

READER

March 1, 1973

SAN DIEGO'S FREE WEEKLY



Meyer/Schoepfer

As the sun sinks slowly into the west...

the Lone Ranger rides off into the high-rise horizon

—John Holland—

The San Diego County Board of Supervisors has a lot of power here. It holds the purse strings on a budget of three hundred million dollars. And it controls the zoning of ninety per cent of the land area of San Diego County. As the battle between developers and environmentalists intensifies, the present Supervisors may well decide what San Diego County will look like twenty years from now.

In the recent past, Supervisor Jack Walsh has been the most consistently liberal member of the Board. In 1969 he urged the University of California Regents to support UCSD Chancellor McGill's decision to retain Marxist professor of philosophy Herbert Marcuse. In 1970 Walsh was the only supervisor to vote against a County ordinance regulating rock concerts. (After this vote was taken, Walsh infuriated a fellow board member by sitting around an "announcement" of a coming rock festival at the board member's "ranch" in Fallbrook.) Walsh has also maintained a hard line on protecting the environment. In last week's vote on the Solana Beach Town Council's case, he found himself alone voting to stop the developers. Alone, again.

"You might say I've been the Lone Ranger these past two years — the San Elijo Lagoon vote, the Cuyamaca thing, the vote requiring developers to include schools in their developments." Walsh philosophized as he sorted a stack of manila envelopes. The envelopes were to contain a "Blueprint for Action" Walsh was sending to friends and supporters. Walsh's office had the appearance of natural California. The walls paneled with old planks made it look like a room in an

atmospheric seafood restaurant. All kinds of antiques, an old plow hanging on the wall, an antique clock. (The receptionist had said the office used to have an old four-legged bathtub in it.)

"Last election, in November, all these front organizations for business interests contributed to my opponent's campaign. The Lomas Santa Fe trial proved the developers' meetings took place in North County specifically with the purpose of defeating me." But the builders weren't alone; the local AFL-CIO also feared Walsh's strong environmentalism and opposed him in the November election. Supposedly, having labor against him would have hurt more, since he had gerrymandered out of a coastal supervisorial district from Del Mar to Point Loma a six-collar district, including National City and Chula Vista. Yet Walsh, who lives in the Point Loma area, defeated the mayor of National City with 56 per cent of the total vote.

Walsh talked as if developers were not a big threat anymore. "As an industry they're assuming more responsibility." But then he agreed that they were getting smarter politically too. The weight of his optimism was put on a more concerned public. "We've seen a lot more citizens groups get involved in the fight to preserve the environment. Like the Solana Beach Town Council. Also, environmental groups are resorting more to the courts. The Public Defenders are helping."

If that wasn't clear, at least his eyes were clear, clear blue. They matched his dark blue long-sleeved shirt and his blue flared pants, right around his slightly bulging middle. His husky sideburns didn't help him look that much younger

than 39. Apparently, from posters hung around the office, it was Walsh's birthday. "39 is Divine" read one banner behind his desk. A picture-poster of Raquel Welch had "I hope you're not opposed to all development" in red magic marker printed neatly on the famous Welch breasts. (Who had sent this to Walsh — a fellow supervisor? Mayor Wilson? Irving Kahn? the Rancho California Corporation?)

Walsh did seem concerned about the rapid rate of construction along the ocean in San Diego. He has been one of the County's representatives on the Proposition 20 citizens committee. And he said something about our having "pissed away our coastline". But he didn't see a ban on high-rises as a good solution. The solution in Mission Beach, Pacific Beach and Ocean Beach is re-development, maybe a re-writing of the zoning laws. High rises are okay, as long as there is enough open space allotted to go along with them. That's why I opposed the 30-foot height limitation, Proposition D. Pushed to give an opinion on the Coronado Shores high rises, Walsh seemed to favor them, comparing them favorably to a "high-rise that might have gone up in the middle of Coronado — that's when you really would have had congestion." Walsh even seemed to see high rises as the solution to San Diego avoiding the Los Angeles sprawl. "To avoid another L.A. here, we're going to have to shift to condominiums and high-rise. We'll have to have truly regional planning. We'll have to have county-wide transportation."

