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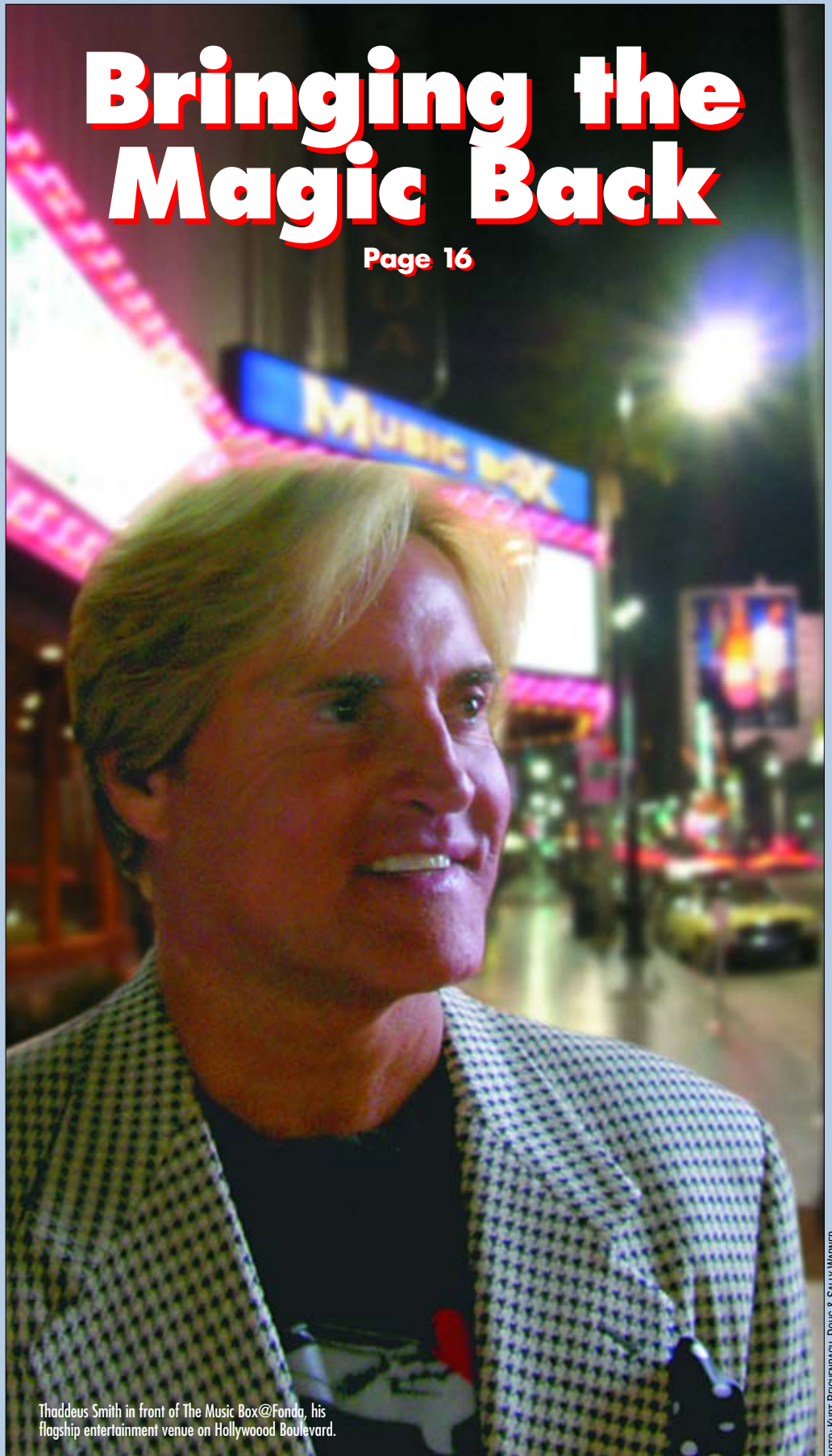
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Thaddeus Smith in front of The Music Box@Fonda, his
flagship entertainment venue on Hollywood Boulevard.

The Editor's Voice

Growth

Dear Readers,

We're back from our first ever hiatus. This past few months was a time of renewal for this publication and as a result, we are pleased to introduce several additional new members of our BV team: Writer, editor, and neighborhood Republican, Alan Donovan (see page 5); new neighbor, young and hip professional writer, Humberto Guida (see page 30); young novelist and video game designer, Kevin Kastle starts a new column on video games (see page 29); writer, neighbor and local business owner (*Padma Bodyworks*), Nikki Zada has joined our editing,

proofreading team; courtesy of the *New Statesman*, we share with you the work of John Pilgar (see page 22) (thanks to Prudence Baird for working that out). Speaking of Prudence, she is a mother, neighbor, and writer (see pages 10 & 13) and deserves some special recognition for being the inspiration to continue and expand the Beachwood Voice. The simple statement, "Fran, I'm ready to help..." changed the way this publication has developed and is presented to you today.

Coming from an extensive professional public relations background, Prudence has

gifted us with her experience, wisdom, and inspiration. Her energy has injected a sense of unlimited possibility, humor, and endless joy into the crafting of the Beachwood Voice.

You may be reading this paper for the first time. This "new" quarterly newspaper is actually jumping into its 9th year in 2006. We are now reaching into many new neighborhoods east, west, and south of Beachwood Canyon because we realize that our "neighborhood" is Hollywood itself.

You will be reading about how you can effect change locally and nationally—from your



front room. We hope you will enjoy reading this new edition of the Beachwood Voice and that you will write to us when you are pleased, inspired, irritated, empowered, rejuvenated, or moved.

While we are excited with our new growth, we do have a short wish list and would like to expand our team to include a web designer, a financial wizard, ad layout artists, and political writers (local city politics). There will always be room for more energetic input. Our tent just got a whole lot bigger!

