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MONTECITO MISCELLANY

by Richard Mineards



Richard covered the Royal Family for Britain's Daily Mirror and Daily Mail before moving to New York to write for Rupert Murdoch's newly launched Star magazine in 1978; Richard later wrote for New York magazine's "Intelligencer". He continues to make regular appearances on CBS, ABC, and CNN, and moved to Montecito four years ago.

Forbes' Rich List

When it comes to wealth, our area positively glows. *Forbes*, the bi-weekly New York-based financial magazine, has just published its eagerly awaited annual list of the 400 richest people in America, and 11 live in or around our Eden by the Beach.

But one particularly outstanding resident is peripatetic Texan **Harold Simmons**, 80, who flies between his 27-acre Montecito estate, formerly the home of actor **Gene Hackman**, and his Dallas mansion, who has seen his net worth almost double to \$9.3 billion from \$5 billion last year. On the world listing he is ranked at 179.

Harold, whose position on the list has jumped from 55 to 33, has seen the value of his publicly traded buyout vehicle, Valhi, which deals with waste management and chemicals, climb a staggering 250 percent in the last year.

Microsoft co-founder, **Bill Gates**, 55, heads the list for the 18th consecutive year with \$59 billion, and Berkshire Hathaway tycoon **Warren Buffett**, 81, with \$39 billion, \$6 billion less than 2010, comes in at number two.

But **Larry Ellison**, 67, founder of Oracle, the computer software company, who has a number of homes in Santa Barbara, has gained \$6 billion, bringing his worth to \$33 billion, placing him third on the U.S list and fifth



Tycoon Harold Simmons almost doubles fortune in one year

in the world rankings.

Google honcho **Eric Schmidt**, 56, who bought comedienne **Ellen DeGeneres'** four-acre estate for \$20 million four years ago, is valued at \$6.2 billion, ranking him at 50, a drop of two places from last year.

Star Wars director **George Lucas**, 67, who acquired a 1.7-acre oceanfront home in Carpinteria in December, is 107 with \$3.2 billion, while probably our most famous resident, TV talk show titan, **Oprah Winfrey**, is at 139 with \$2.7 billion, putting her at 420 in the world ranking, on par with New York mega-developer **Donald Trump**.

Beanie Baby magnate and hotelier

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MISCELLANY (Continued from page 6)

Ty Warner, 67, owner of the San Ysidro Ranch and the Biltmore, is valued at \$2.4 billion, making him 166 on the U.S. list, while cell phone innovator **Craig McCaw**, 62, ranks at 273 jointly with another Montecito resident, real estate magnate **Herb Simon**, 76, with \$1.6 billion.

Closing off the list of "locals" is **Peter Sperling**, 51, whose father, **John**, founded the University of Phoenix, America's largest private university, at 372 with \$1.15 billion, while polo playing founder of Colony Capital **Tom Barrack**, 64, and Warren Buffett's partner **Charles Munger**, 87, are both valued at \$1 billion.

The biggest gainer of wealth overall is Facebook founder **Mark Zuckerberg**, 27, whose net worth increased a staggering \$10.6 billion to a current \$17.5 billion, landing him in the top 20 at number 14 for the first time.

Quite a crowd!..

It Tuks Two



The Mighty Tuks – Jarryd Commerford and former classmate Simon Linsley – show their mettle

After 12 days and 2,000 miles, which saw Montecito's **Jarryd Commerford**, 24, and his former classmate, **Simon Linsley**, 23, drive a three-wheeled seven-horsepower motorized rickshaw across some of India's roughest terrain, the dynamic duo completed the challenging task last Thursday, raising more than \$15,000 for the Dream Foundation.

The tuk-tuk race, from Shillong, Meghalaya, to Jaisalmer in Rajasthan, was not without incident, with Jarryd, whose grandfather, **Stan Fishman**, is one of the founding members of the popular Santa Barbara charity, being sidelined by a nasty case of "Delhi Belly."

