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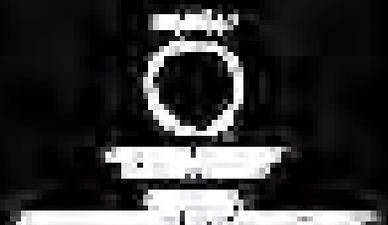
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Editor's letter



This Spring is a rainbow affair - in Fashion for sure (Pg 58) - where elegance *a la Italiana* wraps us in soft, heavenly beauty - a reminder, perhaps, of the real beauty that lies within us all. Also at this time of the year, **Awards Season** is in full, artful bloom, reassuring us - once again - of the wealth of talent that this country consistently produces.

Casper Van Dien and Catherine Oxenberg have shared their beautiful life journey in our exclusive Cover Story (Pg 44). Beneath their gorgeous exteriors you'll find two people who have proactively created a home that is filled with love and positive energy. Their five children are uniquely special - and even their pet cats enjoy their wonderful Malibu life as they stare from their window frame at the coy pond below - no doubt dreaming of sushi. We hope you'll enjoy this family-centered cover story.

Return to Freedom is a non-profit American Wildhorse Sanctuary just north of us (Pg 12) run by Neda DeMayo who is doing her part in helping to save and protect our wild horses, which are an integral part of America's cultural heritage. As their natural ranges are encroached upon - their numbers continue to dwindle - and Neda's proactive efforts multiply.

Mammoth Mountain is one this area's most popular snow-sport retreats - and while you may have skied or snow-boarded in and out of McCoy's Station at Mammoth, few people know the fascinating story behind the Mammoth Founder, **Dave McCoy**. Enjoy the story on Pg 28.

Our **Home and Hearth** section is warmed up by beautiful **fireplace features** that have come a long way in the last 10 years (Pg 68). They're a relatively inexpensive way to add a brand new dimension to your home's attractiveness, and the kids will love summertime marshmallow-roasting - fireside. Also in the Home and Hearth section are beautiful homes offered for sale by **Nicki & Karen** of Sotheby's.

If you're looking for a romantic weekend escape close to home, we highly recommend **Pelican Hill**. Set along the coast of Newport Beach, Pelican Hill features an unparalleled array of appointments, including a 5-star Spa and Pelican Hill Golf Club with 36 dramatic holes by Tom Fazio (Pg 90). If you're looking at taking a longer, further-a-field trip, try an **African Adventure** with Town and Country Travel's Jane Lee & Larry Winter (Pg 94). It will change you forever as you experience its untamed beauty; its adrenaline-packed adventure; and the heartfelt warmth of the African people.

Happy Spring!
Diana



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RETURN TO

AN AMERICAN WILDHORSE SANCTUARY • BY DIANA LYLE

Stephen Spielberg's 'War Horse' has won critical acclaim this awards season for its sensitive portrayal of the immense emotional bond between humans and horses. Native Americans have always referred to horses as 'man's big dogs' - and American icon, Ralph Lauren, has creatively built his designing edifice on the beautiful and majestic elements of America's wide open spaces with its magnificent herds of wild horses. However, as man continues to encroach on the horses' natural habitats in the American west, their numbers have dwindled, despite a law passed to protect them. In fact, the federal



TO FREEDOM

agency charged with managing America's wild horses, seeks to drive their numbers down to the levels that existed in 1971, when Congress determined that the Mustangs were fast disappearing and in need of protection. Diminishing grazing grounds and urbanization, along with range politics, have forced the free-roaming herds off rangelands, thereby decreasing their chances for continued, natural evolution. The aerial roundups of the horses don't have happy endings, as many horses are injured or die, or are shipped off to government holding facilities where they are maintained for life at tax-payer expense. Nobody is more determined to preserve the little land they have left than Neda DeMayo, Founder of the non-profit **Return to Freedom - American Wild Horse Sanctuary**, a protectorate for wild herds throughout the U.S.



Neda's life-long work as an advocate for wild horses took on a significantly positive turn when she established the **Return to Freedom** wild horse sanctuary in 1997 on 300 acres near Lompoc, California, to service a model for minimally intrusive wild horse management solutions. **RTF** (Return to Freedom) will be opening a national wild horse preserve this spring - located strategically in the west. The non-profit's mission is to preserve, conserve and educate the public about wild horses and to address viable solutions for the challenges they face today in a changing world. Among the 500 horses for whom RTF provides sanctuary, there are a number of rare breeds. Neda says passionately, "Some strains of our wild horses have almost disappeared entirely, such as descendents of the original **Colonial Spanish** horses that were the foundation of what we later

called the **Spanish Mustang** in America. These horses include the **Choctaw** ponies, the **Sulphur Springs**, **Wilbur-Cruce Mission horses** and others who, as they dispersed, interbred with larger European breeds who arrived in the Americas later. Many of the larger breeds we know today were created and enhanced with infusions of these hardy horses. We provide a place for these rare strains to range free and choose their own social groups. In order to protect the herds from any catastrophic loss that would reduce the population to below 80, we hope to maintain herds with at least 130-150 of these geographic types to preserve healthy herd groups. To those who value the wild horse as a unique species, it is essential that they continue their natural evolution uninterrupted."

Despite the passing in 1971 of the historic **Wild Free Roaming**

Bear's Band. Photo by Tony Stromberg





Horse and Burro Act, which is supposed to offer protection and preserve these living symbols of the pioneer West, a small group of politically-protected, profit-driven naysayers are a vocal and powerful opposition. Cattle ranchers and big game hunters are the opposition - and they have done their best to overturn the tenants of the Act. However, Dr. Jay F. Kirkpatrick, Director of the Science and Conservation Center in Billings, Montana, attests that wild horses are, in fact, a re-introduced native wildlife species. He explains his in-depth research: "The genus *Equus*, which includes modern horses, zebras and asses, is the only surviving genus in a once diverse family of horses that included 27 genres. *Equus* was native to North America 1.4 to 1.6 million years ago and migrated to Asia where it survived and flourished. It was reintroduced to the North American continent

in 1519 by Hernando Cortez, and it continued to be imported northward by the Spaniards from Mexico. Recent genetic research has proven that the modern horse is the true genetic equivalent to E. Lambei, the last horse to occupy North America prior to extinction." To maintain the herd population at the **Return to Freedom** facility, Dr. Kirkpatrick oversees a reversible, non-hormonal birth control program, allowing the herd's social behavior and the natural herd dynamics to continue, while reproduction is controlled.

The horse is as much a part of our American landscape as the grizzly or the moose, or any other free-roaming species that has survived the millennia. The fact that man has caught and domesticated horses does not cancel out their natural instinct to revert and adapt to wildness readily - which reveals the shallow roots of their





Tatjana Patitz, 'Inez', Neda DeMayo, Catherine Oxenberg, Rick Schroeder, Noah Wyle

domestication. Tragically, the **Burns Amendment Act**, which was passed in 2005, sealed the fate on many wild horses that have been rounded up. The Act allows for any wild horse over 10 years of age or any horse that has been put out for adoption 3 times - and who has not been adopted - to be sold for as little as \$10 for slaughter. The hotly debated and recently overturned language in the Agricultural Appropriations Bill which prevented federal funding for horse meat inspections, and kept US slaughter-houses closed, was a double-edged sword. The effect of shutting down US slaughter-houses has been that our horses are shipped, instead, to Canada and Mexico, enduring extreme suffering during transport, and facing horrific and inhumane deaths at foreign slaughter plants. Until legislation is passed to ban the sale and transport of horses for slaughter - our horses will continue to suffer. It's the final insult to a national icon.

Neda concludes: "Only through education can the American public enjoy the value, beauty and inspiration of wild horses and burros, not only as a unique wildlife species but also as a cultural and historic resource. Even then, it will only work if America's wild horses are protected as Congress intended - living free on the western range in viable genetically-healthy groups." Despite the extensive strides made at the **Return to Freedom Sanctuary**, Neda estimates that it will take the duplication of her sanctuary's efforts to

be successful in the long run. "The grand irony", she says, "is that it's cheaper to support the horses on their natural ranges than it is to round them up, remove them, and ship them off to government holding facilities - but few understand that."

Meanwhile, at the sanctuary, school children and anyone interested, can enjoy a learning opportunity equal to none. The public are invited to visit nature's classroom and partake in living history tours, clinics, special youth programs and retreats. Photographers

are invited in for special Photo Safaris. An onsite celebrity at the Sanctuary is **Spirit** - the beautiful dun stallion who was the inspiration and model for the 2002 DreamWorks film, **Spirit - Stallion of the Cimarron**.

The horse originated in North America and became one of the greatest gifts to cultures all over the world. These highly-adaptable animals have evolved to the point where they can survive in harsh, remote environments...and even there, they're not safe. "Each one of us can make a difference," says Neda, "and we owe it to our voiceless equine companions to do so."

Tours at 'Return to Freedom' can be booked by calling 805.737.9246 or go to www.returntofreedom.org. Your interest and support would be much appreciated. ♡



(ABOVE) Sulphur Springs Stallion, "Chief" and his mares. (RIGHT) Isadora Cruce. Photos by Kimerlee Curyl





Scenearound

Annual Debutante Ball

Photography by Ken Taylor

The National Charity League, Inc. Conejo Valley Chapter held its annual Debutante Ball on Saturday, November 26, 2011 at the Four Seasons Hotel in Westlake Village. The evening was a culmination and celebration of the six years that each of the 17 young women had spent in National Charity League. The debutantes were honored for their 7,368 hours of community service to the chapter's 16 local philanthropies. The highlight of the evening, aside from the presentation of the debutantes, was the traditional Viennese Waltz danced by the debutantes and their fathers. *(Continued on page 20)*



[1st row, left to right] Emily Jane Turner, Andrea Noelle Kemp, Caroline Elizabeth Geckle, Jillian Joyce Stephens, Catherine Jean Gebhardt, Chloe Elizabeth France, Emily Rose Tejeda. [2nd row, left to right] Claire Marie Martone, Melissa Kate Levinsohn, Ashley Rose Tesoriero, Nicole Rachel LaFontaine, Gillian Rachel Lloyd, Alexandra Michele Rice, Melissa Nicole Ryan, Nicoletta Marie LaForgia, Taylor Marie Wong, Amanda Ruth Boone

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Annual Debutante Ball

Photography by Ken Taylor (Continued on page 22)



Taylor Marie Wong, Gillian Rachel Lloyd, Emily Rose Tejeda, Alexandra Michele Rice, Catherine Jean Gebhardt, Chloe Elizabeth France



Front: Ashley Rose Tesoriero; Back: Alexandra Michele Rice, Caroline Elizabeth Geckle, Melissa Kate Levinsohn, Claire Marie Martone, Andrea Noelle Kemp, Nicoletta Marie LaForgia



Front: Andrea Noelle Kemp, Emily Jane Turner, Melissa Kate Levinsohn, Melissa Nicole Ryan, Caroline Elizabeth Geckle, Claire Marie Martone



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Fathers and Daughters Viennese Waltz



Caroline Elizabeth Geckle



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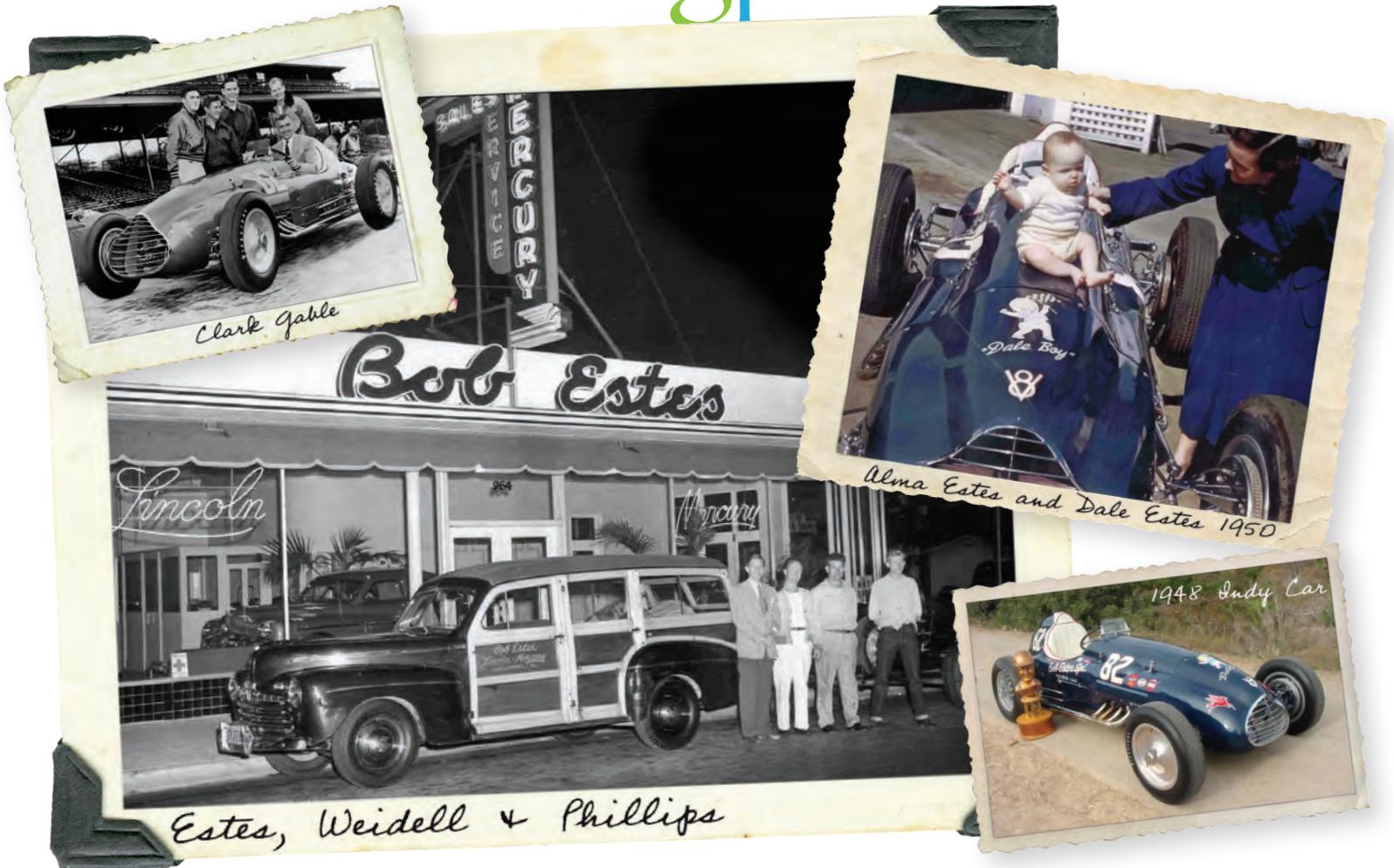
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Motoring pursuits



Minibikes to Go Karts

Connected by Racing Legends, a California Family Story.
By Larry Crane

Dale Estes grew up on a small ranch on the Pacific Coast Highway in Malibu, the son of one of America's most respected automobile industry professionals—and racers, who never drove a racecar. The family bought the ranch in 1960 when Dale was 10. His dad never lived in Malibu; he built his businesses in Inglewood. But lots of Dale's personal history was launched on the coast, much with the encouragement of his dad. His best friend, Bruce Hand, lived on PCH near by. Bruce's dad, Bud Hand, owned a car shop in West L.A. and was a well-known racecar builder. The bloodlines were clear early. They first built mini bikes and raced them up and down the canyons before teenage life got interesting. Driver's licenses resulted in all manner of trouble including countless adventures on the Mulholland-canyon circuits.

Several cars and motorcycles were built or restored in the ranch house garage. There was a vintage 1-liter, V-twin Vincent HRD, an unrestored, tired-looking '67 Mercury Cougar stealth canyon car, with a Ryan Falconer race motor, and Dale restored his dad's Bugatti T35B in the garage with the help of the Los Angeles racing community: his friends.

