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desert

COMPANION

The quintessentially Vegas stories

told by totally random things we found

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FOUND ISSUE

THE

**SHINDIG LIKE
A CHEF
DINNER
PARTY 101**
BY KIM FOSTER

**NORF! NORF! NORF!
NORTH LAS
VEGAS'
HIP-HOP
EXPLOSION**

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ABOUT THIS
PHOTO ON
PAGE 58

*ACTUAL
YUCKY
TRASH
FOUND
WITH THE
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DESERT COMPANION

VOL. 17
11

NOVEMBER 2019 | THE FOUND ISSUE | HOLIDAY GUIDE

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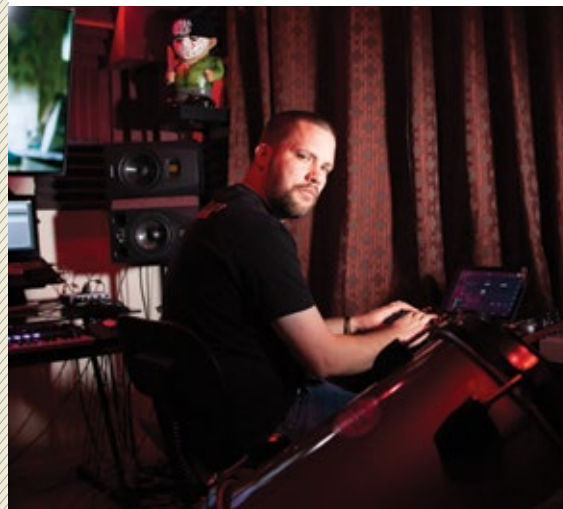
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FOUND OBJECTS

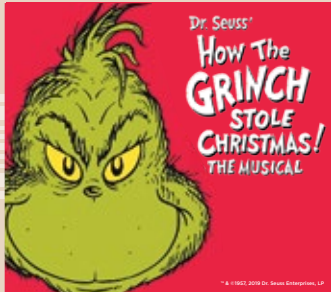
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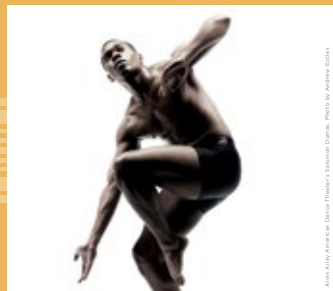
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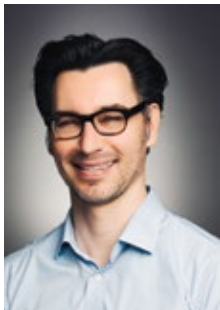
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Editor's Note

THE SUBJECT IS OBJECTS

For all its transience and fluidity, Las Vegas seems like a giant airport sometimes. Countless people — tourists, residents, nomads falling somewhere in between — perch for a while and then flutter off. (We've all had those single-serving, long-pour Vegas friendships that last anywhere from a season to several years before they dissolve in a new job and a cross-country move.) I like to think this constant, fugitive molecular fizz is what makes Vegas such a treasure trove of found objects — notes, mementos, castoffs, and other ephemera left behind that tell compelling stories about where we live. On p. 49, we showcase our many finds, and offer gestural sketches on what they mean. These objects' origins are diverse — from the Las Vegas Wash to the Las Vegas Strip, from thrift stores to the desert outskirts — but their stories strike familiar, human chords.

And now for a facile transition! *Desert Companion* has a few new objects in its trophy cabinet — a slew of awards from the Nevada Press Association. At the honorees' banquet Sept. 21 in Ely, *Desert Companion* garnered five awards, including first place in Entertainment Writing (Mike Weatherford), first in Explanatory Journalism ("You Are the Cure," Erin Ryan, August 2018), and first in Page One Design (Art Director Christopher Smith). Heidi Kyser took third in Feature Writing for October 2018's October 1 retrospective, and Sally Denton won third in nonstaff story for her March historic profile of Jessie Fremont. Congratulations to them, and all the winners — for continuing to find and tell compelling stories about our fascinating home.



Andrew Kiraly
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NEXT MONTH Ready your forks for the Restaurant Awards!

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Desert Companion is published 12 times a year by Nevada Public Radio, 1289 S. Torrey Pines Dr., Las Vegas, NV 89146. It is available by subscription at desertcompanion.vegas, or as part of Nevada Public Radio membership. It is also distributed free at select locations in the Las Vegas Valley. All photos, artwork and ad designs printed are the sole property of Desert Companion and may not be duplicated or reproduced without the written permission of the publisher. The views of Desert Companion contributing writers are not necessarily the views of Desert Companion or Nevada Public Radio. Contact us for back issues, which are available for purchase for \$7.95.