Near the end of the race, which saw the intrepid twosome, who dubbed themselves "The Mighty Tuks," coming in 16th out of 60 international teams, they tried to squeeze their vehicle into a sewer drain to avoid a huge detour, but without any luck.

They even drove at night en-route from Allahabad to Agra, site of the Taj Mahal.

"Driving at night is a terrifying,

if exhilarating, experience, which we were happy to have over quite quickly," says Jarryd, a former George Washington University student. "Most cars drive without headlights, but we had a headlamp, LEDs and a Maglite. We were swerving through traffic like we were driving an American diplomatic convoy through Baghdad!"

As to completing the daunting tour, which even went into Nepal at the base of the Himalayas, Jarryd says on the race blog: "We are very dirty, very smelly and very bearded. Despite children throwing fist-size rocks at us on the outskirts of the city, we made it! It was the trip of a lifetime. As for now, I think we have earned ourselves a nice warm Indian beer."

I'll drink to that...

Leonardo: The Early Years

Santa Barbara Museum of Art director, **Larry Feinberg**, took many years of thought, but just months to write his first major tome *The Young Leonardo: Art and Life in Fifteenth-*

Century Florence.

The impressive 203-page, lavishly illustrated book attempts to unveil the reality behind the Renaissance artist, best known as the creator of the Mona Lisa at the Louvre in Paris.

"He is one of the great painters," says Larry, who moved here from Chicago in December 2007, after working at the Frick, the National Gallery and the Chicago Arts Institute.

"But there has been this whole mythology about him and I wanted to correct that. This is about the first twenty years of his life, because not much has been written about that period.

"People saw his early works as not being completely formed and he has generally been painted as a transcendent genius."

But Larry, who attained four degrees from Harvard and Northwestern universities, feels otherwise.

"Leonardo had a terrible time finishing anything. He was a perfectionist. Nothing pleased him. Even the

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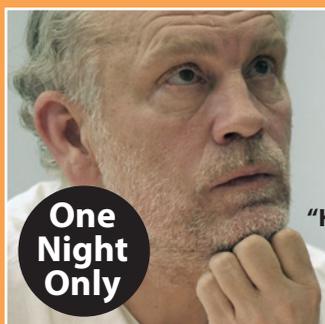
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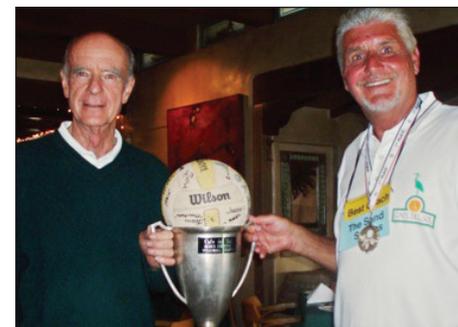


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taking photos with the crew and signing autographs...

Sand Snakes for the Win



Jack Sears presents the Sears Perpetual Volleyball Championship Trophy to Jim Clive at Cafe Del Sol

Cafe Del Sol's first official volleyball tournament, between the Sand Commandos, coached by **Gary Cummins**, and the Sand Snakes, under the athletic tutelage of **Jim Clive**, at East Beach, was a closely contested affair.

But Jim's team, with **Bill Davis**, **Steve Crawford**, **Joannie Wagner**, **Clyde Bennett** and **Dakota McIntyre**, just had the edge, winning the Sears Perpetual Volleyball Championship Trophy, which was presented by the popular nosheteria's owner, **Jack Sears**.

"Each game was incredibly close," says **Trish Davis**, the organizer. "Some of us spent more time in the sand than on it!"

The brass trophy, complete with the ball, signed by all the players, will reside above the bustling bar until the next contest...

Think Pink

Taking a leaf out of *Funny Face*, the classic 1957 **Stanley Donen** film based on the late fashion photographer Richard Avedon, starring Fred Astaire, Audrey Hepburn and Kay Thompson, everybody attending the 13th annual benefit for the Breast Cancer Resource Center of Santa Barbara was urged to "Think Pink!"

