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Volume 17, Issue 10



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## Celebrating Your Favorite Holidays with Joy and Panache

Being in a business that involves the ways in which people celebrate special occasions I often wonder what are holiday traditions. I have come to believe as Ray Charles might have put it, they are what they are. In our multicultural world the holidays: Christmas Season, Chanukah, Yule, Boxing Day and Kwanzaa are what our community, our family and we as individuals make them. When I was young the holidays were a season of anticipation. Anticipating an end to school for up to two glorious weeks, anticipating



## Public Art Improves the Quality of Life in Brea and Whittier



This month, in the city of Whittier, a diverse and large group of people came together on a sunny Saturday morning to witness the unveiling of Whittier's first commissioned work of art, "Through the Garden Gate" by sculptor Guy Wilson. The turnout was startling, several cities

## Vintage Motors: Bob McKean Keeps the Classics on the Road



If there is one thing American Motorists like as much as the brand new cars that Detroit turns out it is the Classic cars that Detroit turned out over the last century. Some of the most desired of these cars are now fifty or more years old. And just like your correspondent with age comes the need for extra care. This is where Bob McKean of Vintage Motors comes in. Bob and his partner, Steve Healys do everything from minor maintenance to complete restorations. "We started this business with the idea of doing vintage restorations, but quickly developed a niche as a maintenance and repair shop. There are lots of businesses in the market that restore cars to

## While it is chic to resist, it is more fun to surrender to the holiday spirit



Luminaries light the way for family and Friends



Menorah lights celebrate ancient traditions



Christmas lights create welcoming warmth

presents that would be received and presents that would be given. It was a time of special lights, special decorations and special food. My heart would lighten as soon as the first holiday decorations appeared in shop windows, it became more elevated still as homes were decorated. By the time school let out in my heart the winter had turned to summer.

When I grew older and my home and neighborhood became a smaller part of a larger world, the Holidays became a symbol of mankind's ability to allow peace to settle like a blanket on a chaotic world. Everyone in New York, which was my whole world until I was an adult, would slow the frantic pace of what they were doing, go home and for one blessed season they would stop being cab drivers and accountants, and cops and crooks and they would become fathers and mothers, and children again. They would not eat their dinner at their desks or from a pretzel cart, they would eat at home as we imagined our grandparents had done when they were young.

There are of course those who like the protagonists in John Grisham's *Skipping Christmas* and the movie *Surviving Christmas* not to mention *The Grinch Who Stole Christmas*, try to be urbane drat-it-all holiday bashers, but there are truly few people who don't have some place in their heart for the pine and tinsel, dradle and menorah, and their relatives, friends and holiday parties.

Awareness of a sadder side of the holiday season took hold as I entered adulthood proper. I realized that the holidays can mark less joyous events for families. Death may have visited at Chanukah or lack of money could make what should be the happiest of times the most stressful. To some people the pain and the holidays themselves are dealt with through denial. To me this seems to only make life worse.

I have also observed that many people develop rituals to turn their losses into fond remembrances. If Grandpa died during the holidays that became a time for watching his favorite movies, and telling stories. Chanukah or Christmas became the day for cooking his favorite food, whether it was traditional holiday food or not. All of the adults in the family would smoke a cigar just like he did.

If there were years when money had skipped its holiday visit, pronounced generosity became a hallmark of the season in more bountiful times. Even the most frugal scrooge blooms into a humanitarian when Christmas bells ring. Stories developed that accentuated virtues of people who had passed and while they undoubtedly helped, they still bear a tinge of melancholy.

My sister Clare has for many years used the holiday season as an excuse to not just care for her family and friends, which is a year long tradition, but to share with those less fortunate strangers. Clare, her husband Peter and their children reach out to the homeless to let them know there are still people who care about them.

We have developed our own rituals. We drink the very last bottle of Beaujolais Nouveau by New Year's Eve. We always roast a goose for Thanksgiving and bake panettone in December. For Christmas we always bake gingerbread moose cookies. Since our families are made up of both Christians and Jews and I suspect some who's religious observances are neither, the holidays are celebrated with gusto, variety and at length. My children will celebrate any holiday that involves even a remote chance of a gift. I likewise will respectfully observe any holiday that involves the preparation of special foods and beverages.

As time goes by the holidays have gone from being gift getting to a gift giving to a celebrating family season. The main features of the holiday season are family and friend get-togethers. The family celebrations inevitably revolve around food. For out of town guests this is a three meals a day focus; for the in-town guests dinners and brunches are the norm.

Making cookies and candies has become a favorite part of the holidays for us. At Parties By Panache the holiday season means making many tens of thousands of cookies and candies. This year we will make over one hundred pounds of dark and white Belgian candy cane bark and over 5,000 chocolate almond clusters. We work in smaller quantities at home.

## Celebrate your ideals at holiday gatherings

Hollis says, "I have always loved to cook. At the shop I get to spend very little time in the kitchen. Reina leads three to six staff members in the production of cakes, cookies, desserts and candies. I have to get my sweet cooking out of my system at home. Three or four years ago Jerry got this heavy moose cookie cutter at Williams - Sonoma so he started making gingerbread moose cookies.

Now I make the gingerbread and he cuts out the cookies."

However, Hollis did have the opportunity to get in the Panache kitchen when she and Kellie Van Leir worked out the specs on the chocolate bark. "Although chocolate bark is an informal candy I felt it was important to make the two layers a very consistent thickness and to avoid a grainy texture, we do this by using the very best chocolate on the market. So many of the barks that are on the market use chocolate compounds that are full of stabilizers. They don't have the right taste. Our chocolate, Callebaut, has great cocoa butter content and is made with incredible skill. Our candy canes are made in the United States. We use a candy cane that is a quarter inch thick, hand break and apply them to the setting chocolate, that way none of the chunks of candy are too large and the distribution mint to chocolate is just perfect."

Back at home, Hollis said, "I also enjoy making rugala and chocolate chip cookies. I have even made gingerbread houses, but I hate to throw one away at the end of the season so I don't do that every year, but since I'm thinking about it maybe I will. That would make Jerry very happy because he wants to put a moose on the roof."

"We now come to what has become the centerpiece of my holiday culinary tradition, my goose or my geese as the case may be," says Jerry. "So far this year I have smoked two geese which were also brined. They came out very nicely; moist and well colored with a flavor that balanced smoke and the goose's natural gaminess."

"Goose smoking requires time, a very good thing as far as ritual goes, because time allows both reflection and conversation. Also it is appropriate while doing the above to share some of that most lyrical of modern wines, Beaujolais Nouveau. This wine which makes up in light fresh grapeiness what it lacks in complexity is a perfect out-door goose smoking wine. The air is full of aromatic smoke and as hours pass tending the smoke box, watching the temperature of the smoke chamber and discussing matters of great significance on many levels, it is probable that everybody will get very thirsty and anxious, because you can't open the smoke box until testing for doneness. The wine quenches thirst and keeps the cooks in a good temper."

Finally as a tradition I have taken to baking panettone. Panettone is in my opinion the very best egg and butter bread that appears all year. It is practically a cake, and when toasted can achieve a surface temperature close to that of the sun, making it ideal for melting pats of sweet butter.