—Fran Reichenbach

Renewal

The Beachwood Voice
(As a matter of choice)
Decided to take a Hiatus

(As a matter of fact)
I am glad that it's back,
Because after its rest,
I can attest,
'Twill be better than it was —
Even at its best.

—Harry Bartron



October 1, 1996, Harry Bartron was inducted into The International Poetry Hall of Fame. His photo, bio, and poetry exhibit can be seen on the World Wide Web at the following address: <http://www.poets.com/harrybartron.html> More of his poetry can be seen by visiting the following address: www.poetry.com and entering "Harry Bartron" on the "Search for an ILP Poet" box.

Christmas Squirrel



Photo: Pauyla Dralke

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About Beachwood Voice

Beachwood Voice is a quarterly publication in its 8th year. We are dedicated to bringing vital information to the Beachwood Canyon community, our hillside neighbors and Hollywood businesses.

We invite your comments:

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Our Side of Town

Vermont Avenue Comes of Age

By Rona Edwards

Vermont Av
1700 N



minimal amount by the city (75 cents)—my New Yorker friends love the *pepperoni pizza* here and I'm kind of partial to the *lasagna*. Split the small *antipasto salad*. Palermo's is always hopping and is a mainstay in the area.

Not in the mood for Italian, how about **Café Figaro**? Beautifully decorated in real Paris bistro fashion, its interior is sometimes used in films to substitute for the

perform 6 nights a week in this hipster bar where the signature drink, *Blood and Sand* is even more popular than Dresden's delectable martinis.

Across the street, you'll find another, more nouveau, Italian restaurant in **Il Capriccio**. The sauce is lighter and the salads more designer fare than Palermo's—both offer Italian in their own unique

offering gourmet California cuisine in a Casablanca-style setting. Michael G. and Manuel are the dapper hosts who greet their customers as old friends do. Monday night is *Open Mike* night in the bar. And it's one of the most striking bars in the area with its mood lighting and minimal, yet stylistic, design. Martinis

If a *Bearded Frenchy* is your style, the cornflake crusted thick French toast is almost sure to satisfy your breakfast palate. They also offer *eggs in the hole* or as it is more commonly known *Toad in the Hole*—a slice of grilled bread with a sunny-side up egg in its center. Breakfast is served all day but they also offer too-hip-for-me retro diner food and blue plate specials. I prefer

breakfast there. If Fred 62 is too hip for you, try that old familiar blast from the past, **House of Pies**. The coffee is stronger at Fred 62, but you can't get that *streusel coffee cake* to go with it like you can at the HOP. The House of Pies is an original coffee shop... offering

inexpensive coffee shop food and a selection of mouth-watering pies, including some that are sugar free.

One thing is for sure, you won't go hungry or thirsty on Vermont Avenue. You can park once and go restaurant hopping before and after seeing a movie at the Los Feliz or catching a play at the Skylight. Maybe you've come to hear an author speak and/or sign books at the Skylight Bookstore or pick up a magazine at the newsstand around the corner from Figaro. Vermont is hopping with culture, culinary arts and signature libations. It's a neighborhood avenue filled with audacious

storefronts over a four-block span. Maybe it's time for you to revisit Vermont—and bask in its bohemian gastronomic delights right in your own backyard.

I'd love to hear from you, the BV readers, about your favorite restaurants and food choices. Email me at BeachwoodVoice@sbcglobal.net—be sure and put my name in the subject line.

Rona Edwards is a motion picture/ television producer. She also writes music reviews for the *Folk Acoustic Music Exchange (FAME)* on the net, feature articles for *Produced By Magazine* and co-authored a book for Lone Eagle Publishing, entitled "I Liked It, Didn't Love It. (Screenplay Development From The Inside Out)" available at bookstores everywhere.

Hollywood has some wonderful areas; neighborhoods reminiscent of New York City without the snow. There's the Cahuenga Corridor filled with clubs, restaurants and steaming with nightlife. We have Sunday mornings on Hillhurst where families and lovers gather for their brunches and lattes, with dogs and strollers roaming the street while basking in the nearly-always perfect weather.

Then there's Vermont Avenue. A bastion of eateries, late night cocktails and early morning breakfasts. I recently revisited this bustling area where there is something for everyone. You can sample cuisines from around the world all within a few blocks. Since we don't have enough space to include all of the restaurants, here's just a smattering:

Beginning our international tour at Franklin and Vermont, **Electric Lotus** offers some of the best Indian food in the area including *Tandori*, luscious *curries* featuring an endless menu of *lamb, tofu, chicken, shrimp and vegetables*. They also serve full-course dinners for two. Known for its seductive and funky look, the ambiance offers a mysterious dimly-lit dining room that reminds one of a Moroccan hideaway with its draped private booths. The loud south London music is the only thing that made me aware I wasn't actually in an exotic land. The restaurant is so dark it's hard to read the menu—a perfect place to meet your secret lover because no one can see you.

Next door, grab a *latte* at **Psychobabble** or maybe you'd prefer good old-fashioned southern Italian cuisine at **Palermo's**—Tony, the affable owner, used to serve free wine to everyone waiting for a table during crowded weekend dinners but was forced to charge a

City of Lights.

They've recently gone organic and offer some real French delicacies including *Merguez, chicken and mushroom crepes, French Onion soup* and a *charcuterie* plate. One little-known secret is they also have one of the best *tuna fish sandwiches* in the area.

Moving down the block, there's the legendary **Dresden**, now open for lunch as well as dinner, offering comfort continental cuisine and *certified Angus beef*. The *prime rib* is the thing to order along with their scrumptious *garlic bread*. Elayne and Marty still

usually order a good red wine along with their *Spaghetti Bolognese* and the *Mediterranean Salad*. And to top it off, there's nothing like *chocolate Sharfenberger ice cream*—to die for! Brothers Ermanno and Gianni Neiviller plan to open up both a pizza and a wine store nearby. Don't be surprised to find *mamma, Flora*, checking out the cooking in the kitchen. It's truly a family-run business.

