

November 2016



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#NOVENICE BID

DEEPER INSIDE: BALLOT PICKS, ELECTION HELL, The Journey To The Jerusalem Prayer Project, New Homeless Program With Proven Track Record Of Success Comes To Venice, Poetry and Art

Update on the Westminster Storage Facility

By Jon Wolff

The two October Venice meetings that were scheduled to discuss Councilmember Mike Bonin's plan to create a storage facility in the Westminster Senior Center for unhoused people in Venice were cancelled. If any further meetings are scheduled, the Councilmember's office will announce them online. In the meantime, how is the storage facility coming along?

I had the opportunity, on October 26, to speak on the phone with Mr. Bonin's Venice Field Representative, Taylor Bazley. He said that the construction of the facility would be completed in a couple of weeks. After that, the L.A. City Council will vote on if and how it will operate.

Although the Westminster facility project was announced back in March as part of a plan by Mike Bonin to address the issue of homelessness, opponents of the facility attended meetings in September and filibustered any rational discussion. Mr. Bonin's representatives later met with individuals in Venice, including members of the Venice Neighborhood Council, to find ways to improve the plan for "stakeholders" in Venice.

Opposition to the facility had come from those who claim to live near Westminster Park where the Westminster Senior Center is located. These "residents" had expressed fears at the September meetings that their kids, many of whom attend Westminster Avenue Elementary School across the street, would somehow be negatively impacted by the presence of unhoused people who use the storage facility. In response to their concerns, Mr. Bonin's representatives asked for ideas to make it more acceptable. Mr. Bazley was able to cite one such idea, extra trash bins near the facility, as a way to make the facility work better.

At this time, the Westminster storage facility is the only new stationary facility planned in Venice. It consists of one hundred and twenty-six storage bins. By Mr. Bazley's estimate, there are nine hundred unhoused persons in Venice. Other similar facilities are currently operating in San Pedro and Downtown L.A. The feasibility of these sites for use by those in need in Venice is for anyone to judge.

While construction of the Westminster facility is being completed, some in Venice have filed a lawsuit to prevent it from happening. If a court were to issue an injunction, it would be stopped but, so far, it's legal.

One less-discussed effect of the existence of a storage facility is the expansion of police powers in regard to unhoused people. Last year's L.A. Municipal Code 56.11 would have given the police the authority to ticket unhoused people and impound their possessions. Much of this authority was reined in when it became clear that a person without a place to store his or her belongings couldn't be told to remove them from the public space. But now, if a storage facility begins operation, a radius from the site will establish a zone around the facility. The police will then, again, be able to take a person's stuff if he or she falls within the zone.

It remains to be seen how this will play out. If the police are given more power to harass unhoused people, will they only harass within the delineated boundaries? If the zone of enforcement is one quarter of a mile around

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Presidential Election Analysis

By Joe Deleplaine

On October 19, 2016, at the third and final U.S. Presidential debate in Las Vegas, Nevada, the following contentious exchange took place between debate moderator, Chris Wallace and Democratic Party Presidential nominee, Hillary Clinton.

"Secretary Clinton," Chris Wallace asked, "in a speech you gave to a Brazilian bank, for which you were paid \$225,000, we've learned from the WikiLeaks that you said, 'My dream is a hemispheric common market with open trade and open borders.' Is that your dream, open borders?"

Clinton responded, "You are very clearly quoting from WikiLeaks and what's really important about WikiLeaks is that the Russian government has engaged in espionage against Americans, they have hacked American websites, American accounts of private people, of institutions. Then they have given that information to WikiLeaks for the purpose of putting it on the Internet. This has come from the highest levels of the Russian government, clearly, from Putin himself, in an effort to influence our election... We've never had anything like this happen in any of our elections before." [http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=119039] [http://www.nbcnews.com/meet-the-press/meet-press-october-16-2016-n667251]

Clinton's response -- setting aside its deliberate inaccuracies for a moment -- raises critical issues which need to be addressed. Most urgent among them, the U.S. government's increasingly militaristic, anti-Russia hostilities.

Last week, President Obama ordered Russia to be "officially" investigated by both the National Security Agency and Homeland Security, in response to Clinton and the DNC's unsubstantiated claims. This week, Vice President, Joe Biden, went further, declaring the U.S. will launch a cyber attack on Russia as "retaliation". In addition to threats, the U.S. is encircling Russia's borders with increasing numbers of U.S. soldiers and military firepower.

Bear in mind that, to date, neither Clinton nor any U.S. agencies have presented any evidence legitimizing Clinton's claims of "Russian interference" in U.S. elections or the DNC's emails being "hacked by Russia".