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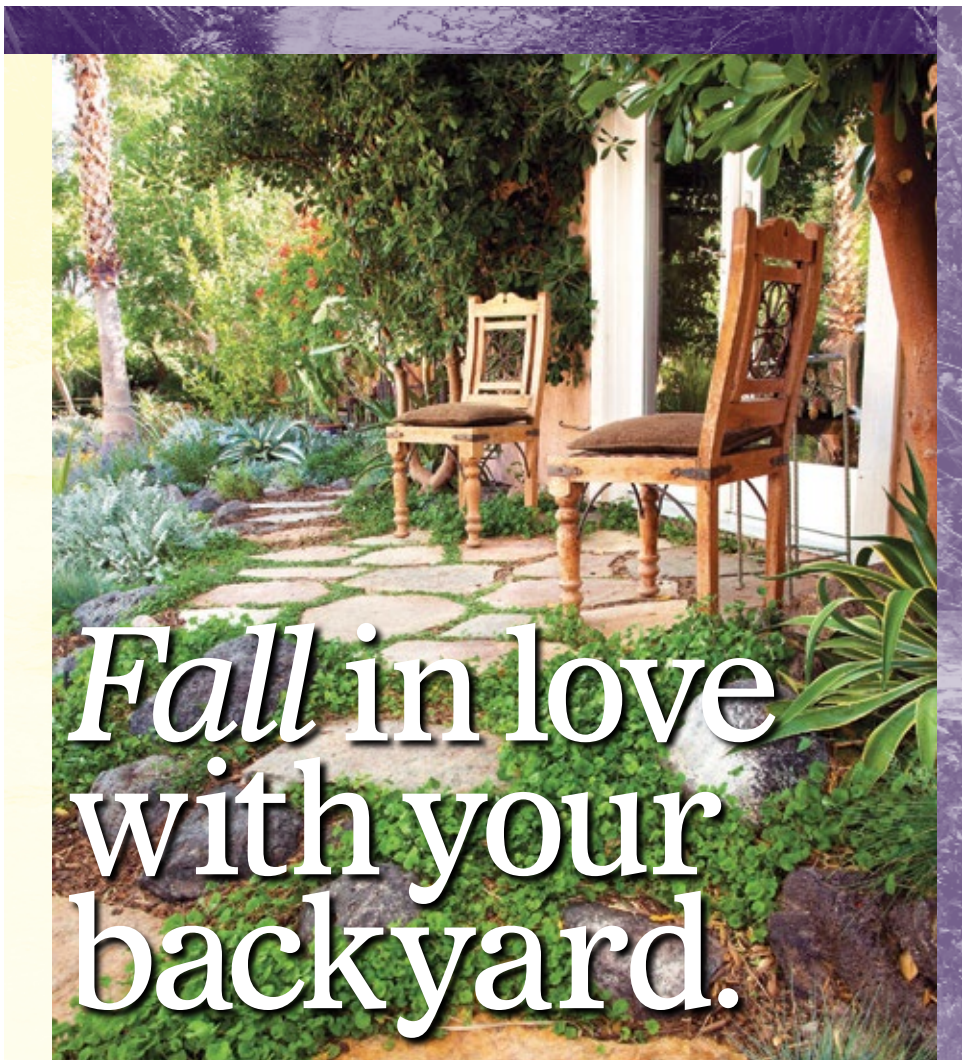
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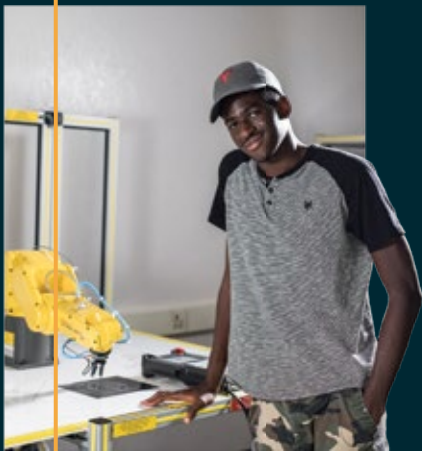
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ALL IN

THE PEOPLE,
ISSUES, OBJECTS,
EVENTS, AND IDEAS
YOU SHOULD KNOW
ABOUT THIS
MONTH



PROFILE

The Man with the Neon Donut

And other strange things Bruce Smiley
has unearthed in a career of finding
the odd in odds and ends

BY Heidi Kyser

“Smiley” isn’t Bruce Smiley’s real last name. It’s his celebrity name. But he’s spent four decades honing the craft that inspired the name, so it’s how he identifies himself now. And he’s cautious about his privacy, in part because of the riches that craft has yielded. Smiley sits on an actual treasure trove of collector’s items. He’s a picker. Or, antique hunter, flipper, storage warrior, thrifter — whatever you call it is okay by him. “Hoarder, collector, reseller,” he says with a chuckle. He’s done it all.

The Smiley moniker is more than figurative. In the mid-’80s, a recent college grad, Bruce lived in the Bay Area and was part of a vintage Vespa scooter club. By then, he was already collecting things — records, funky Christmas decorations — having grown up cruising garage and yard sales with his mom. On an outing, he came across a smiley-face patch, and the resonance between it and Ace Face, a favorite Vespa-riding character from the British mod scene, struck him: Why not call their club the Smiley Face Scooter Club? The name stuck, and not just to the club. Today, Smiley estimates, he has upwards of 5,000 smiley-faced items.

“My first goal was to have a hundred smiley faces,” he remembers. “And that became relatively easy. Then I was like, ‘Oh, try 200.’ And then I thought, ‘Oh, I’m going to make a big jump to 500.’ And then, I accumulated that, and I thought, ‘Ooh, man of a thousand faces!’ That’s a cool catchphrase. So, I’ll do that. That probably took me a couple more years.”

What does one do with thousands of happy keychain fobs, glassware, pillows, posters, and so on? Same thing he does with the thousands of other tchotchkes he’s accumulated, which is to say, it depends. Most are in storage; Smiley’s got a warehouse full of his unique items. Parts of his smiley-face collection have been displayed in a Bay Area library and county fair, and a museum in Massachusetts.

Smiley’s house in Las Vegas is also a wonderland of oddities, from the kitsch Wayne Newton painting by the front door, to the huge neon donut sign standing in his living room, to the taxidermied monkey hanging from the rafters. Sitting at a mid-mod table and chair in a Hawaiian shirt, strawberry blond and covered in freckles, he wears the cryptic grin of someone about to deliver a punchline you won’t get. As he talks about where each thing came from, it’s obvious that he takes pleasure in being surrounded by unusual objects — and sharing them. He

remembers the first time he rented a room that had enough space for him to put things out for his friends to come see, and how the joy of sharing led to commerce.

“When you live in a small studio where you don’t have much room, you display something, and then you find something else cooler,” Smiley says. “Well, what do you do? Put this (first thing) in a box somewhere? I might as well sell it. I’ve enjoyed it, my friends saw it.”

That’s when he got into renting booths to sell his wares — a flea market in Marin City, an antique store in San Francisco — along with the occasional collectibles garage sale at his house, and, later, eBay. All are avenues Smiley still uses (he’s got a booth at the Vintage Vegas store on Main Street) in addition to commissioned work chasing

down particular items for clients ranging from interior designers to show producers. The business sometimes takes him outside his comfort zone.

