

# How Well Do You Know Your Town's History?



Intersection of Manhattan Beach Boulevard and Manhattan Avenue in 1920 prior to the Neptunian Memorial Fountain being destroyed.

By Jan Dennis

Abridged from *A Walk Beside The Sea* by Jan Dennis

America was rushing pell-mell into the Auto Age and nowhere faster or more recklessly than in Manhattan Beach. On May 9, 1924, a car leaped 30 feet into the air, landing on the beach. Fortunately only minor injuries resulted. Almost every week, there was some kind of traffic encounter. In August of that year, one penniless and reckless driver has to paint parking spaces for three days during what was pronounced as the "Week of the Speeders."

Another example was J. Harper, described as a person "from the large and congested city," who was speeding down Center Street (Manhattan Beach Boulevard) in his Studebaker Special when he was caught. The *Manhattan Beach News* stated, "Judge Price must have been in a terrible state of mind because he

charged the fellow \$500 in gold." Following sentencing, the hapless Harper was reported "to be convalescing from shock."

There were more than half a million cars in Los Angeles at the time and people went without necessities to have a prestigious car. At the time a driver did not have to take any tests. The only requirement to getting a license was to be able to fill out name, hair and eye color. The Automobile Association of Southern California found that incompetent drivers were the main cause of accidents.

One of the unhappiest events was the destruction of the Neptunian Memorial Fountain. In 1915, Mrs. John C. Stockwell, chairman of the committee to erect a memorial fountain to Mrs. Jessie Smith, founder of the Neptunian Club, announced the club had \$200. The club ladies had held bake sales and sponsored weekly card parties to raise

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# Political Penguin

By Duane Plank

Week three of the *Penguin*, and thanks to the outpouring of reader support regarding the political opines of Plank. Someone asked how was the name of the column selected? One of the fine folks at the *Herald* came up with the column heading, which kinda works because it leans toward the political side, and one of my nicknames back in the day was Penguin.

Had nothing to do with politics, nor the Burgess Meredith character in the old *Batman* TV show. Nope, I was nicknamed the Penguin because I played third base on the Mira Costa High School baseball team, and apparently waddled like a Penguin when I sprinted down the line to first. Just like Dodger third-sacker Ron Cey. So now you know.

Where to start, where to start? How bout with Miss California Carrie Prejean, who may be stripped of her oh-so-important title by the stuffed shirts who are upset that very revealing photos of Ms. Prejean have surfaced on the Internet? Holy Batman!

The column is not supposed to tilt toward pop culture or celebrity garbage, but Ms. Prejean was referenced in column numero uno because she had the stones to honestly answer a question lobbed at her regarding gay marriage. So a little follow-up is due.

Course it now appears that she may not have been so forthright when she was denying that revealing photos of her were out there in the world of cyberspace.

Another bubble burst! What next? Will we find out that "The Most Interesting Man in the World" is really just a boring, old geezer who favors Grecian formula?

Anyway, this column's interest in Prejean, above board, of course, was that her honest answer while competing for the silly crown of Miss U.S.A. was made into a political football by the PC crowd. Not the folks that own a type of computer, SW, the politically

correct police.

Looks like the gay marriage question won't go away, no matter how many times voters and taxpayers in the Great Bankrupt State vote "no." Didn't we just pass Prop. 8 last year, the proposition that put into effect that "only marriage between a man and a woman is valid and recognized in California?" Or did we defeat Prop 8? I confuse easily, folks, and the shrewd politicians who manage campaigns and devise media ads count on dimwits like myself to get easily bamboozled and manipulated.

The campaign for Prop. 8 cost more than 80 million bucks last year, and was the "highest funded campaign on any state ballot that day, surpassing every campaign in the country in spending except the presidential contest." So said the fine folks at Wikipedia. Gospel to me.

The thought from this page isn't whether one supports or doesn't support gay marriage. It's that with a reported \$23 billion budget deficit looming after the probable defeat of most, if not all of Governor Arnold's tax increase proposals that are to be voted on Tuesday, do we really need to waste more moolah voting on the same-old, same-old?

So with the probable defeat of the tax increase measures on Tuesday, championed by a Governor who ran on a platform of less taxation, where does that leave us Cali residents? Living in a state of anarchy?

Governor Arnold and his administrators have floated plans to commute the sentences of nearly 40,000 prison inmates, including all illegal immigrants. Closing some prisons is also being considered. Firehouses will be closed. All police officers will be laid off.

Okay, just trying to see if you are paying attention. Chances are we will still have police protecting us from the bad guys and

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