apartment should be earned. Give them a goal to strive for. For example, the drug addict must complete a program before he or she is given an apartment. We cannot allow someone who is addicted to drugs to occupy an apartment.

Most importantly, the drug addict was given an opportunity to clean themselves up. This is what is important. They were given the opportunity. You see, I'm a firm believer in second chances. However, we cannot continue to utilize our time with a person that does not want to get clean. Same thing with those who are offered help and they refuse, those people fall up under the rules and regulations which are in place to deal with this type of behavior. We cannot spend unnecessary time trying to help someone who doesn't want help.

If you are interested in learning how to implement a drug program within any facility, there is a man that specializes in this. I am going to give you the benefit of any doubt. But I will know if the city's efforts are for real. It's easy to figure out. When I see the unhoused return to the streets, that's a signal that things are not going right.

Mayor, you are surrounded by people who have degrees from school, but absolutely no street knowledge. That's a problem. This is the problem at the Bridge House. This is why there are so many overdoses. In my opinion, there should be mandatory drug testing. I went into this before about users being in the same facility with those who are clean. It does not mix. This is one of the first things they teach you.

In closing, I certainly hope you will pick my brain and utilize the knowledge I'm sharing with you. There is no room for failure, especially on your watch. You will be held to a higher standard, and be blamed for every failure, even though this mess is not of your making. I want you to know that I will be observing the progress that is made. Thank you for reading my letter.

Garry Featherstone - Homeless Advocate

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Venice Place Hotel – continued from page 1

toric Oakwood neighborhood, certainly Abbot Kinney, anybody who's been on that thoroughfare in the last ten of fifteen years recognizes the aggressive nature of the change there."

Then he voted to approve the project in lockstep with his committee, ignoring the project's impacts on Venice and the developers' numerous workarounds that tortured the City Zoning code and the Coastal Land Use Plan into submission.

From there it went to City Council, which gaveled it through with barely a pretense of weighing the issues.

Disappointed by the City's highly politicized process, the appellants looked to the California Coastal Commission (CCC) as a state body that would not be subject to local prejudices and pressures. And we were encouraged by the fact that the CCC's Executive Director had filed an appeal of his own.

Boy, were we dumb.

The Abrams group hired a Sacramento lobbyist, Ted Harris of California Strategies, who worked hand in hand with the Commission staff for at least ten months leading up to the hearing. The Executive Director's appeal was limited to compelling the hotel to make 17 of its 78 rooms affordable for low-income visitors, per CCC policy. Using an expert hired by Abrams, Harris set about convincing them this was "infeasible" and talked them down to 21 "pods" in 4 rooms, along with a \$1.2mm "in lieu" contribution toward affordable accommodations in the city of Malibu, another Harris client, rather than Venice.

The pods eventually succumbed to community ridicule. Ainsworth settled for 10 very small rooms with shared bathrooms and a \$880K contribution, redirected from Malibu to LA and tentatively reassigned to Venice. But none of the community concerns got anywhere.

We were not allowed to meet with Coastal staff during the two months leading up to the final Staff Report, while Harris was busy working his magic. Finally we were granted an hour on zoom, but not with the staffer assigned to the project. She had been promoted to supervisor, covering another city. Instead we were to meet with two of her former supervisors. One of them was fifteen minutes late, and the other wouldn't talk until she showed up. So we ended up with 45 minutes to counter Harris' ten months. In any case, the staff report had already been drafted.

The week before the hearing, two community members did get a meeting with CCC Chair, Donne Brownsey, who was cordial, if noncommittal.

But the train had already left the station. Venice was left unprotected.

Third and Rose – continued from page 1

LW: Alarms were going off at Public Storage. They had been going for a day and a half, just this "Wah!, Wah!, Wah!," constant noise for over a day and a half. And it was pouring down rain. Everybody was soaking wet. Everybody was trying to pack all their things and get it together to get out of the way. Because then came a trash truck with a big crane on it that was taking their things, and it was making a roaring noise, "Raaaow!" constantly. And then the trash trucks made noise, so it was just noise, noise, noise, and pouring down rain. It just seemed like it was an attack on the entire street, and the noise was a way of making them hurry up and move or be so discombobulated they didn't know what to do, that you would just take their things and move on to the next tent. But we were there helping elderly people, Carol, with her things. She has been here twenty years. Carol is in her 80s, almost in her 80s, and she could not get her stuff. She was shaking, she was cold, it was wet, and she just couldn't get her mind together to get her things. So we took the things and started stuffing them in our cars just so she wouldn't lose everything. Because she said, "I don't know where my purse is, I don't know where anything is." And she couldn't take it anymore. She just turned her chair around, the chair that you can walk or sit, and she just sat there in the pouring rain. And the rain was just coming down on her. And there was no care about how old she was, that she was discombobulated. There was no thought process about how we could help her, except for us who had been running the street for over two years, how to help her because we knew her.

JW: There are other individuals that were affected by this?

LW: There was another individual named Georgina who wasn't allowed to robe herself. She's been here for over twenty years. She just came out of her tent, "I can't take it! I can't take it!" And she just started hurling her clothes into the street, all her belongings into the street. They didn't allow her to get her clothes on. She had her bra on and some pants but they did not allow her to get her clothes and get dressed. She was soaked at that point because of the downpour of rain. And it was just like something out of a horror movie, how these people were dehumanized to the point that nobody cared if they were dressed. Nobody cared that they couldn't get their things. Nobody cared that they had a community there and they were all crying for their community. There was a guy named Michael who was there who had some dogs, and he just took his dogs and started walking down the street. And when they were calling for him he said, "Just take the shit. You don't want us here. Just take the shit." And he just left his things and took his dogs in his wagon and just walked up to Rose and Third. He turned right. We

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don't know where he went. But I have been told that they came back and offered him a room, a hotel room, I don't know where.

JW: This was all done surrounded by armed police officers the whole time.

LW: LAPD was there, LA Sanitation was there. It was taped off, and that's what threw people too. If it was supposed to be voluntary, why was it all taped off?

JW: This location, Third, was very organized, very tidy. One of the tidiest spots in the whole city.

LW: We always got compliments. Of course, not from the NIMBYs who didn't want them there at all. But we got various compliments from parents who would come see their children and see that they were getting food, they were being clothed. We got lots of donations from individual people who would drop off food and clothing. We had one woman bring in almost 100 pallets so they could stack their tents on top of the pallets so if it rained they didn't get wet and the water ran off into the street. But we were complimented because it was such a clean environment. The trash was always picked up. The trash was always kept tidy. We always made sure that the trash was kept clean. We were always putting the trash onto the dumpsters. We were constantly cleaning. And all the people had an interest in keeping the street clean. They swept. They always swept and it was a ritual. The first tent: You take the east side of the street. On the other side: You take the west side of the street. And they had to sweep and clean. And they picked up. And when they ate they never put their trash on the ground. It was always put in a trash bag that was always put in the trash bins.

They had showers every Tuesday and Thursday. They had a 24-hour bathroom over there so there was none of the "pooping in my yard" because bathrooms were always there. Pit Stop kept one set clean on one side of the street and we kept the other one cleaned and sanitized on the other side.

JW: Wasn't a lot of this due to the organizing efforts of Mr. Featherstone and yourself and others?

LW: Garry Featherstone. He fussed and he was sometimes cranky as "all outdoors" but he loved everyone over there. Michael Ridley, same thing. We have been accused of drug trafficking, open-air drug market. I was accused of prostituting the girls. None of that was true. All of us worked over there because there were people there. We lost our oldest member of Third Street, he died on the street. "Bird". We called him Bird. He died on the street in the parking lot. And we don't know, they wouldn't tell us what caused his death. He was another one who was a hard worker and always cleaned the street. I mean, there was always somebody sweeping the street and making sure the trash was picked up. We had a recycling day. Always we were recycling so the people were able to keep money in their pocket just by going. Gary was so kind. He would take them up there to the recycling center. He took them to the doctor. Michael took them to the doctor. They took them to the market. We had an organized encampment.

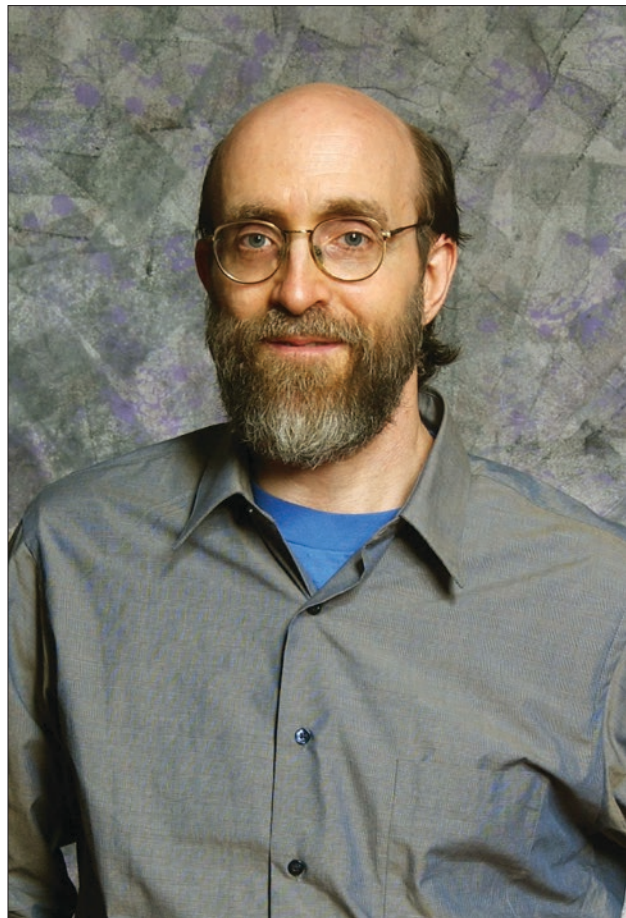
JW: Mr. Featherstone's also a natural born Venetian, and a good number of the people there were from here. They're from Venice.