I was in one of my many incarnations a baker. Now that Hollis has two or three bakers working in the kitchen I don't get to bake there, I believe it has to do with the territoriality for which chefs, cooks and bakers are renowned; they say I make too much of mess. At any rate I now make my panettone at home in three sizes. Each is baked in its own mold. I like to make small ones that can fit into a lunch box or a jacket pocket. And I also like to make panettone that are family meal sized, about eight ounces. I use these two sizes because my feeling is as soon as you cut into a panettone you should eat the entire tome because otherwise it could get stale at the edges. Also I have never been able to eat only part of a panettone and the party sized five pounders take much longer than the average coffee break to finish. But I do like to bake at least one party sized panettone each year. It goes great with cards and coffee and as both of those are components of our holiday traditions, it works out very well.

And there you have it, holidays have become a time of sharing food and comfort with family members and friends. For giving gifts to loved ones and sharing with those who might be in need. They have become a time where the world slows down a little and let's us remember why it is that we race along full speed the rest of the year.

## In this Issue:

### Page Story

- 1 Celebrating the Holidays Public Art  
Vintage Motors
- 2 Celebrating the Holidays
- 3 Celebrating the Holidays, continued
- 4 No Reply Sofia Laiti
- 5 Sofia Laiti, continued  
Following Yonder Starbucks
- 6 Large Parties and Small Parties
- 7 Large Parties and Small Parties,  
continued
- 8 Vintage Motors  
Following Yonder Starbucks, continued
- 9 The Organization
- 10 What I Want for the Holidays
- 11 Chanukah Menu
- 12 Christmas Menu Smoking a Goose
- 13 New Years Eve Celebration
- 14 Winter in the South West's Magnificent  
Deserts
- 15 Public Art, Continued

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## No Reply: Rock Band Delivers a Killer Performance in Tustin

These pages are usually reserved for musicians with hard earned and well deserved reputations. However, when “No Reply” a young rock band out of Tustin played their debut gig at Renaissance Café in the Tustin Market Place, I knew I found a group that merits an exception.

No Reply favors playing songs that the members have written. Says Bass Guitarist Henry O’Brien, “We are not a cover band. There are great rock songs that we would like to cover but, right now we are trying to find our own voice. We use an organic process of spontaneous jamming and when we hit on something where we feel the energy is right we try to develop it. Everyone contributes to both the musical composition and the lyrics.

“Renaissance Café is small, but people drifted in and out all night long, so while I have no idea how many people came to hear us, the place seemed pretty full for the whole gig,” says drummer Lee Cody.

“We are just getting started and obviously have a whole world of options available to us, but I think that we are on the right track. Most successful bands play together for years before they get any recognition. We realize that the ones that make it do so by staying true to what they believe their music is all about,” says guitarist Aaron Gruberg .

We will keep on playing, learning each others strengths and feeding into them. We are looking for a sound, that is unique and that feels right to both our audience and to us. Says Henry, “Plus this is a lot of fun.”



## Sofia Laiti: A Brief Chat with Cabaret/Jazz Singer

Anybody who follows jazz has probably heard the name Sofia Laiti by now. The husky voiced singer, reminiscent of Marlena Dietrich is beginning to get the recognition that she deserves. With a vibrant style she delivers standards with a conviction missing from many of today’s jazz and contemporary singers. I had the opportunity to ask her a few questions about her life and music.

**PBP:** How many languages do you know and which do you sing in?

**Sofia Laiti:** My native language is Finnish. I speak English. I have studied Swedish and German. When I sing I sometimes use Spanish or German. I sing primarily in English.

**PBP:** When did you start singing?

**Sofia Laiti:** My mother was singing all the time at home and she was singing in a chorus. My mother told me, that by the time I was two years old I already said I’ll be a singer when I grow up. I sang for hours every day when I was a child. I sang children’s songs and religious songs.

**PBP:** Do you come from a family of artists?

**Sofia Laiti:** I was surrounded with people who did a lot of handcraft work and as I said my mother was always singing.

**PBP:** I know that you grew up in Finland. Could you talk about that?

**Sofia Laiti:** The part of Finland where I come from is called Lapland. I’m from the village of Utsjoki, which is near the border of Norway. It is the only village in Finland with an indigenous majority. The indigenous people who call themselves Samis and have lived there for about 1,000 years. I have many relatives living in Norway. As a teenager I moved to Kuopio, a city in central Finland, where I studied music. After that I moved to Helsinki, the capitol of Finland, and I spent some years pursuing my career before I moved to New York City. I felt that Finland was too small for me and I knew that I had the talent for an international career.

**PBP:** I know that many jazz musicians spend time in Scandinavia. Is there a jazz scene in Finland?

**Sofia Laiti:** Finland has a lot of jazz festivals during the summer. Pori Jazz Festival is the most



## Jazz/Cabaret Singer Sofia Laiti

famous (I have performed there a few times.) In Helsinki they have some jazz clubs: Umo Jazz Club and Storyville. They like different kinds of jazz: traditional, avant garde, big band jazz, etc.

**PBP:** What is the most popular type of jazz in Finland?

**Sofia Laiti:** The most popular kind of music in Finland is still traditional tango. They like melancholy music. Young people like rock. Now in Finland techno music is getting big.

**PBP:** In terms of jazz has there been much change?

**Sofia Laiti:** It has been very much the same over the years. When I visit Finland during the summer – I still hear the same kind of music playing on the radio. At least when I visit my mother – she has her radio on and the music sounds the same all the time.

**PBP:** What is it like to be a young musician in Finland?

**Sofia Laiti:** In Finland there are great music schools and music is very big in Finland. There is for example, the world renowned Sibelius Academy. Finland has produced a number of world class musicians especially on the classical music scene.

**PBP:** Who in the world of jazz singers has most influenced you?

**Sofia Laiti:** As a jazz singer my biggest influences as a teenager were singers like Billie Holiday, Sarah Vaughan, Frank Sinatra, Dinah Washington. In addition I listened to a lot of singers like Edith Piaf, Charles Aznavour, Elvis Presley, and Stevie Wonder.

**PBP:** When you are singing, what instrument is your favorite accompaniment?

**Sofia Laiti:** I prefer piano the most.

**PBP:** Do you still live in Finland?

**Sofia Laiti:** I moved to New York City in January 1991. I got a grant from the Music Council of Finland. I knew when I moved that I would not go back there to live. I was in New York City for the first time in 1989 when I did my first recording for Finnish Columbia Records. I was here one month and I fell in love with this city. I love the energy, the atmosphere, the competition. It brings the best out of you.

**PBP:** What part of the city do you call home?

**Sofia Laiti:** When I moved here in 1991 I lived first in Brooklyn at the Sunset Park area for four years. When I met my husband I moved to Manhattan. Now I live on the wonderful Upper West Side near Central Park. I love to go to roller-blading in the park.

