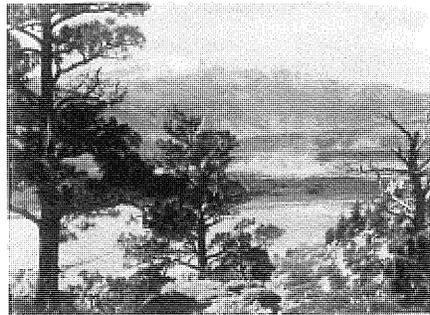


# SAN FRANCISCO HERALD

Proudly Serving Nob Hill

January – February 2017

SanFranciscoHerald.Net



*Looks Much  
the Same  
in January as it  
Does in July*

More Than  
300 Days of  
Sunshine  
Every Year

January and July show little difference in the scenic beauty of the Pikes Peak Region—or in the enjoyment of healthful outdoor life.

A year ago this month January had 20 entirely clear days—bright with hazeless sunshine; only two days that were completely cloudy, and not a trace of precipitation the entire month. Average daytime temperature was 48, though sun temperatures were much higher. Yet the month was close to a 45-year average.

It is such weather that gives one a new idea of what winter can be. It gives comfort and cheer to those who want or need outdoor living. It holds a happy innovation to those who stop in winter and see this pleasant modern city of homes.

*Booklets about this Region—about "Winning Health"; "100 Winter Days"; about the city; information about free side trip and stop-overs granted any time—sent on request to*

THE  
WELCOME  
CLUB  
212 Independence  
Building

Colorado Springs  
Manitou  
and the Pikes Peak Region

# The Society Page

By Gene Mahoney

Merry Christmas! Oh, and Happy Hanukah to our Jewish readers out there. Yeah, I know it's February, but I realized it was the Holiday Season right after the December issue went to bed, so this is a special belated Christmas issue of the Herald (note how I wrote "Christmas issue", not "Holiday Issue", Mr. Trump).

Actually, I was going to run James Dylan's "The Hickory Farms Holiday Platter" from, like, 2002 and a funny Christmas story Allison Parks wrote, but I couldn't find them on the Internet. So, it looks like it's just a Christmas story Ace wrote and a brief mention in this column. But first...

Another laundromat bites the dust. Thrifty Wash at 917 Bush Street has closed. I remember washing my clothes there over 20 years ago, as I lived down the block from it.

Actually, come to think of it, I don't think I ever washed my clothes there. (Or dried them there.) Where did I do my laundry? That now-defunct laundromat on Post Street? Hmmm. Maybe. I forgot. It's funny I can't remember. Maybe I never washed my clothes back then. No, I did. Oh well. Unique Cleaners goes out of business last month and now it's Thrifty Wash. This neighborhood is getting dirtier by the minute.

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Lan Formal Wear has left California Street and is now at 1542 Polk Street.

XXXXXXXXXX

And now, news from Upper Nob Hill. Yes, you may have noticed that this rag is now serving Nob Hill, not just Lower Nob Hill.

There's a new store called California Cowboy at 1841 Polk (at Jackson). Not far from Russian Hill Upholstery & Décor. Which is also located in Upper Nob Hill. Not Russian Hill.

California Cowboy is run by Drew Clark, "Founder and Self-Made Thousandaire" who says that all his products are designed to help you create connections in real life as opposed to social media. Like the High Water Shirt, which looks Hawaiian and is named after a Hunter S. Thompson reference to San Francisco. Drew says the shirt is a throwback to the Cabana suits from the 1950s, as it's designed to be worn after surfing or skiing. It comes with a bottle opener, a beer koozie, and a pocket to hold beer bottles. The interior of the shirt is similar in texture to a towel, so it absorbs water.

Though the store has a social media presence, Drew thinks we spend too much time online and hopes his store will help change that. As he notes, "If your phone is not in your hand, you'll have a better day."

Amen, brother.

XXXXXXXXXX

And now, the Christmas portion of this column:

There's an interesting essay online titled "Old Man Potter Lived a Wonderful Life" by Tom Mullen. Tom is a Libertarian who argues that the movie "It's a Wonderful Life" gets it all wrong. He doesn't blame Old Man Potter for wanting to close the building & loan as it was obviously making bad business decisions by lending money to people who couldn't pay it back. Kind of the equivalent of the recent subprime loan scandal. As a stockholder, Potter had a fiduciary responsibility to make the most responsible business decisions. That's the real reason Potter wanted to close it down, not because he "can't get his hands on it" as George Bailey claims in his New Deal-inspired Socialist blabber.

