

MONTECITO MISCELLANY



by Richard Mineards



Richard covered the Royal Family for Britain's Daily Mirror and Daily Mail, and was an editor on New York Magazine. He was also a national anchor on CBS, a commentator on ABC Network News, gossip on The Joan Rivers Show and Geraldo Rivera, host on E! TV, a correspondent on the syndicated show Extra, a commentator on the KTLA Morning News and Entertainment Tonight. He moved to Montecito 14 years ago.

Foodbank Feeling Full After Empty Bowls



Kaitland Denbeers, Danyel Dean, and Jared Denbeers (Photo by Priscilla)

After making it an online event given the pandemic last year, the 23rd annual Empty Bowls fundraiser at the headquarters of the Foodbank of Santa Barbara County, just a tiara's toss from its normal venue at the Ben Page Youth Center, was quite the gridlocked occasion at the weekend.

The bustling event, founded by bubbly **Danyel Dean**, who has been on the committee for more than two decades, is now one of the most popular bowls events in the U.S., not to mention France, Argentina, Hong Kong, and New Zealand.

The event, which has raised more than \$2 million over the last two



Paula Suter, Stu Lewis, and Paula Bard (Photo by Priscilla)

decades, providing nearly 16 million meals for needy residents, was expected to net more than \$100,000 for the Foodbank, which runs 300 programs annually.

Fourth- and sixth-grade students from Crane Country Day School

showed their artistic talents decorating the bowls, which participants are allowed to take home as part of the \$30 ticket price for a hearty meal of nourishing soup and crusty stone-

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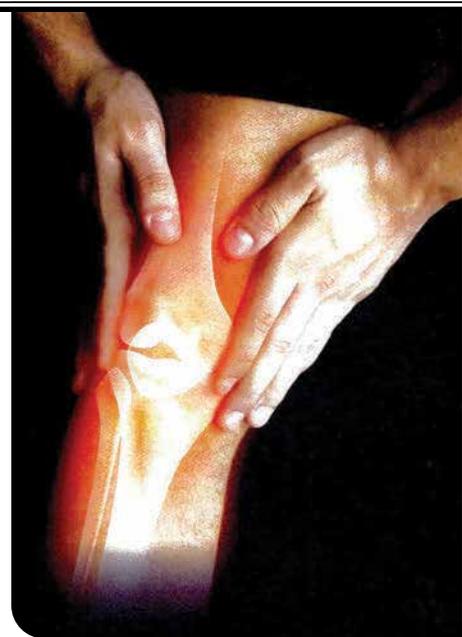


Sally Park, George Leis, Sarah Evans, and Paul Wieckowski (Photo by Priscilla)

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Kaitland Denbeers, Danyel Dean, and Jared Denbeers (Photo by Priscilla)



Lisa Klonowski, Levi and Regan Parillo with Eleanor, Avika, and Maisi (Photo by Priscilla)



Michael Shasberger led the 17th annual Christmas Festival (Photo by Brad Elliott)

ground granular bread.

"We're delighted to share this wonderful experience once again," says Danyel. "It is nice to come together to alleviate hunger in the community."

Food for thought!

Feeling Festive

The 26th annual Christmas Walk at La Arcada Plaza, the charming thoroughfare just off State Street near the Santa Barbara Museum of Art, attract-



Charlotte Andersen inviting Santa (Richard Pommerville) to listen to the Christmas request from Bridget (Photo by Priscilla)

ed more than a thousand spectators with strolling carolers in Dickensian garb, freshly popped popcorn, and even snowmaking machines turning the area into a winter wonderland with colorfully decorated Yuletide trees.

Youngsters were even able to send letters to Santa Claus with typewriters provided in the Crafter's Library, which given their youth was probably the very first time they'd ever encountered one!

Given the pandemic restrictions last year the complex held Festive Fridays, but numbers were severely limited.

Talli Robinson, La Arcada's PR, says: "We were absolutely thrilled so many people turned out to kick off the festive season. It was really magical!"

Indeed, it was.

Round 1: Meghan

British government ministers are considering changing the law to protect free speech after the London Appeals Court ruled in favor of **Meghan Markle** in a privacy dispute against the U.K.'s *Mail* on Sunday.