LW: Michael is born and raised and so was Garry Featherstone. Born and raised, we were all born and raised here. The two of them came up with the idea for Homeless Enterprise, and it was working and they knew that. I mean the tents were well organized. There was never a lot of junk and trash out on the street because we didn't allow it. You had to keep it clean if you were going to live over there. And we were working on Hampton. Hampton was not as organized as Third Street but Third Street was the prototype that we were working to take to Hampton. But the NIMBYs wanted us out of here. I understand we were the trial two days before. Garry and Spike talked to her but Traci Park was there pointing and looking like we had created another catastrophe when it wasn't. It was very well run. Even the people at the Pit Stop who kept the bathrooms clean told them that this was the most organized establishment they had ever seen as far as being homeless.

JW: It seems like this would be the least likely candidate spot for this kind of special action, special treatment.

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George Winston Interview by Gerry Fialka

The inspired and inspiring piano of George Winston has calmed my soul for many years. His first solo LP was released in 1972, but his second "Autumn" in 1980 started a string of albums that deeply touched many listeners. He is one of the best known performers of contemporary instrumental music. He was influenced early on by Jim Morrison and The Doors. Winston's 2002 album "Night Divides the Day - The Music of The Doors" is renditions of the Venice-born rock band.

George befriended another Venice icon, Brad Kay in 1974. Their companionship set the sails for deep explorations of music together. Brad wrote the following 3 paragraphs:

GEORGE WINSTON and I used to hang out together in the early '70s - when he drove his delivery van around to local newsstands, and we'd confer about Harlem Stride Piano, about James P. Johnson, Willie "The Lion" Smith and "Fats" Waller. We would debate heatedly over which guy was better, between dropping off bales of "Hustler" and other high-minded literature. (George, did you wedge a spinet piano into that van? I seem to recall it, but could be wrong! ..."Dear Brad- no I didn't!" - George)

Sometimes we were joined by another Venice pianistic legend, Barry "The Lion" Gordon (who played on the Boardwalk for many years). Whenever the three of us got together, say, tearing a herring at Zucky's or some other eatery with cushy booths, it seemed that that lost world of Harlem jazz in the '20s - of the Nest Club, "Pod's and Jerry's" and Dicky Wells' place; of pianists like "One Leg" Willie Joseph, Don Lambert, "Luckey" Roberts and Stephen "The Beetle" Henderson - was just around the corner, big as life, and all we had to do was pipe down and listen.

At the time, around 1975, I had no inkling that George was soon to invent a whole new way to play the piano! In 1980, when I first heard him play the now-famous pieces from "Autumn," I was stunned - along with whole audiences! Later in the '80s, George was so generous as to let me open for him at "At My Place" and other venues. He was (and remains!) truly a "right" guy - always sweet-tempered, with no airs or pretensions. I always will be thankful to George for that, and especially for his companionship and our friendship, which lasts to this day.

Here is George's righteous praise of Brad: "No one I have ever met is more dedicated to music than

the great pianist Brad Kay...he is ever searching for infinite harmonic variations, love and a soulful sense of humor in his music."

I am grateful to Brad for connecting me with George. I submitted many questions to Winston via email, and he typed out the answers to the following. Please read what George called this exercise: "a great journey through myself and my existence."

F= Fialka's question (followed by question catalogue number).

W= George Winston typed response.

F-1A- Music writer Ben Ratliff talks about the musician's "sound" (in two or three words) in his Bill Frisell book, "every musician finally needs a sound, a full and sensible embodiment of their artistic personality, such that it can be heard, at best, in a single note." For example: Miles= fragile & pointed, and Trane= slightly undercooked & urgent, and Bill= wobbly & woozy. What are two words you'd appreciate a writer used or could use to describe your "sound?"

W- Winston always pays attention to and works off a drone, however direct or indirect the drone is, which is almost always the tonic note of the key of whatever song he is playing, but occasionally it can be the 5th.

F-1a- Tell me a stupid mistake you made and the story about it.

W- In 1973, when delivering something, I left my cassette player and a one-of-a-kind tape in the car, unlocked and with the windows down.

F-2a- What is the most important question in life?
W- "What can I do to help?"

F-3a- What is the most important activity in life?
W- Being of assistance

F-4a- Tell me one quality that makes you feel your life is worthwhile. (tangible or non-tangible)

W- That I have compassion for all others.

F-5a- If you have it, what does it allow you to do in life?

W- To try to be available to help.

F-6a- If you have it, and know it, how does that make you feel inside?

W- Fulfilling why I exist.

F-8a - Can you hate the sin and not the sinner?

W- I can realize that there are two states in all beings: balance or imbalance.

F1- What's the best thing for a human being?

W- Balance.

F3- Why do we collect/gather information?

W- To have what is needed when situations come up.

F5- What is your earliest memory?

W- White sand dunes and seemingly infinite blue water and blue sky (in Western Michigan, Lake Michigan sand beach I think sometime when I was two).

F6- Is memory a curse or a blessing?

W- To me, a blessing, telling me what to work on.

F7- Who were your earliest role-models within your immediate family, and how did they specifically influence you?

W- My mom was very sweet, and all my friends told me so. That made me want to forgive and understand and let go.

F8- Who were your role-models outside your immediate family and how specifically did they affect you?

W- Goobajie ran into my hotel room after a concert in Santa Barbara, California in the Spring of 1984, barely squeezing in, when the door was 98% closed. I exclaimed, "A kitty!!!" She

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Q & A with SunRose Ironshell

With exclusive access to the lives of 9 women, ranging in age from 10 to 98, Women of The White Buffalo is a feature documentary that explores powerful testimonials of loss and survival as we gain insight into the experience of a modern day Indigenous American living on an Indian Reservation. Gripping historical accounts and startling timely statistics guide viewers down the path that has led to these present day conditions.

The indelible voices of these determined women inspire us with their strength, gifting us with ancient insights that speak to our current global, environmental and cultural crises. These are the powerfully rich stories of the brave women and children living in the poorest county in the United States.

Traci Park Cheater – continued from page 2
"home" by any means!)

Between the hours of 2-3 am in the heaviest of rains, Traci Park stormed the area with dozens of policemen, ripped the tents from the homeless and right there in then gave them a take it or leave it option of ridding themselves of all their possessions but two bags, and entering a bus to be stored in a part of town they know no one and where they are not permitted to talk with their fellow occupants or face even harsher consequences. All had their possessions taken and destroyed by the sanitation clearings, not cleanings, within these most vile and demeaning circumstances. (And while she lies and told the press the following morning, along with fellow conspirator Karen Bass, that they all got "homes" and Traci emphasized "and all the social services and mental health support they need.: The reality is, coming from the mouth of a social worker at the Grand Hotel, full of drug addicted clients from skip row, the caseload is 500 to 1 social worker! Yes, that's Traci Park's idea of mental health services provided!)

Traci Park and the new conservative majority LACity Council have again resorted to reinstatement of the unfair and deemed illegal 41.18 criminalization ordinances of the homeless to the entire historic Ocean Front Walk in Venice. Traci fully intends to deploy her anti-houseless vigilante supporters against those living in vehicles, mostly women, as well. Taking photos of license plates of suspected occupants and running them through their insider LAPD fink collaborators to illegally obtain their names and have them towed.

In conclusion, Traci Park deceitfully cheated to obtain her seat and doesn't deserve her CD11 occupancy on the LACity Council She is a divider, not a uniter, like her GOP goons that protect her lies, and try to tear the very heart of Venice to shreds.

Thank you so much for your time and consideration. The co writers prefer to remain anonymous, for fear of vigilante retaliation which we observed first hand prior to the recent eviction of the houseless from Venice. (Long time Westside resident, and previous renter for over 25 years.)

What would you speculate would be the reason why they had to pick Third?

LW: We had the NIMBYs coming every day filming, walking up and down the street, walking down the middle of the street every single day. It was one of them, some of them, just coming to harass people, say nasty things, “We want our streets back.” So when we heard Karen Bass say that at the Rose Cafe over there on Rose, the day she came, we knew what was there. We knew the hate was there.

JW: Traci Park’s congratulating herself for having stepped in and done this. What do you expect the outcome to be? The short-term and long-term outcomes?