“If you’re reselling, to assume that people would only want to buy things you like is a very bad assumption,” he says. “So, you have to open yourself up to buying some really horrible things, depending on whatever ‘horrible’ is in your mind. I mean, if you find a Cabbage Patch doll that’s brand new in the box, you might think that’s the most godawful thing, but yet if you know you can sell it on eBay for a hundred bucks or more, and the price is right, then sure.”

Where does he find his stuff? Sales and shops of various kinds, the so-called World’s Longest Yard Sale, a three-day road trip from Alabama to Ohio. And then there’s ➔

POEM

Lap Dance

*Vegas taught me how to lap dance
my rage, how to take that atomic bomb
and give it to the world. The knee trick.
The hair flip. The you-can’t-do-anything-
more-than-buy-me-drinks-look. The beautiful
and ugly space of desire is four miles long.
Just the good smell of vanilla and Xanadu
rolls through the air. But god
how I love the neon lights. No more
restless nights with no one else awake. Vegas gives
you color after so many drab winters.
Cold and empty is the worst way to go.
Plutonium or Platinum Blonde.*

Angela Brommel

From Angela Brommel’s new collection, *Mojave in July*, out this month from Tolsun Books.



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Friend and superstar thrifter Jason T. Smith, of *Pawn Stars* fame, invokes his adventure with Smiley after the Sahara Hotel closed a few years back to illustrate his friend's shrewd treasure-hunting style.

"Bruce says, 'I'll get there early, because I live the closest,'" Smith recalls. "So, I show up at the crack of dawn, and he's already there, toward the front of the line. And he has two shopping carts! And I was like, 'Who has their own shopping carts?' Bruce does."

Smiley went to the Sahara with a mission: to see the scalloped awning that had hung over the booths at Don the Beachcomber. His research led him to believe the shuttered classic tiki restaurant could still be found somewhere on the third floor. After some off-the-grid exploring, involving service elevators and back-of-house stairs, they found the place — and the awning!

Smiley's most curious finds have come from his fascination with monkeys, hence the stuffed fellow in the living room, which he discovered at a local auction house. Even stranger is the wooden box of pet monkey cremains he bought at an estate sale in Oakland and keeps under lock and key. Asked if he would ever sell it, he replies emphatically, "No, I would never give that away. A cremated monkey, like, oh, my goodness. ... You shake it, and you can hear the bone fragments in it, and the ash. I can't honestly remember how much I paid for it. I think I would've paid anything and everything for it. It was probably a buck, or worst case, five dollars."

Getting rid of stuff does have its upside, though. People who go antique shopping are always in a good mood, Smiley says. They're looking for a present or memento, and it's rewarding to help them find what they want.

"For a moment in time, you had this awesome item in your hands, and it's not a bad thing to not have to keep it," he says. "I mean, you don't have to keep everything." ♦

“ THE WHOLE WORLD WAS OUT TO SCAM YOU. VEGAS WAS JUST UPFRONT ABOUT IT. ... TO ME, VEGAS FELT LIKE THE URBAN-PLANNING EQUIVALENT OF THE HOMELESS MAN WE PASSED WHOSE SIGN SAID: WHY LIE? I WANT BEER. ”

— Leslie Jamison, from *Make It Scream, Make It Burn*

EXPLAINER

Battering Hand

The law of unintended consequences besets a plan to keep guns away from domestic abusers

BY *Rachel Christiansen* AND *Heidi Kyser*

The 2015 Nevada Legislature produced a law barring domestic violence convicts from owning firearms. It took three years for the first case testing the new law to make its way to the state Supreme Court, and its ruling, this September, was a doozy. In a nutshell, the court said that taking away a batterer's weapon infringes on his or her constitutional rights, meaning it's a "serious offense" entitling the offender to a jury trial.

The problem with this is, in Las Vegas, where a large majority of the state's domestic violence cases are tried, those decisions are made by judges, not juries. Same goes in many other jurisdictions.

"We don't even have jury boxes in municipal courtrooms," says Las Vegas City Attorney Brad Jerbic, "let alone enough judges or attorneys to try all those cases" before a jury. In other words, Las Vegas has no legal infrastructure to handle this.



Around 5,000 domestic violence cases passed through Las Vegas Municipal Court in 2018. Jerbic predicted that the addition of jury duty, selection, instruction, summation, and deliberation would reduce the number of possible trials per day from five to one, creating an enormous backlog that would add up to victims waiting years for their cases to be heard.

“That would result in more harm to victims,” he says, “because the most dangerous time for a victim is between (the batterer’s) arrest and trial.”

Las Vegas’ initial reaction was to stop prosecuting domestic violence as a misdemeanor, and instead prosecute it as simple battery. The charge of simple battery, however, carried no mandatory counseling requirement for the offender, and no escalation clause — a mechanism for making a batterer’s third offense a felony. Victim’s advocates were outraged.

In mid-October, the city scrambled to pass an ordinance creating a charge of battery constituting domestic violence, which would include, in sentencing, the counseling requirement and escalation clause. At press time, the fix stood, but most observers agree it’s vulnerable to legal challenge, given the 2015 law on domestic violence and handguns, coupled with the Supreme Court decision about Second Amendment rights and jury trials.

The part about batterers owning guns is precisely why victim advocates are unhappy with the city’s fix, too. Noting that domestic violence victims are five times more likely to become homicide victims when there’s a gun in the home, they say the entire system for charging and prosecuting the crime needs to be rethought so that convictions include both counseling and escalation, as well as firearm confiscation — ostensibly, even if that means trying them by jury.

“This is a wake-up call for the state, that we cannot continue to incrementally change the way that we’re doing this,” says Safe Nest CEO Liz Ortenburger, noting that Nevada is the second-most-lethal state for domestic violence victims. “We have to look at massive, system-wide change, and actually do something that is going to, for generations, change the face of how domestic violence is handled in Nevada.”