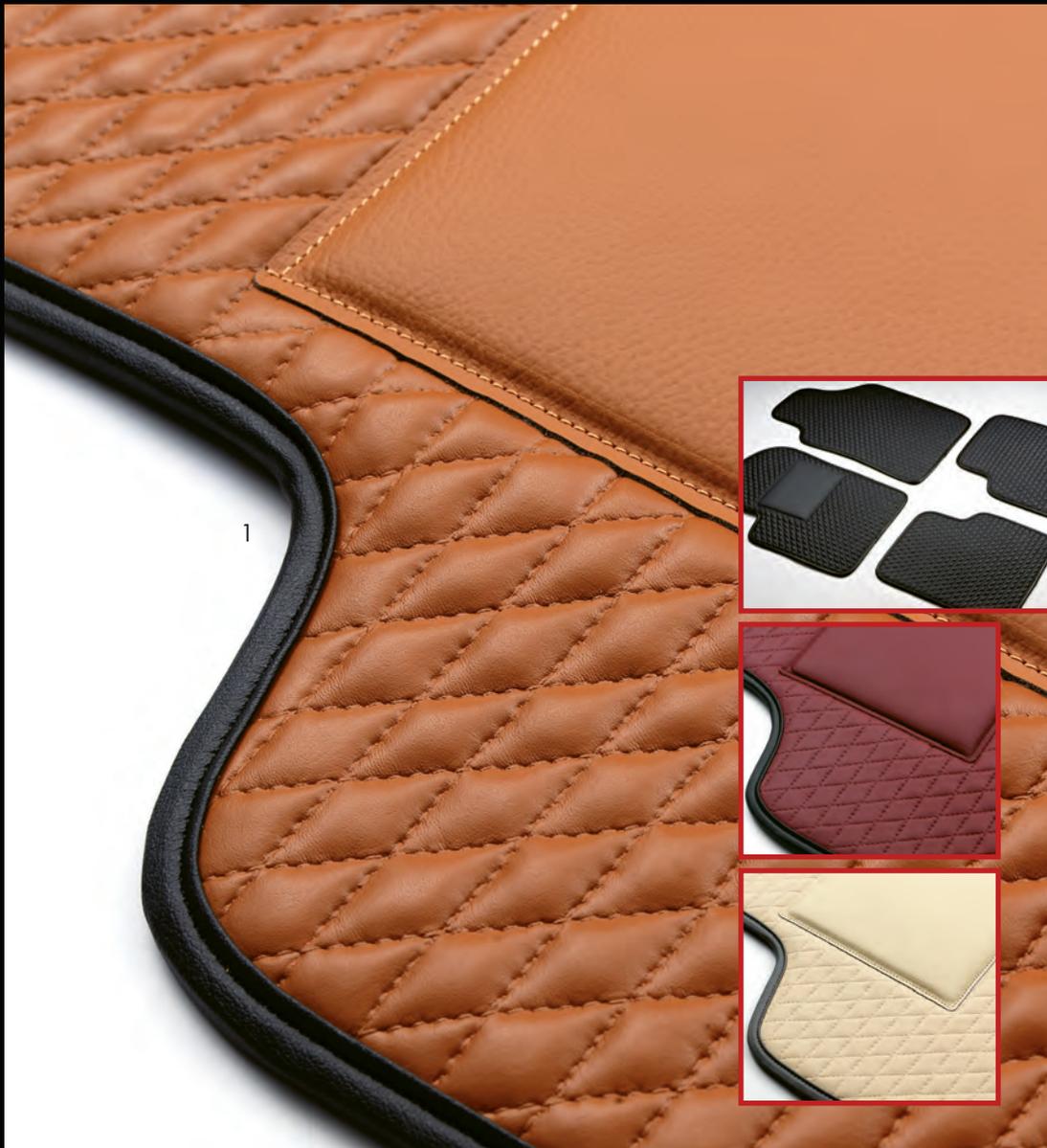
Dale's dad launched Bob Estes Lincoln-Mercury in Inglewood in 1946. By the time Dale was born it had become the headquarters of a

much-admired racing team that included gifted racecar builders Jud Phillips and A.J. Watson. The team had 10 entries at the Indianapolis 500 from 1948 to 1960 and competed in the 1958 Race of Two Worlds at Monza, Italy. Phillips and Watson are credited with creating one of the famous Indy roadsters for the 1954 event, and as the Bob Estes Special, it finished third in 1956. The drivers included: Troy Ruttman, Jim Rigsby, Joe James, Pat O'Connor, Don Freeland and Don Branson, all of them legends and friends of Bob's young son. The team won Midwest Sprint Car Championships with O'Connor in '53, '54 and '56, then with Branson in '59. On several occasions they had tough competition from the Dale Estes Racing team. That team finished second in the 1951 Midwest Sprint Car championship and had a car at Indy in 1952—Dale was 2.

It was always Bob's dream to win Indy with a Ford-powered car. To that end he bought a 1948 double overhead cam conversion Mercury V-8 from Joe Davis and ran it in his Indianapolis 500 car in 1952. It was unable to qualify for the race, but it remains an American racing treasure. Though well known in racing circles, the 'Dale Boy' V-8 sprint car was constructed and entered in the Indy 500 before Dale was born. It was given the name as a gift from his dad. The car never accomplished much as a racecar, but its construction and development had a profound effect on a number of racing careers; not the least of which was its namesake. Dale still has both the hand-made engine and the car, though, it now boasts an equally rare Ardun overhead valve Ford conversion created by Zora Arkus Duntov, who went on to develop the Corvette as a racecar in the early 60s.

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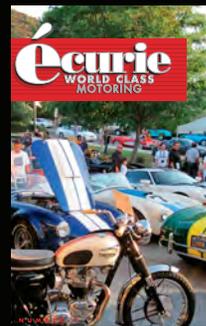
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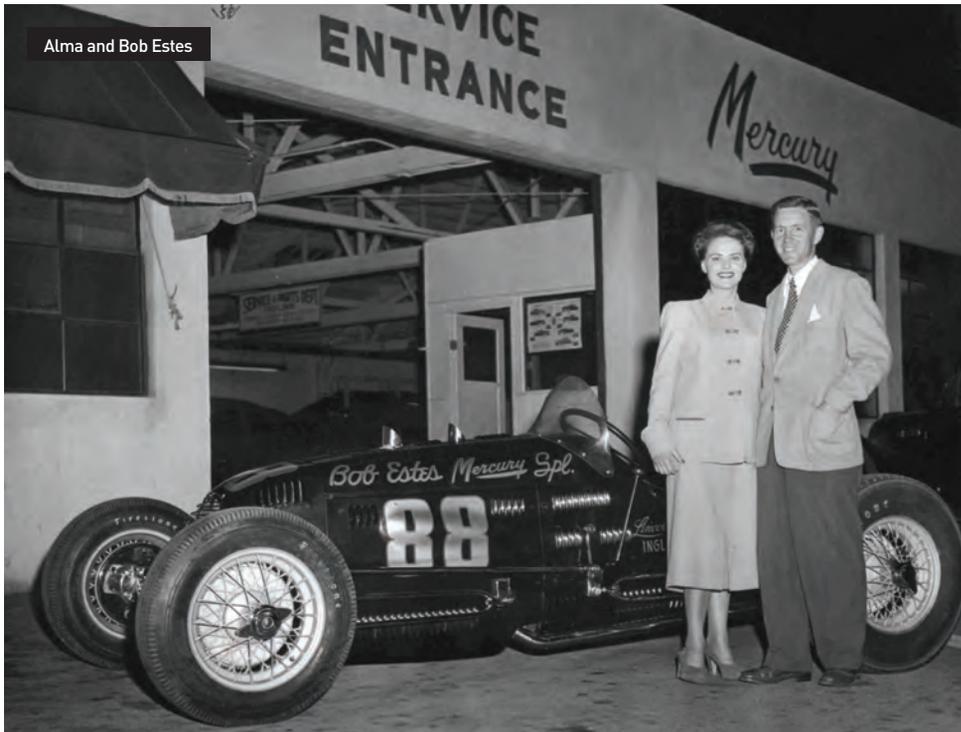


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6



Alma and Bob Estes

After the disastrous 1955 racing season—world wide—AAA dropped out of racing and Bob Estes was a cofounder of the United States Auto Club (USAC) sanctioning body of the Indianapolis 500 and much of American racing. At the same time he expanded his business to include imports and, not incidentally, moved upscale by opening a Porsche and Volkswagen dealership in Beverly Hills. He called it Precision Motor Cars. He soon brought in Austrian auto aficionado, Otto Zipper, to run the operation. Within a decade the showroom included both Ferrari and Lamborghini—and Dale Estes.

Celebrity customers included bombshell driving enthusiast, Jayne Mansfield, who bought her Ferrari 275 GTS from them in 1965; it was later owned by Eric Clapton. Dean Paul Martin bought a Lamborghini Miura S like the one Dale bought for himself. Malibu's own Barry Hilton bought his first Porsche from them, and Harry Adams of World Airways, bought a Lamborghini from Dale.

Bob saw to it that Dale got all the dealership training he could find. That was his education. During the summer of 1965 Bob asked his son to go out and drive the 350 GT that Lamborghini had just delivered to the office and tell him what he thought. After a few minutes and a couple laps of the block he thought, "Nice car. Nice interior. Okay performance." Then he opened the hood and saw the double overhead cam V-12 with six side-draft Weber carburetors, all that polished aluminum and knew the potential was

beyond his brief—slow—experience.

Dale became the distributorship's man in Italy, and was given the responsibility of guiding Lamborghini through the labyrinth of California air quality regulations. Dale was headed to Modena for a meeting with Lamborghini when Harry Adams offered him a seat on a charter flight *en route* to Paris. He would have to find his own way south to Italy. When he arrived at the 707 charter at LAX, Dale discovered he was the only passenger. There were a couple of stewardesses and a pilot. Dale flew to Paris as a co-pilot.

He worked on the Lamborghini production line with designer Giampaolo Dallara to try to make the cars clean and legal. Not easy. The Italians told him they made the car to go, not to breathe shallow breaths. The imported Lamborghinis became hard to sell, like most 'smogged' Italian products. The 350 hp engines could only deliver about 250 after the de-smog kit was installed. One evening after a long day on the line, Ferruccio Lamborghini arranged a dinner at Modena's fabulous Fini Restaurant. During the festivities, Lamborghini presented Dale with a beautiful plaque decorated with a set of miniature sterling silver mechanic's tools, by way of a thank you for all his patience and accomplishments.

As a son of his dad, racing could not be

ignored for long. He had been driving go karts at Willow Springs since he was 14. Early one morning, he and Bruce pushed his racing kart under the gate, put it on the empty track and started making laps. Soon Bill Huth was standing in the middle of the front straight when Dale exited Turn 9. "What do you kids think you're doing on my race track?!" Bill has owned Willow Springs since 1952 and knew the Estes clan. Dale is now marketing director for the track and they still chuckle about that morning.

SuperKart fun became Dale Estes Racing. His team's Anderson 250 TZ Yamaha SuperKart set a track record on the full 2.5 mile Willow Springs road course at 1:18.197 @ 115.104 MPH with Ronnie White at the controls, and the record still stands to this day. In 1977, during the years when he was doing his own driving, Dale won a race at Ontario Motor Speedway in front of a small crowd. Mr. Takahari, a Japanese car collector/racer was in the stands. He invited Dale to come to Japan for a test drive in his new Porsche 935 GT racer at Fuji Speedway. After he had driven the 935 to competitive times through a Japanese rainstorm, Dale thought it was time to go racing. He went to family friend Vasek Polak, the Porsche dealer/race team owner in Hermosa Beach to ask for a test in one of his racecars. "I don't have time for this kid," was his terse reply, "I have Scooter Patrick and Ken Miles driving for me."

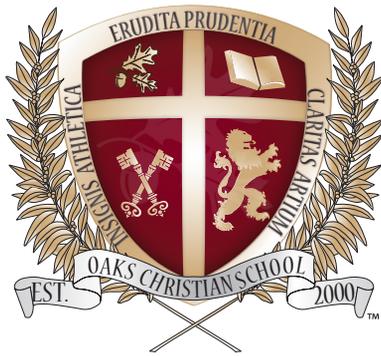
A few years later, as Alzheimers was advancing on him, Bob called Dale into his room. He said, "Sit down son; I have to tell you something you aren't going to like. Remember that comment you got from Vasek years ago? Those were my words he was speaking. I only have one son and I didn't want you to risk me losing him." Dale says he is probably here today because of his dad's hard line on the subject.

But dad had no problem with SuperKart racing. Or, in deed, vintage car racing after Dale restored and raced the Bob Estes Mercury Cougar Trans Am car. He enjoyed seeing it driven well and especially by his only son.

Today it's Formula Pacific - a new category of racing car developed by Bill Huth and Dale Estes; affordable racing with real performance and the sound of a Yamaha 600 R6 four cylinder at 17,000 revs. Not for the canyons, but the music fires lots of canyon memories. 🍷



Dale with his Daughter Ashley



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A MAMMOTH DREAM

FROM THE REAL MCCOYS • BY LARRY CRANE

Imagine. The base of the Mammoth Mountain ski face is at an altitude of over 7,900 feet. The top of the mountain passes 11,000 feet and the top wall is nearly vertical. Six feet of snow can fall overnight and winds have been clocked at 150 mph. Now imagine you have to climb to the top in order to ski down. Now imagine inviting your girl friend to join you...and she does.

Such is the shared passion of Dave and Roma McCoy.

Dave rode his Harley to the eastern Sierra in 1935 in search of freedom. He was 20. His old friend Warren Miller describes the goal and the result: "When the only boundary you know is the horizon, that's real freedom. It's as infectious as any other life-altering exposure." Independence (no, really!), California had a tiny café called 'Jim's' and Dave parked the Harley just outside the door and a job was offered just inside. One day a tall, beautiful redhead burst into the café followed by the rest of her cheer squad. Dave was spellbound. "She was the right gal for me," he said recently. A year would pass before he finally met Roma Carriere on a blind date. *Sic transit freedom.*

The two powerfully independent spirits became a single force of nature. That blend of energy hiked and fished and hunted and rode hundreds of miles on the brown and yellow Harley—even changing place on the seat at 90 mph, Roma proudly remembers—and skied. He left the café in 1936 to become a hydrographer for the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power. They paid him to ski all day five days per week and he joined the Eastern Sierra Ski Club lest he be bored on weekends. He became the California State Champion ski racer at 22.



(TOP) Dave Skiing in the '50s.
(BOTTOM) Dave Skiing in the '60s.
(LEFT) Mammoth Mountain Action



The quality of Sierra skiing brought fans from all over the state. From the south came 'The Wooden Wings Ski Club.' Dave described them as the 'fame and fortune' crowd. They were famous and fortunate because they worked at it, and did the same with their skiing. With Dave as a guide they side-stepped their skis up most of McGee Mountain, then climbed to the top and skied down and climbed again—and again. Not until 1938 did word reach the eastern Sierra about a 1908 German invention that eliminated most of the climbing: a rope tow. Vermont had one in 1934. Dave read about it and got a state permit to build one, but the required \$86 was out of reach. He approached the local bank and was turned down. The banker's secretary told her boss that if he didn't loan that nice young man the money, she would walk out. The money changed hands and the young assistant, Roma Carriere, caught the borrower. They were married in 1941.

The rope tow was a model A Ford truck mounted on blocks with its wheels removed and used as pulleys for the hemp rope. Grab and go and fall and grab and climb over your friends and hang on for dear life. Dave tells us: "Going up the hill was as much fun as coming down

“THE EXPERTS TOLD ME IT WAS TOO REMOTE, IT WAS TOO COLD, IT WAS TOO ALPINE, TOO FAR AWAY FROM ANYTHING... AND AWFUL WEATHER—IT SNOWS!” DAVE RECALLS WITH A SMILE. “I THOUGHT IT WAS ALL A PRETTY GOOD IDEA FOR SKIING.”

the hill.” It was soon clear that the McCoys could not support the entertainment of several thousand Californian skiers on their personal resources. On a given evening, they realized they would not have gas or food the following day. Roma would have to solicit money for the tow. It would be 50¢ to ride the tow all day. The collection box filled quickly and by sunset, it held \$15. “This might be a pretty good deal!” She remembers thinking, “Yeah. We eat tonight.”