Last, but certainly not least, is **Vermont**—an upscale eatery, located in the old Sarno's building,

are the signature drink here and their list is daring. In the restaurant, try *Michael's salad*—a spin on the French salad of frisée lettuce, pancetta, and a poached egg. I'm also partial to their *Pork Chops*.

So, now you've eaten your fill, and you've tried out of a few of the restaurants, listened to the last set by Elayne and Marty at the Dresden. You're feeling a little tipsy, so pop into **Fred 62**—have a *latte* and order breakfast.



Photos-Left, top to bottom: Dresden; Palermo's and Fred 62; and Cafe Figaro. Right, top to bottom: Electric Lotus; House of Pies; Vermont; and Il Capriccio. All photos by Rona Edwards

I Saw it, I Liked it

Mini Reviews of Current Entertainment
By Kurt Reichenbach

I like movies. I like to be entertained. I like to have my world views challenged. And I like to have my brain stimulated. I don't like to be preached to (there are churches and such for that) and I don't need to be "educated" (I went to school, I read the paper). However, if a movie can relate a moral lesson and/or inform in an entertaining way (not easy to do, judging from what is projected on most movie screens these days) all the better! In this column, I will write short reviews of films and shows I have seen and that I like. I am making no attempt to see everything or review everything I see. I will attempt to include movies and plays you can still get out to. Since this paper is a quarterly, and many films don't have screenings far enough in advance for me to view by our deadline, there will be many omissions. With that said, let's begin...

CURRENT AND UPCOMING FILMS

Whether or not you've read any of C.S. Lewis' Narnia books (or read them to your children) *Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* from Disney is a winner. Newcomer Georgie Henley who plays Lucy Pevensie steals every scene she is in. With the exceptions of James McAvoy (Mr. Tumnus), Tilda Swinton (the White Witch), and Jim Broadbent (Professor Kirke), the players are mostly unknown to American audiences, but the cast is terrific without exception. The design and photography of this film is breathtaking and the cgi effects are amazingly convincing. And whether you wish to watch this movie as a religious allegory or a straight good vs. evil fantasy, it works either way.

From writer/director Thomas Bezucha comes *The Family Stone*, an old-fashioned Capraesque Christmas tale with new-fashioned family values. There are no surprises here—you've seen most of it before—but it is so earnestly presented and so wonderfully acted, you'll be dragged along, kicking, screaming, and ultimately laughing. This movie is very funny. And the offbeat Stone clan, headed up by Diane Keaton and Craig T. Nelson, is a family you would love to know, but probably not love to be related to.

A Hollywood movie, a Broadway musical, a Hollywood movie musical, a Broadway musical within a Hollywood movie musical...

The Producers has more layers than a steamed artichoke. But it is just that history, and the sly references to it, that help make this film work so well. And who knew Uma Thurman could sing and dance? Oh yeah...don't leave before the credits are over because there is a post-credit production number!

The Matador. If

like *Lord of the Rings*. Yes, all the fantasy elements are here, and done incredibly well, but this movie is more about the confusion of young love, friendship,

director Rob Marshall (*Chicago*) doesn't disappoint. We follow Nitta Sayuri's journey from being sold into slavery by her father, through her training to become a renowned geisha. The beautiful, richly textured film vividly

building thriller. New from the reigning lord of the fantasy films Peter Jackson is *King Kong*. Stylish, fast-paced, and clocking in at around 3 hours, this is the ultimate Kong. The melding of live action and cgi is practically flawless and the "big guy" is so expressive he will break your heart. It adheres fairly closely to the original story outline, adding characters and subplots judiciously. While Jack Black seems to be doing all of his acting with his eyebrows and some of the creatures-on-the-island confrontation sequences go on a little long, these are minor points and don't spoil the overall effect. The "spider pit" sequence will stay with you long after the credits roll.

LIVE THEATER

This season brings the Broadway scale musical *White Christmas* to the Pantages. Complete with terrific dancing and singing, a top notch orchestra, and elaborate sets, this holiday film favorite translates well to a live stage event. Don't look for Ibsen here. Like the movie, *White Christmas* is short on story but none the less an exhilarating Yuletide experience... it even snows in the theater! Playing through December.

On the more intimate small stage, Ark Theatre Company presents Michael John Richardson's *Holiday Suite* directed by Susan Lee. Consisting of four short one acts—I'm Dreaming of a White Kwanza, Chamukah Claus, Christmas Miracle, and Should Old Acquaintance—these well acted and perfectly paced vignettes run the gamut from laughter to tears, reminding us that most beloved traditional holiday classics are rooted in despair and the human spirit's ability to triumph. Sunday December 11 & 18 at 7 p.m. and Friday December 23 at 8 p.m.

Kurt Reichenbach is an actor, writer, singer, artist, and avid moviegoer.



you can get past the terrible, misleading (until you've seen it) title, you'll see one of my favorite movies of the year. Pierce Brosnan plays the anti-Bond, a grizzled, worn-out assassin, to Greg Kinnear's uptight, by-the-book businessman. An unlikely friendship develops when the two happen to meet in a hotel bar in Mexico City. A perfect mix of humor, thrills, and pathos. Don't miss this one.

Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire from Warner Brothers is arguably the best of the Potter films so far. Harry is growing up, as are his friends, and as they age, the dynamics of teen awakening come rushing to the forefront. This movie may have more in common with *Mean Girls* or even *Fast Times at Ridgemont High* than contemporary fantasy films

loyalty, and the fragility of relationships. A note to parents: this installment of the Potter series is not for young children. It is considerably "darker" and more frightening than Harry's previous adventures so you might want to preview the film before taking the whole family.