She and others are hoping for a special legislative session to sort the issue out. In the meantime, law enforcement agencies say they’ll continue to handle the crime the way they always have, with an emphasis on keeping victims safe. ♦



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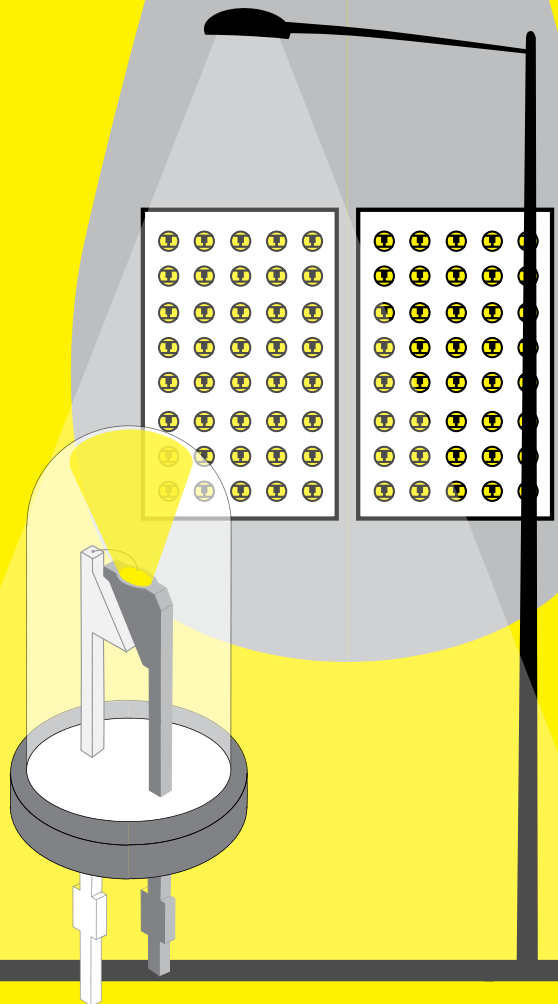
TOTAL NUMBER OF STREETLIGHTS TO BE REPLACED WITH REMAINING FUNDS IN THREE YEARS.

GRAPHIC EXPRESSION

SHINE ON, YOU EFFICIENT STREETLIGHTS

In September, Clark County Commissioner Justin Jones formally revived the county's sustainability initiative — with an added focus on climate change — which had lagged soon after its 2008 creation due to the recession. Among the many individual efforts involved will be the expansion of a program to upgrade streetlights and traffic signals from the existing high-pressure sodium lights to LED bulbs. The seemingly small gesture has a surprising massive impact (and price tag!), according to the numbers.

SOURCE: CLARK COUNTY



CHANGING SIGNALS

552
TRAFFIC SIGNALS IN CLARK COUNTY

304
TRAFFIC SIGNALS IN CLARK COUNTY THAT ARE UPDATED TO LED

THE DIFFERENCE

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OPEN TOPIC

Trash Art

What a randomly acquired painting taught me about the transitory nature of hope, value, and Vegas

BY **Dan Hernandez**

My neighbor got evicted. That or he skipped town. A work crew had been emptying the house for three days, throwing everything into a trailer-sized Dumpster, and when I asked what happened, they just said, “It’s a mess in there.” The guy was a hoarder, apparently. One worker came out carrying a large painting. It had black, yellow, and brown L-shapes overlaid like a pile of boomerangs. I like abstract art, so I asked, “What are you doing with the painting?”

“You want it?” The men set it on my driveway. “It’s yours.”

The thing was pretty beat up, and a bit ugly to begin with. It had sloppy brushstrokes and a distinctly 1970s color palette, the paint had peeled away in spots, and its wooden surface, which stood six feet tall, was dusty and splintered. You might think it was beautiful — but just from the corner of your eye.

I’d moved to town a few months earlier,



to study creative writing, and my house felt barren, so I brought it inside. That’s when I noticed a name on the back: “Marco Tirelli 1984.” I leaned it against a wall and learned from Google that Tirelli is a famous Italian artist. The first hit was a *New York Times* profile celebrating his “large-scale canvases of geometric objects and arresting contrasts of light and darkness.” Naturally, I wondered

if it was actually his and, if so, worth a lot of money.

This wasn’t the first time that the famous Las Vegas confluence of luck, hope, and willful naiveté had crept into my brain: I’d already taken up gambling. In fact, from that point on, whenever my credit card debt and impending student loan bills combined with a bad night of shooting craps to plunge me

↓
Find More Finding!
See Page 49

2019 THANKSGIVING INDEX

Thankful!

Legislature approves green bean casserole for recreational use

Trump also sends tough letter to president of Turducken

KNPR debuts pumpkin-spice pledge drive!

Trend: Hiring mercenaries to do your Black Friday shopping

Tim Burton unveils new holiday classic *Edward Baster Hands*

Uncle Ralph supports extending monorail from stuffing bowl to his mouth

Pelosi advises caution about peach pie

Cops offer exciting door buster deals

Turns out cranberry sauce is actually terrifying alien invasion force

Overheard at White House: “Can you leak me the gravy?”

Family so busy arguing politics, Grandpa forced to pull his own finger

At dinner, Michele Fiore shoots turkey a few more times, thoroughly owning libs

Less Thankful!

into regret and despair, I fantasized that the Tirelli would bail me out. According to artnet.com, his similar-looking 1984 piece “Solare” had fetched \$10,000 back in the '90s. And his star had only risen since.

Through Tirelli’s personal website, I sent him photos of the painting and signature, hoping to authenticate it. He didn’t reply. I emailed the New York art dealer who’d sold “Solare.” She was retired but asked how much I wanted for it. The price I suggested must have been too high because she ghosted me after that. The painting’s only value, then, was as a conversation piece during house parties, and it actually became a burden when I moved in with someone who had no wall space for it, and no love for peripherally attractive art.