**PBP:** Where do you play when you are in New York and what is your favorite jazz club?

**Sofia Laiti:** I have performed in many jazz clubs in the city. When I moved here in 1991, I was performing in well known clubs that do not exist anymore, such as Visiones, Village Gate, and Angry Square. Now I have been performing at Birdland, Kavehaz, Cornelia Street Café and Trumpets in New Jersey. My favorite venue in New York is Birdland jazz club.

**PBP:** Your new album, “You Don’t Know Me” is getting very good critical press. Will you be touring in support of the album?

**Sofia Laiti:** I have several gigs coming up in New York City and surrounding areas. I’ll be at Kavehaz Jazz club on November 28th. At this point I am arranging some performances in Europe. I perform at private events. (Most of them pay really well!!) My recordings are widely available through the web: [www.cdbaby.com](http://www.cdbaby.com), [www.towerrecords.com](http://www.towerrecords.com), [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com).

**PBP:** What does the future hold for your career?

**Sofia Laiti:** I have to let you know that with my latest album “You Don’t Know Me” I have been getting excellent reviews from the cabaret world, too. From now on, I feel that I’d like to be known as a jazz/cabaret singer. I am well known as a keen and soulful interpreter of lyrics. I’m happy that I’m finding a bigger audience for my music.

## Following Yonder Starbucks: One Man’s Quest to Visit Them All

Winter is a man who is fascinated by the Starbucks phenomena, so much in fact that he is making a dedicated effort to visit every one of the official stores in the chain. Born in Chicago and raised in Texas, Winter, which is his preferred name, supports this quest by designing software and apparently by charming women.

This may seem like a whimsical lifestyle but Winter is committed to accomplishing his quest. I spoke with him in Elkridge, Maryland where he is “making bank” on a software contract. When this assignment ends, Winter will go overseas to visit stores that were either missed or not in existence during his prior visits. Winter is adept at cost effective travel, using times when fares are low and hostels empty. As of November 2, 2004 Winter had visited 4,362 North American Stores as well as 114 stores in Britain and 53 stores in Japan.

Since 1997 like a mendicant monk on pilgrimage Winter has devoted a



Photo of Birch Street Starbucks taken by Winter in 1999

## Large Parties and Small Parties: They All Get Hollis' Undivided Attention



Hollis in the kitchen at Thanksgiving.



Hollis stressing the importance of "customer needs awareness" to her staff at the first day of "Holiday Event Server Training Camp."



Here a team of servers gets ready for a bussing and water glass filling relay. Below a candidate for camp demonstrates what he can bring to the party.



At Parties By Panache the holiday season is the pinnacle of the year's efforts. It is the busiest and the most creative season of the year. Many of our clients use this time of year to say thank you to their clients and employees, with a party. Others use parties to make their customers shopping experiences more fun and exciting.

Nordstrom does both beautiful employee events and vibrant, exciting customer shopping events. These parties are usually the largest events that PBP caters during the holiday season and like everything that Nordstrom does high quality, exquisite taste and unparalleled service are the order of the day.

A typical Nordstrom party consists of set out hors d' oeuvres, passed hot and cold hors d' oeuvres and hot and cold beverages. This holiday season we have been setting out cheese & fruit display; sun-dried tomato & roasted garlic torta with fresh fruit, crackers and crostini; and crudités display with herb dip. We are still trying to incorporate as much California cheese as possible and have used Bellwether Farms' Carmody, a moist mellow aged cows cheese at several of the parties. These arranged finger foods will usually be set out on the entrance level along with a drink station so that the shoppers can build their strength for the long night of shopping that lies ahead.

The Nordstrom staff is as poised and ready to go as the PBP staff and between the two staffs every guest is greeted and made to feel welcome, the moment they enter the store.

This year we are serving pomegranate champagne, which is a cocktail made of California champagne infused with pomegranate juice. The drink possesses a beautiful color and is light and refreshing. Of course shopping requires optimum hydration so sparkling and still water is provided both at stations and by servers as needed.

Hot hors d' oeuvres passed from silver trays add elegance. They also give after-work shoppers that little boost that allows for shopping without a full dinner. Nordstrom event planners chose: Mini herb pancakes w/ red onion confit, spanikopita, and Bruschetta on crostini w/ tarragon pesto, dried pears & melted gruyere cheese. The shoppers seemed to prefer all of them.

The cold hors d'oeuvre, smoked salmon & cucumber rolls, and Asian beef salad in filo tart shell were equally well received which means they were consumed with relish.

The desserts married elegance and whimsy with an emphasis on flavorful clean crisp flavors. On the elegant end of the dessert spectrum were mini tiramisus prepared and served in straight sided shot glasses with demitasse spoons. Charming, deep and mellow flavors were displayed in the mini gingerbread cupcakes with cream cheese icing and candied pistachios; and mini chocolate cups with vanilla mousse, a raspberry and a chocolate cigarette. Chocolate, the worlds most passionately craved food was featured in pastry: individual chocolate truffle cakes and as a candy; white chocolate candy cane bark.

No Nordstrom party would be complete with out a coffee bar. Because it is almost winter and a chill is in the air, hot chocolate was also featured as well with whipped cream, marshmallows, and candy canes.

"I love catering for Nordstrom, the stores are such a great backdrop for the food and they are at the top of the retail world when it comes to décor and service. Their staff is a joy to work with, they always make us feel right at home and treat us as well as their guests," says Leslee Meyer, The Parties By Panache décor artist.

"I enjoy working at Nordstrom, because I often run the kitchen and as the guests eat everything it makes service busy and fast and clean up pretty easy," says Jeremy O'Brien.

This of course brings us to the other end of the event spectrum; the small, intimate sit-down dinner. While we do this type of party for many of our clients we chose one that Hollis prepared and hosted in our home. Before this meal Hollis hadn't cooked a large meal for the family since Thanksgiving which would have been— three days ago.

After shopping and selecting champagne and wines for the dinner Hollis started working on our appetizers. First was smoked goose breast with cranberry mustard on a pumpernickel crostini. The smoked goose breast is thinly sliced and two pieces are placed on the crostini and the mustard is spooned on top. These are assembled just before serving. Next were Medjool dates with cream cheese wrapped in prosciutto served warm, which you can see Hollis preparing in the top right photograph. Hollis also made her creamy hot artichoke spinach dip and she prepared a cheese tray which featured Carmody, and Ste. Andre. "St. Andre is one of my favorite cheeses. It is mild, rich and very soft, together with the Carmody you have a delightful pair," said Hollis. The preparation of these dishes and the dinner which followed was done by Hollis after she and her staff served 900 people at various holiday parties earlier that day.

As our guests arrived they were given a choice of Chambord and Champagne or hot cider with a cinnamon stick and rum. Once all our guests had arrived they assembled in our front room before a roaring fire and Henry played several pieces of music on his double bass. The juxtaposition of punk attire and classic instrument lent atmosphere to the concert which included pieces from both Led Zeppelin and Beethoven.