The much anticipated *Memoirs of a Geisha* from

recreates a lost and secret culture, and shows what a young woman in that culture must endure to survive.

Woody Allen's back with *Match Point*, an edgy romantic thriller starring Jonathan Rhys-Meyers as a

tennis pro whose obsession for Scarlett Johansson, his best friend's fiancée, propels this story on its unexpected course. This film harkens back to Allen's *Crimes and Misdemeanors* in style and mood. This is not a comedy, although you will laugh at some of the situations and witty dialog. To tell you any more might spoil your enjoyment of this steadily

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The Left Side of the Canyon

Are we safer now than we were eight years ago?
By Larry Markes

Bill Clinton got himself elected in 1992 primarily by asking one simple question: Are you better off now than you were four years ago? When the American voter considered this question honestly, George Bush Sr. was consigned to irrelevance. America then experienced the most explosive eight-year period of growth in the nation's history.

In 2006 and 2008 the American voter will again be presented with a simple issue: Are you as well off as you were in the year 2000? To put it another way, are you back to where you were when Bill Clinton left office?

Putting aside all moral considerations (because, to be fair, dishonesty, corruption, treachery, bigotry, incompetence and cronyism rarely come off well in moral comparisons), let's look at one practical aspect of George Bush Jr's disastrous presidency: Are we safer now than we were when George sat in a kindergarten class on 9/11 looking "like a duck struck on the head?"

Well, it depends. If you mean physically safer, do you think our porous borders suddenly become stout levees, holding back the flood of—ooh, in the wake of Katrina, I guess that's a poor metaphor...

Let's try again. Recently, George's fatuous Department of Homeland Security triumphantly trumpeted that it was finally bringing its first case against one of the thousands of detainees we have incarcerated—without charges, or the protections of Constitutional rights... for three years at Guantanamo or other, more secret

locations. Well, do you feel safer now that we have one indictment to show for all that? For all those servicemen and women (2,100 at last count) who died in Iraq? For all of Halliburton's

Point Counter Point

In response to comments from the public that we weren't giving any ink to the right wing's point of view, we offer you the other side of the canyon. In this issue we asked a Democrat and a Republican canyon-dweller this question: Is the right-wing conservative's approach to global security making us safer? We didn't show either neighbor the other's writings but rather gave them the question and 400 words. Enjoy!

millions in military service contracts?

But let's consider a wider point. Like many others, I do not believe that our safety depends upon the strength or weakness of Bush's policies or the impermeability of our borders or even the effectiveness of our internal counter-terrorism agencies, but rather relies on the eternal values on which this country was founded and, until recently, generally governed. Because our true safety comes from demonstrating those virtues that earned our nation world-wide respect, admiration, even love: Charity. The Rule of Law. Open-mindedness. Liberty. Zealous protection of the rights of all, particularly the poor, the powerless, the ordinary, even the foreign.

You don't have to ask me. Tell me: do you feel safer now than you were in 2000? Do you think the current Administration's policies and conduct have helped us, or hurt us?

The Other Side of the Canyon

Is it safe?
By Allan O'Donovan

Many in the "Loyal Opposition" and the press have been criticizing The Administration for a variety of missteps and policies, notably The War on Terrorism. It has been

consequence for 40 years, and especially the tepid response from Clinton, Bin Laden was emboldened to attack New York City.

After the attack, Bush moved quickly, and with the blessing of the Democrats, trampled not only Al Qaeda in its home base of Afghanistan but also the Taliban who were oppressing and murdering its citizens and denying even the most basic human rights to its people especially women.

The world then turned its attention to Saddam Hussein. Having invaded Kuwait, information flowed to Western governments that, in addition to his chemical and biological weapons he had used on many occasions, he was obtaining nuclear weapons.

Senator John Kerry in a speech on the Senate floor on October 8, 2002 stated that Iraq was dangerous and action had to be taken. It was.

If this action diverted the Terror War to a war for oil then why didn't we "seize" the oil during the first Gulf War? Why were there terrorists in every major country except Iraq?

There has not been a major attack against US interests since 9/11. We are fighting the terrorists on our terms in Iraq rather than our streets. Having lived in the Middle East and having dealt with the people there, I know that we cannot return to the failed Neville Chamberlain School of Diplomacy and appeasement, which, as in past cases, would certainly not work today.

Beachwood Voice Spine Award

The Politicians for the People Award goes to Councilmen Greig Smith from the 12th district & Jack Weiss from the 5th district for standing up for the people's right to be heard at City Council meetings.



Councilman Greig Smith

Imagine yourself going downtown for a City Council meeting with some of your like-minded neighbors to address a burning issue before the council. After going to the trouble of organizing and participating in this effort, including taking time off work; securing childcare; driving, parking, etc., you would expect the meeting to start on time and proceed efficiently through the



agenda. Instead, you are treated to various PR presentations, photo ops, back patting, and much political glad-handing by council members and others as they waste your time!

Then the actual meeting finally begins. And you sit and wait for your issue to come up, alas, only to hear, "Sorry, we're out of time." So you sit there, helpless, and voiceless while your agenda item gets thrown over to another day.

Once upon a time, these non-business sessions were reserved for the Friday session. Not any more. Your time can now be wasted at any of the three weekly City Council meetings.

The Beachwood Voice applauds Greig Smith & Jack Weiss for working to cut these dog and pony shows to a minimum.

According to an L.A. Times article on October 14, 2005, they are

Please see SPINE, page 6

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Health & Healing

THE HEALING ENERGY OF MUSIC by Hal A. Lingerman

Book Review by Sandra Rudy Brown

As a professional piano teacher, I am familiar with all of the benefits music bestows. Music has the remarkable ability to shift awareness and transform the listener. It transcends all boundaries and is loved by all cultures. It can bring comfort, joy and healing to the soul. It does much more than "soothe the savage breast."