Eventually, I reached a London gallery owner who said the painting didn’t represent the style Tirelli became famous for. It might fit into a retrospective, but otherwise had little value, I was told. The dealer offered me 300 euros, not even enough to mail it to his residence in L.A. The *Times* had mentioned that Tirelli came from a school of Rome-based artists who experimented in a variety of styles in the '70s and '80s. As his career matured, Tirelli painted almost exclusively in black and white, often portraying realist objects in abstract compositions, like a spiral staircase floating amid shadows, in tones both darker and brighter than what was in my possession.

It seemed fitting that what I had was Tirelli’s attempt to develop his own artistic style. That’s what I was doing at UNLV — participating in fiction workshops, trying to find my voice as a writer. Some of those stories were published, but the rest will never again see the light of day, which is typical of the MFA experience. You hone your skills by being told when your work is derivative, tedious, confusing, or cliché — all critiques that could’ve been lobbed at that painting.

The next time I moved it was onto a friend’s couch, so the Tirelli ended up in a different buddy’s garage, where it stayed when he moved out. The place was full of old renters’ junk, so we assume it’s there still, waiting for someone else to assess its worth.

That transient narrative, that elusive promise — whatever the painting’s origin, it was a product of Las Vegas in the end. Vibrant and colorful, but also oversized and shoddy and frayed from neglect. For all that, I had a hard time letting go of both it and the city. How often do you come across something that’s world renowned and still full of quirky mystique? ♦

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ALL OUT

CULTURE,
FOOD, STYLE,
AND OTHER
WAYS TO USE
THIS CITY

Award-winning food writer Kim Foster hosts a monthly cookbook club, *Please Send Noodles*, at *The Writer's Block* (thewritersblock.org) beginning November 8.

Chop, Sizzle, Gather

The warm domestic vibe of the season makes this a great time to have people over. Here are some tips to make it easy — especially for the novice party planner

TRY THESE COOKBOOKS FOR YOUR NEXT BIG GATHERING

Nothing Fancy: Unfussy Food for Having People Over
by Allison Roman

Feed Your People: Big Batch, Big-Hearted Cooking and Recipes to Gather Around
by Leslie Jonath


Platters and Boards: Beautiful, Casual Spreads for Every Occasion
by Shelly Westerhausen

Taming the Feast: Ben Ford's Field Guide to Adventurous Cooking
by Ben Ford

MIX IT UP, MAKE IT PRETTY

For apps, snack trays and charcuterie boards loaded with meats, cheese, bread, pickles, nuts, and fruit are your friends. They feed lots of people, can be totally no-cook, and take care of lots of different diets. Choose a few expensive cheeses, and a bunch of affordable salamis and *sopressatas*; buy jarred artichokes and mushrooms; make a chickpea salad or Spam fries; and throw down some jarred cornichon. Do some things homemade and mix with store-bought, and everything will feel home-made. As for the mains, whatever you cook, make it pretty: Think chopped scallions, parsley or cilantro, a few pea sprouts for color, little slices of red-hot Thai chillies. Did you make too little? Don't let Uncle Fred mound all of the pork larb onto his plate. Instead, make little parcels of meat already in lettuce cups. This will stretch your food.


For recipes, visit desertcompanion.com



This poke and the fried wonton chips are easy. Pair with store-bought lumpia from 99 Ranch, and serve with sauces, like sweet chili and peanut.



Spam fries? Cut spam like fries; serve crunchy, hot, and oily from the can. (People love the kitsch of the can.) Serve with garlic-mayo dip.



Break down a lamb shoulder into little slabs, marinate in cumin, fennel, and chilis, then flash-fry right before serving. You can feed a crowd.

DIAL THE VIBE

You don't need to be Ina Garten to pull off a great party. Play to your strengths! Do you have a great eye for design? Create a beautiful tablescape with fruit. Love music? Put together a killer playlist. Have an amazing cabinet of mid-mod glasses and cutlery? Go vintage. I have none of those, so my thing is a secret nosh in the kitchen; if you come into the kitchen to hang with me while I cook, I'll make you a special snack — think chicken egg rolls or fried vegetable wontons — and hand you a secret tequila. Do what *you* can do to make your guests feel special. And remember: If you are stressed, your guests will be stressed. No matter what kind of fresh hell is happening at the stove, smile, relax, be chill, laugh it off — and your guests will, too. Most importantly, *never* apologize for a dish that isn't perfect. Trust me, no one will know. Pick up the chicken off the floor, smile, and carry on.

Kids at the party? Make sure you have something they like — noodles or chicken. These deep-fried panko-crusted chicken thighs with a Sriracha-mayo side are sure hits.

Apps aren't supposed to fill people up. Small things like pickles, peas, shrimp chips, and lotus root chips will give guests a little nosh without stuffing them for dinner.

Take care of your vegans and vegetarians! This chili-garlic fried tofu steak is easy and pretty and even carnivores will eat it.

This shrimp tempura is totally store-bought at 99 Ranch. Bake or fry; no one will care you didn't make them from scratch.

CURATE YR PEEPS

Steal this concept from Australian chef Bill Granger: Invite friends over for Thursday Night Kitchen Suppers. It's the anti-dinner party. Thursday is not the weekend. There isn't the pressure of a weekend party. Manage expectations by keeping it light. In the invite say: I'm making a new dish! If it sucks, we'll order pizza! Invite one couple, the family down the block, that guy at work and his husband who seem so cool. Keep it small, and make a one-pot meal: Chili with your mom's famous cornbread, or pork-belly fried rice and ice-cold Sapporos. Or sheet pan harrisa chicken with roasted potatoes. Eat at the kitchen island instead of in the dining room. And if you're nervous? Invite that one friend who can break the ice with anyone and make everyone feel warm. While you are serving up the food, she can be warming up the crowd. It sometimes takes a village to raise a dinner party! And if you are worried about people judging you, you have invited the wrong people.



Welcome Home!

