

GALA NEWS & REVIEWS

July/August 2006
Volume 16, Issue 4

A Publication of the Gay & Lesbian
Alliance of the Central Coast



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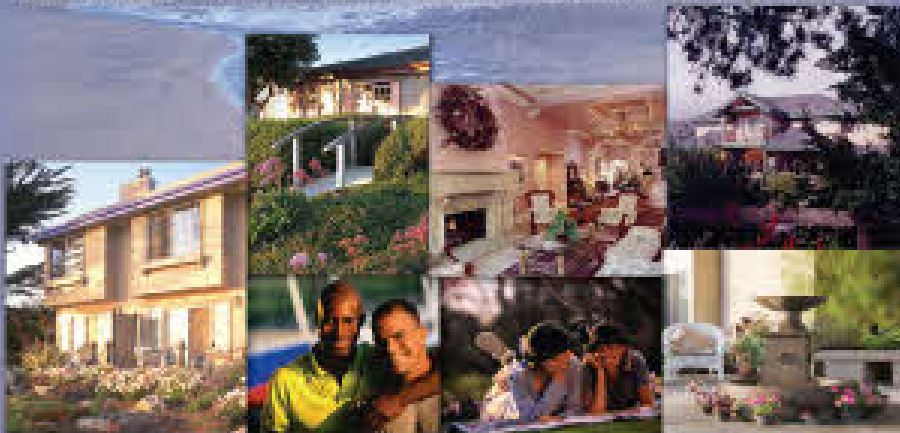
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GALA'S MISSION

Through education, support, recreation, advocacy, and partnerships, we will promote the well-being of our GLBT community.

GALA brings people together.

VISION

To have a healthy GLBT community that is respected, embraced by, and of value to, the broader Central Coast community.

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Next Issue Deadline: August 9, 2006

FAMILY VALUES

What fun we had at the GALA Women's Event on Saturday, May 13, 2006 when 110 women came to enjoy Wine, Women and Songs! Entertainers Carol Lowell and Kristen Black were fabulous and they blessed us not only with their beautiful talent, but also by refusing to take our token payment for their efforts. Their talents are tremendous and I encourage you to check their music at www.carollowell.com and www.kristenblack.com. Carol and Kristen were joined by Joelyn Lutz, who treated us to three songs. An additional impromptu offering by Kelly rounded out the entertainment. All of these women are to be thanked time and again! If you know them, please call and say an extra thanks for their generosity of time and talent. Thanks as well to Mo of Mobile Music for the grand DJ services and dance.

Byron Winery, Cambria Winery in Santa Maria and Peachy Canyon Winery in Templeton all donated wine. Please remember to support businesses that support GALA.

In addition to our entertainment, we all learned more about our struggles to hang on to the domestic partnership rights we currently have in California, and the pending battles we face as the "religious wrong" plot to take these away and prevent us from ever achieving equality. (We have many people of faith who support equality so that's why we prefer to differentiate our opposition with this label.) As I shared that night, we are facing the biggest equal rights challenge our country has seen since the 1960s. None of us can afford to be ill informed or complacent in this battle. As an old Black spiritual says, "None of us is free. None of us is free while one of us is chained, none of us is free." Interesting to note the same arguments we hear today to prevent equal rights for same sex couples were used to prevent marriages between different ethnicities in California until that was corrected in 1968. Remember, this struggle is about equal rights, equal responsibilities, and equal taxation!

Meanwhile, back to our women's event, please note our volunteer team worked hard for three

months to support our guests. Great thanks go to Diana Ferraro, our Co-Chair, for the food, decorations, and fabulous graphic arts; Pat Harris for the public relations and for finding and securing the End of the Line Café for our use; Anthony Parra for finding us Theo, the wonderful bartender; Shannon Wyndson, Sherry Collier, and Cal Garcia for being our anchors and stability throughout the event; Sandy Brooks for her willingness to serve; Claire for not divorcing me because of this (ha ha) as well as doing any job that needed to be done; Deborah B. for doing more than she ever intended or felt comfortable in doing; and many unnamed volunteers who hopped in and strung lights, chopped veggies, moved furniture, and most of all, hung out till 11:00 PM to tear all of the above apart and haul



garbage to the bins.

What is most important to remember is this: it is GALA and our community that created this event, marketed this event, paid for this event, and volunteered to manage this event. All of these efforts were because people like you volunteered to serve our community and volunteered to leave your homes and pay \$12-\$15 to recover our costs. I thank our GALA board, and especially president Robert Kinports, for realizing "women only" events are an important element in the health of our community. I hope all women that supported this event will return for the wonderful co-ed events scheduled for the rest of the year. Bless our community by joining GALA, supporting our events, and being part of the solution.

Ethel Landers

Women's Event Co-Chair

NEWS

KAY ALLEN HATLER

January 26, 1941 -- April 17, 2006

JAMIE MAE HATLER

(Nee: James Edward Johnston)

April 9, 1942 -- April 28, 2006



Born in Huntsville, Missouri, the youngest of four children, Ray and his family moved often as his father searched for work in the construction industry. Years later, when Ray needed a security clearance, his mother was able to reconstruct a list of over twenty former home addresses along with the four high schools that Ray had attended in three states.

Graduating from California State University, Los Angeles in 1963 during the Kennedy administration, Ray applied for and was accepted to serve in the Peace Corps. After teaching for two years in Liberia, West Africa, he returned to the United States in 1965 having seen sights he could never have imagined. He returned to school for another year for certification to teach in California.

America was divided over the Viet Nam War and being classified 1-A (the highest rating in the pre-Lottery days), Ray knew that he soon would be called in the Selective Service Draft. He enlisted in the Air Force and went into Officer Training. Ray spent the next four years watching a radar screen to see if the Soviets were coming.

After an honorable discharge, Ray returned to California, and was job hunting. He met Jamie in a bar in Los Angeles. They went home together that night and stayed together for over 35 years. Ray told Jamie about his dream of becoming an attorney. Jamie was very supportive, and Ray did his part by knuckling down and passing the State Bar Exam on the first try. Thereafter, he could call himself an attorney.