The tow could be self-sustaining. The mountain snow could not. During the five years they skied McGee Mountain, the snowfall became less and

less reliable. Mammoth Mountain to the north had an additional 3,000 feet of altitude and at 14,000 feet, it remained snow-capped all winter.

They moved the tow rope equipment to the back side of Mammoth. Some days there could be several hundred people on the rope and they were doing okay. But it could be a long slog just to get to the rope tow. At the end of WWII, Dave found the solution in a military surplus yard—a Weasel (two caterpillar-like tracks under a steel box). He got one for \$100. “We could seat 20 on the Weasel and pull a rope, lined with skiers, up to a quarter of a mile long sometimes.”

Watching Dave's success and the growing popularity of skiing, the Federal Government decided it was time to expand Mammoth Mountain into a full-fledged resort. The Forest Service put out a call to develop Mammoth; not a single person or company applied. So the Service was left with going to Dave and asking him what he could do.

“The experts told me it was too remote, it was too cold, it was too alpine, too far away from anything...and awful weather—it snows!” Dave recalls with a smile. “I thought it was all a pretty good idea for skiing.”

Olympic Snowboarder Scotty Lago at Mammoth. Photo by Curtis Dahl



Passionate Pursuits

His actual job with the Department of Water and Power was taking up too much of his time. “We had five children and just had the sixth, and I came home and told Roma I quit.” She asked why. “Well, I don’t think I can do my job well and the ski area well, and I chose to do the ski area. I believe in this mountain and I’m going to do it. One way or another.”

Roma remembers, “It was quite a chore for a young boy who didn’t have a cent - to try to raise money for a chair lift.”

By 1955 Dave and his gang of friends and local kids had built a new lodge and immediately started building chair lift number one. The lift towers were constructed on the ground and tilted up onto their bases with the backs of Dave and his crew and a couple of trucks. “It would be impossible today. The paperwork would be more daunting than the project.” Rusty Gregory, Magic Mountain CEO, reminds us, “You know, Dave was used to doing impossible things.”

“The probability never even stuck in my head that we couldn’t do it. Just because people said we couldn’t do it or in spite of them saying that, we did succeed.” Dave and his crew built new lifts every summer and had to have them operable for the first snow.

In 1966 it was time to go to the top. Describing the McCoy contract, “The gondola lift was made by a Swiss company and with a

handshake they said they would send professional builders and cable splicers over when it came time.” The Swiss crew arrived, saw the mountain and went home. By the time Dave got them to come back, he had several of the steel-frame towers set, some over 100 feet high. It was all done with logs and Rube Goldberg rigging that Dave had taught himself, a few men and a bunch of local teenagers. “The Swiss builders thought it was all impossible,” according to Rusty, “Dave just thought it was another day of work.”

Clifford Mann, General Manager of Outside Operations, elaborates, “From 1965 to 1972 Mammoth went from five chairs to fourteen chairs and two gondolas that took you to the top of the mountain.” With the growing popularity of skiing and the requirements of facilities, the resort expanded exponentially. Then the snow stopped!

The purist boss had to bring making to Mammoth, along with snowboards and wild aerobatics; wheels followed them for summer fans. Now there is a four-mile downhill for mountain bikes. Warren tells us, “There is four minute club. If your IQ is low enough you can *average* 60 mph on your mountain bike”

According to Rusty Gregory, “At the core of Dave’s motivations lies that constant search for freedom, and if he has a passion for something, he wants to share it with everyone.”



Dave & Roma Skiing



Mammoth Mountain Action

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Chatroom



Short Stories About Big People

By Bob Eubanks

As we begin 2012, I reflect back at some of the stupid mistakes I've made. I thought I would share a couple of those with you as part of our short stories about big people.

In the '70s, my partner Willy Leopold and I were managing the career of gospel icon Andre Crouch. My neighbor at the time, Marty Paich, contacted me about managing a band that his son had started. I told Marty we were really busy, and I suggested another manager. David Paich and Toto became big stars.

Also in the '70s, I managed the career of Dolly Parton. After a couple of years she

came to me and said that she had decided to get a Nashville manager, as she thought it would be better for her career. About a year later she called me, and we met at the Beverly Hilton Hotel and she asked me if I would manage her again. After putting much thought into it I came back to her the next day and said, "No, I think I'll pass".

Just a couple of stupid mistakes in my race through life.

Now that Valentine's Day is over, I often think about Lawrence Welk and his number one television show on ABC. On one particular show, Welk, with his Scandinavian accent and total naivety, introduced the Lennon Sisters who were wearing big



Dolly Parton

hearts for a dance number on Valentine's Day. He said, "And now the lovely Lennon Sisters, with a heart-on."

Another Welk-ism: He once said to his staff, "The ABC executives will be here today, so everybody pee on your toes".

Well there you have it. Short stories about big people. Before I leave you, I will remind you of one thing. Red meat is not bad for you. Fuzzy green meat is bad for you. 🍌

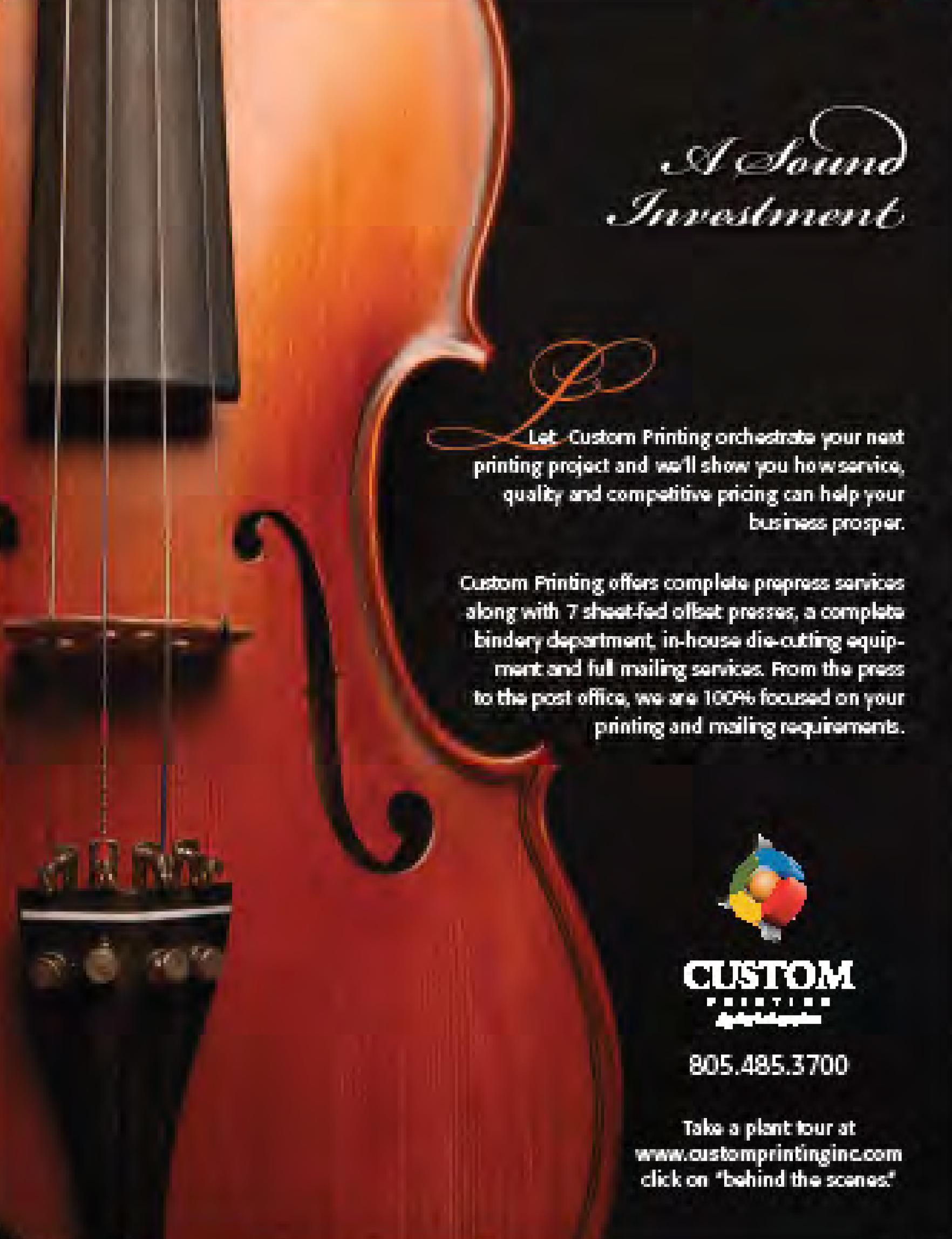
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TOTO

ON ONE PARTICULAR SHOW, WELK, WITH HIS SCANDINAVIAN ACCENT AND TOTAL NAIVETY, INTRODUCED THE LENNON SISTERS WHO WERE WEARING BIG HEARTS FOR A DANCE NUMBER ON VALENTINE'S DAY. HE SAID, "AND NOW THE LOVELY LENNON SISTERS, WITH A HEART-ON."



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Dr. Alexander P. Hersel, founder of Pain Management and Injury Relief Medical Center (PMIR), is opening a second medical clinic in Ventura County at the Park Plaza Simi Valley Medical and Professional Center, 3695 Alamo Street, in



March. “We’re pleased to be opening this location in Simi Valley to better serve our Ventura County patients in this convenient and state-of-the-art setting”, said Dr. Hersel. This new office marks the third clinic opening for Dr. Hersel, joining locations in the Thousand Oaks Medical Center and Santa Monica Medical Center.

PMIR Medical Center’s newly-reconstructed facility will provide state-of-the-art diagnostic and treatment services, in addition to FDA techniques that do not require surgery.

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Hi-Tech Builders, Inc. recently opened their offices in the San Fernando Valley to provide customers with the latest, high-tech building options that are state-of-the-art. With a wealth of over two decades experience, David Lachyani comes with highly-respected credentials - having been part of previous teams that were ranked some of the best general contractors in the Los Angeles, Orange, and Ventura counties. Hi-Tech Builders, Inc. specializes not only in major renovations, such as room additions and bathroom and kitchen remodels, but provides an unlimited number of services to assist in any type of home improvement project. The quality of professionalism in the service and work exceeds clients' expectations. Hi-Tech Builders, Inc. is a dedicated team of professionals and experts handling every client's home as if it were their own. Their priority is to put the client's demands



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Challenging pursuits

Thousand Oaks' New Police Chief Commander Randy Pentis

Two years ago we ran a story on *Cops Running for Charity* - a group of 7 intrepid, resourceful friends with hearts the size of three Olympic stadiums - who pay their own travel expenses to far-flung places in the world - to raise substantial funds for Children's Charities. They put their bodies through grueling and punishing physical tests, and they surmount the obstacles with humor and positivity, because they know that their pain is nothing compared to the pain that children with life-threatening diseases experience. Most people are sent to Siberia - a form of banishment; In 2010, Cops Running for Charity voluntarily went to Siberia to test their endurance levels for their charities. Siberia didn't beat them; they beat it! Before that they slogged 85 miles across the African Sahara Desert - fighting their way across sand storms and brutal temperatures, and then after that, they did an ultra cold, icy marathon in Iceland. Goals often entail hardship, but the group's leader, Commander Randy Pentis,



Capt. Tim Hagel, Commander Randy Pentis, Capt. Paul Higgason



Commander Randy Pentis (Extreme right) in Patagonia, Argentina with 'Cops Running for Charity'

shrugs off the discomforts: "We're all in this together and we're better people for it. We have so many great moments: moments that have come to define who we are." They were certainly radically defined in their recent November 2011 expedition to Argentina where they climbed the Patagonian Mountains - hiking 26.2 miles at 3,000 - 5,000 feet through two active volcanoes that spewed volcanic ash into their already ultra-tested lungs. They completed their mission with gray, ashen hair, volcanic-ash-colored faces and enough humor to supersede all the obstacles. The \$40,000 they raised went to Children's Hospital L.A., Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation, Make-A-Wish Foundation, Big Brothers Big Sisters Ventura County, and Lou Gehrig's Disease (ALS). Commander Randy Pentis was recently promoted to the position of Police Chief of Thousand Oaks. 💧



Commander Randy Pentis running through the ash in Argentina



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CASPER VAN DIEN'S AND CATHERINE OXENBERG'S

Beautiful Life Journey

STORY BY DIANA LYLE ∞ PHOTOGRAPHY BY CHRISTOPHER AMERUOSO

Who could ever forget Casper Van Dien as the lead in Paul Verhoeven's masterpiece, *Starship Troopers* (1997), which has established a huge cult in the last 15 years. He followed that up with *Sleepy Hollow* (1999), which is based on the classic Washington Irving story of Ichabod Crane (Johnny Depp).

A starring role as 'Lord of the Jungle' in *Tarzan and the Lost City* (1998) was another acting highlight - as was *The Omega Code* (1999) - in which his award-winning actress wife, Catherine Oxenberg, landed the starring role, and Casper played the lead role. Catherine Oxenberg's life is worthy of an epic movie in of itself. Born in New York and raised in London, she is the daughter of HRH Princess Elizabeth of Yugoslavia and the granddaughter of Prince Paul, the former Regent of Yugoslavia (now Serbia). Her grandmother is Princess Olga of Greece and Denmark, who is the first cousin to the Duke of Edinburgh, the husband of Queen Elizabeth II. Prince William's uncle, Prince Andrew, proposed to Catherine on the night of Charles' and Diana's wedding ball, but she chose another life - here in Malibu - with Casper. Catherine's first acting coach was Richard Burton (who was engaged to her mother), and the highlights of her career include *The Miracle of the Cards* - where she garnered a 2002 Best Actress Award from the prestigious Movieguide Awards. Other memorable roles include her run in the massively-successful TV series *Dynasty*.



Catherine: Jeans: JBrand.
Top: Leyendecker Los Angeles.
Casper: T Shirt by Hanes; Cardigan/
Sweater by Spindle and Canister,
Malibu. Scarf by Oxenberg

Catherine's Make-up/Hair: Kathleen
Hagan. www.kathleenhagan.com
Stylist for Catherine: Kimmy Ratican.
Twitter @kimmyerin
Stylist for Casper: Jake Warner



Cappy, Casper, Catherine, Maya, Celeste,
Grace. Catherine's dress: Jahanaara.
Grace's dress: Leyendecker Los Angeles.
Casper: T Shirt: Hanes. Cardigan/Sweat-
er by Spindle and Canister.

Catherine's Make-up/Hair: Kathleen
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But it was during the filming of the *Omega Code* - which turned out to be the highest grossing independent film of the year - that Casper Van Dien's and Catherine Oxenberg's romance produced its own unique, script-worthy vitality: They were filming in Israel and Italy when Casper - unexpectedly - proposed to Catherine across the marble floor of the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem. In front of the church is a mosaic of the three wise men - one of which is Casper's namesake - and next to it is St. Catherine. Catherine found it enormously romantic and synchronistic that Casper asked her to spend the rest of her life with him in the exact spot where their two namesakes have been preserved - inseparably - for over 2,000 years. Casper's and Catherine's romantic story wouldn't be theirs if it wasn't also etched with some wonderfully comedic moments: Upon leaving the church where Catherine had made Casper a happy man by accepting his proposal, a local Palestinian considered Casper's new fiancé to be a worthy acquisition for his own affections, so he offered Casper 200 camels to hand over Catherine! The camel-less Casper chose to ride off into the sunset with the bigger prize instead - and 13 years later, Catherine and Casper are devoted to their marriage and to their family life in Malibu. India (20), Cappy (18), Grace (15), Maya (10) and Celeste (8) make up their brood of energized children - accompanied by 3 affectionate cats and 1 dog. Cappy and Grace are the great grandchildren of famed actor, Robert Mitchum. The beautiful, ivy-educated Catherine is a strong advocate for women's issues and in particular - is passionate about improving the conditions of women who live in oppressive cultures. Casper recently completed *The Pact* - a top-notch thriller featured at the *Sundance Film Festival* this year. He's also executive produced an animation film version of Starship Troopers called *Starship Troopers Invasion*. And together, Casper and Catherine are working on the historically-significant, untold story of Catherine's grandfather, HRH Prince Paul. Our happy, exclusive photo shoot and cover story with the Van Dien/Oxenberg family was accompanied by perfect Southern Californian winter weather - and life's great elixir - humor!