Meanwhile back in the kitchen, Hollis was preparing a winter salad with cranberries, endive, arugula and champagne vinaigrette. Prior to serving the salad it was garnished by Henry, who having put aside his bass, washed his hands, and transformed himself from musical artist into a culinary artist. Also joining Hollis in the kitchen at this time was her nephew Jeffrey Fliegler, who usually works in the Kitchen of the Restaurant ,The Californian at the Huntington Beach Hyatt Regency Resort. Salad was served by Jeremy O'Brien and PBP staffer Paul Martin. Having witnessed Jeremy at work in the dining room it is going to become difficult for him to spend all his time in the kitchen. The salad was accompanied by hot aromatic garlic bread and Arthur Earl Grenache , light fruity red, which Jeffrey had brought.

After the salad course was cleared it was time for the main course. This was a filet of beef which was marinated prior to roasting served with a cranberry cognac and pepper sauce. The filet which was cooked to individual taste, mine being rare was like butter. The marinade which Hollis uses with this delicate beef added with a superb flavor to its outstanding texture and the sauce raised that flavor to gastronomic artistry. The beef was not served alone however and the side dishes by themselves could have made a worthy meal.

Served with the filet were homemade creamed spinach, scalloped potatoes and carrots sautéed with cumin and cinnamon. The creamed spinach was made with only the leaves of baby spinach and like the filet was a delicate dish. The scalloped potatoes were a demonstration of how to perfectly prepare this humble tuber. They were as prepared, suited for a meal all by themselves. The nice thing about dining in is that you can have seconds and with the exception of the filet which was huge, I had seconds of everything.

The wine that was served with the dinner was a 2000 Isosceles from Justin Vineyards. This wine is predominantly cabernet (78%) with a seasoning of merlot and malbec. This is the flagship of the Justin Vineyards and I would say they are on the right track. The wine has a clear deep garnet color and the 2000 is ready for drinking now.

After dinner was cleared it was time for coffee and dessert. The main dessert was a chocolate mousse that was as far from the puddings that many mousses truly are as could be. While the flavor was a dense dark chocolate the texture was airy and light, the texture lasted as long as the dessert. The mousse was served in individual white ramekins with sweetened whipped cream and garnished with a chocolate espresso bean. Hollis also served homemade chocolate candy cane bark with the mousse and coffee. A truly fitting end to a very memorable meal.

"I love to cook, so having a large family gives me the opportunity to do that. Also I get to cook what I want, and I get to enjoy it. **NOW IF I CAN JUST GET MY HUSBAND TO DO THE DISHES, I WILL HAVE COOKING AT HOME PERFECTED, SAYS HOLLIS**



Hollis at work making stuffed dates in her home kitchen. Producing beautiful food in an open kitchen is a hallmark of Hollis' style.



The table is set with chargers, silver and crystal, but dinner is still hours away. Advance preparation is important even for a small gathering.



Donna Fliegler and Hollis' Aunt Jeanne Howard visit Hollis in the kitchen just as hors d'oeuvres are served. Hollis and Aunt Jeanne have shared kitchens with great results on many occasions.

# Vintage Motors: Keeping Street Rods Safe, Running and On the Street

(continued from Page 1) show car status. We are much more driver orientated than car focused. Our customers are the kind of people who like to drive these cars. And for that they need a person who knows how to work with these older cars. It may seem intuitive that a person who can work on the sophisticated power plants of today's automobiles would have no problem working on older cars, but that is not the case. If you drive a 1931 or 1946 you will most likely be told the car is simply too old for the shop. The problem is actually two-fold, one is that the older cars can not be hooked up to the modern diagnostic machines and therefore require some real detective work to find the problem. Second, there is the challenge of finding the parts that are needed for the maintenance and repair. As the years pass we are becoming a greater resource for the parts. We participate in many vintage auto shows and we check out all the vendors and innovators who also participate. We know all the salvage yards. It helps us get the parts that put your ride back on the road." says Bob McKean

Vintage Motors is filled with hot rods that are being repaired and enhanced. Just past the door is a 1946 GMC pick up. The truck which has a huge cab and a wooden flatbed looks fast just sitting still. "This truck has had a lot of repair, but I have also talked the owner out of unnecessary repairs that will save him some money and get the truck back on the street," says Bob.

Up on the rack is a 1931 Ford roadster. "The owner of this car hadn't run it in thirteen years. When he got it started it had dangerously high oil pressure. We fixed the oil but then when the car was running it shook like it was coming apart. We fixed that by working on the after market frame on which the car built. Now it should run safely."

Out front Bob has his own ride, a pristine 1972 Suburban. While it looks like a pampered child and has an engine voice that goes from baritone to a deep bass, Bob has a plan that includes many enhancements. "I'm like my customers, I love driving this car," says Bob.

**Vintage Motors 647-South Palm Street, Suite D, La Habra California 90631 (562) 690 5608**



Steve and Bob at their La Habra Shop

(continued from page 5) tremendous amount of time to his quest. This year alone he has devoted 81 full days to visiting stores. During three days of a longer trip Winter visited 60 stores. No mean feat when you consider that each store visit requires ritual precision. A photograph of each store must be taken and a cup of coffee must be purchased. When asked, "Do you actually drink coffee at each location?" Winter states, "I often drink 15-25 a day. In bigger cities like NYC and LA. on some days I drink as much as 240 ounces of coffee. Think of the classic 'Beavis and Butthead' episode, 'Butt-niks.'" Winter's favorite coffees are House Blend and Verona, but he does not enjoy the Gold Coast.

Life on the road would be lonely for Winter were it not for a second passion which is playing Scrabble. Winter is deeply involved in tournament play and he has a current rating of 1528. I asked him what was his favorite opening rack and he replied any "bingo," that is seven letter word, gets things started nicely, but it doesn't guarantee a winning game. I also asked him what was his killer word and I was informed that it is a class of words, five letter words to be exact. Winter says, "There is strategy in the use of these words. They are not studied by most tournament players and can lead to challenges that result in your opponent losing his or her turn. He said, "Yesterday in club play I used three five letter words that my opponent did not know. When I used the third five letter word she couldn't believe that I could muster a third word she didn't know and she challenged it. That cost her a turn."

Winter has an extensive and interesting web site where you can enjoy and follow his globe spanning quest. You will find on his site photos of every Starbucks store that has been visited, paintings in which Starbucks is the setting, even poetry about coffee. The site "Starbucks Everywhere" can be found at , [www.starbuckseverywhere.net](http://www.starbuckseverywhere.net). It is such an extravagant work of documentation that even Andy Warhol would have been impressed. In the world of coffee this is the germinal documentary of an astounding piece of performance art. - Ishmael "Shaky" O'Brien



This is Starbucks' first location in Tokyo, Japan.



## Panache Experience Editorial Staff

**Publisher:** Hollis O'Brien

**Editor:** Gerard W. O'Brien

**Proof Readers:** Hank and Donna Fliegler

**Local Business Reporter:** J. W. O'Brien

**Photographer:** Jerry O'Brien

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**Jazz Reporter :** J. "Hepcat" O'Brien

**California Wine Reporter:** G. W. "Bacchus" O'Brien

**Poetry Reporter:** g.w.e. o brien

**California Fine Art Reporter:** G.W.E. O'Brien, B.A.

**Team Reporter:** Thom Peters O'Brien

**Distribution:** Jerry "The Mule" O'Brien

**Offices:** 2808 E. Imperial Highway Brea, CA 92821

**Printing :** ABF Chad Buonauro 714 255 9988

The views expressed here are Jerry O'Brien's and reflect only his point of view.

