

VIEW



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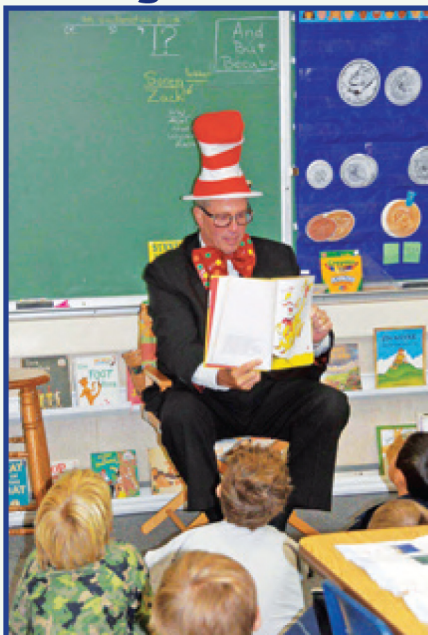
**BFB
ROCK
OUT
BEACH**



Photos © 2012, Joel Anderson

What Would Einstein Say?

**ADMINISTRATIVE ERROR
Ojai Unified School
District (OUSD)
Superintendent's
Message To The VIEW**



Dr. Bangser (as Dr. Seuss) makes himself useful in a OUSD elementary classroom.

**Confirms Chaparral
Could be Sold to Shore Up
Severe Pension Liability
The Cabrillo Connection**

PHONE CALL #1 to *The VIEW*
Wednesday, Apr. 18, 11:06am

"Hi. This is Hank Bangser, the Superintendent of schools of Ojai. I believe we've met, if you're the same person I recall from *The VIEW* in the last couple of years since I've been here. Um I occasionally pick up your... uh your newspaper and I'm looking now at the March 2012 Issue 44 Page 3.

See Page Two...

The Kids Are Alright!



Bobby Brown

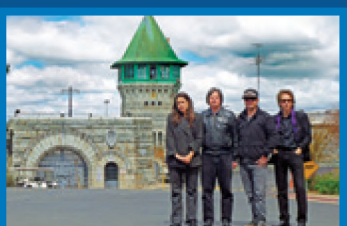
Ernie Joseph

Brian Faith



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Ojai native and Fulltime Mom, Crystal Magill has to do a lot of things to keep up with her children Lola, 3-years-old, and Skylar, 5. Edison installed a health hazardous "Smart" Meter just above her children's "play" work bench, where they while away the hours of the day. Story, Page Eleven



FOLSOM BLUES



Trowbridge/Ojai



**The Elephant in the Closet
A TRIP DOWN MEMORY LANE**

**Sacred Space Studio
Vibrational EFT - Healing**

RLN's "Two Worlds"

**WHY HASN'T
CASITAS WATER
GIVEN THE OJAI
PUBLIC AN ANSWER
AFTER ONE YEAR AND
1900 PETITIONS???**
**GOLDEN STATE HAS TO GO
NO MEETING???**
**AFTER CASITAS WATER
EXHAUSTIVELY SEARCHES
FOR A MEETING PLACE
IN THE OJAI VALLEY
FOR 9 MONTHS???**

**DEMAND
ACCOUNTABILITY NOW
FROM YOUR ELECTED
OFFICIALS!!! ATTEND
OFFICIAL MEETINGS**

PAID FOR BY THE OJAI ELDERLY CAREGIVERS ASSOCIATION

Ojai City Council Raggedy Edge - Dick Lynch So this month Ojai will have paid in excess of \$3,500,000 (\$3.5million) more to Golden Extortion Water Company in the last year.



That's right folks MORE, not total, MORE. With that kind of money we could have used that extra \$3.5 Million to pay off the WATER BONDS we will need to Rescue us so we can purchase and replace Golden Mistake Water.

Letter From Michael Lenehan

Dear View, I'd just like to send a huge "Atta boy" for your brief March 2012 article concerning the bloated, bu-reaucratic (and some might say corrupt) mess at the Ojai Unified School District (OUSD).



"Of course the bloated salaries and retirement packages of other OUSD administrators cannot be ignored...."

activities, much of that to the school district.... all while making about 1/3 of their OUSD salary. My wife also volunteered an additional 400 hours per year, almost all of it with the school district.

mess, lots of work, tons of money. I can't blame Casitas. If they look at this as the WHITE ELEPHANT GIFT someone wants to unload. After all they didn't announce to anyone that, if they get the Water Co. back from Golden Overcharge Water, Casitas would love to spend A lot of money, time, effort and risk!

Superintendent "Chicago Hank" Dr. Spin: Cries Foul

Obviously you have the right to be both sarcastic and humorous, in this case at the expense of school administrators screwing in a light bulb... I'm not commenting on that. I do want to be sure you know however that, the implication that we have 101 administrators predominantly, and then some support staff.

"Morning, Uh, it's about 10 O'Clock and this is Hank Bangser, the Superintendent in Ojai. Following up real quickly on the message I left you uh a while ago uh, in response to the piece uh that you had in The VIEW where you were thinking, suggesting, writing that we would be selling the property to Cabrillo. I left my message regarding that. I don't need to say any more about that, but what I did want to do is to give you the opportunity... and I would enjoy sitting down and talking with you specifically about what has occurred since you wrote that piece and since I responded to it. Uh we did have a board meeting on April 17th. We had an extensive

presentation by a real estate attorney with whom we're working... uh perhaps you saw the long article in last weeks Ojai Valley News about what went on at that meeting. Uh, I'd be happy to sit down and give you the information that is pertinent and accurate regarding our consideration, really our analysis of whether selling the property would even be... or leasing the property all or part of it would be a good idea.

The VIEW Responds

EDITOR'S NOTE: The VIEW wholeheartedly apologizes for any administrative typographical errors, or otherwise, which it may have made. However, as originally noted in our March 2012, Issue 44, Page 3, Issue of The VIEW.

It is crystal clear, still, to The VIEW that more Administrative cuts are necessary and required if real improvements are to be realized. Additionally, it is not beyond the realm of concern that OUSD would consider selling off Chaparral High School for a commercial retail venture with Cabrillo Development Corp., considering recent developments.



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Continued From Previous Page... defer pension income checks until such time that a real retirement date is decided upon.

The Tribune article points to another half a dozen Illinois School Administrators working the system the same way. According to the Tribune article, "Bangser said he moved to California to be closer to his daughter and granddaughter. Although his base salary is \$170,000 at California's Ojai Unified School District northeast of Ventura, Bangser said furlough days this year will reduce that to about \$161,000."

Chaparral: Prime real estate or historic preservation? It is The VIEW's view, and that of the Ventura County Grand Jury (report begins next page), that public schools here and elsewhere cannot justify current no limit "pay-as-you-go" "substantial unfunded retiree health care benefit liabilities."

Interestingly enough, Dr. Hank Bangser, Ojai Unified School District (OUSD) Superintendent, came to us from the Chicago school system just a couple years ago after he had retired. According to Chicago Tribune investigators, who published an article dated Jan. 29, 2011 (http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2011-01-29/news/ct-met-superintendent-pensions-20110129_1_pension-rules-public-school-pension-state-pension), "Hank Bangser collects a \$261,681 state pension after retiring as superintendent of New Trier Township High School District. Now, he's a full-time superintendent in Southern California, earning \$170,000 at a job he'd be barred from in Illinois if he wanted to keep getting retirement checks. His annual pension-salary combo: \$431,681."