Even more than the ocean front, the "coastal plain", according to Walsh, was threatened by over-development. "There are

1,200,000 acres of vacant land in San Diego County, 1,100,000 of them in unincorporated areas. There, there's where the big companies, Boise Cascade, Dillingham, Rancho California, are buying acreage for towns of a hundred thousand!" But Walsh's solution wasn't extreme. "I'm not opposed to developers. I'm not opposed to development. I just want to see them pay for what they get, provide schools and adequate sewer facilities in their developments."

Walsh was also optimistic about the future politics of the Board of Supervisors. "I've gone from 4 to 1 to 3 to 2." Walsh apparently meant that the election of former El Cajon Councilman Dick Brown gave him a fellow liberal, on the Board, at least on the environment. He also seemed to think that former Wallace supporter Lou Conde would join him at least some of the time. "Conde bounces back and forth." And that one of the two anti-environmentalists would be leaving. "Craven will probably get the Assembly seat." So maybe Walsh won't be much of a Lone Ranger any more.

But maybe by then Walsh will be gone. He was all ready to answer questions about his future. "I'm tired of people asking me what level I'm aiming for next, whether it's a state or national office. I'm really satisfied with San Diego. The local level is high enough." As he walked over to the other side of the room, next to the window that looked out over Harbor Drive to San Diego Bay and the sailboats and North Island, he said something about Mayor Wilson doing "an excellent job" and a few sentences later something about Walsh's taking "another crack at the Mayor's job." □

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"The solution in Mission Beach, Pacific Beach and Ocean Beach is redevelopment..."

Roberta Flack

Susan Ray

Roberta Flack's concert Sunday at the Sports Arena was a triumph. The Arena "amphitheater," as everyone knows, is hardly fit for a hugging contest let alone any serious attempt to make music. Reverberating concrete and clanking metal chairs amplify the loudness of listeners. The air conditioners rattle relentlessly through the most delicate moments of a song. Yet Miss Flack managed simply to transform the setting. With a swish of her elegant black chiffon dress, the glitter of jewels, her abundant afro like a halo framing her face, she embraced the audience in her singing with warmth and affection, a warmth returned especially at the end of the evening by a standing ovation.

The first time I saw her, over two years ago, she was one of several new artists presented on an obscure NET television program dedicated to the best of who was happening in contemporary music. Dressed plainly, she worked at the piano and sang, absorbed in her craft, as if unaware of the audience. A year later, as guest soloist with the Boston Pops Orchestra and riding high on the crest of her first hit record, her singing had gained measurably in spirit and command but even that performance was only a suggestion of the slight of Roberta Flack, 1973, a singer of consummate style and grace.

Music has been part of her life since she began playing piano as a child in her home in Virginia. Guided by her mother, she studied classical piano and voice, graduating from Howard University with a Bachelor's degree in

Miss Education at eighteen. Following some graduate work, she taught school for several years, using music to reach the otherwise unresponsive students. At the same time she moonlighted as an accompanist and eventually took a few club dates herself. This led to a long engagement at Mr. Henry's in Washington, D.C. where Les McCann heard her and helped her to a contract with Atlantic Records, for whom she still records.

Anyone familiar with her background and albums could have anticipated the content of Sunday's program. Although she is usually thought of as a jazz singer (recently capturing the "Most Popular" female jazz singer spot held for so long by Ella Fitzgerald), she moved back and forth between gospel, blues, jazz, and "contemporary folk" music, alternating up-tempo and softer songs. Her high-slapping, whooping rendition of "Reverend Lee" brought a storm of applause but no more than for the wistful "Bridge Over Troubled Water" (dedicated quietly to "a girl in the wheelchair" section) who had written for her requesting it. She did a high-flying interpretation of Gene McDaniels' "Compared to What," Marvin Gaye's "Inner City Blues," and, of course, her hit "The First Time (Ever I Saw Your Face)."

Not so predictable was her choice of Randy Newman's "Suzanne," which she had wanted to record on her first album four and a half years ago. At that time the record company execs looked at her incredulously. This time, she explained with a very satisfied smile, they said "Sure, honey, anything you want!" So it will be included on her next album. The song itself is

(continued on page 8)

Kathleen Woodward

San Francisco's American Conservatory Theatre

SHARE THE REFUGENCE SOAK WITH ACT.