India

Photo by Charles Graulke

Catherine: Diamond bracelets from her own collection. Casper: Shirt and Jacket: John Varvatos, Malibu; Pants: James Jeans, Spindle & Canister, Malibu; Shoes: Vintage Gucci

Catherine's Make-up/Hair: Kathleen Hagan. www.kathleenhagan.com
Stylist for Catherine: Kimmy Ratican. Twitter @kimmyerin
Stylist for Casper: Jake Warner



WHAT IS PARTICULARLY SPECIAL ABOUT THIS PHASE IN YOUR LIFE?

Catherine: These are my golden years! I heard that statistically, people's stress levels drop by 50% when they hit 50 - I don't remember where I read that, but it seems to be true. I am enjoying my lifestyle more than ever. I do feel less stressed, more in a flow, more settled, less topsy-turvy. My children are at an age where they are relatively self-sufficient - compared to the days of diapers and tantrums! I still have to cook endlessly for them - but I love cooking and I love hanging out with my family. I have time to write, to work on projects, take workshops. I have my 20-year-old daughter living with me and I love delegating responsibilities to her like school drop-offs and grocery shopping. We haven't had a nanny for 2 years and it has been wonderful. My husband is a great companion, really easy-going. We have sort of an ideal, harmonious home life; it has taken years of hard work, but it has paid off. I can really see the beauty and exponential power that a loving, supportive family environment can foster.

Casper: My family makes this phase really special. Right now I am enjoying my children as they embrace their power and essence. It is magical to witness them on their journey through life. I feel blessed to be able to see them through my wife's eyes too. Our family has really grown stronger over the years and we laugh all the time. We are having a lot of fun. It has not always been easy. We are constantly working things out, but we have grown together through working on our issues.

ESSENTIAL INGREDIENTS FOR AN ENRICHING RELATIONSHIP - BOTH WITH YOUR SPOUSE AND YOUR CHILDREN?

Catherine: The same ingredients go for both my husband and my children. I attempt to practice being fully present with them and try to remember to give them my full attention - especially in those inconvenient moments! It seems like they always want my attention when I am busiest, and the hardest thing for me to do is to stop what I'm doing, and respond to them without feeling irritated

when they're interrupting me. When Casper grabs me to give me a big hug while I'm madly juggling bubbling saucepans at the stove, I take a deep breath, resist the urge to push him away and screech, "NOT NOW!! Can't you see I'm BUSY?!!" I stop what I'm doing, connect with him, to fully receive his gesture of affection. When I looked at my behavior, I was shocked to see how many times a day I rejected him and was missing out on so many opportunities to connect. The moment I surrendered to his overtures 100%, even if it was for a brief moment, I felt this influx of love. I realized that I was less drained at the end of the day and that I felt more loving and connected to him. It seems like a little thing, but it made a big difference. With my children, I try to catch myself when I'm distracted versus being fully present and listening to them. I think that deep down I had this fear that interruptions would impede me from getting everything done, but the truth is that I can accomplish so much more when I allow myself to be fed by my family's love, on their terms, not just on mine.

Casper: Catherine and I do a lot of weird and wacky stuff together. We have traveled all over the world with films and vacations - with and without our children. We constantly work on ourselves and our relationship. She has been my best friend and has had the hugest impact and influence in my life. One ingredient I feel I added to enriching our relationship from the beginning was to let her know that there will be absolutely no TV in our bedroom! The bedroom is a sacred place. We include our family with a lot of the weird and wacky stuff too. We enjoy traveling with the children and make sure we introduce them to as many different cultures and experiences as possible. We eat dinner together and say our prayers; we just enjoy being together. We often do self-improvement seminars and workshops - both together and separately - to help us develop better communication skills. My wife has been the cornerstone in finding things to do that bring us all closer.

WHAT QUALITIES DO YOU ADMIRE IN OTHERS?

Catherine: I admire kind, humble, caring, considerate, humorous, genuine, open-minded, big-hearted, loving,

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curious, ethical, patient, supportive, creative, passionate, cooperative, fun-loving, honest, trustworthy, honorable people!

Casper: I admire people with a great sense of humor. My wife and children constantly make me laugh. I also find myself gravitating more towards kind-hearted and honest people. But a great sense of humor is an absolute must.

FAVORITE DOWN-TIME ACTIVITIES?

FAVORITE VACATIONS SPOTS?

Catherine: I love playing tennis. I go to a clinic twice a week with a wonderful bunch of women and I am guaranteed a healthy dose of laughter each and every time. I have been writing a blog since March of last year and I find that process deeply satisfying (<http://catherineoxenberg.wordpress.com/> <http://catherineoxenberg.me/>. [Twitter - @catoxenberg](#) and [@caspervandien](#)). I love cooking with my eldest daughter India, and developing new recipes. She is a great baker and is constantly inventing new, healthy, gluten-free, refined sugar-free substitutes for comfort foods. Actually I love doing anything with her; she is the best company. I love human potential workshops and most of our children are old enough to participate with us. This past summer we took an ethical business workshop together and found it incredibly beneficial. We took the kids on Safari at the Gorah Elephant Lodge after Casper finished filming in South Africa in 2007. That was an amazing experience, even though I didn't sleep the entire time as we were all staying in these luxurious tents and I could hear lions roaring outside and was terrified that the little girls would run outside and get eaten! A couple of years ago, my mother invited us to stay with her in Jamaica at an amazing resort called Round Hill. The girls still talk about that vacation; it was a highlight for them. This last summer we traveled to New Orleans and did a workshop called 'Shaking Medicine' with a shaman called Brad Keeney who trains with the bushmen of the Kalahari. I was so surprised to see how much all the children got out of the process. It was so much fun. I spent a very romantic vacation at the Hotel Bora-Bora Nui with Casper in one of those huts on stilts over the water. My dream would be to have enough money to take my entire family all over the world. There are 7 of us, so it is a big dream!

Casper: I enjoy going on walks on the beach with my wife and children. I love eating the food that my wife and now eldest daughter, India, make. It is HEAVEN. They are amazing to watch when they cook and the results are beyond my greatest expectations. I love playing basketball with my buddies and working out. Watching films has always been a favorite down-time activity. Not only do I enjoy working in them but just being able to get lost in a great story has always brought me into the fantasy part of my brain that helps inspire me in my life. So many possibilities get opened up by witnessing the magic of a great story. I also love to travel.

A FAVORITE MOM/DAD MOMENT?

Catherine: When I was giving birth to my 2nd child, Maya, I had the powerful realization that this would be the only time I would have the benefit of 2 hearts, and 2 consciousnesses working together. I communicated with my daughter and together, we planned her birth as a team. Everything I asked her to do, she did - from the moment it was time for her to emerge - to the length of the labor. I even had time to give a labor party for my girlfriends and cooked pasta in-between contractions. And when it was time to push her out, I felt my womb transform into hands of golden light and offer her to me. I reached down and pulled her out myself. It may sound a little odd to some of you, but it seemed like the most natural thing in the world. Why would any woman need an intermediary to deliver a piece of her own essence? In that moment, I had the deepest, most primal sense of my own power as a woman, as a mother. I never doubted my ability but I was operating from a place of knowing - a place that I can't always access. I felt complete. If only I could access that power all the time, I would be an unstoppable force!

Casper: I love watching my wife laugh with our children. She is the greatest Mom. She is inspiring to watch as she navigates through the day with the storm that is our family. She is a natural. Even from her pregnancy through the calmness of her giving birth, she has always had this grace about being a mother. She blogged about being a stepmother the other day and I was blown away yet again by the way she is as a mother. It is worth the read. In fact all of her blogs are beautiful. She has a way with words. My favorite Dad moment is my children's laughter - which inspires me. I have so many moments that I have loved: Going on Safari in Africa with them, watching them play,

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Catherine: Dress: Leyendecker
Los Angeles. Shoes: Michael Kors.
Bracelet and earrings by "Rebecca"
windsorfinejewelers.com

Make-Up/Hair: Kathleen Hagan
Stylist: Kimmy Ratican



Shirt and Jacket: John Varvatos,
Malibu; Pants: James Jeans,
Spindle & Canister, Malibu

Stylist for Casper: Jake Warner



listening to them laugh - was special. I guess my favorite moment is the present moment. We all seem to be getting along better than ever, so living in the Now with them is pretty awesome.

A FAVORITE PIECE OF WISDOM YOU'RE HAPPY TO SHARE?

Catherine: I am going to quote my daughter Maya when she was 7: "The most beautiful thing in the world is art and you are art!" She said this out of the blue as I was putting her to bed. The beauty of her words struck a deep chord in my heart and I often think about the significance of what came through her. I instantly feel immense gratitude for the wisdom that flows through my children, as if Source can access me more easily through them. Truly, out of the mouths of babes! We are all God's creations - divine microcosmic art forms - and should honor the magnificence of our being.

Casper: My wife and my family have become my greatest teachers. I have learned more from spending valuable time with them and truly listening to them. I feel that I have been living my life more fully as I have experienced it through the eyes of the ones who seem to know me better than I could ever possibly know myself. Listening to my children, watching them experience their journey through life, and helping them figure things out for themselves, has been something that has brought me closer to them and all of us together as a family. Being patient and enjoying time with your wife, children and yourself is the best advice I can share.

WHAT IS YOUR GUIDING PRINCIPLE IN LIFE?

Catherine: Do not take things personally and do not take offense easily. Instead - look for the love in the communication. My children healed me of my thin skin. When Maya was 4, she ran up to my bedside one morning and exclaimed, "Mom, are you going to die today?!" I mumbled, "No, I hadn't planned on it. Why?" She answered, "Because you look SO old!" This was the beginning of my inoculation process. My children can say anything to me and I have never taken offense. I feel so much love for them and from them, that the words are almost irrelevant. I can always feel their love regardless of what is being said. If I could experience everyone and interact with everyone in the same way, I think I would have achieved my ultimate goal - to feel that deep connection with all Creation. I would be free!

Casper: Best advice I can give: Don't take the people you're closest to for granted. Make the effort to show your

vulnerability to those you love; be patient and enjoy your family. Work on building intimacy because it is harder for men and it does not come as naturally for us as it does for women.

WHAT ARE THE WORLD ISSUES THAT GET YOUR ATTENTION?

Catherine: I watch everything and try to be informed. This past year I found all the uprisings in the Middle East fascinating. I watched, riveted, as dictators toppled in countries that had only known oppression for generations. It was inspiring to watch people with so much courage - refusing to tolerate injustice anymore. Some of my friends commented that these people were better off before; that they had traded in a bad situation for a worse one. I disagree. We pass judgment from the vantage point of a well-established democracy, but our beginnings were bathed in blood. Change of that magnitude is not often pretty and carving a path towards democracy might seem a rocky road, but worth the battle none-the-less. Another part of the world that I am deeply interested in is Eastern Europe. I have watched the dissolution of Communism there with particular interest as I grew up being told that our family would never be allowed to go back to Yugoslavia. There was an actual law outlawing any of us from returning - under penalty of death. All mention of my family and especially of my grandfather, Prince Paul, who was the leader of Yugoslavia during World War II - was stricken from the history books. I never learned to speak the language because my mother said that there was no point. Still, it is sad to see those countries of the Eastern Block struggle to forge a foundation of democracy from the ravages left by a communist system. It's so hard, in fact, that my native country, Yugoslavia, torn apart by war, has ceased to exist. I returned to Serbia a few years ago, when my mother decided to run for the Presidency. I'm not sure, but she might be the first princess to run for political office!

Casper: Catherine and I watch 60 minutes and I go on cnn.com all the time. I am definitely interested in world events. All of the protests in the Middle East and the surge for freedom is truly engaging. My brother-in-law just got back from Iraq so I think that also helped with my focus.

WHAT HAS LIFE TAUGHT YOU AND DOES THE JOURNEY IMPROVE?

Catherine: Someone recently asked me what the best time in my life was and I answered, "that would have to be NOW". Yes, the journey definitely improves. I am happier

MY WIFE AND MY FAMILY HAVE BECOME MY GREATEST TEACHERS. I HAVE LEARNED MORE FROM SPENDING VALUABLE TIME WITH THEM AND TRULY LISTENING TO THEM. I FEEL THAT I HAVE BEEN LIVING MY LIFE MORE FULLY AS I HAVE EXPERIENCED IT THROUGH THE EYES OF THE ONES WHO SEEM TO KNOW ME BETTER THAN I COULD EVER POSSIBLY KNOW MYSELF.

today than I have ever been. I jokingly call myself “a labor of love”! I have worked hard to develop skills that support healthy communication; I have a deeper understanding of self - and a better sense of how to nurture that self. I have a humorous perspective that gives me a semblance of sanity and objectivity.

Casper: I feel lucky. I have a great family with whom to journey through life. My wife and children have all added so many elements that bring value to my experience and I have a much deeper understanding of myself because of their input. It just keeps getting better. There are always set-backs and bumps, and sometimes even brick walls that we seem to slam into but we get back up on our feet and continue on the path. And that is heaven to me..

WHAT CAN WE LOOK FORWARD TO?

Catherine: Casper and I wrote a script about my grandfather, H.R.H Prince Paul of Yugoslavia (who was leader of Yugoslavia during World War II). We are hoping to get the film produced this year. Also, I am working to raise money for research for an amazing potential cure for breast cancer and I have been asked to be a spokesperson for an anti-aging supplement called Crown Vital - which I hope will launch soon. I have been taking it and my skin looks amazing. Casper’s eczema, which has plagued him for a decade - literally disappeared after a few days. These are the projects that I am most passionate about right now.

Casper: I have a bunch of current projects. **The Pact** - which I acted in - is a Thriller that was at Sundance this year. **Starship Troopers Invasion** is an Animation film of which I am an Executive Producer. And ... as Catherine has just said, we have written a script about her Grandfather, H.R.H. Prince Paul of Yugoslavia. We are raising monies for it right now but in doing the research for writing this script, I have grown to love the man that Catherine’s Grandfather was. He was a great man that few people know anything about - yet. (<http://www.princepaulroyalexile.com/>) The story is definitely worth sharing. 💧

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windsorfinejewelers.com Casper: Shirt
& Pants by John Varvatos, Malibu;
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Quarterback appraisal

Tom Brady & Tim Tebow

Most experts agree that Tom Brady of the New England Patriots and Tim Tebow of the Denver Broncos - are incomparable Quarterbacks. However, since both these key NFL players have made such an impact - both on and off the field - we thought it would be interesting to conclude the football season with some insights.

TOM BRADY

Age: 33 • Height: 6'4" • Weight: 225
6th round NFL draft pick.

He has led the New England Patriots in 5 Superbowl Championships - winning 3.

One of the most accomplished players in NFL history.

At the much-hyped January 2012 pre Superbowl game between the New England Patriots & the Denver Broncos, Brady dismantled the Broncos defense in a 45-10 beatdown. Brady set an NFL record with 5 touchdowns in the first half and tied an NFL record with 6 touchdowns in the win.

Brady's had 36 passing touchdowns in 20 career postseason games.

Brady has a slew of Superbowl rings on his hand; He has 3 Lombardi trophies; 2 Super Bowl MVPs, and 2 NFL MVPs.

AN INTERESTING ANALOGY BETWEEN THE QUARTERBACKS

Tom Brady is a Scientist: He does not create art; he performs surgery. He accounts for every variable by knowing not only where his receivers will be, but where the defenders will be as well. Like a scientist, he studies his opponents to know their every game vulnerability. Add Bill Belichick to the scientific cocktail, and you have the perfect chemistry: Bill gives Brady the best strategy and fact sheet so that his Quarterback can produce the chemical reaction. His strengths are his precision and his carefully-calculated objectives.