The Wentworth of Las Vegas is a state-of-the-art assisted living and memory community in The Lakes that offers the perfect mix of personal care and hospitality tailored to meet the individual needs of residents. With 24-hour care staff, planned activities and outings, and short-term stay options, The Wentworth is the premier senior living choice in Las Vegas.

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MEAT & VEGGIE

Taco Times Two

At Santos Guisados Tacos & Beer, to interpret the flexible Spanish culinary term *guisado*, General Manager Michael Carlisi goes with “stewed.” The meats in the *guisado* tacos are cooked for hours, adding water and letting it reduce again to the desired flavor and texture. As for the vegetarian and pescatarian *guisados*, the shrimp and mushroom are chopped, seasoned, and sautéed — aligning them more with the “braised” meaning of the term. We sent our staff taco enthusiasts — one a meat-eater, one a vegetarian — to report back.

BY **Scott Dickensheets** AND **Heidi Kyser**

Mole sauces vary from region to region, even from family to family. On the shredded-chicken Holy Mole, the sauce is *mole negro*, a dark version derived from Mexico’s Oaxaca area.

The key to the Hongos taco, according to Carlisi, is the freshness of the mushrooms. “We approach vegetables with urgency,” he says. Braised in a savory sauce, their just-shy-of-crunchy consistency makes them the perfect taco-meat substitute.

Light one of Santos’ faux-saint bottle candles (I’m not saying Mariah Carey and Marc-Andre Fleury aren’t sacred; they’re just not dead yet!) to the simplicity of this taco’s toppings: guacamole, cilantro, onions, salsa verde. Boom. All you need, nothing more.



The onions may look primarily decorative, but they flutter in with the aftertaste, adding a final clarifying note that underscores how multi-layered each bite is.

If there’s a taco on this menu that carnivores and pescatarians can agree on, it’s the Fish Santo, on which the mango habanero sauce is neatly complemented by the lightest touch of sweetness in the fish’s batter.

Handmade daily, these tortillas make the dish. This commitment to freshness reflects Carlisi’s attitude toward the mini-menu: “There’s always a temptation to go bigger, but ... I would never want us to have more at the risk of having something bad.”

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CUE THAT PHARRELL SONG If you're determined to pursue happiness — or at least a child-like, selfie-intensive version of it — Mandalay Bay has a place for you: **Happy Place**, that is, 15,000-square feet offering 10 themed rooms for all the Instagram posts you could want; the hardest part is coming up with captions. (It will be open through February.) The staff, officially the happiest people in Vegas, hands you gummy bears and cookies. They also double as your personal photographer, and yes, they get all the angles. They guide you into a bright yellow room filled with gumballs and comically large shoes. There's a Cookie Room that actually smells like cookies, and an Upside-Down bedroom that defies gravity by really being upside down. Take photos in a Rubber Ducky Bathtub and with six-foot tall X's and O's covered in mirrored squares. I was underwhelmed by a plain black room with flowers hanging from the ceiling — until I climbed a ladder and was immersed in 40,000 handmade gold flowers. The final room is the backyard. In one corner is the world's largest confetti dome, perfect for a Boomerang. The other corner has a giant ball pit and slides, also perfect for a Boomerang. If some of this sounds a little cheesy, letting loose and being childlike for an hour made me happier than I expected it would, even if the price was—frowny face!—\$35. (Info: happyplace.me) **Hayleigh Hayhurst**

BOOK REPORT



In August, the *Paris Review* website published an essay titled “Lucky,” about a teenage Kansas farm girl who, in the 1990s, often visited Vegas with her gambling grandmother. “Walking up and down Fremont Street in the middle of the night, or near dawn, was the only real experience I had of urban life.” Though not a local, the writer’s cultivated some higher-order thoughts about the city: “The sense that a

game of chance asks or answers a private, wordless question, and that luck reveals our moral worth, is central to the magic of many modern things.”

Now that writer, Shannon Pufahl, is out with a novel, *On Swift Horses* (Riverhead Books), set partly in 1950s-era, rooftop-atomic-party Las Vegas — and in its gay underground, frequented by one of her protagonists, a closeted gambler named Julius. The story eventually moves beyond Vegas,

but while it's here, Pufahl deftly conveys the place, from a lyrical evocation of an A-bomb blast as seen from Downtown to the rhythms of casino culture to this sly aside: “The Mormons run a nice joint though they themselves are merely rumors.” At times her poetic license swamps reality — tourists can't see Lake Mead from their hotel rooms. But this is a print-the-myth city, and here's hoping she turns her eye to Las Vegas again. **Scott Dickensheets**

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ABOVE & BEYOND



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*Comparisons based on Section 179 and 168(k) of the Internal Revenue Code, which allows for the additional first year depreciation for eligible vehicles and reflect figures for owners who purchase vehicles for 100 percent business use and place vehicles in service by December 31, 2019.

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'Performers Actually Hit One Another'

R.U.N is an intense, action-driven departure from the Cirque du Soleil formula

BY **Mike Weatherford**

You walk from the Luxor box office onto a movie set, passing the steaming crashed car with the still-blinking taillight amid sirens and street sounds. The graffiti-lined corridor leading to your seat may remind you of Disneyland's immersive "hide the line" distractions. But this show *R.U.N* you are headed in to see?

"Disney wouldn't create a show like this," says director Michael Schwandt.

Cirque du Soleil is usually close to Disney in its audience appeal. But not this time. *R.U.N* trades in the pastel leotards and dreamlike acrobatics for costumes and action that are more, well ... "We use the word 'gritty' a lot, but that's a good descriptor for a lot of elements in the show," Schwandt says. "Some of the scenes are intense."

R.U.N does have valid comparisons to theme-park stunt shows, such as the long-running *WaterWorld* at Universal

Studios Hollywood. It pursues what creators call "a graphic novel aesthetic," to bring a comic book tone to the stage, complete with superimposed word balloons. But it's not branded to a movie or comic-book franchise, even as it draws inspiration from *Sin City*, the film by Robert Rodriguez, a *R.U.N* writer. And it isn't recommended for young children. "Aesthetically, our fights aren't superhero fights," Schwandt says. "People do get knocked out onstage and don't get back up. It's just a different tone altogether."