In contrast, the U.S. government has done both -- and far worse -- historically, including: the massacring millions of indigenous people worldwide and well as within its own borders; the funding, arming and training of death squads around the world; the continued torturing of people and the continued "hacking" and data collection of innocent people domestically and outside the U.S. The latter being revealed most recently through information made public by the Snowden, Assange and Manley leaks.

Most brutal of all, however, is the long history of the U.S. using its military to maintain murderous dictatorships worldwide. Here's a woefully incomplete list, beginning with the Duvaliers in Haiti; Chile's Augusto Pinochet (after assassinating democratically-elected (AS: president, and delete comma), Salvador Allende); Congo's Joseph Sese Seko Mobutu (after assassinating the country's democratically-elected President, Patrice Lumumba); Angola's Jonas Savimbi; Iran's so-called "Shah"; Nicaragua's Somoza; the Dominican Republic's Rafael Trujillo; and the current Saudi family.

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Families are the building blocks of a healthy, thriving community. Well Baby Center helps cement family relationships in Venice and Mar Vista.

By Barbara A. Mastje

In these times of escalating property values, rampant development, and focus on commodity rather than community, it's rare to find someone who is so committed to helping both the "have" and "have not" families living in Venice.

Blending her keen sense of entrepreneurship with her expertise in infant-parent mental health, Deborah Groening, MA, LMFT and Psy.D. candidate, founded Well Baby Center in 2009 to provide parenting support services and counseling for young children (prenatal to 5 years old) and their families living in Venice and Mar Vista. While there are many boutique businesses on the Westside that cater to small children and their parents, many of these may be out of reach for low-income residents. WBC welcomes families of all economic status. Unlike the typical "mommy & me" model, WBC is staffed by mental health professionals.

Groening's model for Well Baby Center was inspired by her own experiential and intellectual journey. As a mother, she knew the immense stresses and challenges of raising small children firsthand. She saw that motherhood could also bring turbulence in a woman's relationship with her partner, herself, and with her own mother. Concurrently, Groening was pursuing a degree in psychology with a direct emphasis on the family dynamic at Antioch University. "The subject of infant-family mental health became my passion, so I decided to start a parenting and counseling center that would advance accessibility of preventative services for mothers and mothers-to-be," she said. "I set out to help women receive social and psychological support during one of the most vulnerable times of their lives." A woman of boundless energy, Groening continues to broaden her studies in infant-parent and perinatal mental health, and endeavors to keep abreast of innovative clinical thinking and theory. She is about to supplement her Masters in Clinical Psychology with a Doctorate in Marriage-Family Therapy from Ryokan College. She stresses the importance of evolving to both better herself and the center she founded.

Groening moved to Venice over 30 years ago, long before the onslaught of gentrification. She was drawn to the area by its unique mix of people of all races, creeds, and economic strata. Taking this to heart, she envisioned Well Baby Center as a place where every family could afford essential services by offering them at low fees on a sliding scale.

"The transition to parenthood is rarely simple and can bring one or more struggles for new or expanding families. The professional staff at Well Baby Center leads groups and classes or private sessions that blanket a wide range of issues. These include post partum depression, loneliness, anxiety, social isolation, breast feeding and weaning, separation, divorce, or blended families, marital

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The FREE VENICE BEACHHEAD is published monthly by the Beachhead Collective as a vehicle for the people of Venice to communicate their ideas and opinions to the community at large. The Beachhead encourages anyone to submit news stories, articles, letters, photos, poetry or graphics of interest to the Venice community.

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

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The State of the Beachhead, by Not The Editor

Well if you are reading this then we have successfully put out another edition of the Free Venice Beachhead. We have about 2 months of so of funds in the bank, and some expected revenue. We need community members coming forward to take responsibility for distribution, fundraising, sustainer list maintenance, and of course, writing. While I like to think I have done a decent job of pulling this issue out of the void, the facts are that we thrive only from your contributions. Here we have a shorter issue, but last issue used 3 full page graphics. There is much going on about development issues, and it seems to me that most development permits are being subject to a lot of scrutiny. There is much political intrigue. We cannot cover it all, but you can. This paper is your poem.