BRADY



And here's a closing similarity between Quarterbacks Tom Brady & Tim Tebow: Off the field, they both conduct themselves with grace, dignity and class. They're an amazing credit to professional Football, and a great example of what sportsmanship is all about.

Acknowledgements: Tom Brewer: Bleacher Report. December 2011

TIM TEBOW

Age: 24 • Height: 6'3" • Weight: 245

1st round NFL draft pick in 2010.

Has been the rare exception to achieve success as an option Quarterback.

Winner of 2 NCAA National Football Championships.

1st ever sophomore to win the Heisman Trophy

Has won the Davey O'Brien Award (nation's best college quarterback); 2-time winner of the Maxwell Award (nation's top college player); Winner of the James E. Sullivan Award (nation's most outstanding amateur athlete in any sport).

AN INTERESTING ANALOGY BETWEEN THE QUARTERBACKS

Tim Tebow is an Artist: He plays the quarterback position like an artist creates a masterpiece. His process can be messy and unpredictable, and sometimes fraught with mistakes, but he has a rare ability to overcome mistakes and turn anarchy into a masterpiece. He has brilliant 4th-quarter epiphanies. Just as an artist's greatest inspirations occur in moments of tumult, Tebow thrives in chaos. His leadership is powerfully inspirational, and he has been the strength behind the Broncos major comeback. The Denver defense keeps Tebow in a position to be brilliant.

TEBOW

Laura Biagiotti





Fashionsense



This Spring is a Rainbow Affair

By Magda Pescariu

My first time out of the house this year I went to the post office in flip-flops, cropped jeans and a T-shirt. The shelves were empty except for a few scattered Holiday items, left as a shabby reminder that we had just passed into another New Year. The line was unexpectedly long, people still struggling to send away boxed proofs of their enduring feelings and hidden regrets. Everybody looked tired, grumpy and unkempt, like all those weeks of Holiday preparations and doctor-recommended joy had left them depleted and bereft. The beginning of this year didn't look like a beginning at all. Weren't beginnings supposed to be attractive, cheerful, encouraging and exciting? Nothing of the kind radiated from the line moving at snail-pace and nobody was in the mood. In graceful revenge, the weather was clear and brilliant, an unexpectedly beautiful day like a sun-drenched pastel - a January on Prozac washed down with a double martini. Or it was just nature's way of reminding Californians that we had it all (and maybe we should start to appreciate it a little). Anyway, the bright day accomplished its mission by me - I left the post office smiling, sorting already through my plans for the following days. Spring was coming, and -with it - a promise of revival, beauty and chance.

Back to work reviewing my notes from the last fashion shows, while

combing through the trends for the new season, I realized that - how it happens so often in life - when you have it all, more will be added to it. **This Spring-Summer Fashion wraps us in heavenly beauty, soft and subtle**, joining the weather and nature in making up for the gloomy look of our everyday life.

The S/S 2012 Collections are a dream of creativity which juxtaposes natural charm, distinctive elegance, contemporary femininity, historical references, experimentation and avant-garde compositions. **The result is seductive: *Pitalianità* of fashion, a fashion infused with Italian spirit, with Italian desire to allure and exceed boundaries.** Elegance runs in the Italian genes, but it never reflects an impulse for something trendy that it is not also durable, classical and genuine. This elegance *a la Italiana* is a symbol of a women's style and wardrobe of a bygone era, and yet when it is revisited with present-day inspiration and vision, it looks modern and sharp.

The elegance we experience in the upcoming season reinterprets two great classics of romanticism: flowers and lace. Their presence, particularly if we talk about lace, acts as a cultural barometer, testifying to a woman's sense of herself, to her level of sophistication, and even to her social status.



Krizia, Versace, Etro and RoccoBarocco - Photos by Thomas Salme.
Laura Biagiotti Photos (Runway & Guests) - Courtesy of The House of Biagiotti.



Versace



Etro



RoccoBarocco

This season is bathed in a **rainbow of colors: soft nude and creamy neutrals, pastels (rose, peach, lilac, lime-green), patinated gold or silver** (think of the old domes and cathedrals), and **vivid, fluorescent tropical hues (green, yellow, orange, purple, Bougainvillea pink)**. **Black and white** - separate or together- continue to suggest core elegance, particularly when lit by a touch of **red**.

The fabrics are delicate and supple, with a natural look – silk, chiffon, lace, shantung, soft cotton; even leather is velvety and fine. **Richness and character come from patterns, tailoring, embellishments and appliqués.**

Spring introduces a twirl of scenic patterns, but the undeniable star is **the floral fantasy**: from lovely little bouquets on soft muted pastels to tropical bold and carnivore flowers of South Pacific inspiration – everything is here. **Whimsical** patterns are also big this season: prints of birds, deer, fruits, feathers, tribal or animal prints - enliven blouses and dresses of minimal cut. **Paisley** - paired with neutral hues or matched with the darkest color in the print - decorates short and long plissé skirts, romantic blouses, sculpted bustieres, and draped one-shoulder dresses of ancient goddesses' beauty. Last but not least, we see **geometric** patterns with stone embellishments and a lot of **stripes**, as they

hold their place in fashion year after year. Horizontal stripes – on dresses, nautical knit-tops, handbags or even espadrilles meet vertical stripes – on pajama silk pants or one-piece chiffon jumpsuits, in a playful eye-game with our silhouette.

In a strange but attractive vision twist, **one face of this season's Italian-influenced fashion is Katharine Hepburn**, an icon with no known affinity for Italy or Italianism. However, if we think about it, Katharine Hepburn epitomizes the modern woman of the 20th century America, outspoken and self-confident, who refused to conform to societal expectations of women. Her strong-willed spirit and sophisticated beauty have changed - through the characters she depicted in her movies - the way society perceived women, throwing away cliché after cliché. So it's no wonder that 2012 begins with a fashion style meant for the sharp and intense women of our century, celebrating in this way a liberation process that has lasted for too long already.

Therefore, **tailoring** is elegant yet comfortable, feminine but square-shouldered, graceful yet standing tall, and finally, angel-looking but powerfully sexy. We have a wide selection of styles to choose from, and many practical ways to experiment with them in combinations of classic and modern.

The blazers and jackets are tailored, with accentuated shoulder line. Cardigans and caftans are asymmetrical in length, with winged sleeves in an “East meets West” approach. All pants have a raised waist, jeans included; thank goodness, because the **bare-midriff** makes a sudden come-back, surprising us out of our messy “winter diet”.

Exactly à la Katharine Hepburn, **high-waist flared pants, with loops for a skinny and shiny belt** are a favorite look of the season. They are paired with high-heels (to accentuate the flare) and with **delicate blouses supported by small shoulder pads**. Even **shorts have high-waists** for both accepted lengths: long to just above the knee (boyish-styled long shorts) or very short, layered over black thin leggings. Summer **skirts are mid-knee length or sweeping the floor**, in pastel colors or floral prints. The **dress** continues to hold a central place on the fashion stage with stamina and imagination: sexy **silk-robe or wrapped** dresses; **one-shoulder style** with folds, pleats or drapes in reverence to ancient Greece and Rome; an **angel-looking sheer** dress (with bishop or angled sleeves and buttoned-up soft shirt-collar). The **little black dress** of this season is classic, supple and elegant as well: A-line at knee-length, the sheath of the '60s, the timeless wrap or the V-neck, long number.



Laura Chiatti, Lavinia Biagiotti, Virna Lisi, Laura Biagiotti and Margareth Madè (the new face of Biagiotti's Venezia fragrance) at the Spring-Summer 2012 Fashion Show, Milan, Italy

Q&A WITH FAMOUS DESIGNERS

LAURA BIAGIOTTI

WML: Ms. Biagiotti, you studied literature and aspired to become an archeologist, yet your name is internationally famous today for your successful, decades-long career creating beauty and unique style in the world of fashion. Please share your perception of fashion with our readers.

LB: Fashion is the expression of human behavior that evolves in contemporary rhythms. Its aim is that of following everyday tastes, variations and mood. Human attitude could be studied through the description and analysis of dresses interpreted as signs.

Our casual look is preppy-sweet and sporty-feminine: cropped jeans at different lengths (from the middle of the calf down to the ankle), nautical T-shirts or girly blouses, and **leather motorcycle jackets in pastel colors** (smoothie rose, lime, yellow or orange). The jackets may also be worn over feminine dresses, with dainty floral prints or paisley. **Crochet** - made of the finest silk cashmere and **linen yards blended with gold and silver threads** - is a big surprise this season. It is present mainly in **vests and bathing suits**, but it shows up on **accessories** as well (handbags or shoes) in **macramé** version.

The **shoes** are beautiful, with a **wild look given by floral appliqués, vivid prints or shiny metallic accessories**, but not too practical or merciful. **We swing between extremes: towering stilettos and very high platform pumps or flats** (ballerina-shoes, gladiator sandals and espadrilles). **All shoes are fancy, in bright, shiny or pastel colors** (silver shoes are all the rage), embellished with flowers, ropes, feathers, ruffles or fringe. They are also **lacey and sleek: lace pumps** with rounded toes for a tailored suit or a great pair of jeans; lattice-weave, mesh, caged or cut-out **booties**; **gladiator sandals** in antique gold or silver color, with lace straps wrapped around for a romantic look; **espadrilles** with stripes, in lace, plaid or nautical navy & white design; **ballerina flats** in lacquered lace-pattern, with bows and feathers accents. And at the end of the day, when we call it quits and long for the comfy sofa, **the kitten heel** saves our feet and preserves the classic elegant look, without

any noticeable compromise.

In terms of **handbags**, from the clutch (best in white and medium size) to the soft hobo tote – everything works. The trend however is for the **rigid handbag (clutch-style), mid-size, with hand-straps (short), in bright colors** (red-flame, purple, cobalt blue, pink, emerald green, orange, sea-blue, lime), **exotic skins** (ostrich preferred) or **lace**. We come across the same accents we've seen in shoes: **floral intarsia or**



Laura Biagiotti

leather flower appliqués, laser-cut lacey patterns, **big stones or metallic decorations** (including oftentimes **chain-straps**).

We hear the same statement of “**remarkable and colorful**” from the **jewelry** realm as well. **Gold is dominant this season**, showcased in **big and bold pieces** so intricate that they look unique, a precious heritage of luxury and style from an unrepeatable era. An impressive necklace, bangle, cocktail ring or a pair of dramatic earrings is enough to hold up an entire fashion ensemble. **Ethnic beading, exotic big stones, natural elements (leather, woods, feathers)** add avant-garde quality to the jewelry design. **Pearls** are *in* to authenticate all things *lace*, and they **reflect the same luscious and luminous rosé** we embrace in all the fashion styles of this summer - the color of sunset on the Venice lagoon, as seen through a glass of Perrier-Jouët fizzing idly with nostalgic wit.

You understand now why I thought of this spring as being a rainbow affair. It carries into our lives the persuasion of hope and possibility, which is not lost on us. We know too well that there is no rainbow without rain, yet - in the midst of the most terrible storm of worry in our lives, drenched to the soul in fear, frozen and numb - we find solace in knowing that rainbow is reachable and one day life will be beautiful again. As the poet-prophet said once, “We live only to discover beauty. All else is a form of waiting.” I like to believe in spring revealing that the waiting is over. 🌈

Thingswelope

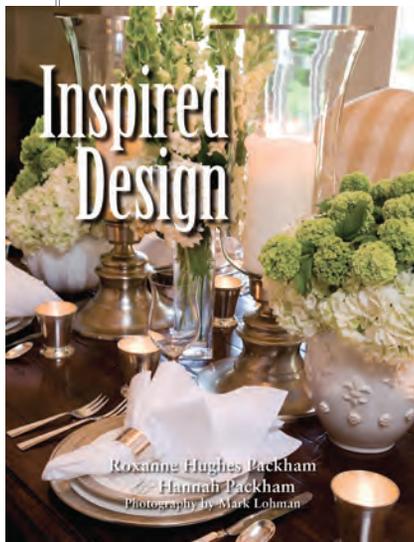


1

1. 302 Remedy Rx: The ultimate ointment. Speeds healing of acne, burns, rashes and other blemishes and reduces scarring with all-natural moisturizers and sun protection. \$22. Available at: **Remedy Skin + Body**, 3723 Thousand Oaks Boulevard, Westlake Village, CA or online at www.skigrin.com. 805.497.9400.



2. Inspired Design: Hospitality Book, written by a local mother-teenage daughter team, about the true beauty of the Home: Proceeds to Orphanage in Romania. Spectacular photography by Mark Lohman. View Chapters & Order: Inspired31.org



2

3. Nurburgring Race Track Jacket. 100% cotton fleece, vintage-inspired epitome of retro-racing style. Features vintage Nurburgring logo & full circuit outline from 1964. DDTJNURB \$60. **World Class Motoring.** (800)986-4977 or www.worldclassmotoring.com

3



4. Custom jeweled swaroski crystal frame: \$55. Sterling silver smoked citrine heart necklace: \$100. Genuine pearl cross necklace: \$148. Designs by American Idol jewelry artist Carol Lynn. Ilene's vintage 1930's earrings: \$120. **Ilene's Boutique.** 1145 Lindero Cyn. Rd. Westlake Village. 805.373.6633

4



5. Stunning blue Sapphire and diamond pave disk bracelet. \$800. The Courtyard At The Commons Inside Dungerees 23655 Calabasas Rd. 818.231.3105 or 818-674-3771. shoptempt.com

5





6

6. Zara Collection hand-tufted area rug made of 100% New Zealand wool. Chic, contemporary collection available in 3 sizes: 4x6 (\$320), 5x8 and 8x10. **Karma Home Accents** 31149 Via Collection #603 Westlake Village 31149. 818-706-0715 www.karmahomeaccents.info



7

7. Batwing Minnie Rose Cashmere Sweater. Color Red. \$288

8. Short Sleeve Fitted Dress by Parker. \$25

9. Western Ankle Boot by Alberto Fermani. Color Canapa. \$475 All items available at **Madison**, The Promenade at Westlake. 100 Promenade Way, Westlake Village. 818-222-3444

8



10. Unique flower arrangements - reasonably priced - created by Janet Webb of **Greenwich Floral Design**. 805-427-3399. Email: janet@greenwichfloral.net. www.greenwichfloral.net

10



9

11. Vin Baker handbag. Was \$385. Now \$195. **Ilene's Boutique**. 1145 Lindero Cyn. Rd. Westlake Village. 805.373.6633

12. Alterations and dress-making meticulously done by Annie. Lindero Canyon Rd, Oak Park (next door to Cleo's Salon & Day Spa). Tel: 818-735-7355

11



12



Iran Army stands guard in the Strait of Hormuz, the passageway for one-sixth of the world's oil supply.





Portraits of Power



That 'Imminent' Attack on Iran and Why It Won't Happen

By Christine Seisun

Lately, American and Israeli officials, presidential candidates and media have been furiously threatening that an attack on Iran is 'imminent' should the country continue on its supposed path towards heightened militarization. The problem with this rhetoric? The claim that the United States is on the cusp of attacking Iran is as old as the Islamic Republic itself and has been the same for the last thirty years. Throughout all this time, no strike has taken place and notwithstanding the media hype, an attack on Iran is very unlikely to take place. Here's why.

When asked what he would do to stave off a nuclear Iran, then-presidential candidate Rick Perry proudly answered that he would instruct the US armed forces to launch "a nuclear strike, or excuse me, a military strike" against Iran from obtaining its own nuclear weapons program. Not to be outdone, Governor Mitt Romney proclaimed that Iran was "the greatest threat that the world faces over the next decade" and that both "covert and overt" actions should be taken against Iran to ultimately achieve regime change. Such answers hearken back to the infamous response of Senator John McCain during the 2008 presidential election who riffed off of the famous Beach Boys song that he would "Bomb bomb bomb/Bomb bomb Iran".

President Obama's administration recently saw through a push for its most stringent round of sanctions yet by attempting to block the Islamic Republic's access to the world financial system. That's hardly a soft approach. Hot on the heels of the United States, in late January, the European Union took the highly publicized step of placing an embargo on all Iranian oil imports and froze the assets of Iran's central bank in the EU. It seems that the Western political world has drawn the line in the sand by demanding full Iranian withdrawal from its attempts at building a nuclear weapon.