Parties By Panache accepts for possible publication original works, by artists, writers, and photographers. Any work which is submitted will only be returned if return postage accompanies the submission, however, the submitter may pick up his or her submission at our offices. Acceptance does not guarantee use of the work in this newsletter, however, submission is deemed a warranty of originality and authority to grant permission for use.

Google: Orange County Anniversary Caterer PBP #6; Orange County Bat Mitzvah Caterer #1

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## The Organization: Life Inside the PBP Office

Parties By Panache might have as many as forty parties during any week, more sometimes, less others, but that's a good number. Catering forty events requires preparing, cooking and serving a tremendous amount of a great variety of food. It also requires a tremendous amount of paper work. Organizing a party can involve as little as getting the kitchen the list of foods from our platter menu to as much as coordinating every facet of a three day long event. Documenting this takes a lot of planning, writing, telephoning, writing, meeting, writing, cutting, writing, pasting, writing, and then distributing all of these writings to the proper people. All of this activity documenting leads to: purveyor locating, order placing, order checking, billing, and work order writing. Then some one has to deal with the inevitable changes that come in as parties grow, shrink, relocate, change dates, change color schemes, change menus, change contact people, etc.



This is where "The Organization" gets involved. They are the people who know where to get the engraved champagne flutes, the ice creams that are shaped and glazed to look like real fruit, the whole pigs for roasting and the whole roasted pigs. They can also get you a carriage drawn by two black horses, search lights to light up your night, or a band that does a virtual Neil Diamond show.

The head honcho is, of course, **Hollis O'Brien**, Barnard College Alum, former chemist with Union Carbide and Unocal, former restaurateur and owner and president for the past seventeen years of Parties By Panache. She is easy to recognize because she has the big office/ware house/design studio/show room where she meets clients, handles labor shortages, conducts sales meetings, deals with deliveries or the lack there of, practices popular psychology, etc. Also if there is a light on in the place Hollis is there, or at a meeting or at an event. "Hollis has developed a work and management style that allows her to oversee virtually every phase of every event that goes out the door. She has almost total recall of event details, she remembers parties that PBP catered last year or two years ago. She has a good idea of what she served, what the rentals were, and who was the purveyor who was able to get the one item that nobody else on the west coast carries. Hollis has developed an information organization system that she has used for the last 30 years and is apparently fail safe, every day she writes her task list on a lined yellow pad and she crosses out completed tasks, adds new tasks and rolls forward those that are not completed. I have witnessed this system work flawlessly for the last 20 years. Hollis at least skims every article that is published about food in the *Los Angeles Times*, *New York Times*, *Gourmet*, *Food and Wine*, *Bon Appetit*, *The Good Cook*, *Cucina Italiana*, and others that I don't recall. Then she cooks what looks good," says Jerry O'Brien. "If she wasn't such a nice person it could be a little intimidating."

However, even with her intimate knowledge of the details of all operations Hollis has to delegate work to other members of the organization. Before we get to who is doing what in the office; a word on past staffers. "I have had really great people work with me and I would not have been able to build Parties By Panache up to where it is today without help from Tori White and Beverley Durbin. Tori and Bev are good friends of mine as well former employees. Tori started the business with me and now lives in New Hampshire. Her son Todd who is now in college, works with us. Bev retired and moved to Tucson. **[hagiographic note:** Bev is married to Don Durbin, known as Saint Don to the PBP staffers.]

**Patsy Davila:** she is the bookkeeper/office manager and the person who gives Jerry most of his draconian management ideas. Patsy takes care of all of our accounts and human resources.

**Chellie Disney:** she comes to us with past hotel management experience and she knew how to operate a computer when she arrived. She is becoming E.T.'s lieutenant in planning and proposals.

**Leslee Meyer:** is our décor designer; this is a calling which she loves. She is also in charge of staffing all of our events, a job which she does.

**NOTE:** Servers don't cancel at the last minute or Leslee will assign you only to PFHs that are out in (*pick anyplace that has a two hour drive and traffic jams at midnight*) for the rest of your working life.

**Michelle Ross:** Michelle is the front receptionist and sort of a utility person, and she does all the work orders, and changes to work orders, and more changes to the work orders, as well as filling in where ever we need someone. That is when she is not on vacation in Europe, Hawaii, or China. Michelle told us when we hired her that she expected as much time off as she had when she was in school. We didn't know she had been a part time student.

**Sherry Simonson:** Sherry is our rental expert. If she can't get it for you, 1.) you don't need it 2.) it doesn't exist and 3.) you will not be able to get it anywhere else. You may be able to have it custom made, but that's on you.

**Elizabeth Taylor:** In case you don't know Elizabeth grew up in La Habra and worked for Deutsche Bank. Now she is one of our top gun sales people and party planners. E.T., as she is known is also a crack trainer and does some graphics design. However, her true love is writing and rewriting and rewriting proposals.

**Kellie Van Leir:** She is not actually an office staffer per se, she is really in charge of transportation, but she comes down to the office a lot so I felt what the heck, let's cover her here. If she says you get a truck you do, if she says you don't, you don't.

## What I want for the Holidays by James Flash Misty Isles, AKC

This is the first time I have had the opportunity to write for publication and it wasn't easy to get here. The opportunity presented itself while I was watching Dad read his e-mail. He had just chased me off of the red couch because I was drooling. What does he expect? I'm a dog. He received an email message from Trixie, Dean Koontz's dog. I snuck up on the bed which is next to the computer table and read it over his shoulder. I jumped down and said, "Hey Dad, can I write emails like Trixie, or maybe even a magazine article. He said, "I'll let you write, but you have to use better English than Trixie, she sounds like a native from Gilligan's Island." I said "Okay." Dad looked at me very strangely and said, "What are you going to write about?" I said, "Getting presents, just like Trixie and Jeremy and Henry." He said, "go ahead" and went out for a walk.

Jeremy and Henry want boring things like computer games and movies. Trixie, always wants food and sniffing and to be able to behave like a dog. I already eat and behave like a dog, so I want things to make my life more fun and interesting. The first thing I want is some new CD's. You see Dad got a new CD player and it is all push buttons, so I can turn it on and off with my nose. Since I am home

alone for some part of each day the music would keep me company, and block out the annoying street sounds which if heard must be investigated and barked at. The music would truly make my life easier, freeing me from interruptions so that I could sleep. I really like that world music sound so you can get me: **Lori Bell's** self titled album. It is a very nice listen. I also like straight ahead jazz vocals, anything by **Barbara Morrison** would be good and also **Annie Sellick**. Since the CD changer fits six CDs I would also like **Heaven Bound Train's** new CD, which is available at their website. I really dig Shin Kato's vocal stylings, especially when he sings in Japanese. And then there is *Beyond Mercury* by **Carolyne Mas**. Pure Magic. Finally I love **Alexandra Caselli's** album "*Out the Aquarium*" Smooth jazz and classic standards. I would like to lay on the red leather couch and listen to her play those keyboards all day.