LW: Well, the people are coming back. Two or three of them have already left the hotels and they’re back. So now they’re just in the community. I don’t think you can keep people inside like that when they have mental issues, they have drug issues. I don’t think you can just stick them in a room and say we housed 108 people. Because many of them have mental issues that need to be dealt with and many of them have drug issues that need to be dealt with on a daily basis. So sticking them in a room, giving yourself a clap because you took them off the street. It’s a Band-Aid.

JW: Do you think they’re gonna have to talk about this later on when it comes back to haunt them?

LW: I’m sure they’re talking about it now. Because I’m sure that they’ve heard that some people had food, some people didn’t. Some people needed medical supplies, some people didn’t. And I’m sure they’re scurrying around trying to figure it out when they kept it well together on Third Street. They had the Rose Clinic coming every Thursday to check on them and refill prescriptions and make sure they were, you know, somewhat healthy.

JW: You and others are doing some of the care after-the-fact for some of these people. You’re actually doing some help.

LW: Yeah. The lady is still dropping food off. There’s two hotels on Lincoln that we’re taking it to where I think it is almost sixty people there. And they’re not happy. They’re all complaining about the fact that they can’t visit with one another. I guess they signed rules to get in there. So they’re not able to socialize with each other. They’re cordoned off from each other, but they’re in the hotels on Lincoln, the Marina 7.

JW: Is there anything you’d like to communicate to Traci Park if she were here right now?

LW: Well, I’d like to tell her: Instead of coming over and pointing her finger at us on the day that Karen Bass and she came over, it would have been nice if they would have come up and talked to us and seen what we were doing and how we were successful, and added on to that. It wasn’t about coming in like they’re a pariah and taking them from where their community was. Community is important for healing and Venice has always been a community where we helped one another, we loved one another, we were there for one another, and we always wanted to see people do better. These new people who have come in... They don’t know that. They don’t know the Venice that I grew up in where our grandmothers fed the unhoused to keep the street clean. They let them take showers in their backyard until the proactive code enforcement came through and made us all take our showers out the backyard. We were a community. We fed each other. We loved each other. And what they did to us, it’s very very painstaking. So I wish they would have come, talked to us, seeing what we were doing and seeing that it was working, instead of listening to the fear-mongering that goes on in this community 24/7. Next Door should be taken out of existence. Because fear-mongering on there is what’s got everybody upset. It’s what’s got everybody thinking that the homeless are going to kill them. Making them think that the homeless are going to poop in their front yard. The lies just generate off of that fear-mongering place until it’s, like, unbelievable.

JW: Any suggestions or plans about what to do from here on?

LW: Well, we’d like to get our church here saved. It has twelve rooms in it. We could educate and be there for people who need it within the community, who want to be here, who want to make the changes. We could offer drug classes. We could offer safe streets. We could offer

so many programs here that it would truly truly benefit those who want to do different and want to be different. Because a lot of them do want to be different but they’ve been molested as children, they’ve been beat up. They’ve been thrown out in the street at 12 and 13 years old. So they don’t know. And what this church could do for them is give them the love and the confidence they need in order to enter into society instead of being kicked out. Because right now, living in a motel, you don’t know how long, you don’t know if it’s permanent and supportive, you don’t know what it is. You’re just in this hotel room and you have no idea what’s going to happen to you. You don’t know if you’re going to get Permanent Supportive Housing. You don’t know if you’re going to get counseling. You don’t know if you’re going to be loved. You don’t know if somebody’s going to be there for you 24/7. You don’t know. They don’t know.

JW: These are Venice traditions that we’ve always abided by as long as I’ve been alive.

LW: Venice has always been a place of love. And now, with these new NIMBYs and our new CD11 person, we have to keep fighting. We’re not going to give up. If you go along Rose Avenue in Venice, there’s this gaudy awful fence. It looks like the penitentiary. It is horrible. You go back behind Amazon, there’s a fence. You go on Flower, there’s a fence. We have never ever ever had that in Venice. Never. Not even through the darkest times when “the drugs” were poured into this community. We didn’t have fences. We didn’t have gates. We still came out. We still fed people. We still came out. We still loved people. We still came out. We were there. Venice has always been well organized and been there. It’s a different kind of city. We don’t want to be known as the city of fences. You don’t want the unhoused. You don’t want them on the beach. You want to 41.18 the beach, which means they can’t sit, sleep, or enjoy the beach. So, I understand. I saw the map. That they’re going to 41.18 Hampton. They’re going to 41.18 Third Street. So, there will be no unhoused, no people that can sit, rest, or sleep in those areas.

JW: Unless they look like tourists. Is there anything you could say to the newcomers to Venice, and the NIMBYs, to get through to them, to explain to them what they’re doing.

LW: You said you wanted to come here for the Bohemian love, for the Bohemian effect. Let’s try to look up what that means and not bring your thoughts and your values and how you grew up here to a city that has been Bohemian. Come out, get to know people, talk to people. Don’t put up your 20-foot fences in the front yard. And by the way, they didn’t allow us to put fences that high up. We had to keep the fence so the police could look from the street to the alley. Now they can’t do that. You ride around Venice and the fences are so high. They come in through the alley, they exit through the alley. They don’t want to know anybody, they don’t want to talk to anybody. That’s not what Venice was about or is about. There’s still many of us here who have the Bohemian upbringing where you love one another, you treat one another equally no matter what they do.

Margaret Molloy: Laddie, what did they call you out here?

LW: We can’t put that one on there.

MM: Come on. Come on, Laddie.

LW: They do call me “The Warden”. I mean, they know I’m not for the bull crap. I’m not for the bull pucky. I don’t like you to steal. I don’t like you to rob. I don’t like you to thieve. So yes, I am known as The Warden.

MM: And what does Naomi [Nightingale] call you?

LW: Fannie Lou Hamer.

MM: There you go.

LW: Or I was Malcolm X too. It’s just because I love you but you gotta be right.

JW: And Naomi said she was Martin Luther King.

LW: Yeah, she’s Martin Luther King. I’m not.

MM: Laddie, when people were given this offer in the middle of the night, and it’s pouring rain, and the sirens are going, did they have to sign something?

LW: Yes. They had to sign a pledge that they were giving the city their things, their belongings. And that it wasn’t done under duress and that it was voluntary. Which is not true. Everything that happened over there,

they were made to do. And what choice did they have when the streets were blocked off, police were everywhere, sanitation was out there. The siren was going at Public Storage. I called, Garry called, Spike called. Peggy Kennedy called to turn that thing off. The noise was deafening. So of course you were gonna do what they told you to do because it was done under duress.

JW: Signing those pledges... that’s a psychological warfare tactic to make the person feel that they’re consenting or playing a part in their own oppression.

LW: I agree.

MM: So what were they allowed to take?

LW: Two bags. And they had to give up the physical tent. Sanitation had a picture of the said tent. And if the face didn’t fit the tent you just had to go. Then you couldn’t get on the bus. This long Trailways bus was there, waiting for them to sign the pledge. They only could bring two bags to get on the bus. And then they had to watch all the things that they cared about, because they couldn’t get them in two grocery bags, they just had to watch The Claw come and drop it into the truck. Many of them were crying. It was very very very hard to see. People crying because you could only take two bags but the rest of your stuff was just thrown away. This loud noise with this crane just picking it up, dropping it into the dumpster.

JW: Was anybody video recording a lot of this?

LW: You couldn’t. It was pouring rain. How are you gonna video. And we wanted to videotape, but you had to help the people. You couldn’t stop and not assist the people with what was going on. You didn’t have a heart if you couldn’t. Because a lot of them didn’t know what to do. And the rain didn’t help. And why did they have to do it on a day that was pouring rain?

MM: How much notice did they get that this was gonna happen?

LW: They had the things on the fence, the notices on the fence. But, what I’ve learned with these signs... because we helped them. We would always rent U-Haul trucks when the signs came for the comprehensive cleaning. We couldn’t do that this time. There was a notice there and they said they didn’t have to really notice because it was an SECZ Zone. So they didn’t have to. But there were signs. It was just... when you’re down and out and homeless, on drugs, or you got a mental problem, what good is a sign? It was there but what good is it?

MM: So what time of night did they start?

LW: The sirens were a whole day and a half. They started at six in the morning.

MM: So, in the pouring rain people had to decide what went in the two bags.

LW: We tried, with Cecil Bowens, to tell them we could get him to calm down. They wanted no parts of what we were talking about.

MM: What about Cecil now?

LW: Cecil’s in Harbor General UCLA. They wanted us to come pick him up but we can’t take that kind of responsibility for him because we don’t have anywhere for him to go. So I asked Karen Bass to make sure, in an email, that Cecil Bowens be given housing, and Permanent Supportive Housing, which means that everything you need should be on the ground or close to him. I don’t know if I did him a disservice by writing that letter but we haven’t heard from him since. I wrote the letter on Saturday.

MM: So why would it be a disservice?

LW: Because now we haven’t heard from him at all. We were hearing from him every day. But now we haven’t heard from him at all.