Except there is no nuclear weapons program currently in place in Iran.

There is a serious disconnect between the political discourse and the reality on the ground in Iran regarding the actual progress of its nuclear program. Between 2007 and 2010, sixteen US intelligence agencies came to the conclusion that Iran was not in the process of creating a nuclear weapon, a result echoed this year by Defense Secretary Leon Panetta. Dropping their own journalistic nuclear bomb, Ha'aretz – the

prominent English language newspaper of Israel – confirmed in a January 2012 article that Israeli intelligence officials likewise found that Iran does not have a nuclear bomb nor any current intentions to produce one. So if both American and Israeli intelligence, as well as the UN weapons inspectors, have not found any direct evidence of Iranian attempts to manufacture nuclear weapons, why all the sabre-rattling from the Republican presidential candidates on Iran? In short: it's an election year and fearmongering sells.

The 2012 presidential elections are set to be an uphill battle for President Obama and Republicans have often attacked him for being weak on foreign affairs, a charge that belies his proactive military stance when it comes to Middle Eastern politics. Republican presidential candidates have exploited Obama's perceived weakness in security affairs by using the case of Iran as their litmus test, one-upping each other with progressively hawkish public statements. By staking out these hypothetical and hyper-aggressive military positions, regardless of the established facts in Iran, candidates are attempting to project an image of strength and confidence, key personality traits desired by the electorate especially during a time of war.

The international law covenant regulating the acquisition of nuclear materials, the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), explicitly forbids non-nuclear signatories like Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons. Nuclear weapons generally require a level of enriched uranium of over 90%. Conversely, peaceful nuclear energy technology requires enriched uranium levels at around 3% and the NPT does not necessarily prohibit countries from acquiring enrichment capabilities that fall between this wide spectrum.

In the traditional days of geopolitics, the few nuclear-capable



AMERICA, ISRAEL AND IRAN – ARE ALL TOO AWARE AT WHAT A PREMATURE RUSH TO WAR IN THIS REGION ENTAILS. IN THE WORDS OF PREVIOUS CIA CHIEF MICHAEL HAYDEN: “IT’S NOT SO MUCH THAT WE DON’T WANT IRAN TO HAVE A NUCLEAR CAPACITY [AS IT IS] THAT WE DON’T WANT *THIS* IRAN TO HAVE IT.”

countries such as America, France, England and Russia, were left to geostrategically counterbalance each other. However, with the rise of powerful non-state actors, isolationist states and religious fundamentalism, the select few nuclear countries soon found themselves in a growing crowd of states clamoring for or holding nuclear weapons. Four states—India, Israel, North Korea and Pakistan—who strategically are not current members to the NPT - are known to possess nuclear weapons.

Strands of religious fundamentalism run high throughout certain areas of Pakistan yet since Pakistan is considered a crucial ally in the War on Terror, the United States has and continues to turn a blind eye to Pakistan’s nuclear weapons program. In the case of Israel, its arsenal of nuclear weapons is the only stockpile of nuclear warheads in the Middle East. Many argue that it is precisely Israel’s supply of weapons that causes other neighboring countries such as Iran to actively look towards creating

a rival stockpile of nuclear weapons to counterbalance the small yet extremely militarily-powerful country.

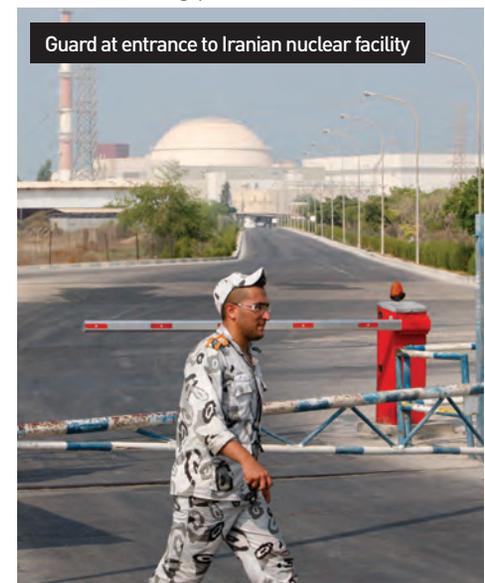
Nonetheless, the international community does have two examples which they may follow when trying to persuade non-“friendly” states to voluntarily give up their nuclear weapons aspirations: 1990 South Africa and 2003 Libya. Both of these countries had become increasingly isolated in the international arena and condemned for the political actions of their governments: apartheid in South Africa and Libya’s state sponsorship of terrorism in the infamous Lockerbie bombing.

In the end, the real question is what Iran really wants in exchange for definitively stepping away from beginning a nuclear weapons program and whether Western countries are willing to negotiate on those terms. Increasingly isolated in the region, Iran’s once-powerful Shi’a crescent - spanning from fighters in Iraq to Lebanon’s Hezbollah and down to Islamic Jihad of

Palestine - is allegedly losing steam as global condemnation of its actions mount and the political upheaval of the Arab Spring has ushered in a new era of democratically-elected leaders, a worrying trend for authoritarian Iran.

If both America and Israel acknowledge that Iran does not have, and is not currently working towards building a nuclear weapon, it also begs the question as to whether the strong international sanctions are doing anything besides building Iranian resentment towards the West. Put another way: how is Iran meant to satisfy Western powers in order to have the sanctions lifted if there is no program for them to suspend? While it is true that 80% of Iran’s foreign revenue comes from oil exports, it is expected that this new round of sanctions will only make Iran lower their oil prices with the likely result of China buying the oil typically destined for Europe. However, the effect of these sanctions might create the opposite outcome of what the Americans and Europeans have intended. Symbolic sanctions such as the ones in place could serve to rally the Iranian people around the government thereby reinforcing Iranian nationalism, an action counterproductive to bringing a country to the negotiation table.

This of course by no means implies that the Iranian regime has benign intentions. The government is almost certainly determined to at least acquire the capability to quickly make a nuclear weapon should the need ever arise (hence the proclamation that they were enriching uranium to a level of 20%) and the idea of such a program is popular with Iranian nationals. In response to the increasingly bellicose rhetoric



coming from Western states and Israel, certain Iranian government officials have recently gone on record threatening to close the Strait of Hormuz, a crucial shipping waterway off the eastern coast of Saudi Arabia. To ensure that the warning was received, Iran shortly thereafter conducted a major military exercise in the Strait at the mouth of the Persian Gulf. Nearly 20% of the global oil supply passes through the Strait of Hormuz and the mere talk of its closure was enough to upset the barrel price of oil in the days following the Iranian announcement. Yet, much like American bluster towards Iran, it is nearly certain that the Islamic Republic would never realistically take such action as it would first and foremost cripple their own economy past the point of no return.

This steady ramping up of mutual distrust and military flexing of muscles bears an eerie resemblance to the 1956 Suez Canal Crisis when Egypt unilaterally closed the strategically important shipping channel of the Straits of Tiran, an act that was considered a declaration of war by Israel and other Western powers. Egypt's new ruler, Gamal Abdel Nasser, had publicly declared himself and his country to be sovereign and independent of any Western and Israeli influence and had been cozying up to the Soviet Union by signing extensive weapons contracts with the communist state.

Half a century later, it would be foolish not to draw a direct parallel to modern day Iran and their threat to close the Strait of Hormuz, directly opposite the Straits of Tiran on the Gulf of Arabia. Egypt in 1956 was supplying arms to rebels in neighboring Algeria in their attempt to overthrow the French colonial regime. France, Britain, Israel and the United States recognized Egypt's growing regional power and had long been plotting to overthrow the Egyptian ruler through any means possible, and when Nasser belligerently closed the Straits of Tiran, Israel and the Western powers responded with resounding military strength. The subsequent bombing campaign on behalf of Britain, Israel and France resulted in a decisive military win against the incoherent Egyptian forces. However, from a political standpoint, it was an unqualified disaster for the West. The international community strongly condemned the heavy-handed actions of the allied countries and their clearly premeditated response to Egypt's rejection of Western power.

From a military angle, launching strikes against Iran to take out Iranian nuclear reactors would be sheer folly. The

plants are often buried under 30 feet of reinforced concrete (as is the case with the Natanz centrifuge) or built into the side of a mountain (as is the case with the Fordo centrifuge) and would solicit extremely heavy civilian casualties. The flip side of forgoing such a military scenario would be the prospect of a world with a nuclear Iran. While Iranian president Mahmoud Ahmadienijad may make statements suggesting to the contrary, Iran has an extremely long history of military pragmatism and it is not realistic that they would invite national suicide by attempting to actually "erase" Israel. Instead, it is far more likely that a weaponized Iran would trigger

a nuclear arms race in an already extremely volatile region. Furthermore, an armed Iran would find itself emboldened in openly sponsoring menacing proxies like Hezbollah.

Of course, the history of the region never absolutely precludes a sudden outbreak of hostilities but the major players involved in this game of chicken – America, Israel and Iran – are all too aware at what a premature rush to war in this region entails. In the words of previous CIA chief Michael Hayden: "It's not so much that we don't want Iran to have a nuclear capacity [as it is] that we don't want *this* Iran to have it." Unfortunately, that's not a decision entirely up to the United States of America. 🌊

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Exterior



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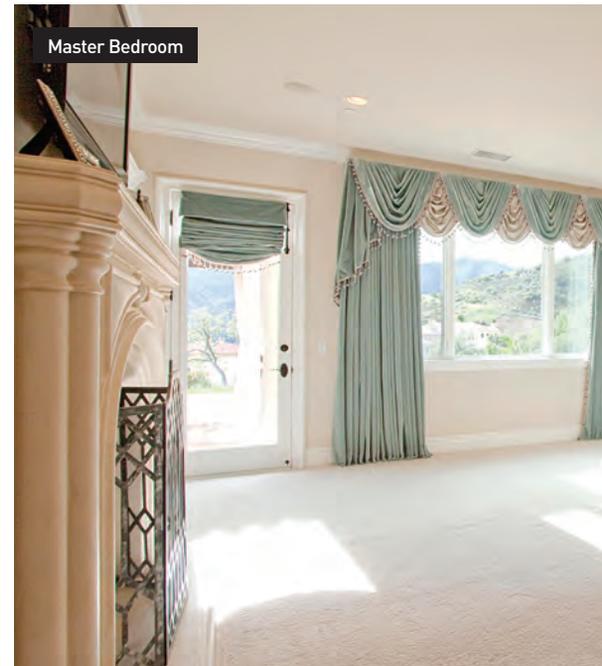
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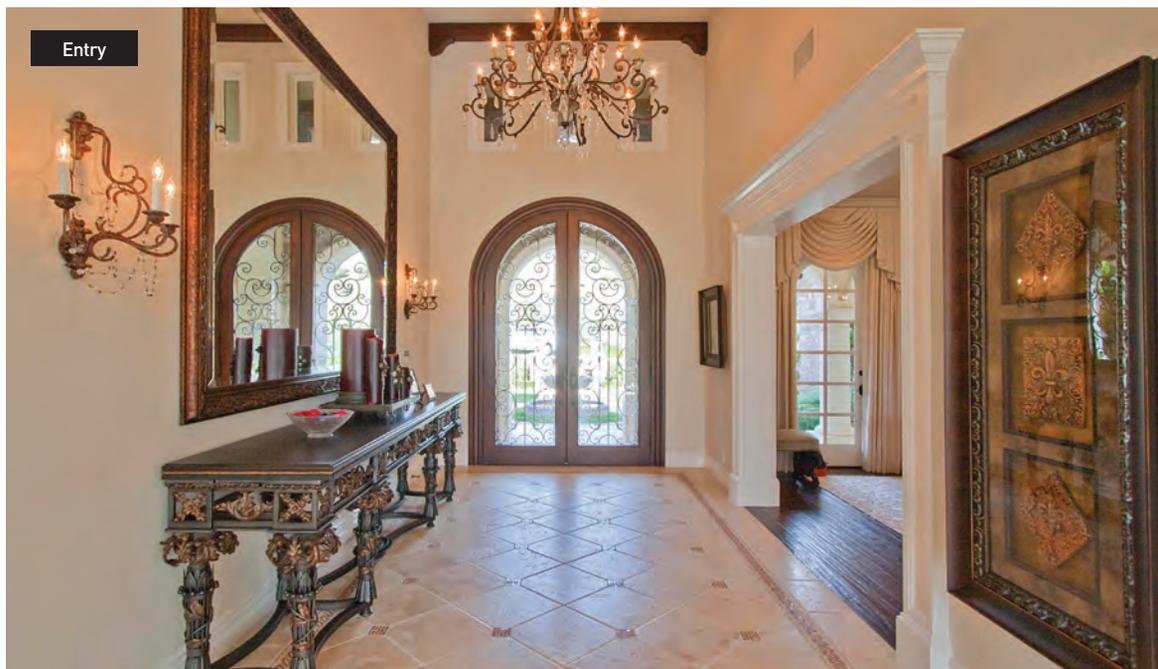


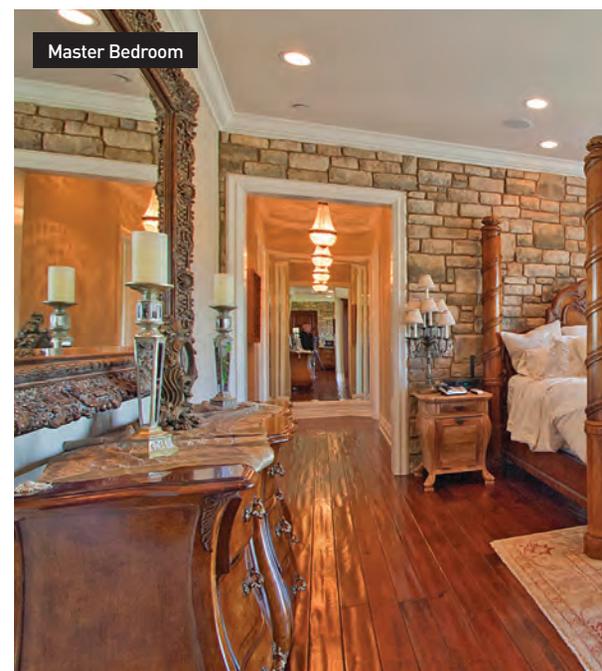
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Kitchen



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Job seekers wait in line at a job fair in New York City in June

Be Prepared...2012 The Year of the Boy Scouts

Doug De Groot, MBA, CFP®

The Boy Scout motto is “Be Prepared”. 2012 is already shaping up to be very interesting. As a nation, we are facing many transitions and fundamental tipping points that may change our nation for years to come. We face an election that will most likely be one of the most divisive, negative and vitriolic elections our nation has

seen. As citizens, we yearn for solutions to situations threatening our economy and the social fabric of our nation, all while politicians and the media lob fuel to the fire trying to reignite the fires of class warfare, racism and the very new struggle of child vs. parent or as I like to call it - ageism. All of these issues will play an important role on all of our investment strategies as we look forward to an exciting 2012.

For the last several months, half of our nation has been embroiled in a debate over who is more conservative, more electable, a better debater, smarter, richer, inclusive, empathetic, and stronger, better looking, more charismatic, etc., etc. The other half has tried to define who they are and what they don't like about the 1%. They are proud of the fact they call themselves the 99% and truly believe they are the majority. They can tweet, face book and order pizza from technology invented by people who grew up out of broken homes, poor and with huge doubt hanging over their heads when they took that leap of faith to chase their dreams and start their own business -

and are now counted as the 1%. The 99% continued their march, shutting down businesses and costing cities millions to pick up after them - hoping to convince the majority to take up their cause and ask for support all while enjoying their Starbucks and sending out YouTube videos via their “I” phones.

Picking the scabs of racism and class warfare will not solve the issues we face nor will it provide an environment to build a better nation by making very tough decisions together. Yet, the media and politicians struggle with the fact that it is in their best interest in order to survive to pit rich against poor and evoke racial divide to preserve power. Not only is this damaging to our nation, it further disrupts and fractures our economy as Americans sit idly looking for real solutions - only to be divided by those we trust with our nation. Our nation has been a beacon for those around the world looking for opportunity to build themselves up from nothing. People from around the world flock to this country to take part in what many have called the American experiment, yet after 236 years of proving capitalism works, we should rename our American Experiment, “The American Reality” as long as we do not vilify success and make it unattractive for people to risk capital to foster and invest in the next great idea. Plain hard work and investment are the seeds of our prosperity.