And most of the 300 guests took it to heart making the garden of the Montecito home of **Steven** and **Wynne Benhayon** look more like a scene from the swank Bath and Tennis Club in Palm Beach, Florida, with an absolute abundance of pink linens, be they dresses, pants or jackets.

Emcee, the ubiquitous **Andrew Firestone**, whose wife, **Ivana**, sport-



Larry Feinberg's new book, *The Young Leonardo: Art and Life in Fifteenth-Century Florence*, attempts to reveal the real Leonardo

Mona Lisa took him decades to do and he never gave it to his patron."

As to the centuries-old rumor that the Mona Lisa's face is really a reflection of da Vinci's, Larry says: "Absolutely not. It's a real woman and we even know who she was!"

And as to writing his letters in a secret code, Larry says Leonardo was left-handed and simply did not want to smear the ink.

"Leonardo was not the great scientist everyone thought. He only got a couple of years of formal education and didn't know Latin or Greek, which was important at the time."

Larry, who will be discussing his book at the museum's Mary Craig Auditorium on October 27, says he would like to write two more tomes on da Vinci, making a trilogy.

"But, given all the research needed, that will probably have to wait until my retirement," he adds...

Lowe's Cool Composure

Rob Lowe kept his cool during strong turbulence on a flight from Los Angeles to New York the other day.

Montecito-based Rob, 47, star of NBC's "Parks and Recreation," was traveling with his 18-year-old son, **Matthew**, in first class on Virgin Airways.

In the middle of helping his son, who has been interning in House Majority Leader **Eric Cantor's** office during the summer, the trip turned decidedly rocky, but the actor, a veteran air traveler, remained unperturbed.

Not so many of the other passengers, who started to panic.

"People were screaming, it was that bad. But Rob kept his cool," says a fellow passenger.

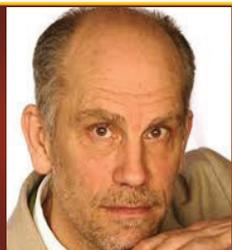
After the safe landing, he went into the cockpit to thank the pilot, even

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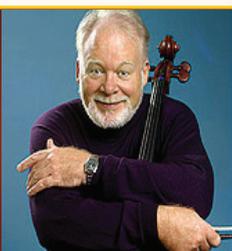
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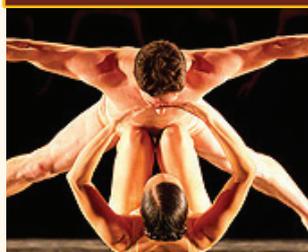
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ed a positively perky pink fascinator, even had pink soles on his black patent Velcro-fastened sneakers!

The event, co-chaired by **Dinah Calderon** and **Rachael Stein**, was creatively decorated by local party guru **Merryl Brown**, with pink and white balloons floating in the pool, while a decidedly androgynous personality, decked out in a gigantic pink wig – a mix of Madame de Pompadour and **Zandra Rhodes** – with a large ruffle-trimmed round table circling her waist, circulated around the guests, including **Mike and Anne Towbes**, **Leslie Ridley-Tree**, **Brian King**, **Hiroko Benko**, **Corinna Gordon**, **Justin Klentner** and **Amanda Masters**, **Paige Beard**, **Thomas Rollerson**, **Maryanne Contreras**, **Susan McCaw** and **Ricardo Calderon**.

Nearly \$90,000 was raised before the party even began, with another \$35,000 expected to come in from the silent and live auctions, which included stays at the Biltmore, a Padaro Lane beach house and a condo in Vail, Colorado.

A swell-egant event, indeed...

Furry Friends



Karen Lee Stevens launched her first children's book, *Animals Have Feelings, Too!*

Santa Barbara author **Karen Lee Stevens** has launched her first children's book, *Animals Have Feelings, Too!*

Filled with humor and whimsical illustrations by San Diego-based **Teri Rider**, this enchanting and educational 32-page A to Z guide takes younger readers on a journey through the alphabet with the help of lovable Labrador, Sandy.