Downing Street, the home of British Prime Minister **Boris Johnson**, has said publicly that it will closely study the ruling that upheld the High Court's decision that the Duchess of Sussex had "a reasonable expectation

of privacy" over a letter written to her estranged father **Thomas Markle**.

Senior figures in government have told the *Daily Mail*, the sister newspaper, a change in the law may now be needed to redress the balance between the competing rights of privacy and free speech.

Legal experts have said the case could have a chilling effect on free speech, giving too little weight to the right of freedom of expression.

The *Mail* on Sunday is now considering an appeal to Britain's Supreme Court, I'm told.

Stay tuned...

Some 'Salvation'

The venerable Granada was socially gridlocked when Westmont College held its 17th annual Christmas Festival "Salvation For All" over two days given the demand for tickets.

Michael Shasberger, Adams professor for music and worship, who is retiring in May after 16 years, created the hugely popular event and has directed it each year, normally at the First Presbyterian Church.

Featuring music from around the world and throughout the centuries, the concert featured the Westmont orchestra conducted by Shasberger, the Westmont College Choir and Chamber Singers led by **Daniel Gee**, and the Westmont Choral Union conducted by **Grey Brothers**.

Christmas hymns and carols featured large as well as classics by Bach, Handel, and Mendelssohn.

A delightful kickoff to the Yuletide season.

Fabulous Flowerpots

Arlene Larsen, co-owner of Montecito's Magic Castle with her husband, **Milt**, is going to pot!

During the downturn caused by the pandemic, Arlene has been busy making one-of-a-kind flowerpots from trim, fabric, and jewelry she has been collecting over the past six decades.

"I've been making and selling costumes since I was 15 years old," says Arlene. "I started in the theater and collected broken jewelry and scraps anyone would discard. To them it was trash, to me it was beautiful."

"The very best leftovers were from costumes made for **Carol Burnett**, The Dean Martin Gold Diggers, and all the big production numbers the networks produced in the 80s."

All the pots, as extravagantly decorated as a Faberge egg, feature silk or fresh flowers, and retail from \$100 to \$1,000, depending on their ornateness.

"I started making these four months ago and I spend many hours on each one," adds Arlene. "It is like putting a jigsaw together. They are quite magical!"

While I was interviewing her at the old Cafe del Sol location, she received the good news that the city had now issued her a permit which will enable the Magic Castle to reopen in the New Year after innumerable planning delays, which even made the dynamic duo consider selling the property a few months back.

The pots, of which only 61 have been made, are available at zamagic@aol.com.

Getting in the Spirit

Having shown the more gracious and opulent upstairs living arrangements with the first production in Ensemble Theatre Company's Jane Austen trilogy four years ago, it was time to move downstairs at the New Vic for *The Wickhams: Christmas at Pemberley*, its second production of the current season.

The **Michael Butler**-directed play takes place in the servants' quarters, cleverly designed by **Bruce Goodrich**, and tells an 1815 tale of the youngest sister Lydia and her ne'er-do-well former military husband George Wickham. Add in to the grand mix a trio of domestic staff, including the housekeeper, new maid, and the foot-



April Rodriquez, Evelyn Mills, and Ember Reiter with La Arcada strollers Nora and Michael Hurley (Photo by Priscilla)



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man as they prepare for Yuletide and a gaggle of aristocratic guests upstairs.

The show, which runs through December 19, has an excellent seven-member ensemble cast, including **Adam Poss** as Darcy, **Kyle T. Hester** as bouncer Wickham, and **Chelsea Kurtz** as Lydia.

A rollicking Regency romp which will undoubtedly get you in the Christmas spirit!

Standing the Test of Time

The musical *Hairspray*, which spawned two films in 1988 and 2007, not to mention a successful multi-Tony Award winning Broadway show, has stood the test of time.

The hugely entertaining production, which follows teen Tracy Turnblad in 1962 Baltimore as she searches for national TV fame, is witty and funny with a very definite message, particularly in the current era.

Tracy's laundress mother, famously played by **Harvey Fierstein**, **John Travolta**, and the late Divine in previous guises, is equally splendid with **Andrew Levitt** in the over-the-top role urging on her starstruck daughter, delightfully played by **Niki Metcalf**, in the **Matt Lenz**-directed American Theater Guild show at the Granada.

It was a show to dye for!

Wreaks of Positivity

Montecito's **Michael J. Fox** has managed to stay upbeat over the last 30 years famously battling Parkinson's Disease.