LOCKER ROOM BLAHS

willing to do anything to get it. He, for example, kicks off the evening's fun and games by revealing that the Italian is screwing the Mayor's wife.

But that's only four, right? The fifth is missing, right? You would think the most remarkable revelation is that Martin, the missing fifth, won the season for them by playing dirty on the Coach's orders. It's all a shabby farce, they're not champions after all.

The play, as you can see, runs on locker room language, one-liners (often stolen), and cheap structural TV-comedy tricks. Miller throws in the words "pederast" and "cunnilingus" to get a nervous titter and allows his characters to take us down maudlin memory lane. They break down sobbing, point guns at each other, fall down stairs, slap each other across the face, and make up, of course, at the end. The end of Act Three is only

topped by the end of Act II. The Mayor, about to be sick, runs for the window—someone already there—then grabs at something silver on the bookcase. The Coach: *Oh no! Not in the trophy!* Curtain. Even the 13-year-old in front of me found all this monstrous and professed Ibsen's *Doll's House*.

At one drunken point in *Albee's Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, Martha, munching on her boozy ice cubes, muses: *George and Martha... sad... sad...* We can say the same about the Coach and his crippled Boys, about Miller's play, and about the state of American drama which thrives on empty imitations of *Virginia Woolf's* alcoholic evening when corrupt relationships are exposed for what they are. First we had the homosexual version in *Boys in the Band*, then the all-female version in *Marjorie*, now the defeated jock version in *That Championship Season*. What's next? □

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Jeanne Shoemaker

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assist Mom, a chubby, bouezy, compact black woman with a rainbow smile, is the best witness for her food. It's great and it's filling. Chitlins, cornbread, greens, ham hocks, smothered chicken, and today's delicacy, ox tails.

Now, way back in my heritage is a German strain which carried through to mother in the form of her ability to cook oxtails, usually in a stew. But my Mom's got nothing on this blue waitress-dressed Ma. And this black Mom's a lot quicker. Five min' is a maximum till you've got a plate full of beans, rice, collards and meaty oxtails that are lively, spicy, and whose full flavor reflects a day of careful simmering. Plus you get a side dish of sweet, buttered cornbread pancakes. Outside of Mr. A's it's the best, most exciting meal my girlfriend and I've had in a long time. And Mr. A's cost us over \$30. Mom's and Pop's cost \$2.80.

We ate there a Saturday afternoon, and one might've thought we were a couple of white honkies gone weekend slumming. Well, we were. But no one minded. In fact, Mom was super nice and downright hospitable. The overall impression was that this sweet Southern country black had invited us to come eat in her home kitchen. It was neat and orderly, but no electric can openers or plates and walls in matching decorator colors.

It's Mom's kitchen, and Pop knows it. He looks on unconcerned while she cooks away, taking care to stay clear of her nimble footwork. With Pop tall and sharp-boned, Mom quite short and plump-checked, they hang together in an odd but effective working relationship.

Mom and Pop's is pragmatic. You come to eat and that's what you get. And you can listen to great music while you're gobbling at the counter. There's a juke box stacked with the real soul 45's. James Brown, Al Green, The Impressions, Luther Ingram. We put on Al Green and a couple of slow-whispering Spinners tunes. There was this trio of black Marines when we came in, jumping and dipping around the

room to the tinny funky stereo, propped high in the pink corners. All were in uniform but after a short while it became clear they weren't no lackbuster, jive-less marine grunts. Just had to watch 'em move, slither and hop in the same side-to-side motion. The thin, short black, with lively snapping fingers was the cafe's Smokey Robinson, singing falsetto smooth right in there with Luther. Where can one get such a floor show these days, and at these prices?

If you can't get into the scene, enjoy what it has to offer and relish its genuine hoakiness. I mean, where do you find a restaurant with paper towels instead of napkins, every coffee and water cup different and probably rescued from the Volunteers of America Thrift Store down the street? Only at Mom and Pop's with their toy cash register that they use as a real cash register, placed prominently under the Andy's Cafe calendar. There's no now generation Pepsi, or hip Unclea Marines when we came in, jumping and dipping around the

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