Ray established his own law office in Los Angeles and in 1987 moved it to San Luis Obispo and then to Los Osos. He was founder and first President of the Gay Lawyers in Los

Angeles and in 1989 of the Business And Professional Association in San Luis Obispo. He was deeply involved in numerous organizations on the Central Coast, including ALLPS Support Network and the Gay And Lesbian Alliance, and did extensive "pro bono" legal work for several organizations.

Upon being diagnosed with an aggressive type of prostate cancer in 2001, Ray closed his legal office and concentrated on enjoying the time left to him with Jamie. Together, they delighted in bridge, chess, billiards, and gay cruises. They were especially proud of their collections of beer stems and nutcracker figures. Ray loved gardening, home projects, and was secretly an adept woodworker. They had designed and built their first home in Los Osos in 1989, and moved into a second, larger home on the same property in 1991.

Ray is survived by a sister, Sharon, and a brother, Larry and his wife, Wanda, and for a short time, his life-partner, Jamie. An older brother, Everette, as well as his mother and father preceded Ray in death.

Jamie was born and raised in Los Angeles, and although he was afflicted with cerebral palsy from birth, he never regarded himself as being handicapped. Although he had attended special elementary and secondary schools for his basic education, he refused to attend reunions because it depressed him to be around "crippled people". He was referring to people who allowed themselves to be "crippled" in spirit by their handicaps. He delighted in knowledge and learning and received two degrees from Pepperdine University -- his BA in 1964, and his MA in 1966. He had majored in Mathematics and minored in Physics.

Jamie worked for IKW for many years as a computer software engineer until his retirement in 2004. His work schedule included extensive travel, which he enjoyed his entire life. He was a key member of the team that developed software for space vehicle launches. GALA was a particular beneficiary of Jamie's computer expertise, since he kept the membership records complete and up to date for nearly ten years.

Recently, Jamie had decided it was time to change his name to more correctly reflect how he and Ray viewed their relationship. The change was made official and published in the San Luis Obispo Tribune.

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Possessed of a quick and ready wit, no one enjoyed a good joke more than Jamie. The St. Patrick's Day comed beef dinners, the mid-summer Sunday brunches, and the annual Christmas Open House were signature events for he and Ray. While the invitation might read, "light refreshments", the billiard table in the game room could almost be heard to groan from the weight and variety of food spread out on it. Admission to the Christmas Open House was by canned goods they collected for the ASN Pantry. Gracious and considerate hosts, their guests always felt welcomed, and no one ever left one of their parties either hungry or thirsty. They were named "Honorary Lesbians" by the LOLOW's.

Jamie is survived by a brother, John Johnston, and his wife, Bebe, having been preceded in death by his parents and his life partner, Kay.

Bon voyage, dear friends.

By Clay Marsh

Youth Rule: Empowerment Conference, 2006

The Third Annual Youth Empowerment Conference was held on May 20th at Cal Poly, and, as usual, youth from the county came together to make contacts with one another and hear workshops specifically geared towards them. The Conference title this year was *Queer Identity: Sex, Drugs, and Rock and Roll—There is So Much More*. The title came from the idea that many young queers are feeling the pressure to live up to the media's image of homosexuals having multiple partners, using a large amounts of drugs and alcohol and being portrayed as stereotypes in the media.

The youth gathered to hear workshops on how maintain self-identity in an age of media influence and stereotyping and *The Joy of Queer Sex*, which discussed healthy sexuality as a queer individual, and included tips on safer sex and sexual satisfaction. The conference ended with keynote speaker Chris Beckman from MTV's *The Real World Chicago* cast, who spoke about his journey to recovery from drug and alcohol abuse.

The youth all seemed to enjoy the day, laugh-

ing at the workshops or crying during Chris' story. This conference once again succeeded in its goal of empowering the queer youth of our community.

By Conrad Mendosa

Empowering LGBT Youth Conference


Education Track

The twenty-five adults who gathered at Cal Poly on Saturday May 20 were surprisingly alert and eager for 9:00 a.m. They were teachers, therapists, therapists-in-training, social workers, school counselors and adult allies. What they had in common was a commitment to support youth in coming to terms with sexual identities that don't match mainstream. The morning began with a panel of four high school students from SLO County who shared stories of coming out. Their eye-opening stories revealed incidents of challenge and discrimination but also support and encouragement from family and peers.

If you haven't interacted with youth lately, you may be perplexed by some of the terminology they use. You won't hear "lesbian" "gay" and "bi-sexual," these are replaced by "queer," "questioning," "gender-queer" or "claim no labels." Youth are shedding the terms of their adult counterparts, using new ones to define themselves. Fortunately, Ariel Clemenzi-Allen and Vicky Valentine from Health Initiatives for Youth (HIFY) were on hand to guide participants through some of the subtleties of youth culture. HIFY is an organization in the Bay Area devoted to improving health outcomes for all youth. They quickly got everyone involved and struggling to define the terms gender identity, sexual orientation, queer, gender expression, heterosexism, and intersex. And they kept it personal. This was not just about youth or other adults. Each of us was expected to define ourselves in relation to those terms. The culminating message of the day was a straightforward one—talk to youth and listen to them. Let each personal and individual life experience speak for itself.

For more information about local youth groups and resources contact GALA.


By John Elfer



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Safe Schools for All: PFLAG is Back in the Schools Again!

On May 10th, two PFLAG members, Kosi Lusardi and Steve Click, were able to make a presentation about "Safe Schools for All" to the faculty of the Los Osos Middle School. Although the presentation was at their after school meeting (not the best time of day), the faculty spent 40 minutes sharing and talking about some of the issues and concerns of GLBT and Questioning kids.

After a brief introduction and short discussion about the "gay" climate at their school, there was a discussion about State Law AB537, the California Student Safety and Violence Prevention Act of 2000, with information given about education employees' responsibilities as stated in the act. It seemed like some faculty members did not know the importance of this law. Parts of the film, *Let's Get Real*, were shown. This film features middle school students talking about many facets of discrimination and harassment on campus. This helped in further discussion about gay issues, and how to make the school's climate inclusive for all students (a few minutes were used to talk about put-down words in general). The group was reminded that GLBTQ concerns may involve students who may not see themselves as gay, but may live in a family or have friends who have GLBTQ concerns.