The many benefits of music are extolled in countless quotations scattered throughout literature. So I found it particularly interesting, from both personal and professional points of view, to read a book devoted entirely to the positive effects music can have.

The Healing Energy of Music is an insightful work. Its author, Hal A. Lingerman, has master's degrees in both the arts and divinity. His basic thesis is that music is much more than merely "pleasant sounds."

"Some music affects primarily your physical body . . . makes you feel stronger and more powerful in your movements. Music with strong regular rhythms tends to activate the body, while also coordinating and focusing the mind. Other selections will affect your feelings - emotions more . . . the music of such romantics as Chopin, Tchaikovsky, and

Rachmaninoff. Another selection of music will appeal mostly to your mind, inspiring you with new ideas, seed thoughts for new possibilities, and creativity. The music of the Baroque is structured and seems to be especially effective for a listener who wishes to study, organize ideas, or focus on goals. Finally, there are those pieces of music that penetrate through all your outer layers. This kind of music speaks directly to your heart and soul, reminding you of your wholeness, divine connection and highest selfhood in God."

Dr. Lingerman points out that different instruments also affect different parts of your make-up. For example, brass, percussion, heavy bass notes, electronic music, and amplified sounds primarily affect us physically, while woodwinds and strings have their greatest effect on our minds. The high strings, harp, bells, organ and wind chimes resonate in the soul.

Music can be used for better health and well-being. Music can release or calm anger and relieve tension, hyperactivity, depression, fear, grief and boredom. Music can provide strength, courage, relaxation, love, devotion, meditation and prayer. "Sometimes music is simply good for a laugh, allowing happy, fun-filled

opportunity for release." The Anatomy of an Illness by Norman Cousins celebrates "the therapeutic value of genuine laughter, which unties knots in the emotions, the mind, and the body, and opens the whole system to the renewing energies of the universe."

Seek out the kind of music you need to awaken all of you. The physical body is the earthly temple for the soul. It is important to love and care for your physical body in every possible way.



Sandra Brown is a Beachwood resident working in healing arts (Reiki & Hypnotherapy) and music. Feel free to contact her for more information about this article (cell) 310-666-4149. In future issues, Ms. Brown will be covering alternative healing arts, holistic healing with nutrition, acupuncture, and massage therapy.

SPINE Cont'd from page 5

now asking that these demonstrations be restricted to the half-hour *before* each City Council session begins. Now when these presentations occur, several councilmembers have a tough time resisting the urge to add their city tax dollar sponsored two cents which drags these presentations on. Smith and Weiss would like to see that changed as well. If a councilmember wishes to highlight someone or some organization in his or her district, only that member would be permitted to wax eloquent for the honor recipient.

It appears that these two councilmen are concerned with the business of the city and its residents, right? And it also sounds like anyone who has an objection to this moderate proposal should be required to wear the "Shame on Me" badge for the remainder of their term,

right?

Well, according to L.A. Times staff writer Steve Hymon, our own Councilman Tom LaBonge was quoted as saying "There are 4 million people in this city and only 15 microphones, and by golly I'm going to use mine." LaBonge believes the real reason meetings are overly long is the late arrival of many fellow councilmembers. Although this certainly can be a contributing factor, the BV had the opportunity to do some research and to time the presentations by attending a recent City Council meeting. The honorary presentations ran over 45 minutes! This represented a lot of wasted time.

Who will support Smith and Weiss in this bold move toward citizen empowerment? How about you, Councilman LaBonge? We're watching.
—Terri Foster, political writer

Do Your Party a Favor

Diz McNally
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HOSTESS/GREETER/EMCEE/LIFE OF THE PARTY

Season's Greetings
May this joyous season bring you success, good times and happiness
Happy Holidays

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Dental Health

Poor self-image, resulting in low self-esteem

The appearance of the teeth has a dramatic effect on both a person's attractiveness to others and one's own self-image and self-esteem. Studies have shown that a person's appearance will have a strong effect on social and career success by influencing how others perceive them.

While the appearance of the teeth is one of the most important contributors to facial beauty, it is also probably the most often neglected when improvements to appearance are sought. Low self-esteem resulting from facial appearance can often be greatly helped by cosmetic dental procedures.

Dental make-overs have become more common, less invasive, and more effective in correcting deformities and cosmetic dental problems. The effect of these procedures can be nothing short of dramatic, both in terms of appearance and also in terms of correcting, at least partially, personality deficiencies caused by poor self-image. Ugly teeth are no longer a matter of fate; they are now becoming a matter of choice.

— Dr. Suzanne Wenzlaff

P.S. If you have any friends or family members who you feel could use our services, please don't hesitate to have them call us at (323) 461-4676 or email us at team@hollywooddentalcare.com. We'll be sure to take good care of them.

Questions? Comments? Please e-mail me, Dr. Suzanne Wenzlaff, at drsuz1943@earthlink.net or call me at Wenzlaff's Famous Hollywood Dental Care: 323-461-4676.

Success is a lousy teacher. It seduces smart people into thinking they can't lose. — Bill Gates

Avoid having your ego so close to your position that when your position falls, your ego goes with it.—Colin Powell

HHA Partys Down in the Village



The Hollywood Homeowner's Association did it again. They threw one of the best parties in Beachwood Village yet. Here's just a few photos from the event with the petting zoo and the raffle being the highlights of the day. Soren Kerk won a couple of hours of limo service and had a great birthday party for many of her friends—all over town—and she says, "Thanks!" to the HHA for making it possible.

—Editor



Three HHA Boardmembers selling raffle tickets.

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There's less than a month left to qualify for the 2005 Bah Humbug Awards. Ebbie Scrooge Crachitt, Chairwoman of the Bah Humbug Awards Nominating Committee, recently announced that names of potential 2005 award contenders must be submitted by midnight, December 31, 2005. Names submitted after that date will be ineligible to compete for the 2005 Awards.