R.U.N marks Cirque's return to the Strip in a big way, after the recession and corporate changes at the Montreal-based company left Las Vegas with an imported show, *Zarkana*, in 2012 and the more modestly budgeted *Michael Jackson: One* in 2013. The big gamble here is giving *R.U.N* an original story, completely bucking the prebranded drift of both Hollywood and Broadway. But it is Cirque's most exciting creative risk in Las Vegas since *KÀ* in 2004, in terms of pushing live performance ➔



THE Hot Seat



(Film)

AN EVENING WITH RYAN COOGLER

UNLV ARTEMUS W. HAM CONCERT HALL

Coogler, director of the boundary-busting megahit *Black Panther* (as well as *Fruitvale Station* and *Creed*), will talk about his career and love for storytelling. **November 17, 7:30p, free (but tickets required), unlv.edu/calendar**

Arts, Crafts, and Gift Festival

You can knock out a bunch of your holiday shopping list — and highlight your own thoughtfulness! — with some handcrafted, one-of-a-kind gifts. **Texas Station, November 22-24, \$5, lvcrafts-hows.com**

(Talk) TIME CAPSULES

UNLV'S BARRICK MUSEUM

Consider the modest time capsule: a gimmicky handful of period-appropriate junk buried in the belief that a future generation will open it, marvel at said junk, and proclaim, *Those old-timers were pretty cool.* But in his talk "An Index to Our Civilization," University of Iowa history professor Nick Yablon will show us the dark underbelly of the time-capsule craze. **November 12, 7:30, free, unlv.edu/calendar**



Renowned filmmaker and artist Tim Burton premieres new digital and sculptural installations created specifically for the museum's unique campus.

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into a new hybrid of theater that's hard to even name.

"We're putting on a movie," says production designer Bruce Rodgers. Friends tell him they "feel like they're in a filmic experience."

That effect is partly achieved by turning the theater's side walls into a scaffolded "superstructure" covered by a scrim, allowing a switch from 240-degree film projections to views of live performers on the sets. "When you get a sense of scale of these sidewall projections, and how intricate and engineered these systems are behind it, you're really hit in the face with just how far Cirque is willing to go to blow people's minds," Rodgers says.

Cirque fans will see at least two more departures from past formula: The motorcycle jumps, guys set on fire, and martial-arts battles are part of a linear story, with Rodriguez in full *Sin City* mode as text and narrated "inner monologue" projects onto scrims in front of the action: "Bride: The plan went straight to hell." And the extended-chase mayhem — erupting from a wedding gone awry — unfolds in a near-future underground more resembling the cult-movie *The Warriors* than the fantasy realm of *KA*.

"Everything in the show has to be scripted and choreographed, because there are no (circus) acts," Schwandt says. Moreover, the fights and high falls have to be designed for repeatability. "You're not looking at it through a camera lens, so the stunts have to be believable from a full scope of vision ... There's a lot of positive contact, where the performers actually do hit one another to make it seem believable."

It's telling that Schwandt and Rodgers have more credits in special events and concert touring than traditional theater. Rodgers is working on his 14th Super Bowl halftime show.

"We're doing some things in here that no one has done before," he says. When *R.U.N* pulls off its coup de grace, combining projection mapping and live performance to create a car and motorcycle chase through the desert, "I think it's going to make everybody stand up and applaud." ♦

THE Hot Seat



(Visual Art)

DAYS, BY CHRISTOPHER MCNULTY

CSN'S ARTSPACE GALLERY

Having determined his life expectancy from an actuary, the artist has created works that attempt both to quantify the time he presumably has left — works that involve some 20,000 individual marks — and reflect on his own mortality. Hear more at his November 20 artist's talk. **November 8-January 29, free, csn.edu/artgallery**

(Seasonal)

A VERY ELECTRIC CHRISTMAS

CHARLESTON HEIGHTS ARTS CENTER

Imagine if every Christmas story unfurled on a dark stage with only one source of illumination — performers in costumes outlined in colorful, glowing lights. This electroluminescent razzmatazz is how Lightwire Theatre tells the tale of Max, a young bird separated from his family during a snowstorm, who ends up lost and alone at the North Pole. Don't worry! We predict a happy ending. **November 23, 2p, \$12.50-\$27, artslasvegas.org**

(Music)

TAUK

BROOKLYN BOWL

Somewhere in the fertile, groove-washed interzone between jam rock and guitar-forward jazz, you'll find Tauk, a driving four-piece from New York. That these guys aren't mere noodlers is signaled by the subject of their new album, *Shapeshifter II: Outbreak*, which is about the disruptive potential of artificial intelligence. So they go for your brain, but always get there through its pleasure centers. **November 12, 7p, \$18 and up, brooklynbowl.com/las-vegas**



Donut Fest Las Vegas Don't let

centuries-old pilgrim food choices dominate your November eating enjoyment!

This event offers sample donuts, plus beer, coffee, and more. Remember to pace yourself! **Hofbrauhaus, November 17, 1-5p, \$15-\$50, hofbrauhauslasvegas.com**

(Green Stuff)

CELEBRATING FRUITS OF OUR LABOR: A FALL GARDEN FAIR

SUMMERLIN LIBRARY

Calling all green-thumbs, black-thumbs, gardening newbies, and everyone in between. Along with organic produce for sale, this fall garden fair includes lectures exploring methods of growing, harvesting, and preparing crops in the desert. Rest assured, your gardening notebooks will be overflowing. **November 21, 11 a.m.-1pm, free, lvccld.org**

THEATER

Finding a Good Holmes

Vegas Theatre Company plumbs the identity and mythology of the world's greatest detective

“The setup is fantastic,” says Andrew Paul, director of Vegas Theatre Company’s production of *Holmes & Watson*. It’s been three years since Sherlock Holmes and his nemesis, Professor Moriarity, tumbled from Reichenbach Falls, locked in mortal combat, their bodies never recovered. Since then, Watson has regularly had to debunk the claims of men claiming to be Holmes. Now comes a strange summons: At a remote Scottish asylum, three inmates all say they’re the famous detective. Can Watson come take a look? “That’s the setup,” Paul says. “It’s already pretty titillating, right?”