Kosi and Steve were very happy to have been invited to share information about helping to make our schools safe for all of our kids, especially our GLBTQ concerned students. If you would like to have a similar presentation at one of your local schools, please contact Kosi at 461-5554 or Steve at 549-8317 or smcfai@hotmail.com.

Gary Grossman Scholarship Awarded to Cuesta College Student

Scholarship supports gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender students without family backing.

SAN LUIS OBISPO – The Gary Grossman Scholarship in the amount of \$4,000, administered by the San Luis Obispo County Community Foundation, has been awarded to

Richard Kline, a student at Cuesta College.

The scholarship was established to provide financial support to local students who lack the financial resources to pursue higher education because of their sexual orientation. The program is specifically designed to provide scholarships to current or potential students whose parents or legal guardians are financially unable or refuse to support their son or daughter's college expenses because they are gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender.



Scholarship recipient Richard Kline

Kline said he was amazed that such a scholarship even existed.

"It gave me an initial feeling of acceptance and recognition that growing up I never knew," he said. "To see that people really do care ... meant so much. The scholarship money will give me more freedom and open up more doors for me while in school. I've had to struggle for my college education so far, but now with a helping hand, I'll have less on my shoulders."

Following completion of his general education requirements at Cuesta, Kline would like to attend the American University in Beirut, majoring in International Studies for his Bachelor's degree and Middle Eastern Studies for a Master's. His eventual goal is to work as a diplomat. And, he said, "I really want to give back so much more than has been so graciously given to me. I'll one day (soon) add to the bountiful opportunities for the people of my community."

In only six years, the SLOCCF has grown their assets to over \$21 million, holds more than 180 funds and has given out more than \$5 million in grants to assist nonprofit agencies. For more information on the SLOCCF or any funds, call 543-2323 or log onto www.sloccf.org.

Area faith communities join forces to support Pride in the Plaza

This year, several churches and synagogues are joining together to staff a booth at Pride in the Plaza July 9.

A new organization, Coalition of Welcoming Congregations, has been meeting all year to establish connections among the many religious communities in the county which are both welcoming and affirming of gay, lesbian, transgender and bisexual individuals.

The Coalition's mission is to build a bridge between faith communities and GLBT people. They are here to show GLBT people, who might have been censured by their religion of origin because of their sexual orientation or gender identity, that homosexuality and religion are not necessarily mutually exclusive.

Stop by their booth, and meet members of Community Church Atascadero, Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of SLO County, St. Benedict's Episcopal Church, Congregation Beth David, Trinity Methodist Church and other welcoming congregations throughout the county. They will be happy to answer your questions, and offer you refreshments!

For further information or to participate, contact Gina Whitaker at paganspirit@gmanh.com or 481-0788.

Help Wanted

GALA's booth at San Luis Obispo's Farmers Market is in need of volunteers!

Only 3 hours on Thursdays

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To schedule a time up to 3 months in advance, call Shannon Wyndsong 541-4252 or stop by and say "Howdy" Every Thursday near NOVO

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Save the Date



Sept 10th

Speaker: Rep. Lois Capps D-CA

11:30 am Brunch



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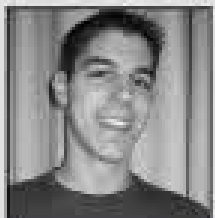


Conrad Mendoza, San Luis Obispo:

Young queers and the strength that they demonstrate in their lives and in coming out.

Debra Broner, Atascadero

Being open and being who I am. Participating and creating public events and moving us forward until all come out of the closet.



Jason Lindo, Gustine, Central Valley

That I can fully express myself and truly be who I am. When people aren't open to that, I can respect their opinion.

David Durham, San Diego:

Support. It's important that we get together and share experiences and learn. If people don't do that, good decisions can't be made.



Michele Seybert, Arroyo Grande

Breaking down stereotypes and educating people every day.

Daniel Pfau, San Luis Obispo:

Being myself.



Focus on Board Members

Dan Frederickson grew up in Ventura and believes that family is very important. Dan says his only sibling is his best friend. His parents divorced when he was three and each has re-married. His father and step-mom gave him a sister who is 12 years younger, but they don't let the age difference get in their way. They love to hang out and cook. Kristie (his sis) is planning on becoming a chef and they hope that one day they will own a restaurant together.

Dan is a southern California native but his company, Banana Republic, moved him to Santa Barbara in 2003. After living in Santa Barbara for two years, he was offered the position to run the new location here in San Luis Obispo as General Manager, which he gladly accepted. Dan started his new life in SLO in April of 2005. He feels the community welcomed him with open arms and he has many new friends.

His passion is being involved within the community so he quickly got involved volunteer-

ing in the community of San Luis Obispo, from the Women's Shelter to Hotline. His past associations include AIDS Project Los Angeles, AIDS Walk Los Angeles, and mentoring inner city children. Dan feels volunteering is fulfilling in many aspects, the biggest is making a difference in at least one person's life.

Dan got involved with GALA through Stuart Clyde and Robert Kimports. Stuart was looking for someone to replace him due to other commitments and knew of Dan's involvement in the community at large. He was approached by Robert and Stuart and asked if he would be interested in being on the board of GALA. He was excited to be asked to make a difference within the GLBT community and is looking forward to Pride and future activities.

By Eveline Blanchette

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Betty and Barbara

by Greg Perry

I met up with Betty Hesters and Barbara Clutter on the Friday preceding the Memorial Day weekend. Pulling up to their home, located in a quiet, San Luis Obispo neighborhood, I sensed a certain familiarity.

I knew nothing about Betty and Barbara, except that Barbara was a doctor and Betty a retired nurse, and that they had been together for twenty-five years. Yet, walking up to the front door, I almost expected a familiar face to greet me.

Betty answered the door, their dog, Scooby, a dachshund, at her heels. "Did you eat yet?" Betty asked right off the bat. I said that I had and thanked her for offering.

"Barbara's not home yet" Betty said, and invited me into the living room. The whole scene gave me a sense of déjà vu. "I've been here before," I told Betty as I sat down on the sofa. I asked her when they moved into the house and we determined, after a brief discussion, that I must be mistaken.

Barbara and Betty have been together since 1979 when they met working at a Women's Collective health clinic in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Soon after meeting, they moved to Alaska, where they and their children lived for six and a half years. Bending to the will of the children, who weren't adapting too well to the area, the family relocated to San Luis Obispo in 1987, where Barbara opened her medical practice.