MM: So if they took him on a 5150 they can’t keep them there more than 72 hours, right?

LW: That’s the mayor you’re talking about. She could demand that they stay. Especially if it’s to make them look good. You don’t want to see that you arrested him and brutally took him out of here to, in 72 hours, see him again walking around the neighborhood. Because he’s gonna come back.

JW: That story is going to be in the Beachhead when

George Winston – continued from page 4

looked up at me, to say, "You know what to do." I said, "Of course I do!!" And her name, as usual with cats I meet, just popped out of her mouth. The front desk people said she was a stray, and I knew her for 8 years. She didn't have a voice - whenever she occasionally meowed at me, no sound came out. I always say the being I learned the most from never said one word to me.

F10- Do evil people exist or does evil use people as a vehicle?

W- No such thing- just imbalance.

F13- Lewis Hines published photos of child labor in newspapers, printed matter. Upton Sinclair wrote the book *The Jungle*. They both have been credited as the tipping-point to change laws. Can you tell me of any music, theater, art, or film that actually was the tipping point to change laws?

W- The song "A Change is Gonna Come" by Sam Cooke, and the song "Strange Fruit" by "Lewis Allan" (Abel Meeropol) and sung by Billie Holiday.

F14- A screenwriting teacher told me a great film is when you can clearly see the intention of the maker. Stanley Kubrick says the opposite: great art is when you cannot see the intention of the maker. What role does intention play in your creative process?

W- Not too much. I much more just watch a composition unfold, and then the music always tells me what to do.

F15- What first attracted you to pursue music?

W- I grew up living the sound of organs. When I heard *The Doors* first album on 1-5-67.

I was inspired to start playing the organ.

F16- If clothing is an extension of skin, and knife & fork are extensions of teeth, what human sensorium, humanness does the piano extend?

W- Maybe piano playing is like brushing someone.

F17- McLuhan said there is no such thing as a good or bad movie, it's a good or bad viewing experience. Any comment.

W- I think it depends on the viewpoint of the observer, but there are some movies that are so bad that they are good ("The Creeping Terror").

F21- When I asked Michael APTED years ago why rock video makers feel so obliged to edit fast, he told me "because we have learned to take in information faster." Martin Scorsese also said that he edited his films faster because of MTV. Can we indeed learn to take in info faster? Is it literally possible to multi-task?

W- I think so, from my own experience.

F22- "Film as an art form has been swindled by capitalism."

W- Many art forms have.

F24- Marcel Duchamp said there is no art without an audience. What role does the audience play in your creative process (during the making)?

W- Not so much in the making, but totally essential in the performance for me - in fact when alone I never play songs all the way through, and I never just sit and play for myself.

F25- What was the motive of the cave artists?

W- I think they were inspired by what they encountered or thought they encountered.

F26- What is more important - conviction or compromise?

W- Conviction, with a little compromise available to help the project happen - particularly in technical matters.

F27- Is ambition based more on fear or joy?

W- I think depends on the person, but totally joy



for me.

F28- Is loyalty based on reason?

W- Sometimes reason, sometimes gratitude, sometimes fear.

F29- T.S. Eliot said that poetry is outing your inner dialogue. What language is your inner dialogue in?

W- I think English.

F29- What form is your inner consciousness in?

W- In the 12 musical keys.

F30- George Manupelli says "Ignore yourself." Jonas Mekas says there is no self-expression. Cecil Taylor says he is a vehicle and it comes through him. Is art making more self-expression or more vehicles for whatever dominant technology or culture is currently present?

W- Self-expression for me

F30- Can art-making be egoless?

W- I think so.

F31- Is perception reality?

W- Sometimes.

F32- McLuhan probed *Finnegans Wake* by James Joyce: artists dream awake. We all have creative powers we use to dream while sleeping, but artists also use them while awake. Dream awake. Have dreams played a role in your creative process? How?

W- Yes, very much so, the "waking dream," lying down and dreaming on something, a thing I got from Professor Longhair.

F32- Please recall a dream.

W- I slept and dreamed the structure of the song "Muted Dream" (from the "Spring Carousel" album).

F34- Why is it so difficult for humans to consider the possibility that life may be pointless?

W- Too many things to do to think about that.

F36- What is one major element of your music that has changed and what has remained the same since you started making music?

W- The melodic folk piano style is the same. The up-tempo R&B stuff is now all inspired by the New Orleans pianists— especially Professor Longhair, James Booker, and Henry Butler

F37- Moshe Feldenkrais said that it is literally possible to identify a weakness and incorporate it to become a strength. We are normally taught to overcome a weakness. Please tell me a weakness that you have turned into a strength.

W- When I played in bands, I never really heard what anyone else was playing. When I switched from organ to solo piano in 1971, after hearing Fats Waller's recordings, that tendency became a strength when playing alone. So I didn't really change myself, rather I found the format that was totally me and that worked.

F38- The American Indians and Eastern culture respect their elders. Can you explain Western culture's disdain for old age?

W- So unfortunate, but I think because technologies and other things are changing so rapidly that a lot of the old knowledge is (seemingly) less useful (until you need someone to repair an analog recording device).

F39- Why would Joseph Beuys say "Make the secrets productive." Lew Welsh said, "Guard the secrets, constantly reveal them." Thornton Wilder (1928) said, "Art is confession; art is the secret told. . . But art is not only the desire to tell one's secret; it is the desire to tell it and hide it at the same time." What are you really all about? What role do secrets play in your creative process?

W- Just in the occasional song inspired by an infatuation that I don't pursue.

The Odyssey to Marijuana Legislation and the New NORML

By Enyaj Pitchford

I recently met with the legendary marijuana defense attorney Bruce Margolin and his NORML peeps (National Organization for Reform of Marijuana Laws). They meet weekly on Tuesdays at the Baja Cantina in Marina Del Rey at the magic hour of 4:20. It's a great spot, great time (live Mariachi), great people and best vibes!

Bruce came with his close friend and co-worker of NORML since its inception, activist, and local Venetian Linda Lucks. They have been friends since high school in the Valley. In 1973, she bought her house near the ocean on Wavecrest in Venice, where many NORML meetings, as well as BeachHead meetings, which she joined in 1975, were held. The magic happened when Bruce invited her to San Francisco, to attend a NORML event and she jumped on it. She didn't know much about it but she was a pot smoker so that's all she needed to know. The two former party animals became co-coordinators of NORML in 1973. They worked in the media, held informative fundraising parties, networked to spread the word of the great need for reform of the then draconian cannabis laws. They became part of a political cadre of people in California that passed the first decriminalization laws in 1976. They heralded the lobby to Sacramento along with George Moscone, Willie Lee Brown, Henry Waxman and others, which decriminalized cannabis for the first time ever in California. Previously, it was a felony to have any amount on you. You could get up to 10 years in the state penitentiary! After years of working together, Lisa Lucks was tapped to be the only woman at the time on the National board of NORML. Lisa reminisced about a time in Venice, in 1970, when Jack Herrer, author of *The Emperor Wears No Clothes*, set up his tables on the Ocean Front Walk, promoting hemp and its historical value in this country's history, and medical marijuana. "He'd hang at my house while his colleagues continued his work at his table. A truly wonderful time!" Linda exclaimed.

In Dec 22 2022 California NORML held an event celebrating their 1972 campaign called Prop 19. "That was the ideal campaign which is what we should have right now!" Says Bruce. "That is to legalize the use of marijuana for anyone over the age of 18; including the right of possession, cultivation and sales without any legal consequences." Bruce goes on to explain that "We collected signatures; hippies went out into the streets to get them, and we got it on the ballot! In 1972, it was a tough time for pot smokers. And despite how conservative the laws on the books were, we managed to get one third of the voters in their favor of prop 19". With such an instant success, Bruce believed that legalization was a short battle ahead. He believed that within five years they'd have it done, no problem! Little did he realize the compromised victory would take nearly four more decades, as conservative forces or should we say "farces" created their 'war on drugs' money making tactics for their own martini swinging contingent. Furthermore, the cost of getting propositions on the ballot went up considerably. Hippie crews working 'for the cause' were rapidly declining in these changing times, and you needed to pay people to get this done.

Undaunted by obstacles, and committed to their cause, Linda and Bruce went to Washington DC to see what they could do on a



DOWN FOR THE CAUSE

BRUCE MARGOLIN, THE "DEAN OF CANNABIS LAW,"

TRAILBLAZER ON THE PATH OF MARIJUANA LEGALIZATION,

TIMOTHY LEARY'S DEFENSE ATTORNEY, AND YOGI OF THE HEART

BRUCE M. MARGOLIN

WITH PARVATI MARKUS

FOREWORD BY MADISON MARGOLIN

national level. That is until the Moscone bill passed. George Moscone was the mayor of San Francisco, who was brutally murdered along with Harvey Milk. His bill reduced marijuana charges to a misdemeanor. It now had a six month maximum jail time, instead of ten years. Quite an accomplishment for social justice! And less than an ounce of cannabis was now just a fine. Linda pointed out that the cops' response then was "going for blood. They didn't relinquish their power easily". She said that "all they were going after then were hippies and people of color." They, being professionals, white and homeowners, were not targeted.