In early January, the Awards Committee will announce the 2005 nominees, each of which will be assigned to a specific category. This year the Committee has added several new categories:

- The Most Impersonal Automated Phone Response System: only



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BY MARCELLA MEHARG

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those without live voice responses are eligible.

- The Magazine with the Most Virulent Perfume Ad.
- The Restaurant with the Most Ear-Splitting Ambient Noise Level.
- The Elected Public Official Most Recently Convicted of a Crime.
- The Best Overall Environmental Polluter (two awards: Corporate & Non-Corporate).
- Unfortunately, the Alfred

E. Newman "What, Me Worry" Award is no longer being contested, as George W. Bush has retired the trophy by winning this category five years in a row.

The annual Bah Humbug Awards Event will take place in early March (exact date to be announced later) and will be aired on satellite television. This event, which always attracts a worldwide audience, singles out individuals and

organizations that during 2005 have interfered most significantly with the way to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. So get these important names in before the end of the year. They deserve world recognition.

In the meantime, buy a good book, give it to someone you love—better still, read it aloud to whatever captive audience you can capture. What better way to celebrate the season—try an old time



classic: Dickens' "A Christmas Carol;" O'Henry's "The Gift of the Magi;" Dylan Thomas' "A Child's Christmas in Wales" Dr. Seuss' "How the Grinch Stole Christmas." Happy Holidays to One and All!

—Marcella Meharg,
book-loving
Beachwood neighbor
gwynnedanny@hotmail.com

Holiday Greetings from Post-Katrina New Orleans

by Armand and Patty Lee St. Martin

New Orleans was founded in 1718; Armand's most ancient ancestor here came ashore in 1721, and by 1724 everything in the area was wiped out by a hurricane and flood. They stayed and rebuilt.

Surrounded by rivers, canals, lakes, bays, and bayous, it's not surprising that the Isle of Orleans is below sea-level. The faithful have trusted the city's world-renowned pumping stations, intricate drainage system and extensive levees to keep this vast area safe, dry, and habitable.

Three months after Hurricane Katrina smashed everything from New Orleans to Mobile, human error is blamed for the flooding that destroyed properties, claiming innumerable lives. It's dubbed "the largest civil engineering disaster in the history of the United States."

Evacuating Hurricane Katrina was difficult. It's not easy to select the most important things you've accumulated in your lifetime and compress them into one suitcase.

We packed up our entire house all day Saturday into Sunday morning, August 28th, with only one hour's sleep, while awaiting the Mayor's mandatory evacuation ruling. Because Patty's mother, "Mom", had an e.coli infection, transporting her was of concern. She's 88, has Alzheimers and breast cancer, is bedridden and can't adequately communicate. Adding her caregiving needs into our evacuation-gumbo was quite a formula. Her doctor suggested we go to the Superdome, saying, "They are taking special patients."

It was eerily quiet when the three of us left New

Orleans, being the last to evacuate our street. Sunday was calm and sunny with the Times Picayune left untouched in every yard. Little did we know that our lives would be altered forever within the next 24 hours. We left for what was

with her fingers while driving. Wind wildly whipped trees; the rainstorm rendered windshield wipers useless. We took turns caregiving for Mom in a makeshift bed in the backseat. Around 3 a.m. Monday, we reached

information. We had no mailing address, working cell phones, or accurate news about our properties. It was easy to stay away and it was hard to stay away.

Seeing is believing and no pictures, descriptions, or television images can describe the reality of returning to the City That Care Forgot. It still looks like an atom bomb hit. Grass, plants, trees, flowers – dead. Asphalt resembles dirt roads. No laughter on the wind, no birds chirping, no lights on the streets at night, no people milling. There are military humvees, curfews, Red Cross lines, and large sinkholes in the streets.

There are few restaurants open, fewer gas stations, a couple of coffeehouses and grocery stores. Few schools are open, no colleges. There are two hospitals, no cabs, no postmen, no gardeners and no power service in large sections.

Thousands are without gas and electricity. Trash is piled high. Large appliances line the neutral grounds. Downed trees crisscross houses, blasted cars sit on sidewalks, gutted houses stand empty, FEMA trailers are parked near ravaged homes.

Ours is a "raised

basement" home meaning the basement is ground level. Everything in our basement was destroyed; soaked for weeks in foul sewerage water, with mold everywhere. Armand's pianos, music gear, CD stock, our jukeboxes, tools, bikes, childhood toys, patio furniture, appliances, memorabilia – all gone forever. Upstairs, we lost large portions of our roof with various caved-in ceilings, some broken windows. We lost everything in our closets where we had stored special possessions away from hurricane winds. Rain damage inside is everywhere.

Basically, we are "camping out" indoors. At first, we didn't even have electricity or hot water or gas. And of course, we are still caregivers in the midst of this crisis.

Picking up pieces is a larger-than-life experience, a "Survivor" challenge of daunting proportions. But Louisiana people are resilient and exude a great sense of humor in spite of tragedy. They love good times, good food, good music. With the holidays here, "HOPE" is finally apparent.

Editors Note: If readers want to help the St. Martin family directly, Armand's CDs are for sale on Amazon.com or you can send the St. Martins a personal note at www.PattyLeeRecords.com, or you can contribute a donation by sending a check to:

*The St. Martins
1920 Audubon Street
New Orleans, LA 70118*



expected to be two or three days, exhausted yet hopeful. We drug ourselves home 2 1/2 months later, exhausted and defeated.

The normal 6-hour trip to Houston took us 18 hours, bumper-to-bumper. People were stranded in out-of-gas cars. Families were living out of vehicles in parking lots and roadside parks. Multitudes of shell-shocked drivers with kids, pets, elders, relatives, and meager belongings, many with no real place to go, inched slowly away from New Orleans in this mass exodus.