Since that last move, both have spent their time working at their jobs as both breadwinners and the parents of four children: Betty's three, Brian, Mark, and Shauna, and Barbara's daughter, Dana, which Betty adopted in 1992. Dana's adoption was the first gay-couple adoption in San Luis Obispo County—an event which passed with little fanfare at the time.

I asked Betty and Barbara how they've handled raising their children with respects to their lesbian lifestyle. "I don't think you waited more than five minutes to tell your kids," Barbara says directly to Betty.

"We didn't agonize over that," Betty says to me. "There were times when Dana felt uncomfortable having both of us show up at school; some of her friend's parents didn't want their daughters coming over our

"The gay lifestyle is much more mainstream today."

Spirituality is an important aspect of both of their lives. Together, they are members of the Unitarian Universalists, a congregation that has a large contingency of gays and lesbians. They are proud of the work they have done for their church, offering classes on GLBT issues that lead their congregation to be recognized as a "Welcoming Congregation."

As for the big issues, Betty and Barbara are low-key, but adamant, about their support for making gay marriage legal, and plan to tie the knot officially when that day arrives. Equality is the one thing that both believe is the biggest challenge facing the gay and lesbian community today; however, Barbara points out, once equality is achieved, "it doesn't automatically make people love you...but I imagine it gets better with time."

Betty and Barbara share that being a lesbian couple hasn't been the driving force in their lives. Their children, their church, their overall happiness, has led them to make the choices they've made.

Barbara sums up her thoughts, adding, "We like to just live our lives. Our children grew up to be really fine people. In the end it's not whether a person is gay, lesbian, straight or whatever, it's not the most important thing in life, you know...it's your values...it's how you live your life."

As I drove away from Betty and Barbara's home, I realized the familiarity I felt earlier was not so much thinking I'd been there before as it was a feeling like I'd just visited a close relative. The comfortable atmosphere reminded me of my home growing up: the family photos on the walls, the familiar smells coming from the kitchen, and the anticipation in the air of family coming to visit for the long weekend.



Betty (center) and Barbara with their son Brian, and dachshund, Scooby.

house." They added that Dana, now twenty-four, learned to be selective with her friends, a fact that Dana didn't share with them until years later.

Betty and Barbara add that the experience has been positive. Dana, a straight "A" student now in medical school, and has given her a unique sensitivity that she was able to exploit during her medical school interviews.

Asked how things have changed from when they were young, they both agree that times have definitely changed. "Thirty years ago gays and lesbians just sort of huddled together to protect themselves," Betty says, adding that today the youth are much bolder.



CENTRAL COAST

CALENDAR



RuPaul
Pride in the Plaza
July 9th

SUNDAY PRIDE IN THE PLAZA EVENTS

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8:00pm Drag Show at Downtown

\$15 pre purchase & \$20 a

10:30pm Dancing at Tortilla Flats,

THURSDAY July 7th

6:30pm "Guys and Balls" at THE

9:00pm Reception at Big Sky Cat

FRIDAY July 7th

8:00pm QUEER a gay and lesbia

Call the Clark Center Box

10:00pm Reception at Corner View



SATURDAY July 8th

4:00pm Domestic Partnership So

SLO Library Community

7:30pm Pride Dance at Downtow

Arrive early and enjoy \$2

little 'Broke Back' with we

SUNDAY July 9th

Noon Pride in the Plaza (see a

6:00pm After Pride Party at Missi

T P R I D E 2 0 0 6

JULY 4-9

OF EVENTS

Week

Interfaith service of Pride
church, Nipomo Street, SLO

at Grover Beach

LA Center
Brew, 18yo+
at the door
18yo+, \$5 at the door

PALM Theatre, \$10 at the door
6

in comedy revue
office at 805.489.9444 for tickets

GALA

Gay and Lesbian Alliance
of the Central Coast

presents

Pride Not Prejudice

FOR MORE INFO AND
TICKETS VISIT:

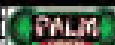
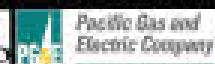
www.slopride.com



minar
Room
n Brew, 21yo+, \$10 at the door
well drinks, house drafts and go a
estern dance instruction until 9pm

adjacent insert for events).
on Grill

A special thanks to our sponsors:



Q & A with Jill Knight

by *Eveline Blanchette*

Jill Knight was born in South Carolina and raised on an island just outside of Savannah, Georgia. She came to the Central Coast in 1984 where her talent made her a local favorite. Jill will be performing at the 10th anniversary of Pride in the Plaza on July 9, 2006. Jill was interviewed by telephone while she was in her car on the way to a gig in Mann.

N&R: Why did you move from the Central Coast?

Jill: I needed to broaden my musical horizons and expression. This has been a life long dream of mine. While living in San Luis, I was commuting to Los Angeles a lot to showcase my music for recording. I was offered a deal but it didn't work out at the time. This was a disappointing setback. I met a lot of incredible musicians, but the music "business" is something else. In 1998, I moved to San Francisco to get more exposure which is where I currently live and perform.

N&R: Do you miss the Central Coast?

Jill: Yes. I kept feeling the pull of this beautiful place and kept returning to visit. Finally in 2002, I rented a cottage in Cambria so I now have dual residency.

N&R: Do you often go back to your Southern home?

Jill: I just returned from Savannah. I go there about three times a year to see family and perform. Savannah is one of the most beautiful places, I am deeply rooted there and spend a lot of time on the river.

N&R: How do you feel about playing at GALA's 10th anniversary of Pride in the Plaza?

Jill: Very excited. There is such a nice strong community that is growing, being able to let go of fear and show up in the world. It is heartwarming. I played at one of the early Pride Festivals and it's always nice to come back to a place where I have history and am committed to.

N&R: In addition to playing at Pride, I see you will be performing at the PAC for it's 10th year anniversary celebration, August 16, 2006, Christopher Cohan Center along with many other wonderful entertainers.

Jill: I am happy to be playing there and being in the company of such good talent. The Central Coast is now attracting top-notch people.

N&R: Would you talk about being gay?