The longtime actor says he has found purpose and joy despite living with the disease.

Michael, 60, is married to actress **Tracy Pollan**, 60, who played his girlfriend in *Family Ties*. They have four children — **Sam**, 32, twin daughters, **Aquinnah** and **Shuyler**, 26, and daughter **Esme**, 20.

The *Back to the Future* actor tells AARP magazine he has stayed positive through all the tough times.

"Gratitude makes optimism sustainable," he says profoundly. "If you don't think you have anything to be grateful for, keep looking!"

On the Market

Oscar winning actress **Gwyneth Paltrow** is now a California girl after buying her estate in our rarefied enclave.

But now, I hear, her old home on Manhattan's oh-so tony Upper Eastside is on the market for \$14.5 million.

The 19th century, seven-bedroom, eight-bath residence was bought in 1984 by Paltrow's parents, the late director-producer Bruce Paltrow, and actress wife **Blythe Danner**.

At the time, Gwyneth, then 12 years old, was attending the elite Spence School nearby.

The sprawling 7,205 square-foot, 20-foot-wide townhouse was sold in 1992 when she was 20.

RIP, Arlene

On a personal note, I remember actress **Arlene Dahl** who died at her New York home aged 96.

Dahl, mother of actor **Lorenzo Lamas**, 63, starred in the 1955 film *Journey to the Center of the Earth* with James Mason and Pat Boone.

A charming, always elegantly attired lady who I would see often on Manhattan's society circuit with her husband of 37 years, **Marc Rosen**, she was married six times, including screen star Fernando Lamas and Lex Barker.

She was known for her striking red coiffure.

Sightings

Former CBS talk show host **David Letterman** with a TV crew on Miramar Beach... Actress **Eva Mendes** checking out the vintage stores in Carpinteria... **Zoey Deschanel** and beau **Jonathan Scott** at the Rosewood Miramar

Pip! Pip! Be safe, wear a mask when needed, and get vaccinated. •M



Linguine With Clams and Ginger

Made with **Bakana Gold Extra Virgin olive oil**

Ingredients

200g of spaghetti, 20 to 25 clams, 1 zucchini, 3 tomato, 2 to 3 cloves of garlic, 1 red onion, 1 bunch of parsley, A few basil leaves, freshly ground ginger, 10 cl of liquid cream (light) Bakana Gold Olive oil, 1 pinch of coarse salt, Fine salt, Freshly ground pepper.

Preparation:

Cook the pasta in boiling water with a drizzle of olive oil and coarse salt. Stop cooking as soon as they are "al dente". In a wok, sauté olive oil then add the onion and garlic, chopped beforehand. When they are golden brown, add the diced tomato and simmer over low heat for a few moments. Add the rinsed clams in clean water and leave on the heat for two minutes. Salt and pepper. Incorporate the zucchini cut into slices into the preparation. Cover the pan with a lid and cook for five to ten minutes. The clams should be split open and the zucchini almost cooked. Halfway through cooking, sprinkle with chopped ginger, parsley and basil, then pour in the liquid cream. Finish cooking and adjust the seasoning if necessary. Serve everything hot on individual plates, mixing or not the pasta with seafood ...

Enjoy your Meal.

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Empire Expands

Rosewood Miramar owner **Rick Caruso** has embarked on his latest mega project, a 165-unit residential six-story apartment building on a 7.5-acre commercial parcel at The Lakes shopping center in Thousand Oaks.

Rick has leased the property from the city since The Lakes opened in 2005.

His eponymous company has holdings in Santa Barbara and Ventura counties, and across the Los Angeles area, including The Grove, a charming shopping complex, near my old home in Hancock Park.

The apartment project is due to start being built next year.

Crying Roses?

Maroon Five rocker **Adam Levine**, known for his colorful collection of tattoos, has showcased new artwork in a completely new area.

The 42-year-old Montecito-based musician debuted a rose on his face near his left eye when he attended a boffo bash at the Art Basel in Miami.

People's 2013 Sexiest Man Alive was joined by his Namibian model wife, **Behati Prinsloo**, 33, on the red carpet.

The tony twosome live just a tiara's toss from the estate of Santa Barbara warbler **Katy Perry** and her British actor fiancé **Orlando Bloom**.