Now, it seems, that if one declares "Retirement" in Illinois, then simply skips out of state to start a new career, continuing to receive that substantial retirement pension-sum while working... this is simply pension abuse. The straight up thing to do, The VIEW suggests, would be to simply inform the New Trier Township High School District of a change in retirement status, and

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indicative of sloppy governance and a cavalier attitude by those 'public servants' who exploit these loopholes selfishly."

"Illinois is a poster child for pension abuses," Gold said. "One of my colleagues calls this child abuse because our children must pay for our fiscal irresponsibility." Perhaps it's time to move over and let someone else drive the OUSD wagon? In the 1980s a study found that nearly 50% of 39,500 Chicago's public school students in the freshman class of 1980 failed to graduate -- they did not get a diploma. The study stated, this was "a human tragedy of enormous dimensions."

The destruction of tens of thousands of young lives, year in and year out." The study was conducted by Designs for Change, a nonprofit research and child-advocacy organization in Chicago. "Most of these young people are permanently locked out of our changing economy and have no hope of continuing their education or getting a permanent job with a future."

It is any wonder U.S. Public Schools have not been world class since the 1930s? The VIEW welcomes all Letters to the Editor, statistics, records of agreements, answers, analysis, articulated announcements, studies, reports, commentary, criticism, dialogue, diatribe, facts, figures, spreadsheets, boulderdash, chit-chat, expressions, exclamations, comments, etc. MORE INFO. http://OjaiAndVenturaView.com/HTMLFiles/Education.html

Check Out My Website/blog: www.DrPeterMilhado.com

GRAND JURY REPORT

Ventura County Grand Jury 2009 - 2010 Final Report The Half Billion Dollar Elephant in Our Schools' Closets June 11, 2010 "A penny saved is a penny earned." - Benjamin Franklin

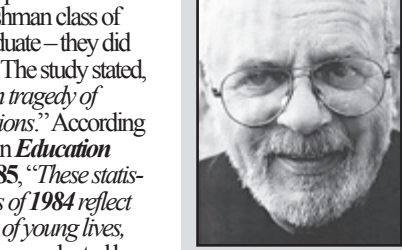
Summary There has been extensive press coverage regarding the magnitude and the problems associated with unfunded pension and health care benefit liabilities at both the state and the local level. The 2009-2010 Ventura County Grand Jury (Grand Jury) investigated whether the 20 Ventura County Public School Districts (VCPSD), the Ventura County Community College District (VCCCD), and the Ventura County Office of Education (VCOE) (collectively known as the County School Districts) are in compliance with the requirements of Government Accounting Standards Board (GASB) 45 and determined the extent of their unfunded retiree health care benefit liabilities. [Ref-01 through Ref-07]

"Don't Tell Me Who I am... Let me guess!"



Is Anyone Neurotic Out There? Check This Out!

(What Happens in Psychotherapy --Part Two)



In my last article I distinguished between real suffering, which is imposed upon us by loss and fateful external events, and neurotic suffering which is 'inauthentic suffering', because we create it ourselves. The good news is, if we create our own suffering and are responsible for our neurotic symptoms of depression, anxiety, loneliness, obsessions etc., we can choose to undo them and heal. How?

Here's an example. Many people were raised in a household of emotional chaos. At worst, their parents shamed and intimidated them, overpowered and controlled them, or rejected and abandoned them, and so forth. In a subtler way, chaos also ensues in a family environment where father or mother were emotionally distant involved only their own self-centered universe or lost in frantic activity, which is the disease of our times. By the way, psychotherapy is not about parent bashing, but it is about having our patients make an accurate and realistic assessment of where they came from. Our parents were wounded too, and they just passed it on, most of the time without conscious intent. The defense against Chaos is Control!

The child tries to control his or her limited universe as much as possible. This makes sense in childhood and is a healthy response to a crazy family situation, but using power and control over others in adulthood leads to neurosis and isolation. So how does the adult neurotic control? There are many ways... i.e. through tyrannical control over others at work or at home, through intimidation and more poisonously through giving guilt, malingering, passive-aggressiveness and other devious manipulations. At bottom, neurosis is an ethical and moral problem. I know, I've been there.

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In order for the neurotic to heal, he has to cop to being either overtly or covertly tyrannical, to being manipulative and often ruthless. This is a Herculean task because the 'neurotic tyrant' often views himself to be a 'nice guy'. For those brave souls, who can actually cop to their dark side and acknowledge that they're not who they pretend to be, the rewards are awesome. Their neurotic symptoms of depression and anxiety will drop by the wayside. They regain freedom by finally taking responsibility for their lives and lose interest in controlling the lives of others. Our personal strength doesn't come from what I call the 'General Manager of the Universe Complex' nor does our inner authority come from trying to control others and external events.

The brilliant bohemian psychologist Sheldon Kopp had this to say: "Neurosis is continuing to act as if we were coping with the problem of childhood. As grownups the world is not the same as in childhood...Neurosis is a way of behaving badly without feeling we are to blame." The art of psychotherapy comes in telling patients painful truths about themselves they don't want to hear. This can only occur when there is trust and caring feelings between doctor and patient, without trust and love nothing happens. Intuition, the doctor sharing his own neurotic detours in life, as well as nighttime dreams can be very helpful. Sometimes only luck or the grace of God can intervene successfully. If we interpret our patient's 'controlling tyrant' too early, they leave therapy pissed off because they are not ready. You can't grow grass by pulling it. If we interpret too late, our patients leave because they don't get better. The old cliché, 'Timing is everything' is especially true in psychotherapy.

Finally, there are two artists who have their own view of treating the neurotic condition. The first is Blues artist, Keb Mo: "If nobody loves you And you're feeling like dust on an empty shelf Just remember you can love yourself." The second one is the soulful German poet Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, "Whatever you want to do, or dream you can do...begin it! Boldness has genius, power and magic in it."

Love to Mother Meera. One for all and all for one. PETER RUDOLF MILHADO, PH.D. Lic #MFT14142 (805) 640-1810 39 Years Experience drpetermilhado@gmail.com • (805) 640-1810 Blog: www.DrPeterMilhado.com Specialties: Psychotherapists and Artists

Ojai City Council Raggedy Edge

Continued From Page 2... blames Casitas for the extra cost of purchased water. GSW purchases from Casitas less than they lose through the pipes each year, in excess of 12%.

You know how one set of Utility Executives treats the other Utility Executives? Look at your water bill and tell me out of Sisar, Hermitage, Siete Robles,

Sisar Canyon, Ventura River Water and Meiners Oaks Water along with Casitas, who is more than triple in price than all the rest in this valley? The only one that is still Private for Profit.

Golden Double - your taxrate hike water company! They are Triple the price. They have doubled your rate in the last 8 years and in THREE years they will be making so much money on this coming rate increase they will have to PAY DOUBLE on their taxes to the State and FED tax collectors.