Jill: Sure. It was a long, hard road as I was raised Southern Baptist. In my family being gay was not talked about, but was whispered at the table. My family had trouble accepting the fact. My mother couldn't believe it, so at seventeen I was sent to a psychiatrist or psychologist. I even took the Rorschach test. I knew I was gay as early as sixth grade but had boyfriends until college. It's a heart opening experience to be myself, to experience that higher consciousness than when I was growing up. Now my family is ok, wonderful. This was meant to be, it was a catalyst for them.

N&R: What about growing up in the South?

Jill: It was tough being gay in my teens, but Savannah is more of a fun town now. When I was growing up, eighteen was legal. There was a gay underground scene in the late '70s early '80s. When *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil* put Savannah on the map as a destination for tourists, and introduced Lady Chablis [a sassy drag queen], the town became more eclectic.

N&R: Let's talk about your music. You have two CDs *Future Perfect* and *Imaginary Lane*.

Jill: Actually I have many recordings available from my years as a performer. I am an independent artist often producing my own music, using the internet to generate my fan base and market my music. I am mak-

ing a good living. I have a live CD recorded through Haunted Sky Street in Cambria is ready to be released.

N&R: Do you think being gay has affected your career? (This presupposes that your fans know you are a lesbian.)



Jill: I try not to make it my business what people think of me. If I did, it could affect my performance. I trust that people are open-minded and relate to my music, not to whom I sleep with. If it affected me in the past, I either moved on and/or never played that venue again. The issue of being gay doesn't impact me at this juncture in my career.

N&R: What are you doing currently with regard to your music?

Jill: I am going to France in October to record with Francois Richomme a wonderful musician/engineer I met in San Francisco. He was in the audience during a performance and came backstage. He has been back to San Francisco twice to discuss working with him in Mont Pelerin. In France, musicians are supported by the government.

N&R: How would you describe your life as a performance artist?

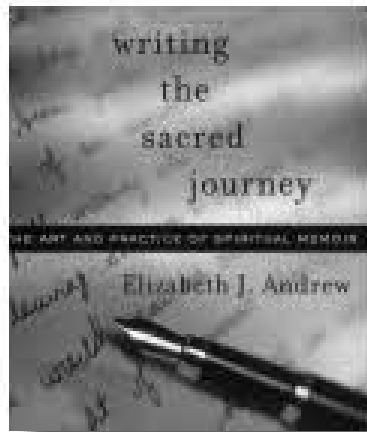
Jill: Life is good, music is my passion. I am doing what I love, making money, what more can I say?

Book Reviews

Writing the Sacred Journey: the Art and Practice of Spiritual Memoir

By Elizabeth J. Andrew

Writing a journal seems a daunting task—all those blank pages looking back at you. Courses are given, advice is freely offered, but still, what goes in and what is trivial are not always apparent. Voila! Here's a book for



the average seeker. Elizabeth Andrew takes us down a spiritual path—not a religion, but much more. It is a path leading toward self-acceptance, self-awareness, and unfolding. It is about recognizing your part in the universe, the sacred as part of you, and your spiritual perceptions. "Know thyself" is the old injunction of the sages; thus, introspection, self-inquiry and evaluation are essential to every seeker. As you mine your life for the

pearls, some guidance is necessary to let the gems of revelation shine, and the dross drip away.

The process of truth to self—eliminating delusion, denial and excusing behavior—is also a familiar process to coming out. Is it any wonder that many gays find a spiritual path along the way, as Ms. Andrew did? She asks us to account for every discrepancy between how we live and what we profess to believe. Any difference is a cause for writing it out and explaining it. This procedure is what we do now, internally. This book gives us tools, gentle guidelines and encouragement—and hopefully some style—to consciously record the steps we take to spiritual awareness. This book may be the one to open a door for you.

Review by Rev. Barbara Strauss, Senses

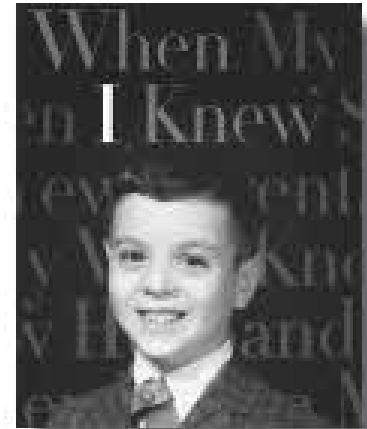
Contact Barbara, co-owner of *Volumes of Pleasure* bookstore in Los Osos, for information about the metaphysical classes and workshops she offers. 528-5565

When I Knew!

Edited by Robert Trachtenberg, who said he always knew!

When I Knew is a collection of smart, hilarious and often poignant stories about that revelation for all gay men and women—when

they first knew they were gay. It is a gorgeously illustrated, cleverly designed, very hip and colorful book. Acclaimed fashion celebrity photographer Robert Trachtenberg brings humor and style to the "eureka!" moments of more than 80 contributors, including B.D. Wong (*Law and Order*), Arthur Laurents (*West Side Story* and *The Way Things Were*), comics Marta Gomez



and Suzanne Westenhoeter, and many more famous and not-so-famous gay and lesbian people who are making great contributions to our larger culture!

"I knew I was gay when the most exciting part of my bar mitzvah was meeting with the party planner" is an excerpt from one of the entries. Filled with original art by New Yorker illustrator Tom Bachtell, *When I Knew* is a vibrant, witty celebration of that sometimes glorious, sometimes painful, but always captivating moment when everything suddenly makes sense.

This is a delightfully positive book, one that makes a great gift for someone special and a wonderful book to give yourself!

*Review by Carroll Leslie
Co-Owner, Volumes of Pleasure Bookstore*

P.S. On LOGO TV, they are replaying *Tales of the City*, the series based on the novels by Armistead Maupin. If you haven't seen it, you are in for a real treat, one worth repeating over and over again! And if you want an even greater treat, read the series!

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Grover Beach, 286 South 16th St., Mon (8-12), Thurs (1-5)	Call 473-7050
Paso Robles, 723 Walnut Dr., Wednesdays (8-12)	Call 237-3050
Pirate's Cove, Fridays and Sundays (2-4)	

For more information call the San Luis Obispo County Health Department

(805) 781-5540

The Violet Quill Reader: The Emergence of Gay Writing After Stonewall

Edited by David Bergman

The recent film, *Brokeback Mountain*, took the gay community by storm. But remember, that film was based almost word-for-word on a spare little short story by Annie Proulx. Read the story in black ink on white paper and experience a different and even deeper take on the hurt and frustration endured by those two cowboys. Yes, cinema can enhance the written word, but the reverse is more often true. Well-written fiction can create wonderful mental pictures and accompanying emotions, pictures and emotions that are all one's own.

