

SANTA BARBARA Sentinel

VOLUME 4 | ISSUE 7 | APRIL 4 - 18 | 2015

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the NEWS PAGE

FREE: TWO GOOD HOMES



THIS CHARMING EARLY 20TH-CENTURY BUNGALOW AND ITS GUEST COTTAGE CAN BE YOURS GRATIS; ALL YOU'VE GOT TO DO IS MOVE ONE OR BOTH (p.12)



MURDER, HE WROTE...

Randy Lioz goes for a spin in a Ferrari and uncovers an intriguing tale of fraud and homicide, South African style, involving Uwe Gemballa's wheeling and dealing. (p.30)

JEFF HARDING UNDERGROUND ECONOMY, YAY!

Shakespeare wrote that the first thing to do would be to "kill all the lawyers"; he should have suggested removing government regulations instead. (p.6)

SNAPSHOT SANTA YNEZ

- SB VINTNERS WEEKEND
- GETTING DIRTY IN SYV
- CHUMASH EARTH DAY
- LOS OLIVOS ART PARK
- "SHAVE" THE DATE

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Milpas on the Move

by Sharon Byrne

Fluctuations in Eastside Business Area: *A Function Of Market Forces, Really*

There is an effort underway in the Milpas / Eastside business area to create a Business Improvement District (BID). Numerous BIDs have been formed in California and other states, as they provide a mechanism for businesses to pay for services that the city can't and won't provide them, like picking up litter off sidewalks, graffiti removal, and promotion and special events to draw new patrons to the area. (Jeffrey Harding wrote a really good piece on the Eastside BID in March.)

It is typical for a minimum 20 percent of businesses to oppose forming a BID. For a variety of reasons, some business owners will just never sign up. It's also typical for BID formation to bring out the best and the worst in people, rather like ballot initiatives. As you can tell from my column on the destructive power of gossip and the PODER protest of El Bajio, the worst can be pretty darned ugly.

Jeffrey dealt with the red herring of gentrification quite well in his column; I'll only add that the example thrown

around of Fresh Market is a poor one. There is no BID, and they moved in. They provided Christmas lights for us in 2013 (a \$9,000 expense). They put on fun events for kids, like cookie-decorating contests. They handed out goodies at the Milpas Holiday Parade. Their intent was to draw Whole Foods and Lazy Acres customers, and it worked.

They went profitable six months ago at the Milpas location. Some whined it wasn't a neighborhood store, but Fresh Market employed many former Scolari's employees. Eastside neighbors shopped there. They had a brisk lunch trade from employees at nearby businesses. Interestingly, Scolari's also exited the state of California for the same reason Fresh Market did: expensive distribution issues. California is a very tough state to do business in.

I've had phone calls asking what's going in the Fresh Market space that go like this: *They* should put in a market that's for the neighborhood this time, like there's some central government planning committee



Sharon Byrne

Sharon Byrne is executive director for the Milpas Community Association, and currently serves on the Advisory Boards for the Salvation Army Hospitality House and Santa Barbara County Alcohol and Drug Problems.



somewhere that decides which market goes in each neighborhood. But that's not how it works. That space rents for \$55,000 per month. A business that can meet those terms leases it, transforms it to suit their needs, and attempts to prosper there. Some things make it in this town. Some don't. It is the landlord's prerogative as to which business moves in, and they aren't required to check in with any Central Neighborhood Approvals Committee before leasing their property. We're not a centrally planned economy such as China. Free market still reigns in America.

I am happy to report that some of the Fresh Market employees were picked up by Tri County Produce, and Wells Fargo is recruiting some as well. This is what you do in a community. You take care of one another.

Another myth perpetuating about the business improvement district is that this is some sort of takeover of the area. A takeover of a business area... by the businesses within it? Aren't takeovers usually external? The businesses in this

district will govern the BID. They'll decide which services to provide themselves with BID assessments. That's not a takeover. It's the spread of democracy within the business community.

Fresh Market's departure creates another heartburn: empty storefronts are blight magnets. A business improvement district could seek out tenants for vacant storefronts. Some do. A BID could get also creative about attracting the type of business the community wants. A small town with empty storefronts painted the windows to make it appear that an ice cream store had opened, and a cheese shop, among other things. Sure enough, someone started similar businesses in those empty storefronts.

Fresh & Easy is also going through tumultuous times as a corporation. Ours on Milpas is staying open, thankfully.

The old Milpas Post Office has been leased to Lumber Liquidators. East Beach Tacos has opened at the batting cages. The ambience is great, and the Asian-fusion tacos are excellent.

Change is happening all around this district and it will keep happening. The BID didn't cause those things, as it doesn't exist yet. But by providing a more welcoming area and drawing more patrons to businesses here, existing businesses will find it easier to prosper. There are lots of mom-and-pop businesses in this neighborhood that make it special. Why wouldn't we want them to succeed?



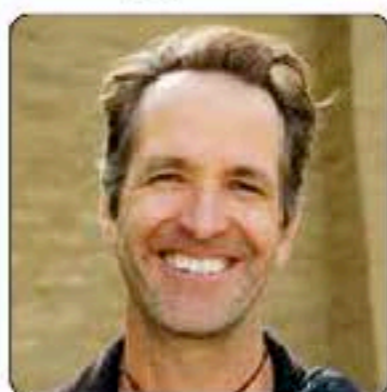
UP CLOSE BY JACQUELYN DE LONGE

Taking a closer look at the people, places, and things that make Santa Barbara so unique. This freelance writer's credits include newspapers, magazines, and copywriting. When Jacquelyn is not writing, practicing Pilates or yoga, you can find her chasing her two kids and dogs around Santa Barbara. Contact Jacquelyn at www.delongewrites.com

Focus on Overcoming TPSD

It is as though the lens of a camera has other worldly powers when it points in my direction. Magically, I'm teleported back to the moment of those awkward elementary school pictures, the ones with lopsided ponytails, feathered bangs, crooked shirt collars, and shiny metal smiles. My mother still has one of my most fashionable years hanging on her entry way wall when I made the smart choice of alternating purple and turquoise rubber bands on my braces. (Yah, because color was really going to make them look stylish.)