Goodbye Ojai, Hello BROWN create a serious financial dilemma for the County School Districts and should no longer be ignored. The Grand Jury Recommends:

County taxpayers should consider this financial dilemma as a warning and a call to action. They should demand greater accountability from their school districts and take an active role in overseeing their public funds and elected officials.

Ventura County Grand Jury 2009 - 2010



Final Report The Half Billion Dollar Elephant in Our Schools' Closets June 11, 2010

A penny saved is a penny earned. Benjamin Franklin

Continued From Page 3...

The Grand Jury found that 17 of the 22 school districts in Ventura County (County) have UNFUNDED RETIREE HEALTH CARE BENEFIT LIABILITIES.



OUSD Elephant in the Board Room!

The five School districts which are fully-funded are:

- Briggs Elementary School District
• Mupu Elementary School District
• Oak Park Unified School District
• Santa Clara Elementary School District
• Somis Union Elementary School District

The Grand Jury found that County School Districts have:

- an estimated total unfunded health care benefits liability of \$529,853,272
• a combined total estimated Annual Required Contribution (ARC) of \$44,056,287

The Grand Jury concluded that the substantial unfunded retiree health care benefit liabilities, combined with the funding reductions from the State of California (State), and the steady decline in enrollment over the past five years

TOWN. I would find it puzzling if visitors to this town didn't wonder why all the streets are continually TORN up, water is always running down the street and asphalt put back as speed bumps or a trench in the middle of the street? Why the town is turning Brown and why we have STOP GSWC signs all over this town?

Sadly it looks like we are going to pounded into the ground on this one. This rate increase will really hurt coming on top of that last Giant Rate Increase of just 3 years ago. Isn't that the same period of time that Casitas didn't take ANY Rate Increase???

Raggedy Edge Continued Page 6... benefit costs are highly speculative, especially over a thirty year period of time. Very slight changes in the assumptions related to costs and return on investments result in huge changes in the projected liability.

Other postemployment benefits (OPEB), such as health care, dental, vision, hearing, life insurance, long-term care and long-term disability, must be recognized (but not necessarily funded) as a current cost during the employees working years. Thus, each public agency must identify and disclose OPEB as an expense and, to the extent that they are not pre-funded, list OPEB obligations as a liability on its financial statements.

Methodology The Grand Jury received information from all County School Districts regarding the extent of each entity's costs and liability in providing benefits and health care for retirees. When all responses were received, the information was summarized for each district. A copy of the summary information was sent to the County School Districts requesting that they each validate the accuracy of the information and make any corrections or adjustments needed to ensure accuracy. The Grand Jury received validation from the County School Districts which were incorporated. Additionally, the Grand Jury conducted internet and newspaper searches on this topic.

Findings - F-01. Two important numbers to be concerned with are:
• the projected total health care benefits costs over the next 30 years which consists of the ARC and the normal costs for the year
• ARC, which represents an amortized payment that would remain the same for 30 years, after which time amortization payments would end

- F-11. Ojai Unified School District (@3,152 Students - 9 Schools)
• the budget for the current school year is \$22,700,000

GASB Statement 45 (GASB 45) and the extent of their unfunded retiree health care benefit liabilities. Several private industries pension funds (for example Enron, WorldCom, Adelphia, and Tyco International) went bankrupt in the 1990s. This resulted in multibillions of dollars in unfunded liabilities; the Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB) began requiring private sector companies to list pension liabilities in financial reports. [Ref-08]

GASB, which establishes and improves standards for financial accounting and reporting for state and local government agencies, concluded that many public agencies were facing a similar crisis regarding unfunded retiree health care benefits. GASB decided to require local governments to disclose the total cost of compensa-

• the annual costs associated with health care benefits are \$2,789,564: \$2,450,719 for 59 active employees and \$338,845 for 38 retirees
• the projected total health care benefits costs over the next 30 years are expected to be \$60,000,000
• the retiree health care benefits plan remains open
• ARC as of June 30, 2009 was \$1,149,918
• the health care benefits plan is not fully funded
• the unfunded health care benefits liability is \$7,560,968 [\$7.6 million]



It's elementary, my dear Watson!

There are 17 school districts that do not have a fully-funded health care benefits plan [Ojai Unified School District (OUSD) is among them].

- F-29. Credit rating agencies have stated that they will consider OPEB funding status in their evaluations of government financial condition. [Ref-09, Ref-12 through Ref-14, Ref-16]

- F-30. Included in the required GASB 45 actuarial reports provided by the consultants were the following recommendations: [Recommendations]

• that it is necessary or even desirable for an agency to establish a policy of funding exactly the ARC on a cash basis each year
• the agencies adopt a policy of pre-funding their retiree health care plan as soon as possible
• establish an irrevocable trust fund for employee's health care benefits

- F-31. Student enrollment in the County as determined by the State through a complicated formula called Average Daily Attendance (ADA) has declined a total of 3,775 students over the past five years: [Ref-17, Ref-18]

- F-32. Several school districts are accepting out-of-district student transfers in an effort to increase ADA. [Ref-19 through Ref-22]

- F-33. On March 22, 2010, the California Department of Education placed 126 school districts on a fiscal early warning list, an increase of 17% over last year. [Ref-23]

- F-34. According to the State, the Santa Paula Elementary School District might not be able to meet its financial obligations over the next few years because of the ongoing budget crises and cuts to education funding. Santa Paula Elementary School District informed the VCOE that is was

Continued, Next Page...

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Continued From Prev. Page...

invested until paid to retirees. The pay-as-you-go approach has led to the accumulation of the financial liabilities to pay for future retiree health care benefits. (F-02 through F-30)

The County School Districts offer varying levels of health care benefits to employees and retirees. They have not joined together to form a single large bargaining unit. (F-02 through F-24, F-34)

The County School District's half billion dollar unfunded liability should no longer be ignored; it will not decrease on its own. (F-30, F-33 through F-36)

Based on historical data, the cost of health care and health care insurance will continue to outpace typical annual inflation. (F-36)

The County School Districts have not been proactive in planning for or dealing with challenging financial conditions. (F-02 through F-24, F-33 through F-36)

There may be unintended consequences as a result of the choices and decisions made by the County School Districts to address the half billion dollars in unfunded health care liabilities. (F-02 through F-36)

The time for the County School Districts to make difficult choices is now. Regardless of the choices, the financial burden rests squarely on the shoulders of the taxpayer. (F-02 through F-36)

Recommendations - R-01. That County School Districts adopt a policy of prefunding their retiree health care benefits plans by establishing an irrevocable trust fund for employees' health care benefits. (C-01 through C-03, C-06 through C-07, C-09)

- R-02. That County School Districts identify effective cost reductions that will allow the District to achieve their respective calculated ARC. (C-02 through C-03, C-06 through C-07, C-09)

- R-03. That County School Districts leverage off of the economies of scale by acting as one bargaining unit and selecting a health care plan for all employees. (C-05, C-07)

- R-04. That County School Districts use language in their financial reports so that the average County taxpayer, employee, and retiree can

understand how tax dollars are being spent and recognize the extent of the district's financial indebtedness. (C-06, C-08)

That County School Districts place the entire district budget on the district website. (C-06, C-08)

That County School Districts schedule sessions to communicate and educate employees, retirees, and parents of students regarding the OPEB issue and how this is being addressed by the district. (C-01, C-02, C-05 through C-09)

That the VCOE and the elected officials of the individual districts take a pro-active role in seeking solutions to the unfunded liability crisis and present these solutions to their districts. (C-01 through C-09)

That the VCOE and the elected officials of the individual districts consider alternatives to resolve this serious financial situation, such as: (C-01 through C-09)

require greater benefit or premium cost sharing from retirees

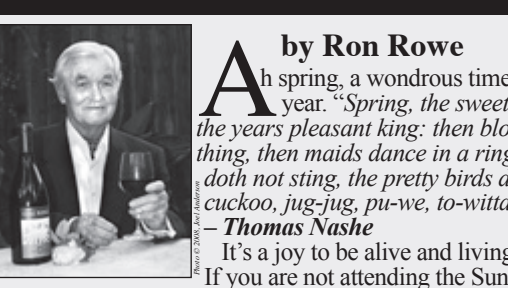
implement a new defined contribution type retiree health care program for new employees

freeze the employer-provided portion of the retiree health plan at present levels for currently covered active employees.