Westminster Facility from page 1

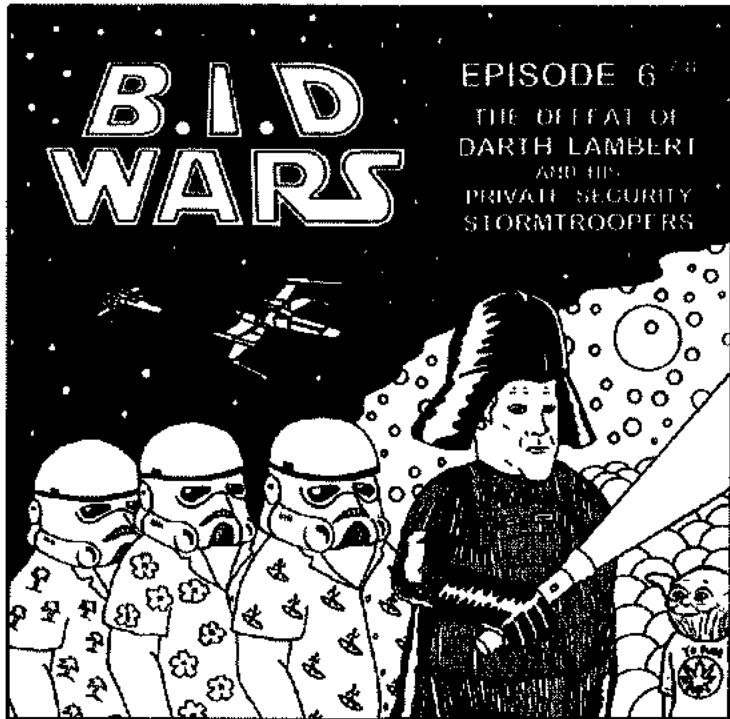
the storage facility, would a person be safe from police harassment if he or she sits one quarter of a mile and two feet from the facility? If the storage facility closes from lack of funding or from weather damage or fire, will the police automatically restrain themselves from enforcing LAMC 36.11 in the zone?

Will the effect of giving the police more power set a sticky precedent? Will some, in Venice, come to expect an easier process by which the police can ticket people and seize their possessions? Would there be times when the police overstep the bounds of their authority and leave it to their victims to sort it out later? Any student of History should hesitate to give the police more power than they already have.

Still, this seems to be the most frequently proposed answer to the housing crisis. Public meetings often fall back to this one issue. Little enthusiasm is expressed for actual low-income housing. Little attention is paid to illegal conversions of apartment buildings into hotels. And little enforcement is brought against developers who thumb their noses at city and state zoning laws and build more Big Ugly Boxes. Again and again, "doing something" about Homelessness is synonymous with "more police".

But this doesn't have to be. Why should anyone accept a compromise where the introduction of storage facilities for the unhoused in Venice has to come with more police abuse? Why should longtime and lifetime Venetians, who remember the days when the police were at war with the people, accept a "take it or leave it" offer?

Instead, envision a Venice where provision is made for those in need, as it once was. Imagine a Venice where the profiteers can't get a solid footing here, as it once was. See a Venice where those living outside are living inside, as it once was. And realize a Venice where decisions about Venice aren't made by somebody else.



STOP THE BID NOW: VENICE BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT (BID)
Venice is a Shared and Diverse Community-NOT a Business District!
Public Hearing at City Hall, 10 am on November 8, 2016

- Only Non-Residential Property Owners vote and they will be awarded total control of \$10.3 Million Dollars over 5 years given to an unproven, brand new non-profit - The Venice Beach Property Owners Association
- Most stakeholders have NO vote but WE will bear the brunt of the BID- a privately ARMED security force who answer only to their employers- handcuffs, mace, and in some BID'S GUNS, with NO City oversight once the money is handed over. More people may be harmed or even die at the hands of untrained security, based on experiences throughout the City of LA and beyond.
- Don't Be Fooled that the Venice Beach BID will provide services the City doesn't "Homeless outreach" by BID's usually means chasing people away from the beach area into residential and other surrounding neighborhoods, not actually helping people secure housing

WHAT CAN I DO?

THE CURRENT BID PLAN is if you don't want a Business Improvement District (BID) you need to actively work to pass a letter of opposition to the City and get it signed and witnessed by neighbors.

LETTERS: ROBERT@VENICEBID.COM

213.433.0013

The Peace and Freedom Party On State Propositions

Proposition 51, a \$9 billion school bond (with \$1 billion going to charter school construction), must be repaid with an additional \$8.6 billion in tax-free interest. For more, see this article. **Vote NO.**

Proposition 52 secures funding for MediCal and services for poor people from a hospital fee and prevents the state legislature from diverting the earmarked money to the general fund. **Vote YES.**

Proposition 53 requires an undemocratic supermajority vote to approve revenue bonds (financed by the proceeds from the funded projects). **Vote NO.**

Proposition 54 looks like a Republican answer to a dispute between the two major parties about how to make the legislative process more transparent. We are sitting this out for now.