Unbearably hot and humid, mosquitoes were rampant. Patty was so tired she held her eyelids open

Houston; Katrina hit Louisiana-land about 6 a.m.

Being labeled "homeless" and "refugee" was a whole other saga in Texas. For weeks, we stayed glued to the TV, horrified as New Orleans "went under" in every conceivable way imaginable.

The enormity of this disaster can't be explained in a few brief sentences. Scholars will be writing about it endlessly. In a nutshell, we moved 5 times. We forgot our e-mail address book and Mom's Medicare

without gas and electricity. Trash is piled high. Large appliances line the neutral grounds. Downed trees crisscross houses, blasted cars sit on sidewalks, gutted houses stand empty, FEMA trailers are parked near ravaged homes.

Ours is a "raised

Armand St. Martin's regular crossword column, **Hollywords**, will resume in our next issue. Longtime residents of Beachwood Canyon, Armand, his wife Patty Lee who has freelanced several feature stories for the Beachwood Voice, and her mother are currently in Armand's hometown, New Orleans.

—Editor

Only one thing is impossible for God: to find any sense in any copyright law on the planet.—Mark Twain

Morning Time is Miller Time

Why not wake up laughing. Tune in to KTLA 1150 AM from 6 to 9 in the morning to hear Stephanie Miller and her talented "voice guy" Jim Ward let the air out of the pompous wind bags who mislead the nation on a daily basis. You'll be amazed at Jim Ward's "Bill O'Reilly," "Sean Hannity," and the main gas bag of all, "Rush Limbaugh." Stephanie and Jim both do imitations of Ahnold, so imagine two



Stephanie Miller speaking at the Peace Rally in downtown L.A.

Ahnolds, debating each other. But be warned: it's dangerous to do certain activities while listening. You might cut yourself shaving or blow milk and cereal through your nose. Or even worse, you might learn something while laughing out loud.

The Stephanie Miller Show
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Another Christmas Carol

An editorial by Bill Reichenbach

It's early Christmas Eve. The streets of Washington, D.C. are crowded with people doing a little very last minute shopping. The weather is cold; it might snow. The traffic going by the Ellipse is slow enough to allow the drivers a momentary glance at the National Christmas Tree, which towers over the surrounding smaller "state" trees at a height of almost 50 feet. Across the street, in the White House, President Bush is putting his signature on some last minute Bills. His secretary enters the Oval Office.

Mr. President?
What?

Mr. President, may I please have the rest of the evening off so that I can take care of a few things before the stores close?

Do you have a problem doing a full day's work?

Oh, no sir, I don't even take a break to exercise during the day. It's just that its, well, you know, Christmas Eve.

I know its Christmas Eve. Here, have some eggnog. I mixed it up myself.

Well, thank you, sir. But about getting off work early . . . ?

Ok, ok. Just look over these things first. This one'll cut that Medicare funding. If people are too lazy to work, they have no right to get sick. And we're gonna' cut food stamps, too. And disaster funding, and armor for the military . . .

Oh yeah, and no more legal abortions . . . heh, heh, heh.

Sir, you're rubbing your hands together in the strangest way . . .

I just love exercising, exercising all this power. I feel like a king or a dictator . . . can I be both?

Sir, may I leave now?

Yes, go, but be back at your desk at 7am sharp the day after Christmas!

Thank you sir. I will, sir. Thank you, thank you.

Get out!

The President had another glass of eggnog. Then he walked down the long hall, past the portraits of former White House inhabitants, to the Lincoln bedroom.

Hmm, I think I'll sleep in here tonight. That extra long bed . . . that's perfect for someone of my *statue*.

The eggnog did its work and Mr. Bush fell fast asleep.

Later that night, just as the bells of the Washington Cathedral were striking midnight, the President was awakened from his deep slumber.

What the he . . . , who is that? What are you doing in here? Why can't I see you better?

It's me, George. It's Dick Cheney.

But I can see through you . . . I'm dead.

What?

Yeah, I died 3 years ago. Your acting vice-president is actually a robot we had made by the Disney Corporation . . .

I wondered why you kept saying the same things over and over again. Hey, why are you dragging all those chains around? Gonna' put 'em on your limo in case it snows? Heh, heh . . .

Go fck yourself! These chains are the chains I forged in life, from many years of secrecy and lying, stealing from the poor to give to the rich . . .

Sounds like a good idea to me . . .

. . . stealing from the poor to give the rich, treating the Earth like a waste dump as long as it was good for me

and my friends . . .

And the problem with that is . . . ?

The problem with that is, you moron, is that I have to walk the Earth for eternity, which might not actually be too long at the rate we are going, until I find a way to gain forgiveness, right my wrongs, try to undo some of the harm that I caused in life.

Boy, you might have to work fast. What are you going to do?

Three times tonight, at the stroke of 1, 2, and 3, you will be visited by spirits . . .

I've already visited some spirits myself tonight, heh, heh . . . where'd ja' go?

Hey Dick, or maybe I should say "Cheney in chains", you didn't tell me what to do. You always tell me what to do . . . this is unfair! And it's so after my bedtime. I'll just get me some more of that eggnog and try to settle down.

Outside, the city had gone quietly to sleep beneath a cool blanket of fresh fallen snow. The lights of the Christmas trees on the Ellipse twinkled and were reflected on the White House lawn up into the windows of the Lincoln bedroom where George Bush lie sleeping the peaceful sleep of the guiltless. Near the foot of the large bed, was a tall, shadow-like presence. At the stroke of one, the President opened his eyes and tried to make out the vague shape . . .

Hey, who's there? I know you're not Dick, you're too tall and thin, like a baseball bat. Dick's more like a bowlin' ball . . . heh, heh.

Please be silent, Mr. President. I am the Spirit of Past Christmases. I've come to take you back to your past to look at how we got to this place . . .