EDITOR'S NOTE: For More Information on Higher Education and to Read the Entire "Ventura County Grand Jury - 2009 - 2010 - Final Report - The Half Billion Dollar Elephant in Our Schools' Closets - June 11, 2010" Go To The Ojai and Ventura VIEWS ONLINE, below.

Additional Information www.OjaiAndVenturaVIEW.com/HTMLFiles/Education.html

Wine And Roses



by Ron Rowe A h spring, a wondrous time of the year. "Spring, the sweet spring is the years pleasant king; then blooms each thing, then maids dance in a ring, cold doth not sting, the pretty birds do sing, cuckoo, jug-jug, pu-we, to-witta woo!" - Thomas Nashe

It's a joy to be alive and living in Ojai. If you are not attending the Sunday Farmer's veggie market, you are missing the highlight of the week. This is a gathering of Ojais who meet old friends, gossip, chat, find new friends. There is a variety of fresh organic produce in which to buy.

The dreaded gophers are back in my garden. I called a general meeting of the wee folk who live at the bottom of my garden. They are a motley group of faeries, sea sprites, elves, gnomes, pixies, water nymphs and a visiting leprechaun: who is lazy and corrupting the young faeries.

I gave them 10 days to get rid of the gophers or they would all be on a one-way trip to Glasgow, Scotland. For chili lovers. New Mexico State University has identified the worlds hottest pepper, the Trinidad Moruga Scorpion. On a score of hotness it rates 1.2 million Scoville Units, compared with 5,000 for the hottest Jalapeno.

Jobs are leaving America. U.S. multinational companies increased employment overseas by 2.6 million, even as they cut U.S. workforces by 2.9 million. Chief executive officers at three U.S. companies earned a combined total of \$3.6 billion in 2011, a 23% increase from 2010. That amount would support 103,325 workers earning a medium wage. U.S. corporations are not our friends.

Keep track of your cell phone. Americans lost over \$30 billion worth of cell phones last year. According to the new industry study, an average consumer lose their cell phone once a year.

Eric Lee King of Minnesota was arrested after he hobbled out of a store. Police noticed him limping slowly through the parking lot with a large rectangular shape protruding from his pants. They found a 20 inch flat screen TV, remote control, power cords and a bottle of brake fluid in his pants.

Want to try something different in flip-flops? The feeling of walking barefoot in a grassy field wherever you go? Try the Australian-made flip-flops. They have the look and feel of a real grass, \$32 at discovery.com.

Everyone is feeling the pinch in these slow economic times, and Queen Elizabeth is no exception. The British government has frozen the royal families stipend, limiting the Queen and the Royals to 50,000,000 pounds a year.

Germany has pushed the U.S. to third place as an investor in clean energy technology by investing \$42 billion last year in renewable energy. The U.S. invested \$34 billion. China, still leading by investing \$58 billion.

Speaking of China, Chinese artists are dominating the global art market holding three of the top five auctions last year. Zhang Daqian fetched number one spot with \$50 million in sales, followed by Qi Baish with \$45 million. Andy Warhol came in third.

Office space in Beijing, China cost more than in New York. Rents have soared making it the fifth most expensive city in the world, followed by London, Tokyo and Moscow.

Chinese legislators make U.S. lawmakers look like paupers. Last year the 78 richest members of the Chinese legislator added more to their wealth, \$11.8 billion. This was more than the combined net worth of all 535 members of Congress, Pres. Obama the entire cabinet and the Supreme Court. Our corporate chiefs are a whole different deal - they have the money.

When Apple began manufacturing the iPhone, the company estimated that it would take nine months to find 8,700 qualified industrial engineers in the U.S. to oversee assembly line workers. In China it took 15 days.

According to a recent study, men's neckties will soon be a thing of the past, over 45 percent of those polled said they do not think office workers will be wearing neckties in six years.

Are you worried about Iran getting the bomb? There are now 20,000, with 550 nuclear warheads and bombs in the world held by nine nations. The U.S. has 8,500 of them.

For wine lovers who would like to know about wine Cor-kz is the most useful resource for the majority of wine consumers. Simply scan the name of the wine and the app will call up reviews, provide price comparisons and help you locate other wine stores. Three dollars for Android, two dollars for iOS.

According to the New York Times, boxed wines have turned the corner. They used to be uniformly bad, now a plastic pouch inside the box keeps air out even after it's been opened. If you are willing to try a boxed wine, here are a few of the best. 2010 domaine le Carrington Côtes-du-Rhône \$39 for 3 Litres. This was a winemaker's favorite choice, fresh and lightly tannic, it comes in a distinctive wooden box. 2009 from the Côtes du Rhône \$37 bright balanced red, a little more straightforward than the Carrington 2010 Cantina Valpatena \$27, boxed whites are often less satisfying than the Reds but this lively nutty wine is a standout, worth a try. The sun has set over the yard arm, time to relax and enjoy a glass of wine.

Your comments are welcome Ron Rowe, rhjrowe@aol.com

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OJAI CITY COUNCIL RAGGEDY EDGE

Continued From Page 2...

are the Ratepayers sitting on their hands? Why aren't we filling the Casitas Board Meetings each meeting and calling our representatives each time we get a water bill? Why aren't we attending City Hall like those BAG people or the NO-LIGHT People. They are getting changes while you stay at home people are letting Golden Sour Grapes Water Company get the GOLD MINE and you are going to continue to get the SHAFT. Over and over again with each water bill.

The real winner, APATHY. 2,860 water users, 37 complaints to the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC).... not enough for them to mess with.

So I guess the rest of the 2,823 users think Golden Shaft Water is providing. Pure quality, clear, sediment free, color free, odor free adequate pressure water for a reasonable cost.... I guess this community is a lot more affluent that I thought? We pay amongst the highest water rates in California and, due to the lack of complaints, we must be satisfied, satisfied with this? When did the people of Ojai lose their stomach for this? Sad I always thought the people of Ojai would fight to preserve this Jewel..

Well, Finally something has got me for a loss of words. Hello, Is this Hanson Well Drillers? Could you come over and start drilling a well, asap? Hang 'em High!