With that endorsement of the written word, we begin a discussion of gay literature and its importance in our lives today. There is no better place to start such an examination than with the work of the seven men of the Violet Quill.

On eight occasions during 1980 and 1981, a group of seven friends, writers prominent in the New York City gay literary and social scene, met informally to read to each other from their writings. Constructive criticism and the mechanics of getting their work into print constituted the core of their ensuing discussions and actions. The seven men were: Christopher Cox, Robert Ferro, Michael Grumley, Andrew Holleran, Felice Picano, Edmund White, and George Whitmore. Until that time, gay-centered writing of any sort had been considered by the American literary establishment to be either pornographic or otherwise totally unworthy of critical comment.

The talent and persistence of this small group of men served to change that perception drastically. Their efforts turned the period from 1969 to 1981—from the Stonewall Riots to the onslaught of AIDS—into a bridge for gay literature from ridicule and scorn to acceptance and honor; a bridge from pioneers like James Baldwin and Christopher Isherwood to the hundreds of out and proud gay writers of today.

The preceding thoughts come from the introduction to a wonderful volume of excerpts from the works of the members of the Violet

Quill. Edited by David Bergman, *The Violet Quill Reader* provides an astounding range of fictional, biographical, analytical, critical, and journal writing.

In all, Bergman offers twenty-four entries, each with introductory background. Whitmore's take on a batchy threesome is hilarious. Holleran's rendering of army enlisted basic training contacts is memorable. A segment from White's autobiographical trilogy is fascinating. Entries from Grumley's diary, as he and countless of his friends were dying in the AIDS epidemic, are heartbreaking.

Productivity of the Violet Quill members varied greatly, but the influence of the whole was priceless. Four are gone from us today, but Picano, White, and Holleran live on as active, productive, and influential fixtures of the gay literary scene. This book is not take-to-the-beach material, but is oh so vital to a true understanding of the place of gays and gay writing in our multicultural society of today.

Review by Jason Stephens



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- Transmission risk reduction
- Case management -- referrals and benefits counseling

Contact Terry Comer (ASN) at 781-3660 for more information.

Hits and Misses: In the Video Store

by Mike Hughes

A Home at the End of the World (2004) **Definite Hit**

I loved the book, written by Michael Cunningham (who also wrote *The Hours*) and was excited to see that he had also written the screenplay. The movie is good too, but as is almost always the case, never as good as the book. Nevertheless, *A Home at the End of the World* is a haunting and hypnotic film about loyalty and the meaning of family that sadly never found much of an audience.

Home is the story of Bobby Morrow, who as he describes it is, "the last of his kind," having been orphaned as a teenager through a series of tragic and shocking events. He goes to live with his best friend's family, and through some strange inertia makes himself indispensable. And he's still there at age 24 when the mother (in another wonderful performance by Sissy Spacek) decides it is time for him not so much to grow up as to grow out.

Bobby is played as an adult by Colin Farrell, who gives an amazing performance. He sets aside his bad boy persona and action star dazzle to play a sweet, pot-blunted, aggravatingly even-tempered guy who is never quite reachable. His best friend is Jonathan (in a creditable first-time performance by Dallas Roberts). Obviously gay since high school, he and Bobby drift into a deep sexual relationship not so much because Bobby wants the sex as he wants to please his friend—the central dynamic of Bobby's personality. Their sexual relationship ends when Jonathan moves to New York for college and Bobby

weirdly takes his place at home.

In New York, Jonathan rooms with Claire, a Bohemian free-spirit played with winning sexuality by Robin Wright Penn. Claire is hopelessly in love with Jonathan who is determinedly pursuing a homosexual lifestyle, but settles for Bobby upon his inevitable arrival in New York. She introduces Bobby to sex with a woman—which doesn't seem to interest him much more than sex with Jonathan did. After some bruising uncertainties, the three form an unlikely household whose fated conclusion rests on who needs Bobby the most.

A first-rate score of period rock music and superb performances by the main players make this strange movie a keeper.

Chicken Tikka Masala (2005) **Definite Miss**

The term "Chicken Tikka Masala" refers to an Anglo-Indian dish popularized in England that is roughly equivalent to Tandoori chicken served in Campbell's Cream of Tomato Soup, and serves as a rather neat metaphor for the struggle that second generation Indian immigrants experience in finding their identities in the modern UK.

In a nutshell, Jimi, a handsome young Indian medical student must contend with his arranged marriage to Simran, the beautiful, well-educated daughter of his father's best friend. Unfortunately, Jimi is in love with Jack, a sweet, dimpled twink who can't understand Jimi's reluctance to commit himself

fully to their relationship.

Torn between the demands of culture, religion, and duty to family on the one hand and his love and desire for Jack on the other, Jimi does what any good protagonist in a British farce would do—he lets the situation get ridiculously out of hand and then tells a bunch of preposterous lies to avoid having to be responsible for his actions. In this case, he tells his parents that he has fathered an illegitimate child with his flat mate—an unpleasantly foul-mouthed alcoholic named Vanessa—thinking this will get him off the hook with Simran. It does. But, to everyone's surprise, Jimi's father (played with his usual good taste by Saeed Jaffrey of *"Gandhi"* and *"The Man Who Would Be King"*), accepts this improbable new development and embraces the boozy slob as his daughter-in-law.


In my book, there are few forms of entertainment harder to stomach than bad British farce, especially one with as many ugly stereotypes as this one has. And this movie doesn't even have the saving grace of a good Bollywood dance number. The only sparkle comes from veteran Indian actress Zohra Segal (*Bend It Like Beckham, Jewel in the Crown*) as the cranky grandmother.

I found it very hard to generate any enjoyment in this garish mess, much less sympathy for the plight of its selfish, lying coward of a main character.

Rent something else.

My Beautiful Laundrette springs immediately to mind.

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GATHERINGS

Amelia's Friends

7:30 pm on the last Friday of the month at
Volumes of Pleasure book store in Los Osos.