What do you mean "how we

Documentaries that NEED to be Screened

We have access to the documentaries listed below thanks to the Truth Fairy at KPDK. Let us know if you have an interest in screening any of these and we will work with you to set up a screening in your home or in a public venue—perhaps the Village Coffee Shop would be a great place to bring neighbors together for routine screenings. . .

It's conceivable that this kind of neighborhood activity could catch on!

9/11 In Plane Site Directors Cut

David Ray Griffen's speech from Madison Wisconsin Loose Change or Loose Change 2 (coming soon)

Invisible War (story of depleted uranium weapons)

The Revolution Will Not Be Televised (an attempt at a coup d'etat against Hugo Chavez)

Aerosol Crimes (chemical trails)

Beyond Treason / The Killing of the Military

Noam Chomsky—Power and Terror

With God on Our Side—George W and the Rise of the Religious Right.

This is just a partial list. Contact Fran at 323-462-1514.



got to this place"? This is the White House. The President lives here, when he's not on vacation, and I stole, I mean, won the election twice. Let me turn the light on so I can see you a little better.

Click

There, that's better. Hey, that beard, you look familiar. . .

In life, I was Abraham Lincoln. Please get out of the bed, we need to change the sheets. Take my hand . . .

You're not one o' them gays are ya'?

Some have wondered, but no, I'm not Jewish either, so don't ask. Take my hand and we will travel back to your past.

The two Presidents stepped through the open French doors onto the balcony of the bedroom and were lifted into the cool air above the snow-covered lawn.

Wow, Abe, it sure is pretty down there. I love the snow. So good for skiing, snow ball fights . . .

What about the homeless who will freeze in the cold?

If they're cold, they should find a shelter. We've listed them online so that they're easy to find.

Online?

Please see CAROL, page 10



TOP: PLS

CAROL *Cont'd from page 9*
 father had just gotten you into the Texas Air National Guard so you wouldn't have to go to war in Viet Nam. You were always a child of privilege, everything was worked out for you. When I was President, there was a great war between the northern and the southern United States . . .

Yeah, kinda' like the war between the red states and the blue states. I'm for the red states. Ratt, tatt, tatt, tatt. I'm blowin' the blue states

away! Maybe global warming will cause the blue coastal states to flood . . .

Enough! You do realize that less fortunate young men went to the war and died while you stayed in the U.S. safe from harm and danger.

Well yeah, I know that. They were poor; they didn't have anything better to do.

We will now return to the present time. You will meet with two more spirits. By the way, the next time I visit you, we will talk about what

you've done to my Grand Old Party, the Republicans.

What do you mean?

Take my hand.

In a split second, they had crossed time and distance and were back in the Lincoln bedroom. The tall spirit faded before the President's eyes.

Whew! That was weird. I better not make eggnog with Yukon Jack any more.

It's too po-ent.

Just then, there was a small rustling sound behind him. He spun on his heels and faced the second spirit. As recognition filled him, he started to shake nervously.

Oh my God! You're Cindy Sheehan! You've come for that talk!

I'm not really Cindy Sheehan, I've just borrowed her form. She's alive and well.

That's a shame, but you make me nervous, looking like that.

I know. Now close your eyes and don't open them until I tell you.

Who's givin' the orders around here . . . ?

I am.

OK.

Soon the room felt cold; there were strange smells, sounds, crying, sadness.

Open your eyes.

Where are we?

We're in a poor neighborhood in any one of a number of cities in

America. Did you know that since you've been President, more people have fallen below the poverty level every year?

Well they should stop bein' so darn lazy and get a job.

Mr. President, your policies have encouraged companies to take good jobs overseas to places like China and India.

Well, I did say I was going to create new jobs. I just didn't say where they would be. And all of my friends are doing very well, thank you very much.

Yes, Mr. President, all of your friends are doing very well. You are taking America back to a neo-feudal existence.

Please see CAROL, page 28

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Don't Worry, It's Not Spy Vs. Spy (More Like Fly Vs. Fly)

In early October, while putting yard waste in his regulation green container, David (whose last name shall remain anonymous so he won't be too embarrassed) found what looked to be a suspicious—if not incendiary—device hanging from his orange tree whose branches overhang Ledgewood Drive. About ten inches long and eight inches across, the clear bell-shaped device held two inches of brown liquid in its generous bottom.

Inquiries at his neighbors' houses proved fruitless. No one at home or—on the fly—could figure out what the bell-shaped thingamajig was. David was really bugged.

His imagination taking wing, David called the police. Minutes later, two HazMat vehicles arrived, the agents all-afflutter. Rubber gloves went on; the professionals conferred. The thingamabob



was gingerly taken down and carried to the street for closer inspection.

Fortunately for David and the HazMat team, a neighbor who always has her antennae up for unusual activity passed by and inquired why two HazMat vehicles were parked half in and half out of the neighbor's ivy. David told her about his sticky problem. No one seemed to be able to help him figure out what the thingy in his orange tree was or who had put it there. "I thought maybe it was a bomb," he confessed.

"I saw the L.A. County

Agriculture Commission lady out here a couple of weeks ago hanging one of those things in my neighbor's lemon tree," observed the passerby, a longtime Ledgewood resident. "I'm sure it's something to do with Med flies."

Sheepishly, the officers returned the bug-catcher to its perch. "Do I have to keep it?" inquired David of the officers. For some reason, all three looked at the neighbor, who rose to her full 5-foot, 3-inch height.

"Are you—or are you not—willing to do your patriotic duty to protect Hollywoodland from Med flies?"

The bug trap went back in the orange tree; the HazMat team buzzed off in search of new adventures and everyone lived happily ever after. Except for the bugs, of course.

—Prudence Baird

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The definition of a consultant someone who borrows your watch, tells you the time, and then charges you for the privilege.—Anonymous