- Dick Lynch

The Mysteries of Creek Road

(Never a good thing). He was chased down and ran to ground at the great Oak Tree on the grounds of Villanova School. There, he was gunned down by lawmen who chopped off his head for a reward.

Some say this small winding thoroughfare is one of the most haunted in all of California. I believe a case could be made for this claim.

In this lane that winds itself from Oak View to Ojai, there are enough ghosts for episodes of Ghost Hunters, Paranormal Challenge and Ghost Adventures with some left over! Besides that, there are even reports of two monsters and a lost treasure!

Perhaps the best known phantom to wander Creek Road is that of Char-Man, the burned figure that stumbles along, with a face that resembles a burned skull. They say that if you are unlucky enough to encounter this ghost you will first smell the sickeningly sweet stench of burned human flesh! They also say he hates teenagers!

If some of the stories about this apparition are true, he has good reason to hold a grudge on teens. They say that he threw some of them, and their hot rods, off of his land in 1951. He didn't like their Rock and Roll music nor their racing about on his farm.

One of the teens, so it is said, returned that night and set fire to a shed, the flames reached the main house, and the sleeping farmer was unable to get out in time and was burned to death. Now he walks Creek Road looking for the people who set the fire and ended his earthly existence. For some reason teenagers love to drive Creek Road at night. Sometimes they even play rock and roll music in hopes that this will cause "Char-Man" to come out (By the way, he prefers classic rock).

Some young people even tell of seeing the phantom! One Nordhoff High student, years ago, was walking on Creek Road and attacked. It ripped off his Letterman Jacket! Some say the terrible ghost now wears a Nordhoff High School Jacket as a sort of "trophy!"

Another well known Creek Road Ghost is one that traces its roots to the wild and woolly days of the Gold Rush. It is said to wander the whole of the Ojai Valley and Creek Road with a few sightings in Ventura.

It is the phantom of the Headless Houseman of the Ojai. It is the ghost of a bandit who raided all over California. He was so evil he stopped worshipping God and began to worship Satan as his personal god!

His ghost was ordered to return to the Earth by his master, El Diablo, to find his head. Now he rides the Ojai Valley and Creek Road seeking sinners to take with him back to Hell to please his boss. If you have done bad things, so they say, he will come for you! He rides Satan's own stallion - a huge black horse named Brimstone, that can gallop at "a mile a minute" (Sixty Miles an Hour). Yes, strange as it seems, people have seen this thing - a headless horseman riding along at the dead of night. Legend says he rides on the last day of the month!

There are other ghosts as well; a phantom woman in a tattered wedding dress who was murdered by her evil husband on her wedding night, a woman riding a ghost horse, the restless shade of a Native American, as well as a new variation on an old yarn, a headless motorcyclist, who rides Creek Road seeking the pick-up truck that forced him off the road and into the wire fence that decapitated him.

Besides ghosts on this road there are two monsters. One is a huge bat that has been seen swooping over cars at late night (in fairness, it might be a California Condor that flew over the vehicles-but if you have ever seen one of those majestic birds up close, it can be scary).

Another monster is that of a huge black dog - a dog almost as big as a Shetland Pony! Like all proper ghost canines, it has eyes that glow like hot coals. One skeptic came face to face with this beast one morning as it jumped on to the hood of her car! The tale is that it was a demon dog sent by a Chumash Holy Man to exact revenge on a cruel Spanish Officer from the Old Mission.

Others link the dog to a Vampire legend set in the Ojai Valley in the late 19th Century. A few people have seen this oversized beast on Creek Road.

There is also a story of a lost treasure hidden some where along San Antonio Creek. It was hidden there by outlaws in Gold Rush times. They placed their ill-gotten gains in a hidden cave, after murdering people traveling on Creek Road! There last victim was a Spanish

DEMAND ACCOUNTABILITY FROM PUBLIC OFFICIALS

Fight For Your Rights!

- **Casitas Water Board Meeting** - Mon, May 7 - 3pm
- **Ojai City Council Meeting** - Tues, May 8 - 7pm
- **Ojai School Board (OUSD)** - Tues, May 8 - 5:30pm
- **Historic Preservation Commission Meeting** - Thurs, May 10 - 5pm
- **Ojai Valley Sanitation District** - Mon, May 21 - 6pm
- **Ojai City Council Meeting** - Tues, May 22 - 7pm
- **Casitas Water Board Meeting** - Wed, May 23 - 3pm
- **Ojai School Board (OUSD)** - Tues, June 5 - 5:30pm
- **Ojai City Council Meeting** - Tues, June 12 - 7pm
- **Casitas Water Board Meeting** - Wed, June 13 - 3pm
- **Ojai Valley Sanitation District** - Mon, June 25 - 6pm
- **Ojai School Board (OUSD)** - Tues, June 26 - 5:30pm
- **Casitas Water Board Meeting** - Wed, June 27 - 3pm
- **Casitas Water Board Meeting** - Wed, July 11 - 3pm
- **Casitas Water Board Meeting** - Wed, July 25 - 3pm
- **Ojai Valley Sanitation District** - Mon, July 30 - 6pm
- **Ojai School Board (OUSD)** - Tues, Aug. 21 - 5:30pm

So What Has Former OUSD Super Tim Baird Been Up to In San Diego?

A Trip Down Memory Lane

Former OUSD Super, Dr. Tim Baird is now (as Superintendent of Encinitas Union School District) suing that City of Encinitas because they won't rezone the school property he wants to sell there. The state changed the proceeds rules until 2014

where any school can sell and use the money for whatever it wants, even outrageous administrative salaries and overwrought pension liabilities. City of Encinitas wouldn't change the zoning for the school, just like Ojai wouldn't do for OUSD.

Can they move fast enough? Will the Historians or the Ancient and archaic board members resist? Will the cities evoke gridlock to avoid making any reasonable decision? Has OUSD's Bangser forgot that the Skate Park, he thought had been there only 2 years, not the 14 to come, has First Right of Refusal for Use, or will it be in the cities best interest to put in a mobile home park for the elderly and infirm to allow access to downtown???? Are these school administrators we're talking about or high-powered real estate developers? Stay tuned, for the Lake Ojai-Weslake homeowners radio vignettes of DENIAL.

- Editor

Monk carrying gold from the Bishop in Santa Barbara. After killing him, the bandit's luck changed - they were caught in a rain storm and flood and washed down the Ventura River into the sea. That's why the Ghostly outlaws still guard their treasure - and why it hasn't been found. That is due to a terrible curse upon the gold. It is whispered that anyone who finds the treasure cave will be instantly struck mad and be discovered wandering Creek Road unable to speak! Would you risk your reason for this wealth?

OF NOTE: These tales and many more will be part of a unique week long class Mr. Senate will offer at The Ignite Creative Learning Studio, July 23 to 27. The class is titled: Lost Gold Mines, Pirate Treasures, Chinese Rebels and Chumash Folklore. For more information and to enroll see: www.IgniteCreativeLearning.com

Classes are held in Ojai. - Richard Senate, hainthunter@aol.com

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My Path to Citizenship

by Jefferson Pinto

When I first arrived in the U.S., I didn't speak the language. I didn't know who was president. I didn't even know the Constitution existed. I didn't even have functional teeth.