But don't think, with the legalization of Cannabis for recreational use that the work of NORML is over! There is a lot of work yet to be done to improve the law to reinstate the original demands of prop 19, to expunge records and free people of past cannabis based convictions and to halt workplace discrimination against marijuana users. NORML's website (<https://NORML.org>), offers a great source for current and evolving marijuana laws. Currently they state that Democratic Gov. Gavin Newsom has signed a number of marijuana-related bills into law, including legislation protecting employees from workplace discrimination. Specifically, it makes "it unlawful for an employer to discriminate against a person in hiring, termination, or any term or condition of employment, or otherwise penalize a person, if the discrimination is based upon the person's use of cannabis off the job and away from the workplace" as determined by a positive drug screen for the presence of the carboxy THC metabo-

lite. (Carboxy THC is an inactive byproduct of THC that may be present in a urine sample for as many as 100 days post-abstinence). As per the United States Department of Justice, the detection of this metabolite "only indicates that a particular substance is present in the test subject's body tissue. It does not indicate abuse or addiction; recency, frequency, or amount of use; or impairment." The law, which does not go into effect until January 1, 2024, is similar to those already enacted in several other adult-use states, including Connecticut, Montana, New Jersey, New York, and Rhode Island. "Urine tests are a highly offensive invasion of workers' personal bodily privacy," said Dale Gieringer, the Director of California NORML — which had lobbied for several years in favor of the bill. "They are too frequently abused to discriminate against unpopular workers and minorities. Workers should have the same right to use cannabis as to use other legal substances off the job."

NORML's Deputy Director Paul Armen-tano added: "Urine screening for off-the-job cannabis consumption has never been an evidence-based policy. Rather, this discriminatory practice is a holdover from the zeitgeist of the 1980s 'war on drugs. It is time for workplace policies to adapt to this new reality and to cease punishing employees for activities they engage in during their off-hours that pose no workplace safety threat." Governor Newsom also signed several additional bills into law reforming marijuana policies, strengthening parental rights — and Assembly Bill 1954 — which prohibits

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F40- Fill in the blank: Anger be a productive emotion when

W- For me, as a last resort, when nothing else is working.

F42- Is human progress cyclical or cumulative?

W- I think a bit of both.

F43- What the most significant difference between women and men, physical aside? Why do women live longer than men?

W- Women are more like the earth (yin) than men are, growing things, nurturing things. I think they live longer than men because generally having less extreme impulses and behavior (yang), less exposure to fighting and chemicals.

F45- How do you find peace of mind?

W- Go to sleep

F46- If you were walking down the street today and you met yourself as a 12-year-old, what would you say to your 12-year-old self?

W- You don't know what you want to do, but don't worry, that will totally come.

F48- If a publisher was to release your autobiography, off the top of your head, what would the title be?

W- "Just Play the %x# Song

F48- They want to scent the glue in the binding. What smell would it be?

W- Honeysuckle.

F49- If a statue was built in your honor, where would it be displayed and what would it be made of?

W- In the worst way I wouldn't want that.

F50- Please tell me something good you never had and you never want.

W- Some kind of big deal car.

F52- What is the healthiest cultural shift you see developing today?

W- There are some incredible scientific minds in the young ones, and incredible compassion.

F53- What gives you the most optimism?

W- Younger folks in science and service.

F54- What is the most overrated idea?

W- Fa-fashions.

F55- What is the most dominant invention of all time,

W- The printing press

F55- Please answer the 4 questions of McLuhan's Tetrad for the most dominant invention in your lifetime,

W- The personal computer:

F- What does it enhance or intensify?

W- Organizing data.

F- What does it render obsolete or replace?

W- Carbon paper.

F- What does it retrieve that was previously obsolesced?

W- Extra copies.

F- What does it become when pressed to an extreme, what does it flip into?

W- Linked directly with the body.

F56- Any rituals or routines in your creative process?

W- No, I just do what is needed to do.

F57- What is the function of music?

W- For both: personal expression of the artist, and for the receiver to be changed or nourished.

F58- What questions remain unresolved for you?

W- Where is life elsewhere.

F59- What is it about your art that audiences resonate with?

W- Not totally sure, as each listener is totally unique, but when I play things from the recordings that they have listened to over the years, they naturally relate more to those pieces.

F60- Larry Jordan: "Human beings conduct their lives from much stronger sources than the rational mind." Name other sources?

W- The subconscious mind.

F60- How do you navigate and understand their relationships.

W- I try to remember to listen to the subconscious

F60- What about the spaces between the sources?

W- Got to be patient.

F61- Put in order what the most important "W" words are for you: who, what, when, where or why.

W- Why, What, Who, When and Where

F62- Summarize your life in three words, all starting with the same letter.

W- Lucky living listener.

F63- Are we hardwired for storytelling?

W- Yes.



F66- What artist would you want to do your portrait?

W- Costanza Knight

F67- If you were a chair, who would you want to sit on you?

W- Fats Waller

W68- Five Alan Watts questions:

Who started it all?

W- J. S. Bach maybe

Are we going to make it?

W- Yes

Where do we put it?

W- Right where it already is.

Who's cleaning it up?

W- Many of us and those to come

Is it serious?

W- Yes.

F69- Are we making it happen or watching it happen?

W- Making it happen.

F70- "I am trying to get more control over my spontaneity." Any comments.

W- Don't try too hard, but keep on working and be on the lookout.

F71- What moment (memory) in your life were you absolutely totally loved?

W- I have always loved cats more than anything, since the day I was born (if I had it to do all over

again, I would be a cat vet). I go into an ecstatic state whenever I see a cat, or a picture of a cat, and whenever I even think of a cat. I love the whole feline species, and all the big cats - and this spins off to realizing that all living beings are cats in another form, and then for the love of all life - and then that expands to realizing that every living being is struggling all the time with two things: defying gravity and death/entropy (we all have two battles at all times, so why are we fighting each other?).

F72- Introducing Andrei Tarkovsky to an audience at the 1983 Telluride Film Festival, Stan Brakhage declared: "I personally think that the three greatest tasks for film in the 20th century are 1) To make the epic, that is, to tell the tales of the tribes of the world. 2) To keep it personal, because only in the eccentricities of our personal lives do we have any chance at the truth. 3) To do the dream work, that is to illuminate the borders of the unconscious." Any comments. What are your 21st and 22nd century's updates?

W- These are great, no additions from me.

F73- What qualities must an artist bring to their work regardless of the era, medium or technology?

W- Coming to realize what they really want to do,"

F74- What is that thing in art (and what causes it) that makes it transcendent and flips consciousness? Why is it often elusive?

W- I think a lot of it is from the subconscious of the artist to the subconscious of the observer, so a lot is not visible / perceiving by ordinary means.

F75- What guides your decision making? Allen Ginsberg says first thought, best thought. Jonah Lehrer (How We Decide) says fast-blink decisions are not always useful. Malcolm Gladwell (Blink) recommends gut-decision making.

W- All 3 for me.

F77- Will there ever be silence?

W- Close, but not total.

F78- What is going to be after the Internet?

W- Hooked up to the body

F79- "A person's identity is a socially induced hallucination. There's no such thing as a person. There's only a bundle of consciousness that's constantly in flux." - Deepak Chopra. Any comments.

W- There is some consistency, and individuality, depending on the person.

F80- If you were an experimental film, what would your subject matter be?

W- The 24 keys and the colors I associate with them.

F81- Are the laws of nature cruel?

W- Depends on your viewpoint.

F82- If you were the ruler of the world, what would you do on your first day?

W- End conscription everywhere.

F83- Are we hardwired for competition?

W- Yes.

F84- On what occasion do you lie?

W- When someone asks how am I doing.

F85- "It's not what you are that counts, it's what you think you are." Any comments.

W- I think both count.

F87- Thelonious Monk said there are no wrong notes. Agree or disagree. Any comments.

W- Depends on what the player does after the mistake. Also depends on the viewpoints of the player and listeners.

F88- Miles Davis spoke of the space between the notes. Any comments.

W- Very important for me, but in a very different way from him. In certain parts of songs, especial-

George Winston – continued from page 8

ly the endings. I want to hear the piano resonate (which is my favorite of all sounds).”

F89- "The key is to bring the audience up onto the stage and into the scene with you. It is they who must give you even more than you give them in way of imagination and creative power." - Ruth Draper. How do you accomplish this?

W-Try for the right sequence of songs.

F89- Consider - Augusto Boal & Paulo Freire (The Theater of the Oppressed), who use theater as a means of promoting social and political change. The audience becomes active ("spect-actors") and explore, show, analyze and transform the reality in which they are living. Judith Malina & Julian Beck promoted: "We believe in the theater as a place of intense experience, half-dream, half-ritual, in which the spectator approaches something of a vision of self-understanding, going past conscious to unconscious, to an understanding of the nature of all things." Nadia Boulanger told Quincy Jones "Your music can never be more or less than you are as a human being." Any comments?

W- Can be more.