Proposition 55 extends Proposition 30, which taxes the wealthy to increase funding for education and health care. Prop. 55 lets the one-half cent sales tax in Prop. 30 expire at the end of 2016. **Vote YES.**

Proposition 56 adds a \$2 a pack excise tax on cigarettes and raises taxes on e-cigarettes. This regressive tax will hurt low-income people. **Vote NO.**

Proposition 57 reduces sentences for many non-violent crimes and stops the practice of immediately sending juveniles to adult court. **Vote YES.**

Proposition 58 repeals part of Prop. 227 (1998) to restore the option of bilingual education. For more see this article. **Vote YES.**

Proposition 59 (advisory) requires officials to push to amend the U.S. Constitution to reverse the Supreme Court's "Citizens United" ruling. Money is not speech; corporations are not people. **Vote YES.**

Proposition 60 requires that actors in explicit sex scenes wear condoms on the job. This is about health and safety. **Vote YES.**

Proposition 61 places a limit on the amount pharmaceutical companies can charge the State for prescription drugs. For more see this article. **Vote YES.**

Proposition 62 abolishes the death penalty. We do not like the alternative, life without parole, and other onerous provisions of this proposition. But we can and must end the death penalty now, and counter the possibility of proposition 66 (taking precedence by getting more votes. For more, see this article. **Vote YES.**

Proposition 63 requires retailers to report anyone who purchases any ammunition to the Department of Justice. There is already a law prohibiting possession of large capacity magazine firearms. **Vote NO.**

Proposition 64 legalizes marijuana and hemp in Ca. It exempts medical marijuana from some taxation and authorizes re-sentencing and destruction of records for prior marijuana convictions. **Vote YES.**

Proposition 65 sounds like an environmental measure but is designed to reduce support for a plastic bag ban. For more see this article. **Vote NO.**

Proposition 66 would speed up the application of the death penalty and require inexperienced lawyers to take death penalty cases. For more see this article. **Work to pass Prop. 62 and vote NO on 66.**

Proposition 67 is a referendum on the plastic bag ban that was passed by the legislature to protect wildlife and prevent waste. For more see this article. **Vote YES.**

Vote for alternative candidates in cases where the Democrat is a sure win.

Hillary will win in California easily, so you have an opportunity to vote for others whose views may more closely match your own:

Federal

Peace and Freedom Party
Gloria La Riva for President
Dennis Banks for Vice President

Green Party Candidate:
Jill Stein for President

State Democrats
Kamala D. Harris for US Senate
Ted Lieu for US Congress District 33
CA Assembly 62 - Autumn Burke

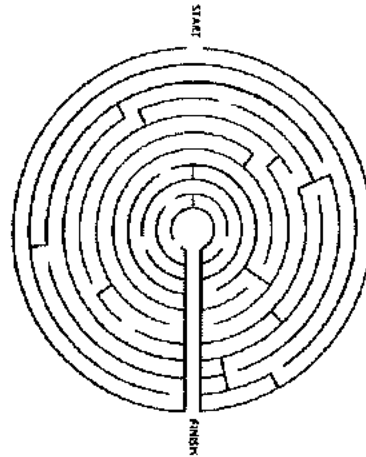
Presidential Race, from page 1

Examples of "cyber-sabotage" include the so-called "Stuxnet" attack carried out first by the George W. Bush administration, then escalated by the Obama Administration. This culminated in 2012 when a thousand Iranian nuclear centrifuges were targeted and destroyed by a combined "hack" carried out by the U.S. and Israeli governments [http://www.nytimes.com/2012/06/01/world/middleeast/obama-ordered-wave-of-cyberattacks-against-iran.html]. The attack was unnecessary, destroying equipment used to purify uranium. Iran was not building nuclear weapons, unlike the U.S. and Israel. This U.S. "hack" was, however, an unprovoked act of war. Then again, so is the U.S. assassinating other countries' leaders.

Given this history, when Secretary of State, John Kerry, in early October, demanded the U.N. investigate Russia for "war crimes" in Syria [http://www.nytimes.com/2016/10/08/us/politics/john-kerry-russia-syria-assad.html] while, at the same time, U.S. bombs were killing Syrian civilians, it is more than simply hypocritical, it's a call to action for working people --united, here and internationally-- to demand an immediate end to all U.S. aggressions.