Fortunately, I had a sponsor. We hadn't spoken before, and my sponsor didn't really know me. My sponsor didn't fully understand the full cost of such a sponsorship. What if I were a slow learner or arrived with a horrible disease or defect?

Nevertheless, she accepted the terms of the sponsorship knowing there were no guarantees. My sponsor prepared for my arrival many months in advance to ensure my arrival was a smooth transition.

As my sponsor, she took me into her home where I caused a great disturbance for the existing occupants. I never missed a meal.

During my younger years, a day didn't go by where I didn't receive my one-on-one education: how to speak English, manners, and customs, morals, citizenship, etc. Because I was incapable, she made many decisions on my behalf without consulting me, such as diet, clothing, religion, enter-

tainment, education, friends, and even cast her ballot in my best interest. Thanks Mom.

Thank you for taking your prenatal vitamins and not smoking when you were pregnant with me. Thanks for forcing me to take piano lessons from the grouchy old lady with rhinestone studded cat glasses. Thanks for taking me to the doctor to get a cast for my broken foot, even though you warned me to stay off the garage roof from which I jumped. Thanks for taking me to the dentist to get crowns over my previously perfect teeth I knocked while riding my bicycle down a steep hill near our home.

But thank you most of all for telling me the truth when I needed to hear it. Thanks for letting me take chances where, more than often, I succeeded. And when I failed, you let me learn from my mistakes and encouraged me to keep trying.

Thank you for teaching me right from wrong and guiding me to become the man I am today. Thank you for giving of your mind, body, and soul without the expectation of anything in return. Thank you for giving me the very best of everything you had. There's something unique about mother-

hood. In addition to the sleep deprivation, emotional stress, back aches, and distortion on the mother's body, there is a nine month waiting period to psychologically prepare her for the change of a lifetime (*hers and mine*).

No licenses or contracts are required. She can't be voted in or out of office. There are very few regulations. Those government rules that do exist are at such a low standard that most mothers wouldn't dream of violating them. If motherhood were a corporate job, it would violate occupational safety laws (*OSHA*) and labor laws (*not child birth, the other labor*). With poor ergonomics, exposure to biohazards, lack of safety equipment, compensation far less than the federal minimum wage, excessive overtime, workplace harassment from self-absorbed teenagers, no health or retirement benefits, who wouldn't look for a better job? Mothers!

On the Job Performance
So why do they perform so well on the job under conditions considered intolerable by government standards. Motherhood is the epitome of *agape* (*ἀγάπη*). It is defined as *the love that brings forth caring regardless of the circumstance. It is unconditional love.*

So how does society thank our Mothers of today?
By selling us out to financial political contributors, taxing the "tar" out of us all, lowering our standard of living, and requiring mothers to take a job outside their home to make ends meet. By over charging them for maternity clothing. Why is a garment with maybe 10% more material triple the price of non-maternity counterparts? By judging her, if her children don't have perfectly combed hair, straight white teeth, and spotless clothing as portrayed in the television commercials. By overlooking them for a promotion because then can't sustain long out of town business trips or work crazy overtime.

Happy Mother's Day
President Woodrow Wilson proclaimed May 9, 1914, the first Mother's Day. He asked Americans on that day to give a public "thank you" to their mothers and all mothers.

Depending on who tabulates the numbers, there are more long distance phone calls on Mother's Day than any other day of the year. That's a tradition worth keeping. By the way, I understand mothers like calls to hear your voice several times throughout the year, with or without a good reason. Text messages or e-mails don't count either. And, by the way happy Mother's Day. Jefferson Pinto is a retired CPA, and holds an MBA from one of the finer accredited universities in the country.

Prayer Request 5th Marines

FRIDAY, MAY 4, 2012 - These young hearts are innocent by birth. Nor could they possibly comprehend the catastrophic politics of our world today with such short lives. The principles of the Patriarchal rule continue to ram steel heads together crashing and killing the joy out of life. And, human beings will never agree at the level of the mind! True freedom requires such sophisticated inner technology that very few acquire or care to know. We live in such a primitive whirl of god forsaken politics fighting and gambling at a crap table! "Slaughterhouse 9"?

We are asking everyone to say a prayer for "Dark-horse" 3rd Battalion 5th Marines and their families. They are fighting it out in Afghanistan & they

have lost 9 marines in 4 days. IT WOULD BE NICE TO SEE the message spread if more could pass it on. Nothing in the media about these guys because no one seems to care: Justin Allen, 23, Brett Linley, 29, Matthew Weikert, 29, Justus Bartlett, 27, Dave Santos, 21, Chase Stanley, 21 Jesse Reed, 26, Matthew Johnson, 21, Zachary Fisher, 24, Brandon King, 23, Christopher Goeke, 23, Sheldon Tate, 27. All are Marines that gave their lives for YOU this week.

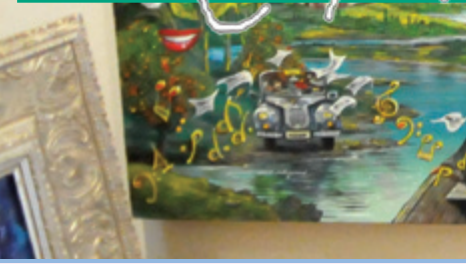
*Learn from the Past
Listen to the Present
- unknown*



Robert and Gallery Owner Donna Tartaglia



The Father of "Two Worlds"



*"Peace cannot be kept by force. It can only be achieved by understanding."
- Einstein*



Photos ©, 2012 Cher/Joel Anderson



Robert Lyn Nelson

by Cher

Saturday April 14th was a successful night in art sales over lively conversation wine and hors d'oeuvres at Trowbridge Gallery, Ojai. International acclaimed artist Robert Lyn Nelson showed his incredible breathtaking art paintings to a friendly group of art lovers.

Robert is known for his impressive murals, sculptures, landscapes, seascapes, and amazing still lifes. Over the last several years he has also been inspired by The Beatles, interpreting their albums through his art.

Nelson was heavily influenced by some of the greatest and well known artists, including Rembrandt, Monet, Salvador Dali, Maxwell Parrish and Andrew Wyeth. His early love of Cubism, in studying the work of creators Pablo Picasso and Georges Braque, greatly influenced Nelson and his work, profoundly apparent to this day.

A festive night unfolded as intriguing people filtered in and out of Trowbridge in a long steady stream all night. Said gallery owner Dana Tartaglia, "Trowbridge Gallery was honored to host the incredible Smithsonian Artist Robert Lyn Nelson for a Spring show of his art. A great selection of Robert's original art is on permanent exhibit here at Trowbridge."

Robert was joined by other in-house artists and prominent others who stopped by; all from Ojai, Santa Barbara, Ventura or beyond; sculptors, painters, photographers and friends such as Caren Satterfield, Denise Carbone, Elisabeth McGinn and Jeff Sojka, John Stutz, Ingrid Boulting, numerous others. A few artists and patrons also stopped by to meet Robert, some coming from L.A., Temecula, and beyond the "Great State."

Later Robert said he really enjoyed doing an exhibit in beautiful Ojai, "I met some really nice Ojians and I really appreciate them coming over to the gallery" and it did not end there as planned but moved on to El Giardino Restaurant, as a large group enjoyed wine, dinner and jovial conversation. It was a nice time to remember in the heart of downtown Ojai at Trowbridge Gallery.