F90A= Copland's 4 elements or ingredients of music: melody, harmony, rhythm, tone color. What is tone color?

W- The way notes are struck.

F= Dave Liebman's tenets: (to balance) hand, head, heart.

W- Good

F= "Song is slowed-down speech. The reason cultures have different musical tastes is ultimately connected to language difference." - McLuhan

W- Very probably so.

F97- Does life require a meaning beyond itself?

W- No.

F98 - If we did not have nationality, how would it affect you?

W- Not at all.

F99- Regarding life expectancy, the age of death has climbed a great deal in the last 60 years. What role did meds play?

W- Definitely some.

F100 - Can we think without language?

W- Yes.

F104- How do you rate these three elements in your creative process: ambition, luck, talent?

W- Luck, then talent, then ambition (I have none if that)

F106- How do you deal with failure?

W- Try again — maybe give it a break too,

F107- Are you more afraid of new ideas or old ideas?

W- Whatever works.

PROBLEMA (2010 film by Ralf Schmerberg) questions-

P- Should we have the right to choose where we live?

W- Yes, but might have to be patient with that.

P- What are the basic dignities that each human being deserves and why do we let so many people go without them?

W- Food & water, shelter, clothes, shoes - some of it is scarcity, some of it is greed, and a lot of it is that it takes time to get resources to those in need and there are only so many hours in a day.

P- What if all Chinese people want a car?

W- They have to be allowed, if I am allowed to.

P- How does consumer culture actually influence the personalities, the ways people live, the way they think within a given culture?

W- Definitely significant.

P- How does it become part of us and what does it mean to be able to resist that visual and verbal culture that seems to me is always reducing and simplifying reality into something that can be easily bought and sold?

W- Maybe being a bit skeptical in what is “popular.”

P- Does our wealth depend on the Third World being poor?

W- It probably does to some degree, but, of course shouldn't.

P- Is there a modern version of colonialism?

W- Yes. The whole money lending thing and trying to get leaders elected who will favor the companies.

P- Why do we still believe more in nationality than in humanity?

W- Beats me.

P- How do we stop our governments from going to war?

W- Simplest of all solutions: Don't go. No matter what, don't go and make one's own alternative plans. Once you have really made up your mind you're not going, you're almost there - the rest is just logistics.

P- Why is there no peace in the Middle East yet?

W- Any time a nation discovers oil reserves, it increases the tension - but also the heat and dryness - and being away from the water, a DRASTIC lack of negative ions (remember being in those libraries with tons of fluorescent lights, and air tight closed windows).

P- Why is an Iranian nuclear bomb supposed to be more dangerous than an American, Israeli or French?

W- For whatever reasons, fair or not, the less of those things the better.

P- Between non-violent resistance and armed struggle where do we go? What is effective? What is the right thing to do? Do we need a biodiversity of resistance?

W- I think it should be based on non-violent resistance.

P- What does courage mean now?

W- Keep going with what you know should be done

P- What can I do, and tell others to do, to stop global warming?

W- Enhance things that tell people that they are part of nature.

P- Can a person be perceptive enough to see our planet in a way that tells them that they too are part of nature?

W- Yes, and art can do that — a photograph, a painting, etc.

P- What are the myths that we need to create to change the world for the better?

W- How about deleting myths.

I welcome your reactions. Thanks, Gerry pfsuzy@aol.com 310-306-7330

Do not miss APRIL 2 - VENICE BEATS at The Venice West - <https://www.facebook.com/events/842381870350476/>

Celebrate the history and future on Venice Music, Art, Poetry - BE HEAR NOW!!! and HOW!!!

Lots of new interviews by Gerry on Rob Grant's channel "I'm Probably Wrong About Everything"

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCqkMpR_ywBZQp1IbDI-0WDw/videos

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Third and Rose – continued from page 5

that happens. I want to make it known that this was just a photo op for these politicians.

LW: That's all it was. And the fact that none of us were invited to the Rose [Cafe]. Just the homeowners. None of us were invited. Cecil is one I've known since he was born. His mom was Ivonne Haines. She died at an early age for them. He wasn't given the grief counseling help that he needed. He spent all of his teen life and all of his adult life like this. I'm praying he could get the help he needs. Georgina, I hope she can get the help she needs because she has mental issues too. That wasn't thought about. That's all I can say.

MM: What's your vision for how we uplift Black History in this community and maintain it in the face of all of this?

LW: I think it's very important we uplift Black History because people need to see that this community, as well as with the Japanese, Latino, the White, we kept this community together. So history has to be taught that it can be done. This church is a very good presentation of what can be done when everyone comes together to fight for what is right. We have to tell our history. You have to know your history to understand your future.

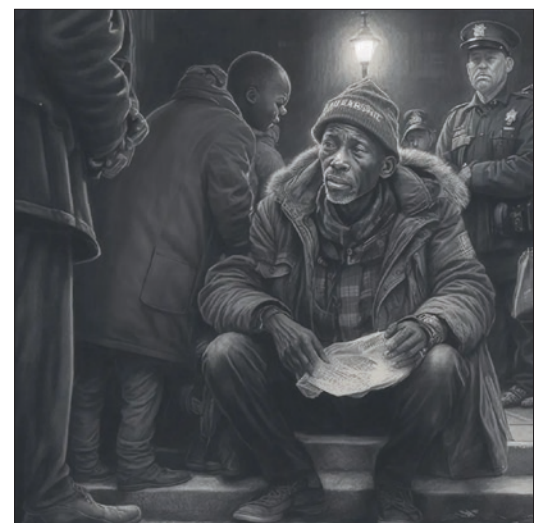
I'm just hoping that we keep putting it out there. We keep saying that the history of Venice is very important for the survival of Venice. This cannot be Silicon Beach. This cannot be whatever else they're trying to call it. This is Venice Beach: Open, loving to everyone.

MM: I think that's a message that should be exported to other communities instead of changed by the incomers.

LW: Oh yeah. And I think what needs to also be said is that there was money here in Venice. Doctors lived here, lawyers lived here. Because back then you couldn't live anywhere else. So we do know about people who have money. But don't come with your bourgeois attitude that "I'm too good to be around this." You said you wanted to be Bohemian, let's be Bohemian. Don't come in and buy and throw up your fences because you want to be here because you think your money is going to make a difference. It's killed us. Their money has killed us. And I'm gonna do a film about the new Venice Penitentiary with all the fences. Cause that's what it looks like. We never had these fences. Never. So people can't sit and walk or stand. It's crazy with the fences. All along Rose, Flower, and now in back of Whole Foods. And the library looks like the Venice Penitentiary. That's where the warden should stay, over there at the library with all that fencing around the library. I won't even take my children back over there. It's too ugly. We now go to Santa Monica. That's hideous over there all around the Venice Library. I don't take my grandkids.

MM: But that's all they do. Dudley Pagoda? If they can't handle it they prefer no use over what they consider the wrong use.

LW: And how long have the pagodas been there? "Oh, I can't walk by. My baby. I'm so afraid." What are you afraid of? They were not bothering you. What are you afraid of? But go on these new Next Doors and everybody's scared. Scared of what? You come in. You change what's been known to work here and it's very hurtful. Our Oakwood Park, all day long. Only Park we have in this 1.1 mile radius and it's being taken over by dogs and nobody wants to do anything. They have a dog park. They took our Green Hill. They made that a dog park. You got Alla Park over there. That's a dog park. "Oh no. I want this park." So they're allowed to come here. We never had dogs in Oakwood. Never.



Sunless Sea Open Mic: Poetry & Spoken Word

by S. A. Gerber-

After a long hiatus, poetry has returned to the Unurban in a big way. Despite the name, (Taken from the poetry of Samuel Taylor Coleridge), there is much illumination cast by the wordsmiths whom gather to share their work in a supportive environment.

The core or regulars of the group can include: an opening incantation of Coleridge's "Kubla Kahn", by host, DeForeest Wright, which invokes the name of the gathering...

the socially conscience, well-worded semi-autobiographical poetic accounts of Ron Dowell growing up living, and working in South-Central L.A.

The sweet renderings of lost youth, friends and love by Elaina Whitesell,

Joey Petraca, generally doing fine justice to the work of poets he admires,

Odinn Nightraven invoking a world of Norse and Viking mythology, with appropriate dialogue and soliloquy,

the honest, relatable, wistful, and nostalgic poetry of Mark Sharlow...

and former host of "The Velvet Guerilla Café" poetry reading here at the Unurban for over a decade, Michael Louis, always favoring the crowd with whimsical as well as semi-rants against prejudice and injustice, always on the side of the angels...

and of course, host DeForeest Wright with his wonderfully dark visions offered in richly, cultivated language. Other poets have also graced the stage from time to time, and a "Zoom" system has just been installed to encourage those outside the area to participate.

I have heard nothing on the order of "slam poetry", which is sometimes the norm at venues around town, uttered on this stage. (Although I'm certain it would be welcome). Just a lot of latter-day scribes attempting to hit the mark of what we all conceive of as "Poetry" in the "classic" sense. (Musicians are welcome to perform also, I might add).