"By the time a child reaches the age of 3, they begin to learn that their behavior and actions, both positive and negative, can greatly impact on an animal's health and well-being," says Karen. "This understanding allows them to develop a responsible stewardship for animals."

Published through the charity, All for Animals, the book was made possible through a generous grant by the

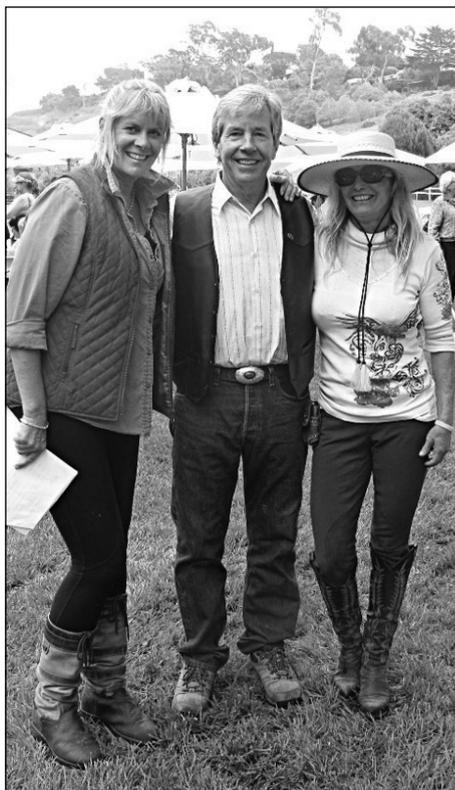
Wendy P. McCaw Foundation, started by the publisher of the *Santa Barbara News-Press*.

Karen, who also wrote *All For Animals: Tips and Inspiration for Living a More Compassionate Life* ten years ago, will be reading from her new book at the Montecito Library on October 24.

She has also held several "Compassion for Critters" workshops at Montecito Union School.

Definitely paws for thought...

Horsin' Around



L. to r: Gail Young, Kevin Snow and Bobbi King. (Photo: Barbara Cleveland)

Horses and riders were out in force for the Montecito Trails Foundation's 26th annual barbecue at the Montecito Valley Ranch home of **Hal and Mary Coffin** after enjoying the pleasures of the 300 miles of trails in the area, which the popular organization tends and keeps open.

A record 170 guests helped raise around \$40,000 for the cause despite the overcast skies, with **Gail Young**, **Gail Persoon** and **Bobbi King** co-chairing the bash.

Kevin Snow, the foundation's president, says it was the first time two trail races had been sponsored, with short and long courses of six and ten miles.

Silent auction items included brunch at the Biltmore, lunch at the Stonehouse and whale watching for 18 on the Sunset Kidd...

Duchess Learns to be Royal

Kate Middleton, the newly minted Duchess of Cambridge, is taking royalty lessons!

Kate, who visited the Santa Barbara Polo Club two months ago with her husband, **Prince William**, is receiving tutorials from senior members

of some of Britain's most respected institutions to prepare for a lifetime of royal duties.

The one-to-ones are taking place at St. James's Palace in London throughout the fall.

William's mother, the late Princess Diana, complained bitterly at being thrown into official duties without training or coaching.

Kate has carried out just one official engagement since marrying the future King William V in April.

But her duties are set to increase when Buckingham Palace reveals the charities she will be supporting in her role as a royal patron in the New Year.

"Kate is being briefed on how the state works, getting to know the national institutions better and learning more about organizations such as the arts, the media and the government," says my palace mole. "It is a

process that will carry on for several months."

Her official engagements will be kept to around one a month until then, to give her time to become accustomed to her new life in the global spotlight...

Sightings: **Josh Brolin** and wife, **Diane Lane**, noshing at Olio e Limone... Oscar nominee **Edward James Olmos** spotted strolling near Stearns Wharf... **Drew Barrymore** checking out the new vegetarian eatery, Adama

Pip! Pip! for now

Readers with tips, sightings and other amusing items for Richard's column should e-mail him at richardmineards@verizon.net or send invitations or other correspondence to the Journal

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