

Year in Review

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Boys and Girls Club blowout



Julie Ellerton / TMT

Actress Eloise DeJoria (top, center) visits with JAMers (Juicy Athlete Moves) dancers as they get ready to entertain the audience at the Boys and Girls Club GALA in October.

Homecoming hoopla



Devon Meyers

The senior class gets into the spirit during the Malibu High School homecoming festivities in October.

California Coastal Commission butted heads over a campus soccer field that the university wants to light up for nighttime use. Coastal staff recommended against it, claiming it would cause light pollution and harm nearby animals and plants in an Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Area (ESHA). One commissioner even suggested that the university might want to build a covered playing field to protect the little critters—the animals, of course, not the students. Seeing the school didn't have the votes, Pepperdine pulled its application. ■ Two severely injured sea lions washed up in Malibu and later died, with wildlife rescuers confirming the cause as bullet wounds. The shooting deaths coincided with the opening of squid season on Oct. 1. Squid boats are frequently seen offshore, with large searchlights used to attract squid. ■ The end of the legislative session brought some new laws, one to make it possible for undocumented people in California to obtain provisional drivers licenses, which they can't currently do. The law should decrease the number of cars being impounded statewide at DUI stops, similar to the types

“Are we going to follow what the founding people of the city started with? Or are we going to go down a path that'll lead us to look like a city like Laguna Beach?”

MIKKE PIERSON
MALIBU PLANNING
COMMISSIONER, ON CHAIN STORE
ORDINANCE

regularly set up in Malibu. In an anti-paparazzi move, Malibu residents and movie stars Halle Berry and Jennifer Garner testified in Sacramento about the harassment of their children by paparazzi. The

legislature quickly obliged, passing restrictive legislation to try and protect the children of the famous.

NOVEMBER

■ Malibu marked the 20th Anniversary of the devastating Nov. 1993 fire, which destroyed 359 homes, 18,000 acres and left three dead. The fire left a permanent mark on all its survivors. Karen and I were among those who lost our homes in a conflagration that saw entire neighborhoods like La Costa Hills decimated. The fire also came within a few feet of the back door of *The Malibu Times* office in Las Flores Canyon. And though 20 years have passed, I still get that queasy feeling when the Santa Anas blow from the dry hot desert.

■ An attempt to hold up the Bank of America in Point Dume ended with the robber in custody after he fled the scene and later crashed into a sign near Zuma Beach. The suspect, later identified as Jason Teas, didn't realize Malibu folks don't just roll over—in fact, Khalil Rafati, owner of SunLife Organics, followed the suspect with his cell-phone and reported the suspect's

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The awesome power of the 1993 Old Topanga Fire was evident as flames ripped the west wall of Las Flores Canyon along Rambla Pacifico during the devastating fire. 2013 marked its 20th anniversary.



From the Publisher
Arnold G. York

Welcome to Malibu, now where do you park?

To read Steve Lopez in the *LA Times*, or to listen to this gal who just developed an iPhone app to direct the public to the Malibu beaches, you might well think that the citizens of Malibu spend all their time camouflaging the beach accesses. They've created a boogiemanager whose motto is “keep 'em out.”

Now I've lived in Malibu a long time, since 1976, and have long ago accepted the fact that for three months a year people come out to visit the beaches and canyons of Malibu. There are roughly 13 weekends in that long summer and we do what most of Malibu does, either stay home on those weekends or get the hell out of town. When our friends come to visit we give them all the same advice—come early and leave early, or come late and stay late.

The problem with beach access is not that there aren't enough ways to get to the beach. No, the problem is much more mundane and that is, where do you park your damn car? The sad but real truth is that on any nice weekend every single available parking spot in Malibu is filled. And after the late comers have battled for an hour and a half to get here they are left parking on hillsides, or half across someone's driveway, or up on lawns or where ever. If you don't believe me, go down to Zuma Beach on any summer weekend and watch the Sheriff's cars and Malibu Towing just hovering like birds of prey picking off the stragglers. It's not their fault, it's just their job, but it's like shooting fish in a barrel and is probably a wonderful source of revenue to someone. Between the parking tickets and the towing and storage charges, it probably runs into the hundreds per car.

Now once that poor visitor has arrived in Malibu, and they've been lucky enough to find a parking place, or have paid the skyrocketing cost of parking, the next hurdle typically is to get across the Pacific Coast Highway, since most of the parking for the already existing public accesses is on the land side of PCH. If you are 19 years old and all you have is your towel, your sunglasses and your girlfriend, it's not that big of a deal. But if you've come to the beach with mom and dad, and all the kids, and towels and toys and food and grandma, getting across PCH is not so easy.

When I was a child I can remember our family headed to the beach in Coney Island or Far Rockaway, with more equipment than an African

safari, so that we practically needed bearers to carry the umbrellas and folding chairs and beach toys, and the multitude of pots of food my grandmother insisted on. Now we didn't have a PCH to cross but the major problem was still the same, where do you park the car? I have vivid and traumatic childhood memories of dropping off grandma, mom, my sister and cousins, while my father and I drove around looking for a parking spot, with my father constantly muttering and occasionally cursing if some got to an open spot before him.

Well, you finally get the car parked, make it across PCH, get onto the beach, set up the umbrella and the chairs, and the towels, and of course what happens next, one of the kids says, “I got to go to the toilet.” So you say, “Go in the ocean,” and he says, “No, I've got to poop.” Now you're faced with a parental dilemma. Do you pack the kid up, walk out to PCH, walk a quarter mile to the crosswalk, cross over and find a public restroom or do you look for a house with an overhanging deck? I don't know about all of you, but elitist that I am, I would be severely miffed if I had a Malibu beach house built over a hastily devised public latrine.

So before everyone goes around patting themselves on the back because of the additional public accesses, the simple fact is that most people want to go to the beach where there is parking that doesn't require bank financing, where there are clean public toilets, where you can buy something to eat, where there are lifeguards—particularly if you have kids—where there are garbage cans, and where there is a certain amount of police protection so you can feel safe and not vulnerable. Unfortunately, most of the public accesses do not meet many of those criteria, which I suspect is why most people don't use them much. I've been walking Malibu Road for years where there are a number of public accesses and they don't get much use, even on busy summer weekends.

I don't imagine that the public access app will make a great deal of difference. But if it does, it's absolutely incumbent on government to guarantee the visitors safety, decent sanitation, lifeguards—particularly on dangerous beaches, and there are a number of them in Malibu—and some rational way to handling the excess cars on a busy weekend, which currently is kind of a public lottery.

And the winner is...



Courtesy Raphael Photo

Natasha Martinez (second from right) was named Miss Malibu in the 9th Annual Miss Malibu Pageant in September at the Malibu Golf Club. Toneata Morgan (far right), an Agoura High student and Malibu resident, won Miss Teen Malibu. They pose with Miss Beverly Hills Cassandra Kunze (second from left), Miss Beverly Hills Teen Savanna Palacio (far left) and Miss Malibu event organizer Kristen Bradford.