Cuesta Squares Start Time: 7:00 PM

Central Coast gay square dance club that
has been around for 6+ years. Beginners
always welcome. Contact: CuestaSquares-
owner@yahoo.com or call Thom at
489-0087.

Fusion

Aimed at building a supportive and positive
environment for young gay, bi, curious men
ages 18-29. Tuesdays from 7-9pm at the
A.S.N. 1320 Nipomo St. SLO (enter through
the back door). Movie on Sunday nights at
8:30 PM.

GALA Board Meeting

First Tuesday Start Time: 6:30 PM
Monthly meeting of the GALA Board of
Directors open to the public.

Gay AA Meeting

This Gay AA meeting occurs every Friday at
7:00 PM at 134 Nelson St in Arroyo Grande.

Gay AA Meeting Start Time: 7:00 PM

This gay AA group meets on Sundays at St.
Stephens Episcopal Church at the corner of
Pismo and Nipomo streets in SLO.

Gay night at Tortilla Flats

Dancing to DJ'd music beginning at 9:30 PM
every Wednesday and Friday nights.

GLBU

Gays, Lesbians, Bisexuals United at Cal Poly
GLBU meetings are every Wednesday at Cal
Poly. During Fall Quarter we will be meeting
in Building 5J (the spider building) Room
A12, at 7 PM. www.calpoly.edu/~glbclub/

Great Outdoors of Santa Barbara

This group meets on the second Wednesday
of the month. Core Group meets at 5:45 - 6:45
pm just prior to the monthly meetings at
Rusty's Pizza Lighthouse, at 15 East Cabrillo
Boulevard, in downtown Santa Barbara.
Contact Brian Miller at 805-407-9001 for
more information.

Hot Shots World Class Balliards & Restaurant

(250 Pomeroy Avenue, downtown Pismo
Beach) Wednesday nights may now be
classified as Gay Lashes Night. They have
31 beers on tap and offer a great selection
of munchies. The owner and employees are
eager to reach out to the lesbian community.
1 hour of free pool starts at 8:00 pm.

Integrity GLBT Episcopalians

3rd Sunday of the month. Call 534-0827 for
location and more information.

Ladies' Second Saturday Club

Start Time: 5:00 PM

This group meets on the 2nd Saturday of each
month at La Mexicana Restaurant, 7495 El
Camino Real in Atascadero.
For information or to RSVP, contact Bernie or
Judy at 460-9163 or bnes@charter.net.

Lesbian Chips 'n Chat

The first Friday of Every Month from 7-9pm
Location: GALA Community Center.

It's great to meet for a feeling of
community and to discuss various topics.
For more information, send email to
shannonwynsong@charter.net.

Lezmingle

This group meets every 2nd weekend of the
month in Santa Maria. For the location of the
month and/or details, call Roxanne at 934-
2646. This event is a lot of fun and a great way
to meet other ladies.

Men's Dinner Group

7:00 PM every Wednesday in Santa Maria at
Carrow's Restaurant, 1635 S. Broadway.
This group meets at a different restaurant on
the first Wednesday of each month. Check the
calendar on GALA's website for more details.

MoMeNtem Start Time: 6:00 PM

A project designed for Gay/Bi or curious guys,
aged 30 and over. This group meets on the
2nd Thursday of each month at the GALA
Center. They also have a movie night on the
3rd Thursday of the month, also at the GALA
Center.

Mothertongue Start Time: 2:00 PM

Mothertongue is a Feminist Theater Collective
open to all women who long to write and/or
perform in the company of other women.

They meet on the third Sunday of the month
in Los Osos. Please call 528-6827 for more
information.

NEWCOMERS WELCOME!

N.O.W. Start Time: 6:00 PM

National Organization of Women meets every
3rd Tuesday at the GALA Center.

Open Door

Open Door, an outreach to the gay and
lesbian community, their family and friends,
is meeting at 4 pm in the Serra Center of the
Old Mission, San Luis Obispo. The purpose
of Open Door is to provide support, in a social
setting, so all may participate fully in the
life of the church. Any questions should be
directed to Cfojo@sbcglobal.net.

**PFLAG (Parents, Families & Friends of
Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender
Persons) General Meeting and Support Group**
7:00 to 9 PM on the fourth Tuesday of the
month. Unitarian Universalist Fellowship 252
Foothill Blvd., SLO 438-3889 or 800-708-
7675

SINGLES S.O.L. (Slightly Older Lesbians)
Women's social group. Call 474-9405 for more
information.

Support Group-Gay and Bisexual Men
7:00 PM Mondays

This group is free and facilitated by an
experienced therapist. The subjects addressed
are chosen by the attendees. The Community
Counseling Center, 1129 Marsh St. in SLO.
Drop-In ok. Telephone-543-7969.

**Support Group-Lesbian and Bisexual
Women** 6:00 PM Wednesdays

This group is free and facilitated by an
experienced therapist. The subjects addressed
are chosen by the attendees. The Community
Counseling Center, 1129 Marsh St. in SLO.
NOT a "drop-in" group. Call to reserve space.
Telephone-543-7969

Support Group-Transgendered People
6:00 PM Thursdays

This group is free and facilitated by an
experienced therapist. The subjects addressed
are chosen by the attendees. The Community
Counseling Center, 1129 Marsh St. in SLO.
Call first. Telephone-543-7969

TGLF 5:00 PM 3rd Friday of the month.

Social gathering for women at The
Quarterdeck in SLO, 1850 Monterey Street on
the 3rd Friday of the month.

TransCentralCoast 6:30 PM 3rd Saturday

Location: GALA Center

This is a support group for transgendered and
their family and friends.

The Walt Whitman Gay Men's Book Club

This club meets at the GALA Center on the
2nd Monday of each month at 7:00 pm. They
read and study books and films chosen by the
group which relate to their lives as gay men.
All are welcome. Please call 938-9035 or
937-0859 for current information.

Youth Group

Start Time: 7:00 PM

This group serves Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and
Transgender youth between ages 13 and 23.
They meet downtown SLO at the Ludwick
Community center every Thursday night 864
Santa Rosa St. at the corner of Mill and Santa
Rosa.

Welcoming Worship

Have you ever wished you could walk into a church hand-in-hand with your partner? Now you can...