Because I spend roughly 23 hours each day in the house, I have come to love art. Without some visually stimulating art on the walls or standing on the floor I would go nuts and start acting like a cat. **Cheryl Ekstrom** has created some smaller pieces called "*The Journeymen*". She is doing a one artist show featuring these little guys which begins on December 2, 2004 at her husband Dennis Ekstrom's studio. One or several Journeymen could be displayed on the table in front of the red couch. They are beautifully colorful and made out of everything under the sun. I could look at them all day. **Marton Varo** is famous for the great big statues he carves from limestone and the life size statues he releases from marble, however, he shapes celestially beautiful smaller pieces. I wish he would sculpt a Sheltie from Carrara marble.

Dad took me for a [rare] walk in Whittier so I was able to run repeatedly around the statues that comprise the suite known as "*Though the Garden Gate*" by **Guy Wilson**. So I would like that also. Finally because I am always thirsty I would like one of **Monika B. Kaden's** Statues, like "*Happy St. Francis Dancing on the Water*." Just a tip, all animals like St. Francis statues, you can't really go wrong with one of those. If you are going to have a statue commissioned just for me, I suggest "*Happy St. Francis Dancing with a Sheltie on the Water*."

I like to read as well as listen to music and view art. I would therefore like a copy of **George Russell's** "*Lydian Chromatic Concept of Tonal Gravity*." Dad thinks I won't understand it but after I have read it I will explain it to him. Then there are those two books by **Lisa Lenard-Cook** "*Dissonance*" and "*Coyote Morning*." Both are works of literary fiction, I however, find books about coyotes to be a bit disquieting. If Poetry is your thing then try out some of the books of poems by **Judyth Hill, David Feela, or Rosemerry Wahtola Trommer**.

Then I would like a dinner for eight from **Parties By Panache**. I favor the Turkey dinner that they do at Thanksgiving, but make that turkey a large one. And it is just for me. I'm happy to share my music, art and books with everyone, but nobody is getting near my food.

Happy Holidays to everyone.

Affectionately, James Flash Misty Isles, AKC

P.S. : For the ease of those who are interested in getting a gift for James, or anyone else the wonderfully talented Artists, Musicians, Writers and Poets can all be contacted through Parties By Panache's website [www.partiesbypanache.com](http://www.partiesbypanache.com) by clicking on the [Art, Music and More](#) link or [Links to our Friends](#). I strongly urge you to support these uniquely creative people.



# Chanukah Menu

## A Well Constructed Chanukah Meal

Roasted Eggplant Dip with pita crisps  
Smoked Salmon Canapés  
Israeli Chopped Salad  
Brisket of Beef with caramelized onions  
Lemon Chicken  
Potato Latkes with applesauce and sour cream  
Sautéed Zucchini with Tomatoes and Garlic  
Freshly Baked Challah  
Sufganiot (Israeli jelly-filled donuts)  
Hand Decorated Hanukkah Cookies  
\$ 25.00 per person

## Sometimes you just have to build your own

### Platters

**Smoked Fish Platter** With smoked salmon, smoked trout, tomatoes, onions, cucumbers, lemon, capers, horseradish cream  
**Middle Eastern Platter** Hummus, baba ghanooj, stuffed grape leaves (vegetarian), feta cheese, olives, and pita bread  
**Grilled Vegetable Platter** Eggplant, zucchini, yellow squash, sweet red peppers, portobello mushrooms, asparagus, and olives  
**Fresh Fruit Platter** A selection of seasonal fresh fruit  
**Orange Salad** With red onion and mint on a bed of gourmet greens  
**Israeli Chopped Salad** Romaine lettuce, cucumbers, tomatoes, red onions, parsley, mint, garlic and lemon vinaigrette  
**Spinach Salad** With pears, pomegranates and candied walnuts  
All items above:  
12" platter \$35.00 (serves 8 to 10)  
16" platter \$60.00 (serves 15 to 20)  
**Brie and Apple Soup** \$12.50/qt.  
**Pumpkin Soup** with honey and cloves \$12.50/qt.

### Entrees/Salads

**Cheese Stuffed Eggplant**  
With ricotta cheese and fresh herbs, baked in a fresh tomato sauce \$3.95 each, each piece weighs approximately 4 ounces.  
**Lamb Stuffed Eggplant** With a tomato pomegranate sauce \$4.95 each  
**Stuffed Honey Orange Chicken Breasts** With dried fruit and homemade bread stuffing topped with a honey-orange glaze \$5.95 each  
**Chicken with Preserved Lemons and Olives**  
\$5.95 each (one breast or two thighs)

### Maple Chicken

With grilled apple rings and dried apricots  
\$5.95 each (one breast or two thighs)

### Lamb Tagine with Prunes and Almonds

\$7.95 per serving

**Cold Poached Salmon** Garnished with cucumber scales, dill sauce and lemon 1 side- approx 2 & 1/2 lbs. (serves 8 to 12)  
\$40.00

### Beef Brisket

With caramelized onions \$7.95 per serving

### Round Challahs

Plain, apple or seeded approximately 1.5 lbs. \$5.00

### Side Dishes

**Noodle Kugel** With sour cream, cottage cheese, eggs, sugar, cinnamon and raisins (serves 12 to 16) \$25.00

**Rice Pilaf** With Dates and Almonds (serves 15-20) \$32.50

**Chick Pea and Lentil Pilaf** (serves 15-20) \$32.50

**Couscous Pilaf** With celery, onions, and dried fruits (serves 15-20) \$32.50

**Leek and Potato Patties** Lightly fried \$12.00 per dozen

**Roasted Red Potatoes** (serves 12-15) \$27.50

**Honey and Pomegranate Glazed Carrot** (serves 12-15)  
\$27.50

**Brown Rice** With honeyed apples (serves 15-20) \$32.50

**Roasted Eggplant Dip** With roasted vegetables, tomatoes and herbs with pita crisps \$12.50/qt.

### Desserts

**Toffee Apple and Honey Trifle** (serves 15-20) \$50.00

*Served in a glass trifle bowl*

**Apple Cake** With layers of cinnamon and apples (serves 12-16) \$18.00

**Lemon Buttermilk Cake** (serves 12-16) \$18.00

**French Apple Tart** (serves 8 to 12) \$25.00

**Plum Galette** (serves 12-16) \$25.00

### Flourless Chocolate Cake

With raspberry sauce and whipped cream (serves 12-16)  
\$30.00

**Rugala** Chocolate Chip, or Apples and Walnuts \$9.00 per dozen

**"Black and White" Cookies** \$1.50 each

**Fig and Date Filo Pastries** \$1.50 each

The quantity of servings noted is only an approximation. Please call us if you have any questions.

All cold items will be displayed attractively on disposable platters. All items that require heating will be in aluminum foil containers ready for the oven.

Servers are available for complete set-up service and clean-up.

For Late Breaking News in the World of Culinary Arts Tune in to:

[Www.partiesbypanache.com](http://www.partiesbypanache.com) "All the News About Eating [and Drinking] Well."