NOTE: On Saturday, May 26 the Gallery is hosting featured artist, Jeff Sojka from 3-7pm. All are welcome.

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THE LEASHES END



Ron and his companion, Dudley.

by Ron Rowe

With a slow economy and money tight pet owners spent a record \$50 billion on their pets in 2011. Of that amount, food and veterinary costs took up over 65 percent.

American Pet Products are predicting 2012 will be another banner year for services, predicting it will grow to an estimated \$4.11 billion.

Pet insurance is also another growing industry topping \$450 million in 2011, with an expected growth to \$500 million in 2012.

A pet dog will walk an average 11,270 miles in an average lifetime. Dogs, who typically live 12 years, will spend one third of their life sleeping.

Every third and first Saturday of every month 10 am to 1 pm at the Ojai Humane Society Shelter on Bryant Street, Ojai, veterinarian Dr. Lewis conducts low-cost shot clinic for pets.

A brand new Best Friends Animal Society opened a new spay/neuter clinic in Los Angeles. This will provide shelter for homeless pets from L.A. It's a large facility 44,000 square feet, and includes exercise yards, meet and greet gardens, a veterinarian clinic and a ready to service staff.

This is just the beginning for Best Friends Animal Society. They are planning on opening no kill shelters all over the U.S.

Did you know over 10 billion chickens are hatched in the U.S. every year? The vast majority of these, intended for meat, are crowded by the thousands into warehouses.

Sad but true, every year they die in filthy disease-ridden factory farms before reaching slaughter, weight: just six weeks of age. If you would like to help call Farm Sanctuary at 607-582-2225.

Finally justice. A strict animal code has been passed in Rhode Island. Repeat animal abuser Todd Perkins became the first person to be sentenced to jail time and banned from owning animals for five years, the dog he neglected is on the mend at the SPCA shelter.

Two new dog leashes are on the market. A tug preventive dog trainer: this ultra sonic device trains dogs to walk without tugging their owners. The device attaches between the leash and collar and, when the dog tugs, the speaker emits an ultra sonic frequency that dogs find irritating, yet is inaudible to humans.

Also, The Unleashed. A shoelace thin super strong cord retracts into the collar itself, freeing your hands when you let your dog roam, \$33 at www.Myraddog.com.

Some cats do have charmed lives. A one-year-old cat in Massachusetts survived a 19 story fall by gliding like a squirrel. Witnesses say the cat landed on her feet in a patch of mulch surrounded by concrete.

A city in Taiwan is offering dog owners who clean up after their pets an incentive: a ticket to a lottery drawing for every bag of dog poop turned in. Prizes include gold ingots worth \$2,200.

The number of pets euthanized in the U.S. has fallen from 20 million in 1972 to 3 million in 2011, even though the number of pets has doubled over that period to 160 million.

Do politicians respond to voters letters of protest? Yes, in the U.S. people are writing to

their congressmen and senators about animal cruelty and circus abuse with positive results. In Norway thousands of animal activist wrote in protesting the Norwegian government plan to make seal hunting a tourist attraction. The government abandoned the idea after an avalanche of protest letters.

Looking for a good book to read? Try One at a Time, A Week in an Animal Shelter by Diane Leigh and Marilynne Geyer.

Up to 12 million animals enter animal shelters in the U.S. every year, yet only 2 to 3 million will be adopted. An animal is euthanized every 5 seconds. It's a powerful book with some success stories as well.

Peace to all living beings on earth your comments are welcome Ron Rowe, rhjrowe@aol.com



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Ojai Residents Say SoCal Edison Smart Meters Causing Health Problems



Photo © 2012, Joel Anderson

Ojai Edison customers Trinity Alexander and her brother, Eric complain of headaches, dizziness which started within an hour of Edison installing a "Smart" Meter on their home a couple weeks ago.

Trinity already suffers from high blood pressure, and is on two different medications, while Eric has never experienced headaches... until the meter was installed.

According to Trinity, Edison showed up and "he said, I'm gonna be turning off your power for just a few minutes.... not long.... I said, Oh oh ok. He didn't tell us why? ...just for a few minutes he said.... when he got done I went over there and this machine's in there.... he had left... you stand next to it you feel funny, it doesn't feel right.... pressure in your head.... right away," she said.

"I had headaches for over a week, a couple weeks since the day they put it in. I didn't know this stuff was going to mess you up in the first place," she said. Eric concluded, "Hopefully we can get to the root of these things. The most amazing part to me is that if I just go stand over there you can feel it, you know that can't be good!"

What I don't understand is why the bill spikes when they put it in?" Apparently the extra dangerous "Electro Magnetic Frequency" (EMF) technology uses more electricity than the old school analog meters, so customers will pay more, one way or the other.

Chances are that children being exposed to the EMF's can be dangerous, according

HUMANE SOCIETY LEGISLATIVE FUND Track Animal Cruelty Crimes

to many studies. Ojai resident Crystal Magill is concerned about her kids, "Their toys.... that's where they play.... it (toywork bench) is literally right here, and that's where they play, usually within feet.... It's a passive form of protest against something you don't believe in, that's being forced upon you."

For More Detailed, scientific and medical information about the "Not So" Smart Meters, http://www.ojaiandventuraview.com/OVVtaArt/OptOutEdison.html



Crystal Magill, and kids, Lola, 3, and Skylar, just 5.

WHY THE OJAI ART CENTER CAN K_S_S MY A_S

From: marketingmavins@gmail.com Subject: 35th Annual Art in the Park - Event Listing Date: April 23, 2012 3:36:52 PM PDT To: editor@ojaiandventuraview.com

Hi, can you run this event listing for us? Ojai Art Center's 35th Annual Art in the Park Juried Fine Arts Festival Downtown Ojai Thank you! Helen Solomon Marketing Mavins - Your Marketing Team marketingmavins@gmail.com 805-317-1504

Subject: Re: 35th Annual Art in the Park - Event Listing From: editor@ojaiandventuraview.com Date: April 23, 2012 4:26:26 PM PDT To: marketingmavins@gmail.com

Helen, I am not sure we have met. I am going to be brutally honest with you so that you will understand my policy and reticence to run P.R. associated with the Ojai Art Center. My newspaper, The Ojai and Ventura VIEW, has not received the support etc. in spirit, material or otherwise from the Ojai Art Center with which THE VIEW wholly deserves.

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several years ago that the reason was that the Art Center Board/or policy did not accept commercial publications displayed/distributed there. This is despite several commercial publications regularly available there (check the rack just outside the double doors and you will usually find several "accepted" commercial publications).

I am not completely sure why this is, however I suspect it has to do with the factual, truthful and real nature of The VIEW content. Most people cannot handle the "truth" in publications, and elsewhere and, I believe, this is in part what is at the core, and of societies current false condition.

It is unfortunate that the Art Center in fact has a proved double standard, because over the years The VIEW (and also in my capacity with The VOICE for a majority of its years in publication) has in fact generated high quality stories, photo essays, and "Free" event listings, which it has in fact benefitted (one need only google to see).