The rules, rendered by host and poet, DeForeest Wright, are more advisory than they are cautionary:

No Hate Speech!

Do not alienate the proprietor or the audience.

(Just a simple matter of "knowing your audience" and self-governing by way of common sense and discretion).

Aside from that...all else is permissible.

As always, owner Pam Stallings is present to serve up delightful food and drink and has her gentle as a lamb, "pit" Ruby in attendance.

Always dog-friendly, she used to serve my "Raven-Agrippina" water when I brought her to "Velvet Guerilla", and always made her feel welcome.

(In fact, Ms. Raven was more popular than I was at the readings!).

The Sunless Sea Open Mic: Poetry and Spoken Word is presented every Tuesday evening promptly at seven-thirty (7:30) at the Unurban Coffee House...3301 Pico Blvd. in the...

"People's Republic Of") Santa Monica, Ca. corner of Pico & Urban.

Bring you work inside...and leave your ego outside. Enjoy!

11-02-22

Hold On To Your Dreams

Hold on, Hold on, hold onto your dreams,
 These are different times, different days.
 It is important to stay with your dreams, be strong,
 have the courage to make your dream a reality.
 Hold on to the beat, hold onto your dreams.
 Become the beat, become your dreams.
 Hold on, hold on, hold onto your dreams
 We need to find the courage to encourage each other
 to hold onto our dreams, live our dreams,
 become our dreams, Keep your dreams alive.
 Hold on to the beat, hold onto your dreams.
 Become the beat, become your dreams.
 Hold on, Hold on, hold onto your dreams.
 It is important to stay with your dreams, be strong,
 have the courage to make your dream a reality.
 hold on, hold on, hold onto your dreams,
 even in these different times, different days.
 Hold on to your dreams, hold onto your dreams,
 hold onto your dreams of a better future

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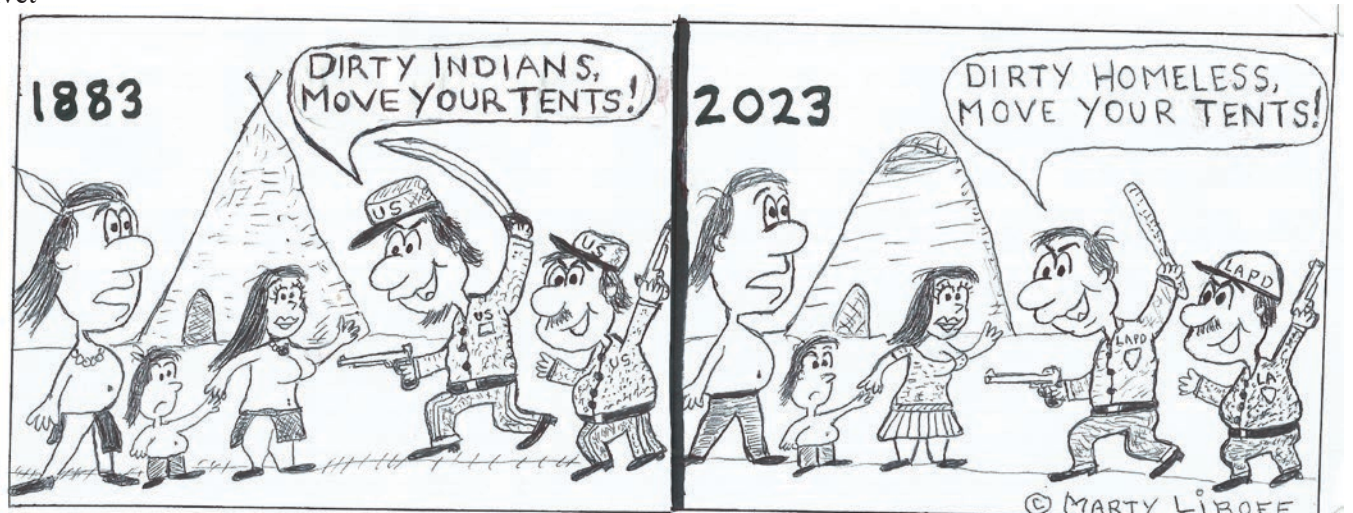
GO WITH THE FLOW marty liboff

Go with the flow
 and go, go, go...
 Do what ya know
 but don't be afraid to do mo.
 Life's a Lesson
 moments in succession.
 Each moment is NOW
 according to the Tao.
 Our Time is a blessing
 for how long we're guessing.
 Each of us are a Light
 so shine it bright.
 Do your own thing
 dance, paint, write and sing.
 Play your part
 Life is Art.
 Do it great
 end your violence, fear and hate.
 Anger, jealousy, greed are your enemy
 just be Me and BE.
 We're holding on and on and on
 even though we'll soon be gone.
 Every day we change
 isn't it strange?
 So go with the flow
 and go, go, go...

START RUNNING!

-MOISHE KIBBITZ-

Conservatives of our nation
 are stuck in mental constipation.
 With guns shoved up their butts
 gun lovers in violent ruts.
 Their idea of utopia
 Whites only and homophobia.
 They believe anything liberals say is a lie
 the want them to all die.
 They don't want handouts to the poor & hungry
 giving away welfare makes them angry.
 They believe science is bullshit
 on COVID & global warming they spit.
 Polluting & poisoning our world is a right
 raping our planet is alright.
 If we hadn't proved the world wasn't flat
 they'd still believe that!
 To them Black history is worthless
 Asians & Latinos make America a mess.
 Muslims & Jews they say are the enemy
 Hindus & Buddhists should be hung from a tree.
 They claim Jesus was a White Aryan male
 the real hairy, hippie, Jew Jesus they'd throw in jail.
 They love nationalism & sexism
 & hate communism & socialism.
 To Black & woman's rights
 they put up fights.
 They say abortion is killing
 but capital punishment is fun & thrilling.
 Immigrants they'd like to sent to Mars
 or behind bars.
 Homeless they'd round up off the street
 lock them in work camps and beat them to meat.
 They hate this & that
 and every liberal is a dirty rat.
 Our country is split & goin mad
 revolution and civil war will be bad.
 America hasn't been so divided since 1860
 could this be the end of our country?
 We need to love every race, religion & ethnicity
 or America's end will be a pity.
 A bloody civil war is coming
 better start running!
 We need to find respect & love soon
 or we'll have to make a new home on the moon!



CALENDAR beyondbaroque.org

L.A. Book Launch: A Tinderbox in Three Acts by Cynthia Dewi Oka

Friday, February 10, 8:00 PM PDT

In person at Beyond Baroque

In her fourth poetry collection, Cynthia Dewi Oka performs a lyric accounting of the anti-Communist genocide of 1965, which, led by the Indonesian military and with American assistance, erased and devastated millions of lives in Indonesia. Under the New Order dictatorship that ruled by terror for over three decades in the aftermath, perpetrators of the killings were celebrated as national heroes while survivors were systemically silenced. The author will be joined by poets Arthur Kayzakian, Vanessa Angélica Villareal, & Kien Lam.

Linda Ravenswood Presents: Cantadora - Letters From California

Saturday, February 11, 7:00 PM PDT

In person at Beyond Baroque

Celebrate the publication of Cantadora - Letters from California (The Black Spring Press Group) with an evening of readings from authors based in Southern California. Linda Ravenswood will be joined by Jennifer Lewis, Caribbean Fragoza, Matt Sedillo, & L.A. Poet Laureate Lynne Thompson.

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Alfred Johnson's birthday bash

Tuesday, February 28, 2023 8:00pm-9:00pm

Unurban Cafe

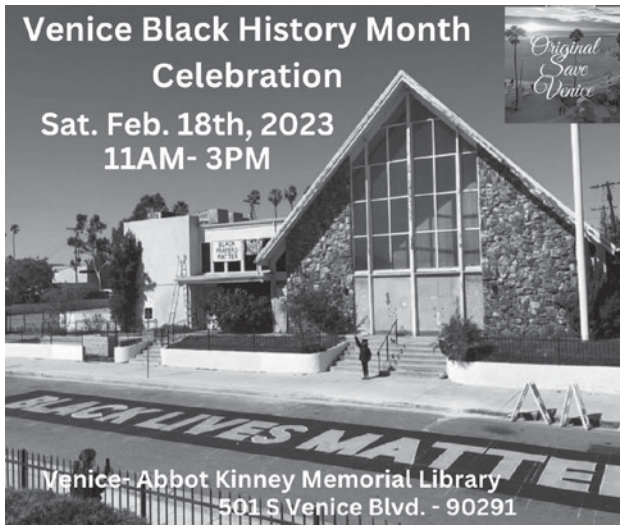
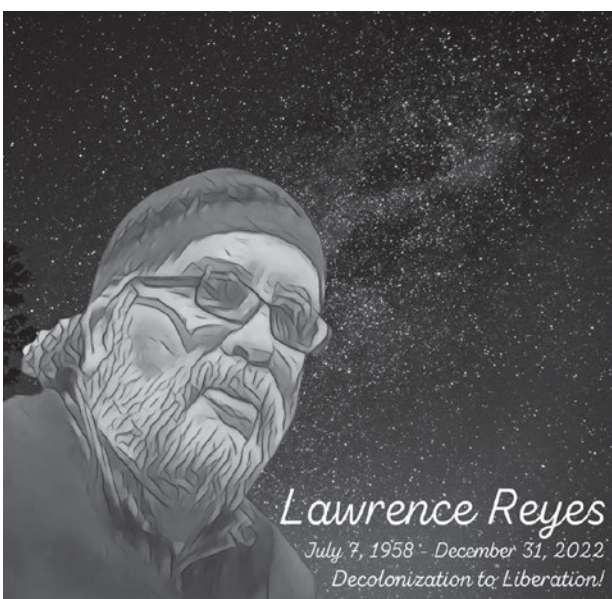
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The Sunless Sea Open Mic: Poetry and Spoken Word Show every Tuesday at 7:30pm

Friday: 7pm Open Mic Music Santa Monica, sign up email via unurban@mail.com,

subject:Open Mic Music to reserve space

Sundays 2pm-5pm Brad Kay performs on piano and with several chanteuses, a lovely time.