Comet on his way to work at Santa's



No need for Rudolph's nose on this moon lit Christmas Eve.

# Christmas Dinner Menu

- Caviar Pie w/ crostini & party rye
- Smoked Trout on dark bread w/ horseradish cream
- Pear Roquefort Salad w/ caramelized walnuts & dried cranberries
- Prime Rib of Beef w/ au jus & horseradish cream
- Garlic Mashed Potatoes
- Green Beans w/ Portobello mushrooms
- Freshly Baked Dinner Rolls
- Holiday Trifle or Buche de Noel
- Hand-Decorated Holiday Cookies
- \$35.00 per person

**Complete New Year's Celebration Packages  
Including Servers, Chefs  
Available for 8 guests or more**

Pick-up until 6:00pm Thursday December 23 and until 1:00pm Friday December 24, 2004  
Orders will be accepted until Monday December 20, 2004

## Recipe : Smoking A Brined Goose

Before you can roast or smoke a brined goose you have to brine it. Brining is a great way to make any kind of meat, fowl or fish moister. Originally brining was used to preserve food, but now when it is still used, it is used to make the food to be brined juicier. And recently brining has gone even further, adding flavor along with moisture. Most brines are simply a mixture of salt, sugar and water, but you can add flavoring elements such as apple juice, cinnamon, pepper and bay leaf to impart taste as well. Here is the brine I am using this year on my geese.

For Each Gallon of water:

- 1 cup of salt
- 1/2 cup of sugar
- 1 cup of apple juice
- 2 Granny Smith Apples, quartered
- 1 cinnamon stick
- 1/2 teaspoon cardamom
- 1/2 teaspoon nutmeg
- 10 crushed black pepper corns
- 2 bay leaves

Put your goose into a container large enough to completely submerge it. Pour in water, measuring it as you add it until the

goose is covered. Now you know how many gallons of water you have used and you can multiply the listed brine ingredients by the number of gallons to get the right amount.

Put the salt, sugar and apple juice into a sauce pan and stir while heating to dissolve the salt and sugar. Once they are dissolved and have come to a boil add the rest of the ingredients, take off the heat and let cool. As soon as the solution has cooled add it to the container with the water and the goose. Refrigerate for 24 to 48 hours. Remove the goose from the brine, pat dry and you are ready to smoke your goose.

### Smoking a goose

The average size goose smokes in about 7 to 9 hours in a smoker that averages 200 degrees Fahrenheit. It is important to keep a close watch on the smoker temperature, because if you let the temperature go under 180 degrees the goose will take much longer to smoke; over 240 degrees and the goose will roast and dry out before it is smoked.

For my smoke I use a mixture of apple and hickory, with all apple for the first 2 to 3 hours.

Your goose is cooked when puncturing the breast and leg produces a stream of clear liquid; the thermometer will show a minimum temperature of 165 degrees.

## New Years Eve Celebration

### Hors d'oeuvre

Havarti En Crouete (must be baked)	\$25.00
Sundried Tomato and Roasted Garlic Torta	\$25.00
Dungeness Crab Cakes w/ Tequila Lime Sauce	\$24.00/doz.
New Potatoes Filled with Sour Cream and Caviar	\$24.00/doz.
Caramelized Onion in Filo Tarts	\$12.00/doz.
Brie and Cranberry Bouchées	\$15.00/doz.

### Soup

Asparagus Bisque	\$12.50qt.
Butternut Squash Soup	\$12.50qt.
Potato & Poblano Chili Soup	\$12.50qt.

### Vegetables

	Per qt./3qt.
Green Beans Almandine W/ Portobello Sauce	\$12.00/\$30.00
Garlic Mashed Red Potatoes W/ Skins	\$12.00/\$30.00
Brussels Sprouts w/ Chestnuts	\$12.50/\$32.50
Baked Potato Cups W/ Caramelized Onions & Bacon	\$3.95 each

### Breads and Condiments

Panettone, 2.5 lbs	\$12.50
Dinner Rolls	\$7.50 per doz.
Cranberry-Walnut Braid	\$8.00 per loaf
Cranberry Sauce	\$6.50/pint

### Desserts

Flourless Chocolate Cake w/ Raspberry Sauce and Whipped Cream	\$30.00
Caramel Apple Trifle	\$50.00
Panache Chocolate Pecan Pie	\$25.00
Mini Dessert Platters	\$25.00 (12" 25pcs.) \$50.00 (16" 50pcs.)
Roasted Pomegranate Pears	\$3.95/Ea.
Cranberry Panache Bar	\$12.00
Pecan Bars By The Dozen	\$12.00
Brownies By The Dozen	\$12.00
Lemon Bars By The Dozen	\$12.00

### Complete New Year's Celebration Packages

Including Servers, Chefs

Available for 8 guests or more

Pick-up until 6:00pm Thursday December 30 and until 12:00pm Friday December 31, 2004

Orders will be accepted until Monday December 27, 2004

Parties By Panache 2808 E. Imperial Hwy, Brea, CA 714-572-2190



## Winter in the South West's Magnificent Deserts

As winter holidays approach many of us are drawn to an image of winter which is foreign to the Southwest. Although we have snow in the mountains and the temperature has dipped into the forties this isn't New England. We won't be sleighing over frozen rivers to grandma's house.

Pictures of New England's temperate climate snowy winter should not push out of mind that the southwestern United States is home to the magnificent Mojave, Sonoran or Colorado deserts. The winter prevents the deserts from being barren stretches of dead land without flora or fauna. The winter is what makes it possible for these deserts to shelter hundreds of types of plants and animals.

The Mojave desert is known as the high desert even though as the home of Death Valley it contains the lowest ground elevation in the Western Hemisphere. Because of its average elevation of over 2000 feet this desert is wetter and cooler than its lower lying southeastern neighbor, the Colorado. The Colorado desert is so called because it's eastern border is the Colorado river. The Southwestern deserts are the home to woodlands. In the Mojave the woodland is made of single leaf pinon pine whose pine needles can live for twelve years making it the epitome of the evergreen. The trees themselves live average lives of over 300 years with specimens that have been alive for over 800 years. Travel southeast into the Colorado and Joshua trees become abundant. Joshua Tree National Monument straddles a transition between the Mojave and Colorado. Continue heading east and you enter the hottest driest desert in the US, the Sonoran. In the Arizona section of the Sonoran desert you will find the magnificent Saguaro cactus, which does not grow anywhere else in nature. This very slow growing cactus can reach forty feet in height, but will take 150 years to do so.

These are lands of spring wildflowers which are the result of winter rains. The desert's flora which wears muted tans most of the year bursts into brilliant color for its brief bloom in March and April. Wet years can bring an earlier bloom.

Desert wildlife can be as big, beautiful and bashful as a mountain goat or as small and strange as a scorpion. The wildlife may hide from the daily sun or lay buried for years waiting for a rainstorm that will temporarily restore its habitat. There are birds, mammals, reptiles, lizards, fish, shell fish, insects and arachnids all of which have developed specialized lifestyles to cope with the desert environment. An example is a tiny shrimp which lays dormant in a pebble hard egg buried in the hard sandy earth, possibly for years, waiting for a wet winter which will create the pool in which it will live. Once the pool appears the egg hatches and grows from infant to mating adult, producing the eggs for the next generation in less than six weeks. The desert is a dichotomy of lives lived in coma like slow motion and lives lived at breakneck speed.