Hmm. Interesting. I'd view the film again to see what I think of that analysis, but as I recall, it never did that much for me. I'm more of "A Christmas Story" guy as I love the late Jean Shepherd, who narrated the film. I used to listen to his nightly

monologues on New York radio back in the 1970s.###

## Christmas Eve 2008

By Ace Backwords

Most of my Christmases are a blur in my memory. But I remember the Christmas of 2008. Or, more to the point, the Christmas Eve of 2008.

I was working at my 25-cent used books vending table on the corner of Telegraph and Haste. My long-time pal B. N. Duncan was working his vending table right next to mine. We'd been setting up our vending tables on Telegraph for nearly 20 years.

Now it was around 5 PM, Christmas Eve, and the Telegraph Avenue Christmas Street Fair was almost over for that year. The other vendors were starting to pack up their tables as last-minute Christmas shoppers dashed about. The party was almost over, giving a melancholy air to the proceedings. It was a last-minute surge of energy before everyone gave up and went home to face their Christmases. You could tell by the vendors' body language whether it had been a good or bad season for them, sales-wise. Some were visibly buoyant, counting their big wads of cash right in front of you. Others, you could tell by their dispirited demeanor that they had bombed. Christmas is the make-it-or-break-it time for most street vendors. Some would be celebrating mightily tonight. While others would be bracing for a dismal year.

Duncan and I had been on both sides of that coin. For 15 years we co-published the Telegraph Avenue Street Calendar. And the week before Christmas was always our brutal moment of truth. Finding out whether we had a hit or a bomb. I can tell you, there's nothing more painful than sitting at a vending table for hours watching customer after customer walk by, take a cursory glance at your product, turn their noses up and quickly move on. It's a

kind of death. You sit there trying every sales trick in the book.

“Should I smile more at the customers? Or should I play it cocky and laid back? Is it this stupid shirt I’m wearing? I just know I should have worn my good luck purple shirt! Etc.”

Win or lose, Duncan and I would always celebrate on Christmas Eve as it all came to an end. Bringing out the beer and cigarettes and toasting the greatness of us. “Another successful Backwards and Duncan collaboration!” Our much-repeated private catch-phrase.

Duncan had been in fading health for the last several years. So I had a premonition that the 2008 Fair would be our last Telegraph Christmas Street Fair together. In fact, Duncan would be dead within the next 6 months. So I made a special effort to savor the moment. I called him over to my table to share a beer. Olde English 800, naturally. And we quietly sat and smoked and made small talk as we listened to the Christmas music on my boom box. I can’t remember much of the conversation. Like I said, it was mostly small talk. Duncan was so frail at that point, his speaking voice was labored. He croaked out his sentences in a long, slow drawl.

Mostly I kept thinking of all the years. All the years. Our first Christmas Street Fair back in 1990, for god sake. Young and strong, with great hope for the future. Embarking on this great adventure. Wondering where it was all going to lead. And now it occurred to me, it was almost over for Duncan. It had all gone by so fast. It was one of those moments that many people have when they hit 50 where you realize that life is a lot shorter than you thought it was when you were young . . .

“Well, I’m gonna pack up . . . and . . . uh... get my supplies for the . . . uh... night,” said Duncan. That meant his usual nightcap that he bought at Fred’s Market: a half dozen deviled eggs, a package of baloney, a chunk of cheddar cheese, some cottage

cheese, two tall cans of Olde English, and a pack of Basic 100s. A typical Duncan dinner. Duncan stood up wearily.

“Merry Christmas, Ace,” he said.

“Merry Christmas, Duncan,” I said.

I hung out at my vending table by myself for a couple more hours. Pounding the beers and enjoying the Christmas music on my radio. I actually love Christmas music (as long as they only play it two weeks before Christmas). I love how you hear every genre of music. Rock, gospel, country, classical, church music, honky tonk music, the 50s, the 60s, etc. Even punk rock. Every genre has their Christmas music. My favorite Christmas song of all-time is the classical song Pachelbel’s Canon in D. And I lucked out that Christmas Eve. The city had hired a guy to play Christmas music on his classical guitar and he was set up across the street from me in front of Mario’s Mexican Restaurant. And right on cue he started playing Pachelbel. I actually started crying. Tears running down my face. What can I say? I’m a sentimental slob at the best of times. And at least you have an excuse on Christmas Eve.

About 15 minutes later I went over and threw 5 bucks in his guitar case. “That was beautiful!” I said. “Please play Paco Bell again!”