Left unchecked, the U.S. can very quickly push its anti-Russian aggression to the point where Russia and the U.S. are actively shooting each other's planes and missiles out of the skies over Syria. As former CIA analyst Ray McGovern noted on RT's "Loud and Clear". [https://sputniknews.com/radio_loud_and_clear/2016/10/18/1846435797-exposed-how-news-week-fabricated-a-putin-trump-conspiracy-theory/] That is, unless --and until-- the U.S. is forced to back down, cooperate with other countries and ease tensions between itself, China and Russia.

Historically the only force capable of doing this has been --and continues to be-- a united front of working and oppressed people domestically and internationally. The same force targeted by U.S. violence and imperialism. The only force, in fact, that's consistently beaten the imperialists. Regardless of whether Trump or Hillary wins the presidency, continue to unite, organize and fight back for working people!



LA County Measures

Measure A - Safe, Clean Neighborhood Parks, Open Space, Beaches, Rivers Protection & Water Conservation Measure • Endorse
Measure M - Los Angeles County Traffic Improvement Plan • Endorse
Measure PP - Santa Monica Mountains • Endorse
Measure GG - Santa Monica Mountains • Endorse

City of Los Angeles

Measure HHB - City of Los Angeles Homelessness Reduction and Prevention, Housing, and Facilities Bond. Proposition • Endorse

Measure JJJ: Affordable Housing and Labor Standards Related to City Planning - This gets mixed reviews, but any restrictions on development will raise the ire of both developers and the Chamber Of Commerce who argue that mandates make building affordable housing more expensive... - Yes

Measure RRR - City of Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (DWP). Charter Amendment • Oppose

WBC from page 1

conflict and sexual intimacy, concerns about children's social-emotional development, or dealing with tantrums. Our goal is to equip parents with tools to reduce feelings of being overwhelmed, show them ways to strengthen bonds with their children while lovingly enforcing limits, and help couples find ways to work together using a common parenting language and positive methods of child rearing."

WBC's programs are based on a multi-disciplinary, family systems approach. Counseling and relationship support services include: infant-parent psychotherapy, Mindful Parenting Groups, family therapy, couples counseling, child therapy, parenting consultations, Mindful Pregnancy and Newborn Parenting Groups, Becoming Social -- a social skills school readiness group, and finally, Loving Discipline -- a mindfulness-based parenting group. WBC is also able to help individuals that have been court-ordered to take parenting classes. It is also a training center for infant-parent mental health specialists.

Asked if she felt WBC was making a positive difference, Groening recalled one specific case during the early days of the center that reassured her that, yes, it truly does. "A single mother with a small child and a newborn came into the center looking for help. She was working as a secretary while in the process of separating from her husband. She was -- naturally -- beyond stressed. After joining a weekly Mindful Parenting Group, she told me the group helped her realize she wasn't alone and now had a safe haven in which she could speak openly about all she was going through. Talking to other moms with similar issues helped relieve her anxiety. Once she gained consistent professional and social support, she began to feel that her life was manageable again. Eventually her co-parent came to some of the parent-child groups as well, so they benefited from having a common parenting language. And in the bigger picture there is now one more mother who is happier and that reflects within the community."

In January 2016, Well Baby celebrated its 8th year -- having provided more than 5,000 children and families with mental health and preventative services. It continues to expand its collaborative network of public and private organizations; has trained 62 infant-parent specialists, and has successfully garnered the respect and authorization as a full-service organization. WBC continues to empower hundreds of new parents with invaluable tools, training, experiences and support.

There's a playful side to Well Baby Center, too! The center has a 1,250 sq. ft. shaded play yard -- available for low cost birthday parties and drop-in play groups. It is equipped with a natural wood climbing structure and slide, a wooden play house, a ball pool, sand toys, a balance beam, and child-sized picnic tables. Children and parents come to meet and play on Thursdays from 12:30 to 4:00 pm -- and it's free to the community! This is a great opportunity for local parents to meet one another while their kids make new friends. There are also yoga classes for young toddlers and their moms, holiday parties, and music classes in which the little ones are encouraged to use drums and other instruments to make their happy noise.

Although Groening will be stepping down as the center's Executive Director, she will continue on as a Senior Child and Family Psychotherapist and a Mindful Parenting Group Leader. She says her vision has been realized, but emphasizes that there is much more that can be done. "I'd love to partner with other entrepreneurial philanthropists who would like to open Well Baby Centers all over town -- frankly, I don't see why there aren't Well Baby Centers in every neighborhood!"

Below, photo of painting by Barbara A. Mastel, of Well Baby Center Founder Deborah Groening.