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***You Matter-** Michael's picnic with friends. Tue. & Thur. around 11 am. North border of Venice on the Ocean Front Walk near Ozone Ave. Also Sat. around 8 am near Dudley Ave. Hot dogs, burgers, snacks, fruit. .

***Oasis Network Inc.** with Dan & friends- various groceries, bread, fruit, vegetables. Sat. & Sun. around 9am. Ocean Front Walk by Dudley Ave.

***Venice Equity Alliance-** Bread, fruit, & vegetables. Wed. 12:45pm. 132 Brooks Ave.

***St. Joseph Center-** their clients, to-go-meals. Mon. 10-11:50, Tues. & Thurs. 12-2:50. 204 Hampton Dr.. Also weekly food if you register at (310)396-6468 ext.313

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physicians and surgeons from automatically denying either treatments or medications to patients solely because they consume medical cannabis or because they have tested a positive for THC on a drug screen.

The Governor also signed a measure which facilitates existing efforts to review and expunge the records of those Californians with certain cannabis-related convictions on their records. Under existing law, nearly 200,000 Californians have had their marijuana-related records expunged. Passage of the new law is anticipated to provide relief to an estimated 34,000 additional Californians. The Governor also ended local bans on medicinal cannabis delivery, thereby expanding patients' access to legal, regulated cannabis products. (Currently, more than half of the state's cities and counties prohibit the operation of licensed cannabis businesses.) The bill takes effect on January 1, 2024.

Finally, Gov. Newsom created a process for California to enter into agreements with other states to allow cannabis transactions with entities outside California. The Governor had previously signed budget legislation reducing various marijuana-specific taxes. "These important legislative victories are a testament to years of hard work and lobbying efforts by California **NORML** and others," **NORML**'s State Policies Director Jax James said. "These common sense reforms provide further and sorely needed protections and relief for patients and millions of others in California who choose to consume cannabis responsibly.

And now, let's take a look at who Bruce Margolin is and what place he represents in the history of cannabis legalization. Bruce began his law practice in LA in 1967. It was the height of the active busts against cannabis users. That was the biggest amount of arrests prior and after that year. It was a terrible misuse of power. As Bruce tells it, "all these young kids were coming from across the nation to find themselves and join in the friendly hippie atmosphere and the good times of California and the great bands; and the cops used this law where if they could smell weed they could search you and you could be put in prison, doing up to ten years, if they didn't get probation. If they got probation they would still see a year in the pen. It was a tough time and shocking to me as a young lawyer. I went to court for one case in the beginning of my career. I represented six kids busted at a hippie house in Hollywood. One of the kids had weed in his draw in his bedroom. I argued with the judge that this constitutes a crime without any intent to hurt anybody. And my understanding of the law that I learned in law school was (and I just graduated that past year), that the American Bar association says that the purpose of punishment is to correct the intended wrong. But clearly, in this case, there is no intended wrong! I suggested that why don't we resolve this case, your Honor, which is not worth the expense of the judicial time and police time, over something so ridiculous! How can you justify punishing this young man and putting him in jail?" Well, as Bruce found out, as the judge paused and looked around for a while, he abruptly said "Well, young man, you broke the law!" Bruce thought, "Oh my God! This is so fucked up!" He knew right there and then he had to do something about this. He knew that he wasn't going to get that far inside the courtroom, until he got traction outside of the courtroom, somehow. That's

when he realized that politics was the way to do it. And on his way to the office in the parking lot, he was thinking about organizations that have acronyms." I thought about the NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People). That's how I came up with the acronym CAMP: The Campaign to Abolish Marijuana Prohibition." He took that down to the Free Press and they interviewed him and put in the article about him and his career took off

Bruce's career skyrocketed! The Free Press put him on the front page of their paper, and he wound up representing thousands of people. He represented more people on marijuana charges than any other lawyer in the country. Bruce declared that "by the time I was in practice for four years, he had five lawyers working for me and 10 employees. A BIG practice! "And his business card had his customary peace sign on it.

Bruce continued his amazing tale. "So I ran for public office the following year. I ran against a 26 year incumbent Republican in 1970, for the district that runs from the Valley to parts of Hollywood. I won the primary and still ran my practice while I had a crew put up signs for me. I ran on the platform for the legalization of marijuana and I lost to this guy by less than 5%! But at that point, I needed to reevaluate myself and my career and took a sabbatical." Bruce went to Greece, Israel, Africa and then to India, where Baba Ram Dass introduced him to his guru, the legendary Neem Karoli Baba, Maharaji. Maharaji said to him "You have a boon to help others, and serve others; you should use it." So he came back to the states and went back to his practice and continued his work for **NORML**. "In 1973 " he explains "I was asked to give up CAMP and join the National Organization of Reform of Marijuana Laws (**NORML**) and that's when I started working with Linda (Lucks) and we became coordinators."

Bruce stuck with his anti-prohibition of Cannabis platform for all these years, using politics to bring attention to the urgency of the matter.. He ran for Congress, he ran for Governor, and most importantly, the state of California gave him the ballot designation of Marijuana Legalization Attorney. And that right there showed that this was a legitimate cause. And in one of the campaigns, he ran during a recall election with 132 candidates, Bruce came in 11th! Just because of the title the campaign granted him, and his identification with the marijuana law reform. After that, he got momentum to run for US Congress, elevating the Marijuana legalization platform. It became a form of national advertising for the cause!

All these years, Bruce has worked on defending cases. He writes a publication called The Guide to Marijuana Laws which is available on his website at 420laws.com. It clarifies the new cannabis business licensing laws. Bruce says that "It's important to know the laws. I wrote this because I found out people were getting busted because they didn't know the law. So this book is important for people to know how to keep out of trouble and for lawyers to know the procedural laws as well."

Bruce has just finished his memoirs and has titled it "Down for the Cause." The day of our interview he received an amazing review from George Gascon, the district attorney of Los Angeles County. He wrote "Down for the Cause is a fascinating account of the legal history of cannabis in the United States. From criminalization to legalization, Bruce invites the

reader to travel in time to understand better how a plant, in thousands of years of use for medicinal, religious and recreational purposes, goes from being one of America's most demonized drugs to one that is widely used and increasingly legalized for medicinal and recreational purposes around the country. Through this personal journey growing up in Los Angeles, becoming a successful criminal defense lawyer, a husband, a father, and a grandfather, Bruce connects the reader to the cannabis world, exposing the policy failures of the war on drugs. In search of his own place in the Universe, Bruce's spirituality, love for his family, and compassion for others, inspires and educates the reader in ways most policy driven books on the subject cannot. A great read for anyone interested in seeking to avoid past policy failures, of America's war on itself. Bruce always says that he's not promoting marijuana, he's promoting a choice.

The Federal government gave him a 'service mark': "no one belongs in jail for marijuana." That service mark hangs in his office. Bruce still practices law. He's still active in **NORML**, which is where we met for this interview. He's done with traveling to board meetings, so they made him Director Emeritus, which means he's got a lifelong appointment on the board. And it's been a big part of his life. Bruce is very proud of the work he's accomplished. He worked hard, and yet humbly admits, in part he lucked out; right place, right time. "I did my part but it wasn't bigger than a lot of other people have done, whose names are not recorded in history." He continues, "But for me it was a great opportunity because I was able to do something of value. It came to me at the right place, at the right time." He had a purpose and succeeded in it. Amazing! "Putting people in prison and jail for simply smoking marijuana was just so barbaric, draconian and unjust. It was just sickening."

Thank you Bruce for your hard work and perseverance, from all of us enjoying the fruits of your decades of labor; for acting to correct the wrong presented to you and not giving up! In the simplest of terms, Bruce is a modern day hero!

NORML continues to represent the rights of the consumer. "We're not in the game to be in business, we're not in the game for money making, but for ours and others personal freedom of choice; and we've done a lot over these many years, by being reliable and presenting to the public an articulate, responsible voice," Bruce clearly declares, and with great pride at that. Thank you Bruce for all your hard work! Look for my review of his book in an upcoming issue!



Bruce Margolin and Linda Lucks