Later much to my delight, he played it again. I applauded deliriously from my vending table. “PACO BELL!” I cried. (I was a little drunk by this time.)

I went over to the classical guitar player again and threw some more money in his case. “THAT WAS GREAT! OH MAN, PLAY PACO BELL ONE MORE TIME! PAH-LEEZE!”

“O-kay,” he said.

But I could tell he said it grudgingly. Later, in the middle of playing another song, he threw in a couple of bars of Pachelbel, before moving on to other songs, hoping that would placate me. I could tell he was

getting annoyed by my constant requests, but I continued to yell out: “PLAY PACO BELL! PLAY PACO BELL!” (When I’m drunk I can turn into the asshole who stands in the front row yelling: “PLAY FREE BIRD! PLAY STAIRWAY TO HEAVEN!” all night long.)

Then Anthony showed up. He had his beat up old street guitar on his back. He whipped it out and played and sang a few bars of the Tubes song “White Punks on Dope.” It was like an inside joke between us. We went back about 20 years, me and Anthony. He had once been one of the best street musicians on the Ave. And his track on the Telegraph Avenue Street Music CD was one of the best tracks we had recorded back in 1994 (a smokin’ funk-rock track hot off the streets of Oakland). But we had both been through the mill over the years. Drugs and etc. But here we still were. Ready to party on one more Christmas Eve.

“Hey Anthony, do me a favor,” I said. “Here’s 5 bucks. Go put that in the guitarist’s case and ask him to play Paco Bell. He won’t listen to me anymore.”

Anthony dutifully trotted over there and then came back with a smile on his face.

“What’d he say?” I asked.

“He said: ‘Please quit requesting Paco Bell.’ And he gave me 20 dollars to leave him alone.”

Anthony gave me his big, toothy Sly Stone smile and trotted off merrily, in search of 20 bucks worth of Christmas cheer. ‘Tis the season of giving.

I realized I was being an asshole (eventually that realization dawns on me) and quit requesting Paco Bell. I sat there quietly at my vending table, drinking my beer and smoking my cigarettes, and listening to Christmas music on my boom box, and thinking many, many thoughts.

Merry Christmas, everybody.###

GOOD CLEAN FUN  
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GENE MAHONEY



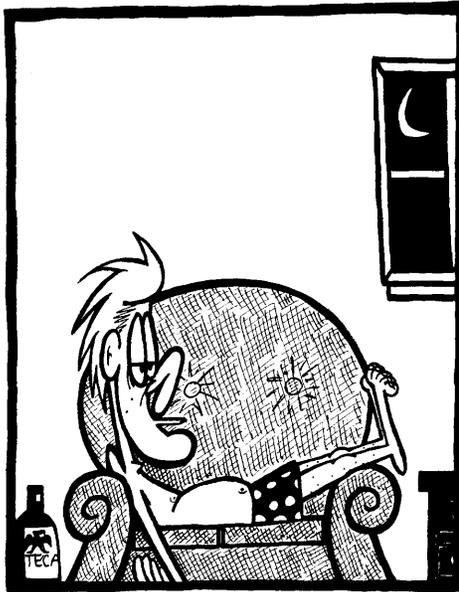
IT'S  
CHAUNCY  
DILLINGER  
IN



"MERRY  
CHRISTMAS,  
MISTER  
DILLINGER"



NO FRIENDS.  
A FAMILY THAT  
FORGOT I EXIST.  
ALONE ON CHRISTMAS.



OH WELL...  
I SHOULD  
BE THANKFUL,  
I GUESS.