It is widely known I have been a great supporter of "free" volunteer listings, photo essays, stories, etc. ever since I arrived in Ojai in the early 90s. I have donated near endless column inches of expensive "ink" which I pay for out of my own pocket in the checks I write to my printer. I have never asked for sympathy, pity or otherwise from this community, and will not start now as I am a realist. I, in fact have a B.A. in Art myself and so find it disheartening that I am unable to contribute, and that any art community behaves in such a narrow, limiting and exclusive manner.

I do wish you good luck with your endeavors. I hope you understand my position, that my hands have been tied.

Joel Anderson http://ojaiandventuraview.com/xhtml/VIEWAdvertise.html

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THE MIGHTY CASH CATS AT FOLSOM

by Joel Anderson
The Mighty Cash Cats continue to spread the gospel of Cash to a variety of age, geographical, and ethnic groups. On April 28, the band played a concert for the students at Thacher School, a private High School in Ojai.

On Sat. May 5, they perform at a theater in Laguna Woods Village, a retirement resort in Laguna Hills – from teens to seniors in one week!

At a recent show at the Norwood Library in El Monte, Michael J and Leticia Blumette did a musical workshop for school children from elementary grades to high school!

Also of significance, on April 14, Michael was asked to be the opening act at the new Folsom Amphitheater. The Mighty Cash Cats played to a standing room only crowd and received several encores. The band got a tour of Folsom Prison, site of Johnny's biggest hit.

Also on the Mighty Cash Cats' calendar last month was the San Bernadino Train Festival – what could be better than Johnny Cash and trains plus Folsom!

This summer, The Mighty Cash



The live Folsom concert April 14.



The Mighty Cash Cats toured Folsom Prison April 14.



Nurturing the next generation of Johnny Cash fans at Norwood, Ca. library, Michael J. presents a great educational workshop for kids who love the bouncy beat, the fascination with the trains and storytelling aspect of Cash originals. They're also eager to learn about the Carter family, Rockabilly music, Sun Records, Carl Perkins, Elvis... and how it all evolved out of real country musical roots.

Cats shows include the Sonoma County Fair, The Sutter Creek Theater, The Coalinga Horned Toad Festival and Races, The Lab Brewery, and The Isalnd Packers Johnny Cash Cruise. They will be back in Europe next year at Festivals in Ireland and France.

Michael J. Smith started the Mighty Cash Cats in 2006. They are the first group in America to do a Johnny and June Tribute. He started playing Johnny Cash's music in a Ventura-based band called the Rhythm Rangers.

He had an inspiration to not only perform the Cash's music, but to tell the stories behind the Man in Black and his music. As a former teacher, Michael concurrently put

Cash Continued on Page 15...



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Ernie's First Guitar

Ernie just told me that his first guitar was a Christmas present. He said he remembers tearing open the wrapping just enough to get a glimpse of what was to be his first guitar.

Ernie's "Stella" guitar – a Christmas gift. It came from a music store downtown Santa Barbara called "Bennett's Music".
 Ernie recalls looking, with his brothers Cory and Brian, at all the musical instruments in the Bennett's Music store window as they passed by, on their way home from the movies on State Street. Brian remembers that store because it's where Ernie got his first guitar. It was the black and sunburst color ¾ scale "Stella" guitar that Ernie still has even today.

So many memories with that guitar. As Ernie said in the recent film documentary, "Makin' it", his first "performance was singing the Elvis tune "Hound Dog" at the entrance of Brownie's Market on De La Vina Street in Santa Barbara.

Ernie was shy, but his classmate and friend Bobby Brown talked Ernie into singing in front of the little neighborhood store that was owned by Bobby's parents.

Years later, Bobby Brown became Ernie's team mate and All-League Center "Bob Brown". He and team quarterback Ernie were co-captains with the SBHS JV Dons. Bob later coached Varsity Football at San Marcos & SB High schools.

Anyhow, both Bobby Brown and Ernie were only 9-years-old. Maybe Ernie was shy, but he sure had that confident Elvis stance when he played. He even had the Elvis leg movements down. And he really belted out that song while strumming that first guitar there in front of Brownie's. Ernie always got the crowd going even without the help of "The Jordanaires".

Soon there were other "Shows" where Ernie did his Elvis impression. Ernie learned even more songs, and got his confidence up too. One neighborhood Halloween party, and before anyone knew it, Ernie was on his way home to get his guitar. Someone snapped a photo of Ernie singing "Hound Dog" with that Elvis stance, white T-shirt and matching white pants. Friends and family were all excited when the shot appeared in a news story the following day. Hey Ernie, where is that photo? It will never be erased from their memories, but it may be one of those lost treasures they will never see again.

It was only a matter of months before Ernie took his musical journey to the next level. It was a very public performance as a band. Yes, it was a real band... kinda. "Ernie couldn't wait for us to learn to play real instruments", explains Brian so they got a friend, Larry Reed, to play some percussion. Yes, Larry had one of those "junior" drum sets,



Ernie, Sunshine, Lance, and "Stella" and Ernie recruited brother Cory and Brian to play kazooos. The kazooos were shaped in the form of a saxophone, so it wasn't long before Ernie had an accompanying rhythm and "horn" sections.

They did their very first public performance with Ernie singing and playing his "Stella" guitar. It was during the annual summer celebration of "Old Spanish Days" in Santa Barbara. The locals call it "Fiesta".

They did that first show for Fiesta right there on State Street at the entrance of an antique shop, with the owner standing to the side with a big smile on his face as he listened to them play, watching them draw a crowd to his store.

Ernie was the main attraction, and the crowd of Fiesta tourists and locals just kept getting bigger and bigger. The businessman that he was, the store owner put out a little container that he called "a tip jar".

The "tip jar" was a great idea. The boys were sure happy about that. They finally made it home still eating their ice creams that they bought with the tip jar money. Their Mom, Esther Oroasco, saw the ice cream and bags of candy and asked, "Where did you get the money to buy all that?"

They were all smiles when answering, "From our tip jar... We played on State Street for Fiesta at an antique shop with Ernie and his guitar."

They all called him "Big Brother Ernie Joseph". He could sure sing, play the guitar and get a crowd going. Everybody loved it. The boys all felt it was the start of something good. Those summertime ice creams and candy were great, always sharing it all with their friends. And the best part of it all was that the people who saw them play were happy too.

The band didn't have a name, but "Big Brother Ernie Joseph" sure had a great idea. And it all started with that Elvis song and Ernie's first guitar.

– Joel Anderson
 SRS News: Brian Faith Band's Karen Perry



Bobby Brown Ernie Joseph Brian Faith



Photos © 2012, Joel Anderson

on his new song, "You Get What You Give." In the near future, Ojai's jammin' James Antunez will be working on a new project also.... BFB was pleased with the great reception @ the Riverside Film Festival for John and Grace Ferry's film on the band, "Makin' It." It hit the Big Screen on April 27th! Part of the Film featured Santa Barbara's Brownies Market, noted in the story above.

Watch new BFB YouTube Videos, produced by Johnny Podz: "Popcorn Double Feature", "I Never Knew You", "I Can't Help Being Yours," all originals. Stay tuned to The VIEW, and Check page 14, VIEW Music Listings for the latest gigs.

– Joel Anderson

Wreck Room Sports Grill
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