Ninety years ago, a unique church was founded in the Colony of Atascadero. Members of thirty different denominations worshipped together. They had no common creed except the commandment to love God and their neighbor.

Today, that church is still unique among churches on the Central Coast. It is now called The Community Church of Atascadero, United Church of Christ (UCC). Its members come from numerous denominations,

respecting each other's different theologies and united in a search for truth.

In February 2004, the church officially became "Open and Affirming." UCC welcomes all individuals and families—be they heterosexual, lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgendered—as they strive to function faithfully in response to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The mission statement of the church specifically acknowledges, "God's gift of sexuality with its joyous power and challenging mystery." Members of the church believe that people of all sexual orientations share the worth that comes of being unique individuals created by God. They continue to reach out to those who feel they have been exiled from their spiritual community or the community at large, and to their families.

Members of the church are dedicated to the UCC motto: "Whoever you are and wherever you are on life's journey, you are welcome here."

By Kara Dunn



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Membership dues are one of the most important ways GALA generates the funds it needs to keep the Center open and to publish and mail the *News and Reviews* for free. Won't you please show your pride in our community and your support for GALA? Join or renew your membership today! In addition to the knowledge that you are supporting GALA, there are other benefits of membership like reduced admission to dances and events and a free listing in the directory! **PLEASE JOIN TODAY!**

1st person's name _____

Gender _____ Occupation _____

Phone (day) _____ (eve) _____

Email _____

Please contact me about volunteering or sharing my professional skills

Please list my name in the directory

I give GALA permission to publish my name

2nd person's name _____

Gender _____ Occupation _____

Phone (day) _____ (eve) _____

Email _____

Please contact me about volunteering or sharing my professional skills

Please list my name in the directory

I give GALA permission to publish my name

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Signature #1 _____

Signature #2 _____

Membership Categories

Please sign me/us up for the following:

- Student/limited income \$15 year per person
- General/Renewal \$25 year per person
- Couple/Family \$45 year per person
- Business \$75 year per person

All contributions and dues are tax deductible!

PLUS, I/we would like to give an additional gift:

- Joan of Arc Club \$50
- Mark Twain Club \$100
- Gertrude Stein Club \$250
- Leonardo da Vinci Club \$500
- Virginia Woolf Club \$750
- Harvey Milk Club \$1000
- other _____

Ray and Jamie Hatler

By Richard Kins

Just a short while ago, our GLBT community lost two of its staunchest supporters: Ray and Jamie Johnston Hatler. Looking back over the years that we've been here in the county, it's been uplifting, to say the least, to observe the dedication they both have had for the community. Even with declining health, they were always there with advice and support and strength. And now, in addition to our mourning this loss, we also celebrate their lives.

When Frank and I moved to Atascadero from Orange County in 1990, we figured that

the time limit), legendary activist Harry Hay (ditto), and many others. The vision for the organization was to get the word out about GLBT-owned or friendly businesses in the area and to drum up support. That vision was certainly met, but it expanded to foster and discuss GLBT rights and issues as well. BAPA, along with GALA, joined the L.I.F.E. Lobby with the total support of Ray and Jamie and the Boards of both organizations. Not long afterward, a meeting of that statewide gay-rights lobbying group was hosted by BAPA and GALA at the Vets Hall, followed by a very successful fund raising reception at Breezes. Ray and Jamie were always heavily

Our community here will never forget them. Their mark is everywhere. Thanks to their tireless work over the years, a spark had been ignited in our community which inspired and still inspires others to pick up the banner and keep on keeping on. Look at how things have changed for us here locally and nationally and around the world.

Yes, Ray and Jamie were just a small part of the overall movement, but a very important part. Now we all must continue their work to keep from being burned by those who oppose us and our lives, so that we may live proudly as they did.

Rest in peace, dear friends, rest in peace.

Our community here will never forget them.

Their mark is everywhere. Thanks to their tireless work over the years, a spark had been ignited in our community which inspired and still inspires others to pick up the banner and keep on keeping on.

we'd hardly see another gay or lesbian again. How wrong we were! We did have a couple of acquaintances that I'd met, before we moved, through a friend down south. Shortly after we settled in, they invited us to attend the next meeting of BAPA (Business and Professional Association). It met monthly at The Motel Inn then. The meetings were very well attended and, for newbies like us, they were a great way to get acquainted. We were introduced to Ray and Jamie, who had founded the organization, and I imagine were officers in it. (My memory about such things is rapidly fading, so bear with me, please.) They certainly made sure that things kept going smoothly before, during, and after the meetings.

Things picked up when the meetings moved to the Monday Club, with dinners catered by Don Reynolds, and with several interesting speakers, including Virginia Uribe (Project 10 in LA), Dell Martin and Phyllis Wyan (Ray had a bit of trouble keeping them within

involved with things BAPA, and I suspect they were somewhat disappointed when the membership dwindled and the meetings were no longer held. But they kept on with their activist work, getting more and more involved with GALA. Ray did considerable legal work for both organizations and Jamie did tons of supportive work with his computer skills.

They had so many wonderful and supportive and close friends here in the county. The last time I saw them both was at the GALA Awards and Holiday Banquet last December. Just a few days before Ray passed away, I talked on the phone with Jamie. He called to express his thanks for the note we had sent them both. Ray had been in hospice care, as most of you knew. At that time Jamie believed that Ray had a couple of months yet. But it was not to be. Then only a few days later, we received the sad news that Jamie had also passed away. How sad to lose both of them so soon.

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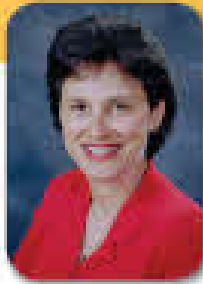
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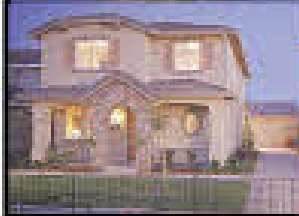
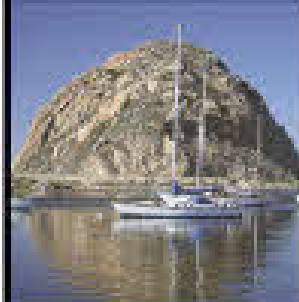
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