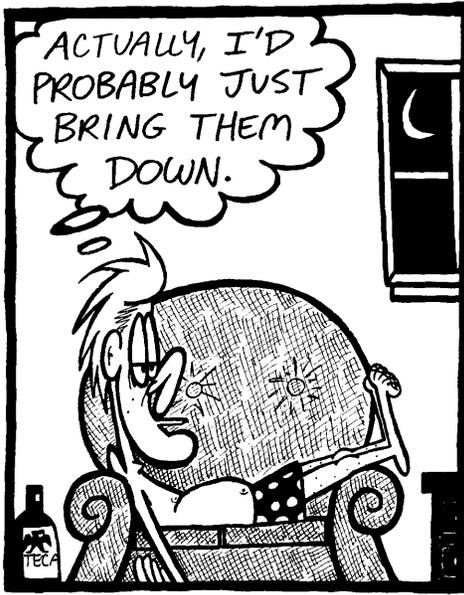


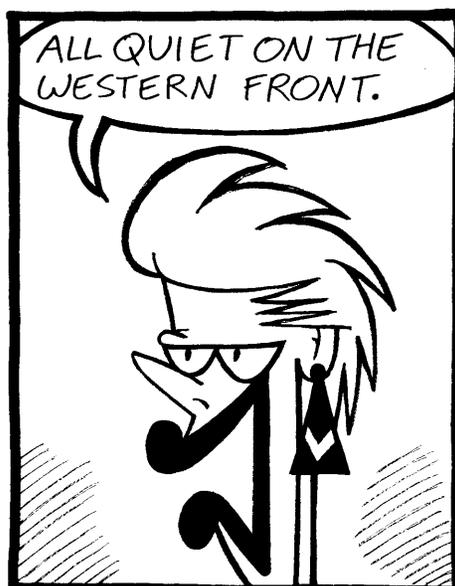
THERE ARE PEOPLE  
SPENDING TODAY  
WITH THEIR FAMILIES  
WHO DON'T WANT TO.



MAYBE I SHOULD  
CELEBRATE THE  
WINTER SOLSTICE  
INSTEAD.







**Editor's Note:** Earlier it was noted that I couldn't find a holiday column by Allison Parks. But if you think of it, this could be a column appropriate for the holidays. It's a few years old, so if you're wondering, that photo is Lindsey Lohan's DUI mugshot.

# Coping with your DUI



## By Allison Parks

One of the most brutal donkey punches to a person's life, alongside tragedies such as: birthing a retarded baby, gangrene, and bankruptcy is the dreadful DUI. It's so tragic that they should make sympathy greeting cards for it. \*Especially\* if you live in California, a DUI is simply a horrid, unforgiving, punishment, that seems to go on forever. It almost makes you wish you had driven into a tree and burst into flames.

Sure you \*should\* have taken a cab home last night, but that would be costly, you'd have to wait for it to

arrive, \*and\* suffer through wafts of BO cascading out of the driver's pits. Then, what if you end up on \*Taxi Cab Confessions\* talking about your g-warts? You'd never get laid again! Then the next day you would have to get a ride back to your car. Eff that! You're not \*that\* drunk. Ugh! Just hop behind the wheel, what's the worst that could happen?

Then suddenly those wrenched lights appear in your rear view mirror. Maybe it's Animal Control and you merely have a raccoon clinging to your bumper? He will simply ask you to pull over so the little bastard can run into the woods. Nope, it's the fuzz, and you're off to spend a night in the clink.

Although I don't have a DUI myself, I can feel your pain, and I deserve many. I kneel on my little rug each morning, thank Allah for not giving me one, and promise to carry out his wishes in return.

(Note to policemen reading this: if you pull me over drunk, I'll do ANYTHING to get out of a DUI: back door, front door, Cleveland steamer, dirty Sanchez, mow the lawn, do your taxes, wash the squad cars in a gorilla suit, change the litter box, murder your in-laws.)

Many of my friends have received a DUI, and they all say the same things! The feelings intensify with each subsequent DUI. Here, to ease you through the awful transition are the 5 stages of grief - normally helpful when coping with the death of a loved one - applied to your DUI.

### Denial

No big deal, I'll get out of this. Their Breathalyzer was broken. That policeman was inept/unfair/not wearing his corrective lenses. Johnny Cochran himself will crawl out of the grave to defend me. Everything will be fine, I will keep my driver's license. This is a small matter that I will squash in a short matter of days.

### Anger

How dare they convict me!! I paid for a lawyer and everything! I only had 4 glasses of Boone's Farm! I could still drive just fine! I knew I shouldn't have gone to visit Uncle Cletus, that rat bastard, this is his fault. Why didn't I take the frontage road, why??

### Bargaining

Please, if I could just get it down to a wet and reckless, it would be ok.

### Depression

My life is over, I have no driver's license, I'm drowning in a sea of fines, there is no coming back from this, this is the worst thing that could possibly happen to me. Wail!

### Acceptance

I'll do my time, and pay the fines. I have no choice. I will eventually emerge from this hell of my own making, poorer, but wiser. After all, everybody makes mistakes, even Mel Gibson has a DUI and he's Jesus' BFF.

I know things look bleak now, but stay strong and get yourself a bus pass or a horse. And for eff's sake don't get another one! If you somehow get a fourth one, pull over, jump out of the car, and sprint to the nearest semi to be run over. The fourth is time to end your life.###

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***(Mention the San Francisco Herald for the above offers. They expire 2-28-16.)***