As investors, business owners, serial entrepreneurs, risk takers, the legends of industry and those who dream of making it on their own, we need to adopt a saying from the Boy Scouts...Be Prepared. While the first three paragraphs were a bit gloomy, please do not see this as an article of “doom and gloom”. What I hope it does is promote change and provide ample motivation to seek out the knowledge to be better prepared. Remember, success is not something that just happens, and for many the old saying goes: “success happens when the well prepared meet opportunity.”

INFLATION

In the recent article from Yahoo Finance dated December 12, 2011 titled, “Looking for Inflation? It’s Hiding in Smaller Pack-

THE 99% CONTINUED THEIR MARCH, SHUTTING DOWN BUSINESSES AND COSTING CITIES MILLIONS TO PICK UP AFTER THEM - HOPING TO CONVINCE THE MAJORITY TO TAKE UP THEIR CAUSE AND ASK FOR SUPPORT ALL WHILE ENJOYING THEIR STARBUCKS AND SENDING OUT YOUTUBE VIDEOS VIA THEIR “I” PHONES.

age Sizes”, there’s a description of how everything from “Chicken of the Sea”, to ice cream and Doritos have shrunken their packages. While our eyes might see deficit packaging, our wallets are feeling the inflation. Even our toilet paper rolls are shrinking according to consumer reports. Scott’s Toilet Paper actually reduced its roll by 9%.

Recently, the government stated that they will now allow investors to purchase bank-owned homes through government-backed loans that originally were meant to spur primary home ownership. Yet, according to the Wall Street Journal article by Phil Izzo on 12/9/2011, economists do not see home prices outpacing inflation for at least the next three years. As an investor or budding landlord, do you want to invest in something that may not be able to keep up with inflation? As a retired person or someone closing in on retirement, can you afford to have your largest asset fall against the cost of rising health care and food? Unfortunately, for many retirees, their home represents a large portion of their future retirement plan whether they expected it to or not.

MONETARY AND FISCAL POLICY

According to the most recent census report, 50% of Americans live in poverty. That means that according to the US Census Bureau, 50% of Americans make less than \$24,343 per family. For over two years our leaders have argued over fiscal policy (raising taxes) and monetary policy (printing money).

While all of this is important and we cannot minimize the value of a strong fiscal and monetary policy, investors and business owners are parked on the sideline trying to decipher the volume of noise coming out of Washington, all adding to uncertainty about future fiscal and monetary policies.

Yet, the sector that feels the pinch the most is the elderly. According to the Guardian article, by Steve Groves dated 12/14/2011, 80% of the wealth in this country is in the hands of people over the age of 60. This means that much of the wealth is in the hands of our parents and grandparents. If taxes go up and interest rates stay low, we will be literally taking the health care and food from grandma’s mouth, increasing poverty rates as they are forced to draw down on precious assets to maintain their care and lifestyle. Effectively, the current low interest rates are lowering investment income for the elderly and those who survive on investment income. This is just one of the unintended consequences that we face when we do not allow markets to act efficiently. The old saying that time is money is really true in this case. For our elderly living off of fixed income, their resources become increasingly important to them. As a country, the longer it takes to fix our economy, the more debt we go into.

HEALTH CARE

The Kaiser Family Foundation just released its annual survey and found that health insurance premiums increased above \$5,000 per year per family in 2011. The Congressional Budget Office estimates that these premiums will rise to \$20,000 per year for a family by 2016. According to the Social Security Administration and the Congressional Budget Office, ten thousand Baby Boomers per day will be going on Medicare for the next 18 years. Who will pay for it? According to the Robert Graham Center, “Policy Study for Family Medicine and Primary Care”, if health care costs and wages continue to grow at the same rate, by 2025, the average annual cost of health-care insurance for a family will equal the average annual household income.



Proving they are anything but peaceful, Wall Street protesters carry a couch and a rug as they prepare to block the corner of 20th and Webster Streets in Oakland, Calif., Wednesday, Nov. 2, 2011.

The white elephant in the room: when it comes to health care, the one thing no one wants to discuss is rationing. If we look to our neighbors to the north, all you would have to know is that according to a Forbes article titled, “Cranking Up the Volume” dated 1/31/2008 by David Whelan, the city of Pittsburg has more MRI machines than the whole country of Canada. At our current pace and without change, we will be forced to make very difficult decisions about the level of care we provide. This will not only greatly affect companies but their employees and the benefit packages companies provide.

AGEISM

What seems to be a simple issue is about to get pretty heated around the dinner table. If you ask older people if they love their children and grandchildren, they say yes and will do almost anything to help them. Yet, if you ask them to give up benefits to ease the burden on the very young people they love, they categorically refuse.

America is realizing a demographic change affecting multiple generations and households that has been in the works for years. Social Security benefits, Medicare

and Medicaid all rely on the contributions of the many to offset the needs of what was thought to be the few. Yet, for years, we have kicked the can down the road and are now finally faced with tough decisions which will force young people to shoulder a larger portion of older people’s benefits.

As a child, I could not imagine the idea of reducing my parent’s benefits, yet as a parent, I can honestly tell you there is no stronger feeling or urge than that of protecting my children. This is not a “chicken or the egg” question of what comes first. We are a society of values and laws. These laws are predicated on equal opportunity. The question is easy to see; the reality is going to be tough for many to face regardless of new laws or regulations.

THE BOY SCOUTS’ MOTTO, “BE PREPARED”

While I only touched on a few issues that will dictate conversations at the dinner table across our country, you can be sure that you will continue to hear lots about sovereign debt, the European Union, China, real estate, market volatility and “The lost Decade” (Japan and the US), The United States’ quickly-rising \$15 trillion

debt. I cannot think of a better motto for 2012. While we face many difficult decisions, the opportunities that will be exposed from these changes will be life changing for those who prepare. As these events unfold, they undoubtedly will have huge repercussions on tax and estate law, Medicare and Medicaid, Social Security, real estate, access to capital and nearly every other area concerning our economy and how we invest. Having a strong understanding of the issues and how they may change our financial playing field will better prepare you for the opportunities that will surely arise. 🌱



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Managing Director of



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Moneysmart



Don't Get Taken by IRA Fraud

By Robert Katch

People generally want easy answers, and investment promoters are often there to tell them what they want to hear. Whether it's how to create a "Gold IRA," buying real estate, or using your IRA to fund your business, there are a myriad of ways to get into expensive trouble with your IRA.

During good times and bad, promoters are busy devising IRA schemes that resonate with the times and entice investors into risky investment and tax avoidance strategies. Recently, however, it has become so prevalent that the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) issued an "Investor Alert" warning of fraudulent promoters targeting self-directed IRAs.

A key element of the announcement explains the difference between a "normal" IRA and a "self-directed" IRA. While most IRA custodians are banks and brokerage firms that limit the types of holdings you can have in an IRA, self-directed IRAs offer investors access to real estate, personal notes, tax lien certificates, precious metals, private placements, etc. Recent stock market volatility and uncertainty have likely increased the perceived attractiveness of non-traditional investments.

The SEC alert goes on to explain some of the tell-tale signs used by fraudulent



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promoters. One of the most common is that they frequently misrepresent the significance of the custodian and its responsibilities. Often they suggest that the custodian has done some level of due diligence on the proposed investment to verify its credibility. This is not usually the case. Most IRA custodians will not evaluate the investment, and most IRA account agreements state that the custodian bears no responsibility for the investment’s performance. In reality, IRA custodians, especially self-directed custodians, are merely record

keepers providing a safe place to hold the investment.

To make matters worse, if the investment is made in a self-directed Roth IRA, the tax impact can be far worse. The SEC alert does not distinguish between “regular” IRAs and Roth IRAs and merely addresses IRA fraud. However, from your perspective, a fraudulent investment made through a Roth IRA is much more damaging financially. With either type of IRA (Regular or Roth) you could lose the money invested, but with a Roth IRA you could also be out the funds you used to

pay the tax when you contributed or converted the funds into the Roth IRA. If you are a victim of fraud in your converted Roth IRA, you should consider recharacterizing by October 15 of the year after the conversion. It may also be possible to claim a partial tax loss on your tax return.

The risk of fraud can never be completely eliminated. The SEC alert, however, does provide a few safeguards you can use to minimize the possibility which can be found at www.sec.gov/investor/alerts/sdira.pdf and can be summarized in the timeless wisdom: if it sounds too good to be true, it probably is. 🌱

This material provided for general and educational purposes only, and is not legal, tax or investment advice. For each strategy or option mentioned, there are detailed tax rules that must be followed.



Robert J. Katch is the founder of Manchester Financial, an Investment Counsel/Wealth Management firm located in Westlake Village. For more information call 805 495 4405



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Extreme Sports: The Medical Facts

By Ian Armstrong, M.D.

The year 2012 kicked off to a dramatic start for a 22-year-old Australian tourist bungee-jumping on the border of Zambia and Zimbabwe in Africa: As she jumped, her cord snapped, and she plunged 365 feet into the fast-flowing Zambezi River below. Erin Langworthy blacked out briefly as she hit the water; she says she felt like she had been slapped all over. Despite breaking her collar bone and the fact that her legs were tied together, she miraculously managed to swim her way through the rapids - to safety. She said of her ordeal: "You get sucked under and then you pop up so it's very disorienting. I didn't know which was up or down." Langworthy went on to describe how her trailing cord repeatedly snagged, so she "had to swim down and yank the bungee cord out of whatever it was caught on - to make it to the surface." She swam through the rapids to reach the Zimbabwean bank and lived to tell the story. The potentially tragic drama was all caught on film.

An **extreme sport** (also called **freesport**, **action sport**, and **adventure sport**) is a term used for activities perceived as having a high level of inherent danger. These activities often involve speed, height, a high level of physical exertion, and highly-specialized gear or spectacular stunts. In some of these sports, there is also extraordinary skill and courage involved. Extreme sports gained popularity in the 1990s when marketing companies recognized the vast spectator vantage: People love to watch spectacular human feats - especially when it involves battling the elements. The annual Aspen X Games garners some of the highest viewer ratings on TV and therein lies one of the reasons for the immense popularity of these so-called 'extreme sports'. The public cannot digest enough reality TV - especially when it's full of drama. But in fairness to the athletes themselves - as spectators - we genuinely admire their skill and their bravery. There's almost a hidden longing in ourselves to muster up the chutzpa to do what they do.

9 air sports fall into the category of Extreme Sports and include: BASE jumping, bungee jumping, gliding, hang gliding, high wire, ski jumping, sky diving, sky surfing, and sky flying.

18 land sports include: indoor climbing, adventure racing, aggressive inline skating, BMX, caving, motocross, extreme skiing, freestyle skiing, land and ice yachting, mountain biking, mountain boarding, outdoor climbing, sandboarding, skateboarding, snowboarding, snowmobiling, speed biking, speed skiing,

scootering and street luge.

15 water sports include: barefoot water skiing, cliff diving, free-diving, jet skiing, open water swimming, powerboat racing, round-the-world yacht racing, scuba diving, snorkeling, speed sailing, surfing, wakeboarding, whitewater kayaking, windsurfing, and kitesurfing.

Not included in the list is this extreme sport: Racing down an active 2,380-foot volcano at speeds of 50 mph with only a board for protection. It's considered by many thrill-seeking sports fanatics as the coolest sport around. Thousands of tourists head to the foothills of Nicaragua's Cerro Negro mountain every year to take part in the new sporting craze. Surfers, dressed in protective jump suits, knee-pads and helmets, can reach speeds of up to 50mph on their specially-constructed plywood boards. Since its creation, in 2005, volcano boarding has attracted more than 10,000 participants.

Activities categorized as extreme sports have a higher number of inherently uncontrollable variables. Athletes in these activities compete not only against other athletes, but also against environmental obstacles and challenges. These environmental variables are frequently weather and terrain-related, including wind, snow, water and mountains. Because these natural phenomena cannot be controlled, they affect the outcome - often with highly dramatic end results. People's insatiable desire for a suspenseful, rollercoaster ride - is the fix.



Sarah Burke

THE RECENT, TRAGIC DEATH OF CANADIAN FREESTYLE SKIER, SARAH BURKE, NINE DAYS AFTER CRASHING AT THE BOTTOM OF THE SUPERPIPE DURING A TRAINING RUN IN UTAH, IS A REMINDER OF THE HIGH-RISK ELEMENT OF AN EXHILARATING SPORT LIKE FREESTYLE SKIING.

Adrenaline: We've all heard the term 'adrenalin junkie' and there's some medical truth in that label except that people get confused: It's the endorphins that come AFTER the adrenaline rush to which people become favorably addicted. Adrenaline is a hormone produced by our adrenal glands and it stimulates the heart-rate, contracts blood vessels, dilates air passages, and has a number of more minor effects. Adrenaline is naturally produced in high-stress or physically-exhilarating situations such as extreme sports. The term 'fight or flight' is often used to characterize the circumstances under which adrenaline is released into the body. It is an early evolutionary adaptation to allow us to cope better with dangerous and unexpected situations. With dilated air passages, for example, the body is able to get more oxygen into the lungs in a timely manner, increasing physical performance for short bursts of time. Extreme sports athletes recognize that without that adrenaline rush, they wouldn't be the super heroes that they become under those extreme conditions.

Endorphins: The word 'Endorphin' comes from two words: endogenous + morphine. Endorphins are small protein molecules that are produced by cells in our nervous system and other parts of the body. An important role of endorphins is to work with sedative receptors that are known to relieve common pain. Because they are naturally produced by the body, endorphins are possibly the best (and most legal way) to achieve a natural 'high'. Chemically speaking, endorphins are polypeptides, which are able to bind to the neuro-receptors in the brain to give relief from pain. They are one reason why soldiers wounded in battle can continue to fight or have the strength to save someone else; it also accounts for the so-called runner's high, or why some people are drawn to dangerous activities like car racing, sky diving and bungee jumping. The human body produces at least 20 different endorphins but Beta-endorphins appear to be the endorphin that seems to have the strongest effect on the brain and body during exercise; it is one kind of peptide hormone that is formed mainly by Tyrosine, an amino acid. The molecular structure is very similar to morphine - and hence it's addictive nature. The feeling that athletes have after exerting themselves in extreme

sports - first with adrenaline - then with endorphins - is a powerfully positive experience for most.

The recent, tragic death of Canadian freestyle skier, Sarah Burke, nine days after crashing at the bottom of the superpipe during a training run in Utah, is a reminder of the high-risk element of an exhilarating sport like freestyle skiing. A 4-time Winter X Games champion who was heading for gold in the 2014 Winter Olympics, Burke crashed on the same halfpipe where snowboarder, Kevin Pearce, suffered an almost fatal accident in 2009. Within the realms of so-called extreme sports - some are less risky than others and there is the intervention of more mandatory safety rules. So, although the margin for error may be vast, there are increasingly more rigorous backup safety standards being required.

However, over the last decade, the talent, skill, and daring of the participants has led to more complex, more sensational 'stunts' which has in turn led to more complex and catastrophic injuries. It is difficult to do some of the amazing physics-defying feats and not occasionally make a mistake. When you are inverted and flying through the air with multiple G forces (gravitational forces), mistakes can lead to equally amazing injuries. Broken bones are one thing but it is the potential head and neck injuries that can lead to death or paralysis in some of these adrenaline-laced sports that are so devastating. We tend to forget that for every pro we see on TV successfully participating in extreme sports, there are dozens of young people who have flipped and flopped into emergency rooms - trying unsuccessfully to get to the top.

There is a certain psychological construct that is attracted to extreme sports. These types of individuals thrive on being on the edge of whatever sport they are participating in. By definition then, the edge is constantly moving; stunts and maneuvers become more outrageous, and each new level of extremism is only temporary until the next competitor pushes above and beyond the recently established boundary of impossibility. 