I feel as if a camera's telescopic gaze amplifies every flaw for outside judgment and in a defensive response, my face morphs into some goofy grin



Ellis specializes in what he jokingly refers to as TPSD - traumatic photographic stress disorder

or smirk, preventing me from wearing my "normal face." I spend much of my time hiding behind the camera taking pictures, terrified of being seen but I know, as a professional, I have to put a face to my name sometime. Since I started writing, I've been using character sketches, a vegetable face, anything not have to take a portrait - but it is



Doug Ellis's unconventional spin on classic wedding photography

finally time. I'm getting published more and more, have a website now, and just need to get over this ridiculous fear while realizing I'm not alone. Many professionals need a portrait of themselves for their online networking and business cards; chefs, bankers, fitness instructors, dentists, therapists... It's not just real-estate agents, actors, and models.

When I sought out a portrait photographer, the goal was anyone who could be understanding about discomfort or at least be able to snap

a picture of me without a deer-in-headlights grin. Miraculously I found just the man, a kindhearted soul named **Doug Ellis**, a former marketing agent turned photographer who specializes in what he jokingly refers to as TPSD - traumatic photographic stress disorder. Given his sense of humor, I'd found my man.

Working as a photographer for more than 10 years, Ellis has traveled the world taking pictures of breathtaking

...continued from p.14



This professional portrait shines bright with the natural light and skill of the subject and photographer Ellis.

landscapes, recording life's memorable moments, even capturing the iconic Dalai Lama, David Byrne, and Cindy Sherman. Before settling in Santa Barbara, he spent a few years in Ojai, where he developed his artistic photography recording sacred ceremonies and spiritual events. His close work with enlightened and open-minded organizations such as Esalen Institute in Big Sur, one of his corporate clients, reflects the spiritual intention in his craft. "It's about capturing character, aspire for that birthless/deathless moment, the part that's you when no one is looking. I try not to intervene in the moment and just let it happen."

It is a two-part process working with Ellis as he tries to find a way around the uneasiness of portraiture. In preparation of shoots, he does a little coaching in an effort for people to make friends with themselves. It is more of a heart-and-soul session where he takes the opportunity to make a direct connection with his subjects, set an intention for the shoot, and maybe even uncover where their fear is coming from.

A few days before our photo shoot, Ellis emailed me a style guide for my clothing and gave me the option for professional hair and make-up. He also sent a handful of questions that made me have to take a deeper look within:

Q. Who inspires you and why?

A. Women who speak their mind and see vulnerability as a strength not a weakness.

What would the outcome of a wildly successful portrait session together be?

To be comfortable being looked at and get a portrait that captures personality and not just facade.

Do you have any features you would like to showcase? Any features you prefer



Portraits aren't the only subjects Ellis has mastered, as you can tell by this breathtaking landscape



Ellis's quick camera captures a candid moment

to minimize?

I'm secure with all my features. More uncomfortable with the occasional blemish or baggy tired eyes

What aspect of yourself has been missing from photographs you have had in the past?

I have a posed or still smile, my energy is low and I seem to fade to neutral.

If the feeling of your photograph was a song, what song or musician/group would it be?

I have a strong sense of duality in most aspects of my life. So I have two artists for you: Phillip Glass and Amanda Palmer (modern classic/fearlessly outspoken)

These weren't necessarily easy questions, and I was surprised by some answers but I wanted this portrait so I trusted Ellis and answer honestly. He was digging for a greater understanding of how to work with me and that helped me start to let go of fear.

We met for our scheduled shoot a few days later at his downtown office on an early Saturday morning. We both packed light, me with my three changes of clothes, him with one camera and step stool, and automatically I felt less pressure with the informal set-up. The courtyard was deserted, the city streets



Thanks to Doug Ellis, I've got a new professional headshot

were quiet, and the early-morning clouds were providing the perfect filtered light. There were a few wasted shots for me to ease into it, but soon Ellis started catching my honest moments when my guard was down. Just as tension would creep across my face and tighten the chest, he'd do a quick wiggle and dance with me to shake it out and capture a candid laugh as I loosened up. There were a few poses, a few walks toward the camera, a change of clothes and one change of location to a courtyard across the street. He'd make suggestions on what I could do with my hands, where I should look, how I should sit. He was invested in the project with me and was patient with an amateur like myself.

When we wrapped up that morning, I felt good about what we'd done but was still hesitant. A week later, our hard work



Finally, a portrait full of personality

appeared to pay off: I saw a confident, professional woman with personality and spirit, all of my intentions from the pre-session inquiry. It was hard to choose which photographs to use, not because my selection was limited but because Ellis had done such an amazing job that I had dozens to pick from.

Can't say I'll never cringe again upon seeing a camera pointed in my direction, but I now have the tools to take a decent picture. Doug Ellis's coaching will help me through it: "Relax, look down, reset your eyes, and when you're ready look up and let yourself be seen."

dougellis.photoshelter.com

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