



Walter Mencken's

SD ON THE QT

Almost factual news



Lots to do, little to read?



Squatter's rights — San Diego's homeless celebrate imminent takeover of old central library, convert underground stacks into nap suites

Alien Invasion



Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego teams with Minutemen, Teabaggers to produce Space Invader Walk; art installation aims to raise awareness of threat posed by "those aliens who might be walking the streets of downtown right beside us."

Crowded House

The City, Eager to Attract New Library Funding Via Tenancy, Neglects Space for Books in Final Design

VACANT LOT AT THE CORNER OF PARK AND J STREET (AP): The good news: the San Diego City Council has voted to move forward with the construction of a new central library for San Diego. The bad news: they still need more than \$32 million to finish the job. Despite private donations, state grants, and \$20 million from the San Diego Unified School District in exchange for playing host to a new charter school on two of its floors, the \$185 million project remains a huge financial risk for the city.

However, the inclusion of the school provided inspiration for the council, which has issued a Library Financing Report outlining a plan to raise additional funds via additional tenants and attractions. Among the planned spaces/venues (see graphic above for locations):

1. "Dive into Learning" five-story bungee-jump platform.
2. "Ramp Up Your Reading" civic skate ramp (eventual installation of full half-pipe not pictured).
3. Top-level "Thunderdome"-style cage-fighting arena. ("Frankly," councilman Kevin Faulconer admitted to *SD on the QT*, "we're not sure

how to connect this with anything having to do with reading, education, or the preservation of Western Civilization, but the revenue potential is undeniable.") According to the financing report, hosting bids have been submitted to WWE and other "similarly classy organizations." Plans for an explicit tie-in with the *Mad Max* movie franchise (which had looked promising in light of director George Miller's announcement of plans to film two additional installments of the post-apocalyptic saga) have been put on hold in light of former *Mad Max* star Mel Gibson's alleged announcement of plans to burn down his girlfriend's house.

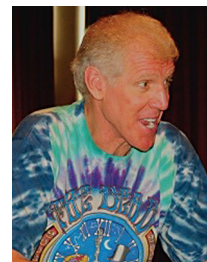
4. Friends of the Library Civic Retreats. Upon learning of council candidate Lorie Zapf's foreclosure scare earlier this year, the council determined that it would be prudent to establish permanent council-person residences in this, their great legacy to the City of San Diego. ("Good governance just doesn't happen when you don't know where you're going to be sleeping next week," explained Faulconer, even as he stressed that the move should not be taken as an explicit statement of support for either Zapf or

her economic practices.) Upon learning of the \$32 million budget shortfall for the library's construction, the council determined that it would also be prudent to include 11 luxury apartments in the new structure, the sale of which would help to finance its completion.

The downside of all these plans for inclusions is that the library, as designed, does not include any physical space for books. However, the report is quick to note that "with the rise of eReaders, iPads, and stuff like that, printed books are pretty much on the way out, anyway. A great library

is about civic pride, not dusty, dimly lit shelves piled with hoary tomes full of arcane trivia about obscure subjects. Wikipedia has taught us that much, at least."

Great Moments in Government, City Council Hearings on the Central Library Edition



NBA great **Bill Walton** to city council: "We can either start building this library today or start building prisons tomorrow."

Councilman **Carl DeMaio**: "Prisons, you say? We could look into that. A lot of money in prisons these days — no shortage of inmates. Could be good for the city, get some state money down here. And I like the 'tomorrow' part, too. A project for after we get out of the financial mess we're in today. Thanks, Bill, I like where your head's at."



WHO PLAYS WHO

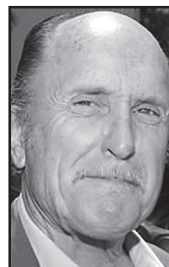
BUILDING SAN DIEGO EDITION



Lukas Haas became a star with *Witness*, a film that lovingly portrays the simplicity and purity of Amish life.



Irving Gill became a star with the First Church of Christ, Scientist, a building that lovingly portrays the simplicity and purity of poured concrete.



In *Apocalypse Now*, **Robert Duvall** had to remind a soldier that "Charlie don't surf!"



In designing the library, **Rob Quigley** had to remember that San Diegans don't read.



In *Nixon*, **Edward Hermann** played Nelson Rockefeller, the man who built the Empire State Plaza in Albany, NY.



Papa **Doug Manchester** is the man who built the Manchester Grand Resorts.