Dr. Ian Armstrong, CEO and Medical Director of Southern California Spine Institute, ianarmstrongmd.com.



Eyelashes and Aging

By Talia Emery, M.D.

We'd all love to age gracefully, but at the same time we want to do as much as we can to keep a refreshed, youthful appearance. An often underappreciated part of a woman's face where the obvious signs of aging can be treated for less than \$1 a day is her eyelashes.

Long, thick, dark eyelashes are recognized as a sign of youth and beauty, which is why women worldwide spend hundreds of dollars a year on mascara, eyelash extensions, and lash-

tinting procedures. But a recent study of 270 women revealed that, compared to women 18 to 29, women over 60 have, on average, 54% thinner, 25% lighter, and 15% shorter lashes--lashes with only 30% of the overall prominence of their younger counterparts. What can we do to reverse these changes?

Latisse is the first and only medication FDA-approved for treating inadequate eyelashes. The solution's active ingredient bimatoprost is a medication used for many years under the brand name Lumigan, a prescription eye drop manufactured by Allergan for glaucoma. Users

of Lumigan were discovering an interesting side effect: the lashes in the corner of their eyes, where excess medication would collect and come in contact with the base of the lashes, were growing longer than the others. After years of further study and testing, Allergan developed the proper dosing and use schedule specific to eyelash growth and launched Latisse in 2009.

Prescribed by a doctor, Latisse is applied nightly at the base of the upper lashes. Most women see clear benefit by 8 weeks, and with the full 16-week course, lashes grow on average 106% fuller, 25% longer, and 18% darker, restoring all that they may have lost and then some. It's like they're winding back the clock and batting the lashes of a 28-year-old. An extra bonus: Many of my patients report that fine wrinkles around their eyes are no longer a concern, because their fuller lashes have become the focus.

Maintenance dosing varies by individual, with most women requiring use one to four nights per week.

Latisse is a prescription medication, so you'll need to see a physician; there are very few contraindications. Side effects are minimal and when used properly, Latisse is safe for women with any eye color—blue included. For more information or to find a Latisse provider in your area, visit www.latisse.com.

Bottom line: Latisse has the power to dramatically improve the appearance of your eyes, giving you a more youthful look—safely, conveniently, and affordably. 🌿



Dr. Emery, Medical Director of Remedy Skin + Body, has served on multiple cosmetic medicine advisory boards, including Allergan's Facial Aesthetics 2011 Advisory Board. She is a Latisse expert and a member

of the Latisse National Speakers Bureau. You can learn more about Dr. Emery's practice at www.remedySkinandbody.com. She can be reached at 805.497.9400 or DrEmery@remedySkinandbody.com.



Pelican Hill Redefines Luxury

With the Ultimate in Amenities and Services

Set on 504 acres along the coast of Newport Beach, Pelican Hill features Bungalow guestrooms and suites, and two-, three-, and four-bedroom villas with magnificent coastal views, and an unparalleled array of appointments, immersing guests in the absolute finest of everything. A 5-star Spa has a menu of the world's most celebrated therapies; world-class restaurants including Andrea - serving authentic Northern Italian cuisine; an iconic Coliseum Pool with tiered decks and luxurious cabanas; and Pelican Hill Golf Club with 36 dramatic holes by Tom Fazio, nearly all with ocean panoramas. A Five-Diamond destination, Pelican Hill has earned acclaim as the 2012 Grand Resort selected *by Andrew Harper's Hideaway Report*, as *Condé Nast's* #1 U.S. Resort and #1 California Golf Resort (Readers' Choice Awards) in *Travel + Leisure's* 'Top 100' World's Best Hotels (Readers' Poll) and with two courses ranked among *Golf Digest's* America's 100 Greatest Public Golf Courses.

Coliseum Pool &
Grill Evening Dining







Golf Clubhouse

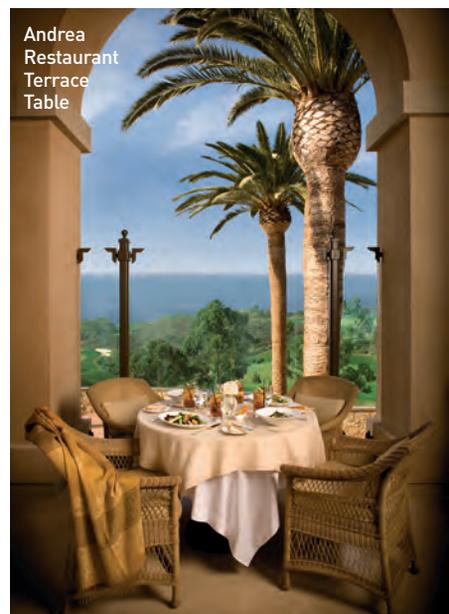
Situated just 15 minutes from Orange County's John Wayne Airport, 45 minutes from LAX, and adjacent to an abundance of shopping (Fashion Island®, Crystal Cove Promenade™, Corona del Mar Plaza), dining, art gallery tours and performing arts, and beaches of the chic nearby communities of Newport Beach and Laguna Beach, Pelican Hill offers a variety of nearby activities. Included in the extensive array of options are hiking, cycling, surfing, kayaking, yachting, sailing, sunset cruises and whale-watching excursions.

Pelican Hill was inspired by the Renaissance belief that humanity is uplifted by aspiring to perfection. This is exemplified in the resort's service - which is exceptional, precedent-setting, and the most

personalized of any resort. The pre-planning begins before your arrival. A personal travel designer arranges every aspect and detail - from pre-shipping golf clubs to the resort - to scenting your suite with your preferred aromatherapy. Once at the resort, the highly-trained, around-the-clock staff attend to your every need, completely customizing your one-of-a-kind experience.

204 Bungalow Guest Rooms & Suites - which offer an intimate, residential ambiance. The bungalows are luxurious - yet relaxing and comfortable - and each has a private terrace, most with unobstructed ocean panoramas.

128 Villas with unimaginable, ultra-luxurious appointments are available for daily rental with a choice of two-, three- and four-bedroom Villas. Ranging from 2,200 square feet to 3,581 square feet, the exceptionally spacious Villas offer expansive terraces with dramatic ocean views, dining area, personal butlers and staff 24/7. An exclusive luxury - enjoyed by Villa guests only is the Villa Clubhouse, a genteel and serene escape from the everyday world with its relaxed elegance, personally-tailored service, private gourmet dining, and glass-mosaic-tiled radiant blue pool overlooking the Pacific Ocean.



Andrea Restaurant Terrace Table



Spa Relaxation Room

The Coliseum Pool is among the most striking swimming pools at any resort. Its supreme dazzle is created by the 1.1 million hand-cut glass mosaic tiles at the bottom of the pool.

The Spa at Pelican Hill® - awarded the Forbes 5-star rating, invites you to indulge your personal intentions of relaxing, renewing and invigorating. It fully evokes

a 21st Century Balanced Wellness philosophy.

Dining: A cornucopia of mouth-watering and singular dining experiences is offered for every mood: The Andrea Ristorante recreates storied culinary traditions and classic dishes bursting with the authentic flavors of Italy. This Northern Italian cuisine has strong Tuscan influences and rivals some of the world's top Italian restaurants. **The Coliseum Pool & Grill** overlooking the Pool offers pizzas, panini and soups, as well as seafood, pastas and specialty salads. **The Caffé** and the café life - an indispensable aspect of *la dolce vita* - serves light breakfast fare, smoothies, resort-made breads and pastries, as well as traditional gelatos. **The Great Room** is sophisticated, yet unpretentious. It offers a champagne cart, interesting and original Italian cocktails, organic coffees, teas and

infusions. **The Pelican Grill** - located at the Pelican Hill Golf Club - is the quintessential Californian dining experience - featuring fresh, locally-sourced foods and *al fresco* dining on the ocean-view terrace.

Pelican Hill Golf Club® - with 36 dramatic holes created by Tom Fazio - is one of the nation's premier golf clubs and boasts a 44,000-square-foot clubhouse. The two 18-hole courses are both ranked on *Golf Digest's* America's 100 Greatest Golf Courses 2011/2012. For more information on Special Offers, Packages and Current Activities at Pelican Hill, call **800.315.8214** or **949.467.6800** or go to www.pelicanhill.com



The Resort at Pelican Hill
22701 Pelican Hill Road South
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www.pelicanhill.com



Villa Upstairs Master Four-Bedroom



Africa

The Trip of a Lifetime



Jane Lee and Larry Winter fell in love with Africa a long time ago - and they've spent the last few decades sharing their love affair with local Americans who've dreamed about going. If you talk to anyone who's gone on an African Adventure, they're seldom able to vocalize all that it evoked: that's how dramatically compelling the wilds of Africa are. What they discover is a blend of exciting, adrenaline-producing adventure; untamed natural beauty that is mesmerizing in its purity; genuinely heartfelt hospitality and the warmest smiles from the African people; and a profound sensuality in the sights, the smells and the sounds of this beautiful continent. Africa seeps into your soul in such a way that there's a craving to go back and experience its life-affirming power - again.

BY DIANA LYLE PHOTOGRAPHY BY LARRY WINTER



Here are some of the journals of couples who have gone on the vacation of a lifetime - with Jane Lee and Larry Winter - to Africa. Their words describe the experience more aptly than any travel guide:

Beth Elliot: We have traveled a lot but the African trip was the best trip of our lives. We loved everything from the accommodations, the food and the ambiance. Every single jeep ride was special and we were able to get so close to the animals. The guides were wonderful and informative. The surprises and the extras? The helicopter rides over the herds of animals; a hotel with wild animals on the grounds. Each camp was so romantic. The breakfast outdoors; the Bomas (thatched forts indigenous to Africa), the pure joy on the faces of the African people; the special drink when we arrived in camp and the serenade when we left. Another highlight was visiting some of the local villages and meeting the local people. And our biggest surprise

was when a monkey entered our room while I was asleep and stole our jar of cookies!

Kathy & Jim Derington: Our African Safari experience with Jane Lee and Larry Winter was and will be the best trip of our lives! Every day is perfectly planned with the group in mind. Details are their expertise. All of the accommodations were perfect and the meals were wonderful. The 'Sundowners' were the most memorable times. Beauty beyond belief! The animals were amazing and being able to experience their land was a gift. The biggest surprise for us was the surprise dinner. Can't say more or we'll spoil it! Beyond wonderful.

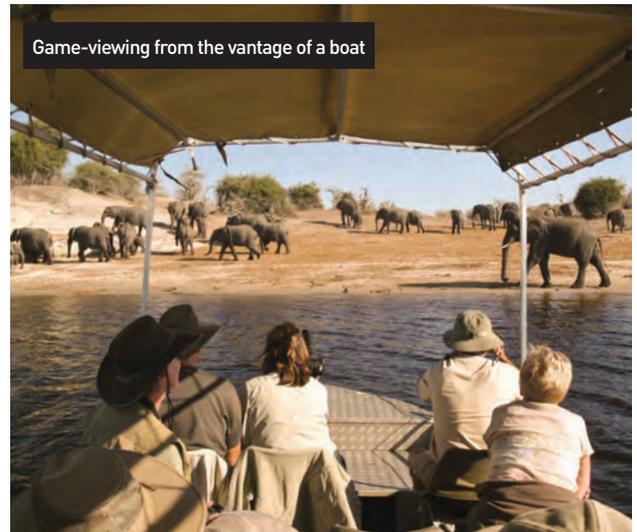
Kathy Shideler: Some of my most profound memories of the African trip: Lunch on a sandbar in the middle of the Zambezi River; water rippling over your toes; elephants on the shore line, crocks and

African sunset; Okavango Delta





Mark & Julie Meahl, Gary & Lynn Albertson, Skip & Alpine Roberts, Jim & Kathy Derington



Game-viewing from the vantage of a boat



Linda Witham, Gary Alwood, Dave Witham, Lyn Perry, Cynthia Perry, Craig mcFarlane, Isabelle Alessandra, Chriss Alwood, Rene Pharisien

hippo in the water, and camera in hand. Fabulous! Torch lit 'sun-downers'. Dinner in the wild under a full moon. Seeing the simple joy of life expressed in the faces of the children of Africa. Every day is exhilarating - the thrill of the 'hunt' and the unexpected joy of finding another animal photo opportunity exceeds any other travel experience. When each day is better than the last, and you just don't want to go home, you know you've come on the ultimate vacation. This definitely was NOT the zoo!

Reg & Gina Harpur: Tracking a lion through the bush for 30 minutes and finding him panting - next to his new kill, an adult giraffe - was exhilarating; A night safari ride that felt just like an Indiana Jones adventure with trumpeting elephants, a pack of running wild dogs, and leopards staring down from trees . A surprise dinner under a lit Baobab tree with the locals singing and dancing for us. Dinner train ride on an old classic engine through the countryside with the locals coming out of their huts to wave at us. A helicopter ride with an aerial view of different herds..... We felt safe while having exciting adventures. The guides and places we stayed were magnificent. The meals were gourmet and plentiful. The variety and the proximity to so many animals and herds was incredible. No two days were ever the same.

Adrienne Blackman: The incredibly special moments on our African trip: The rainbows at Victoria Falls; the welcome we



received at every lodge as if we were long lost family. Seeing our clothes washed and folded in a gift box; seeing people carrying our luggage on their heads. The first time we saw a cheetah in the bush. Watching the native people entertain us with song and dance most everywhere. Seeing the smiles on the children's faces. The people, the food, flowers - the

ambiance was beautiful wherever we went. The special adventures: breakfast on Lake Livingston and the Orient Express at sundown with dinner. The animals. Every day we were treated to nature's daily miracle. The guides were incredible, and the Winters were so knowledgeable, warm, fun-loving and good to us. Can't say enough good things about them.

Erin Botsford: Africa invites a complete lack of pretence. It was the perfect vacation - a 10 - that's why we're going again. I will never forget how close we got to the cheetahs - who chased each other around our jeep....as if we weren't there.

Dick Gochner: Experiencing the thrill of being a few feet away

from wild animals and feeling a part of nature and God's creation like never before - something I'll never forget.

I have frequently heard that an African Safari is a trip of a life time, and I discovered that it was. The accommodations and service were world class.

Linda & Dave Witham: We were enthralled to see so many animal babies. We were enchanted to follow two lionesses coming back to their cubs in a small clearing, and watching the cubs romp all over their mothers in welcoming excitement. We also saw an adorable baby elephant only a few days old. Our African safari was by far the best trip we have been on for so many reasons. Jane Lee is such an amazing host, who selects the most compatible group to travel together, so we had fun getting to know new friends. She also selects the perfect combination of exciting animal-viewing camps and amazing luxury in the midst of such remote places. We really enjoyed the small airplane flights between camps because it gave us an aerial perspective of the variety of the landscape as well as the size of some of the animal herds below.

Isabelle Alessandra: The Winters chose every location carefully and they took care of every hectic detail within Africa so that I was given the opportunity to just 'stop and be present' to each experience. I found myself stopping to listen, stopping to look, stopping to just 'feel' fully alive. I'd felt the incredible majesty of Africa's people and its wildlife on a previous trip, yet the

distinction of this experience was being with 'hosts' who truly love Africa. Larry's and Jane's passion and respect for the land and its people lends a special magic that I'm not sure could ever be replicated by others. At every moment I was graciously treated as if I were their personal guest. Our trip exceeds any words that I have to really describe its impact. We all felt so alive during and after each safari - whether it was because we watched the sun rise or set, or witnessed a group of lions taking down their prey, or found, nestled in a clearing, tables covered with white linens, fine china and a hot breakfast awaiting us. The sense of wonder surprised and delighted all of us present.

Whether you're planning to visit Africa alone or in a group - the key is to plan in advance - and go with people who know the lay of the land. It's the most romantic escape known to humankind - and if you aren't sure how sensitive you are - allow Africa to evoke feelings you've never had before. The people, the animals, and the scenery will quite literally take your breath away! 🌿



To plan your personal, custom African Safari experience, contact Travel Host, Jane Lee Winter: 805.495.9888. Town & Country Travel: 195 E. Hillcrest Dve, Ste 112, Thousand Oaks.



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