While seductively beautiful, the desert can be lethally inhospitable, and as a poor host it requires that its guests bring everything, even for a one day visit. So when you are packing to visit these remarkable remote regions pack two gallons of water per person per day, sun block, sun glasses, wide brimmed hat, clothes for the heat, for sun protection and for the cold; bring ready to eat food that will last far in excess of your planned visit, and remember your digital camera and plenty of batteries.

**THE LIVING DESERT ZOO AND GARDENS** located at 47-900 Portola Avenue, Palm Desert, California, makes it possible to visit not only our southwestern deserts but also the deserts of Mexico and Africa. Beautifully constructed and skillfully maintained on 1,200 acres, THE LIVING DESERT ZOO provides a portal to over 400 animals from 10 different ecosystems. The GARDENS allow the visitor to experience the multitude of plants, shrubs and trees that love the arid climates of California, Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, Colorado, Utah and Nevada. If that's not enough desert for you there are gardens representing Mexico's Sonoran and Chihuahuan deserts. If you still need more, and frankly, can you ever get enough of the solitary beauty of desert wilderness, there is the African section of the park with everything from meerkats to giraffes and a traditional village from the African savanna. The park is open everyday except Christmas; for information call 760-346 5694

The Desert is as fragile as it is fierce and treating it gently will ensure that it is available for all of our winter holiday visits for decades to come.



This huge cactus is known as "Carnegiea Gigantea Schwarzenegger"



Mirages like this oasis can result from dehydration Below: Yucca and blue sky.



# Public Art Programs Turn Cities Into Open Air Galleries

were represented, as were colleges and a large number of Whittierites of every description. These people were excited at the prospect of an original work of art being installed, where they could see it everyday. The ceremony featured the current mayor who introduced almost everyone in the viewing seats, it was pretty boring, but not a soul left. Guy got up and being a man who says more with bronze than words spoke for only several minutes, the sun was getting hot, but everyone hung in. Then it was time for the unveiling. Audrey, the sculptor's daughter and model for the child who looks out from between the gates had her photo taken with her dad and the mayor and other dignitaries. Then the statue was unveiled.

The covering purple drapes were pulled away and the crowd swarmed over the installation, literally all of the people present looked, touched and all but embraced the sculptures. It was magic. There were kids in baggie pants and oversize shirts, mothers with strollers and even a man with a white cane. They were in heaven and all it took was a statue in the park. These people, all different from each other, were willing to sit through a civic presentation, with each other, so they could enjoy art.

I think that the magic was the result of a number of things. First Guy Wilson's design and execution is nothing short of genius. Secondly the sculpture celebrates Whittier, featuring the likenesses of two of the women who are responsible for putting Whittier on the map. Then it is charming, sweet and sophisticated. The art critic can look at the statue and admire how although akin to a bas relief the sculptures are correctly formed from every angle. This is a testament to Guy's technical expertise but also to his commitment to any project he undertakes. For young people the sculpture might say look at the child looking up at young but long ago women who helped to make our town what it is. There is a place for us here. To people who simply enjoy the outdoors and beauty the sculpture is a landmark in a green oasis.

Whittier has just experienced what has become common place in Brea. And it's great that the developers who build in Brea enrich our lives by installing public art, however, it is truly sad that it has become so commonplace that it is no longer treated like a big deal. I would really love if a couple of hundred people would show up when a Varo, De St. Phalle, Kennedy, Riger or Wilson was unveiled. With one piece of public sculpture for every 250 citizens I think that Brea should be called "Art City, USA" like Huntington Beach is called Surf City, USA.

It is because of Brea's unequalled art in public places program that I became aware that I was living among artists like John Kennedy, Cheryl Ekstrom, and Karen Heyl. It is because of their art that I am so incredibly fond of walking through a city which has hardly any side walks.

Now when I am traveling to cities like Santa Fe, New York, Paris or Brussels, I am much more aware of the public art. I go out of my way to meet the artists and talk with them about their work and so far everywhere I go it is the same. The artists want to talk about their work and about the impact that their work has on the place where it is installed. Working artists seem to be very interested in the communities where their art is displayed. Many of them, like Guy Wilson, maintain their sculptures for years after the installation so that they remain intact and viable.

I have found the artists are very willing to speak with interested members of the public not only about the works they have installed, but about how they make them, what they want to do in the future, the condition of the art world, etc. In fact several of them have invited me to eat lunch with them, one of them actually cooked lunch for me. And it was very, very good.

Whittier has now embarked on a journey which will make art a part of the everyday life of its citizens, much as Brea did thirty years ago. I don't like it when the government decides how to spend my money for me. It took a lot of courage to get the government of a small city to make art in public places a requirement for being allowed to build within its limits. It also took a lot of foresight and generosity on the part of the developers to agree to go along with the plan. The result is one where everybody won. The city became a model for civic art programs nationwide. Developers made fortunes building here and the city is a beautiful place to live.



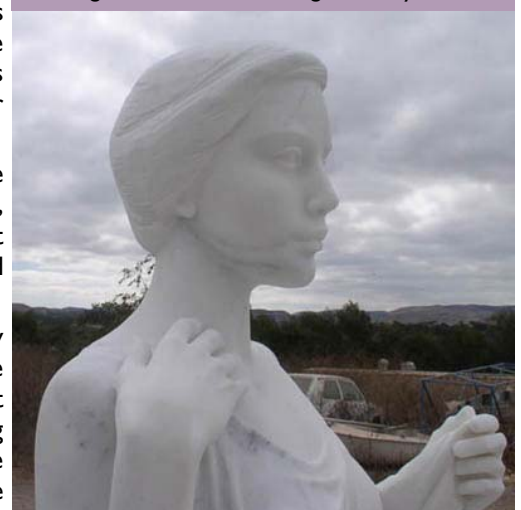
Monika B. Kaden talks about her Happy St. Francis Dancing on Water.



Cheryl Ekstrom builds the Platform for her "Breaking Down the Orange Curtain"



"Through the Garden Gates" greeted by Whittier



Marton Varo has several statues in Brea. This is one he was working on when I visited his studio.

Enjoy All of Life's Flavors With Those You Love . Happy Holidays From Parties By Panache.



Luminaries frame a mission bell, as the holidays are welcomed in the Southwest with the light and sounds of thanks and celebration



Reina and Etelvina create a tapestry of delectable holiday treats , which are a feast for the eyes as well as a feast for the taste bud.



Fresh baked desserts, ripe California fruit and a Honey Fountain grace the table at Hank and Donna Fliegler's home.



Somehow you can usually tell just how much fun a holiday party is going to be. Happy Holidays from the crew at Parties By Panache!



*Support Breast  
Cancer Research*



2808 E. Imperial Highway  
Brea, CA 92821  
714 572 2190

[www.partiesbypanache.com](http://www.partiesbypanache.com)