Well, you’re thinking, what’s the problem? Just pick the one who looks most like Benedict Cumberbatch. The one whose head fits the famous deerstalker cap. You *do* know what Sherlock looks like, right, Dr. Watson?

But in the hands of playwright Jeffrey Hatcher, nothing is so elementary. An Arthur Conan Doyle fanatic — he’s written other plays about the detective, as well as the script for the film *Mr. Holmes* — Hatcher is intent on playing not only with the Holmes mythology, but with your perceptions of the character, many based

more on pop-culture interpretations than Doyle’s source material (for example, Holmes doesn’t wear a deerstalker in the books; a stage actor created that detail).

Thus, Paul says, as Watson jousts with the sanitarium’s mysterious boss and ponders the three very different would-be Holmeses (one who resembles the one we think we know, another who appears to have been homeless, the third deaf

and blind), the central question posed by the play is really this: How should Holmes and Watson be perceived? Must Holmes look like Benedict Cumberbatch or Basil Rathbone? Perhaps ... not? “All three lunatics should be plausible as some variation on Holmes’ personality,” Paul says. “So it’s tricky for the audience to figure out which one is actually him.”

But make no mistake: To whatever degree this is an inquiry into the mysteries of identity and how well we know — or think we know — others, it’s sleeved in a fast-paced, precisely timed, hairpin-turning, expectation-thwarting action-comedy. “It’s a straight thriller,” he says. “It’s also extraordinarily funny, and it becomes funny in ways you least expect it to. If you’re paying attention, there are payoffs for things you weren’t expecting. The key is not allowing the audience to have the time to breathe and think about it. You want it all to be happening so quickly in front of them that they’re not able to piece it together until it’s over.” **Scott Dickensheets**

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13

HOLMES & WATSON, by Jeffrey Hatcher, presented by Vegas Theatre Company, November 13-December 8, Art Square Theatre, \$25, theatre.vegas



WRITER IN RESIDENCE

Into the Gray with the Vegas Flippers

BY T.R. Witcher



Editor's note: In this six-column series, writer T.R. Witcher explores the issues around housing in Southern Nevada. This is the fifth installment. Read his other essays at desertcompanion.com.

FLIPPING ISN'T ROCKET SCIENCE

Your feelings about home flippers — the folks who snap up homes, make a bunch of largely cosmetic fixes, then sell them fast for a nice profit — may have less to do with the work they do and more with your own level of admiration for the swagger of entrepreneurs who see an opportunity to make a buck, take the risk, and, if lucky, reap the rewards. For some, flippers are vaguely distasteful, schemers perfuming rundown homes just enough to lure in an unsuspecting buyer. For others — certainly for the flippers themselves — they are unsung heroes transforming dilapidated 'hoods into desirable communities, one house at a time.

Jay Mirando always wanted to get into real estate. He worked as a dealer in Connecticut, and when the market crashed, he figured the place to be was Las Vegas, Phoenix, or Miami. You could buy a property and clean up. So he came here. It took him almost a year to find work as a dealer, but once he did, he bought an investment condo for \$74,000. He rented it out. Then he sold it for \$160,000. It was, he says, “a good day at the office.”

Mirando began flipping homes and eventually got his real estate license. Now he does 8-12 a year. It's not rocket science, he says. “Buy something for less than what it's worth, put some money into it, sell it for more than what it's worth.”

“Three years ago, flippers were huge, we were appreciating so rapidly,” says Janet Carpenter, president of the Greater Las Vegas Association of Realtors. “They could come in, put in a few repairs, and turn around and put money in their pocket.” That was when housing values were rising north of 7 percent each year. Now we've slowed to 3-5 percent. “The profit margin's not there.”

Most agree the stabilizing market is good for you and me — there's less risk

of entering an unsustainable boom. For flippers, though, it means there's less margin for error. A couple years ago, there were all sorts of homes available through foreclosures and short sales. Homes at auction. Homes at probate court. “If you went to the courthouse, there'd be 30 houses,” Mirando says. “Now there are three or four.” And 20 investors bidding on them.

Flippers fall along a spectrum. At one end are your amateurs, the weekend warriors who take on a job or two a year, who perhaps live in their homes and spend months lovingly restoring them. At the other are a handful of “volume” flippers, the pros of the game who do at least half of the roughly 2,500 homes flipped in Las Vegas a year.

One of those pros is Josh Galindo, owner



NEXT MONTH: Bringing it all back home

of the Galindo Real Estate Group. Galindo flipped his first home in 2008. Since then he has flipped between 650 and 750 homes. He says the changing market hasn't much affected his work. "Flipping is a business of chance. And it's controlled chance." He's used the same formula for buying homes since he began — he seeks an 8-10 percent margin per house, while allowing for a 10 percent margin of error on repair work.

The recent years of high-flying home valuation, he says, "created flippers who should have never been flippers. They didn't have to buy the property properly. They could just buy it at any price. The formula for flipping is to buy a home below market value; when a market is increasing that means you don't have to find as deep a discount" — because the home was increasing in value on its own. Now, not so much.

Or, as Mirando, who aspires to join the ranks of the volume flippers, puts it, "You can't bet on appreciation."

HARD KNOCK LIFE

THE TEXTBOOK FLIP is easy enough: Find a house with deferred maintenance in a rough neighborhood. Figure out the all-important "after-repair value," or ARV — the value of the house after you've fixed it up. Take 80 percent of the ARV. Subtract the costs of repairs. That's what you should pay for the house. So if you find a house for \$130,000 and put \$30,000 in, you want to sell it for \$200,000. A good rule of thumb for flips is 90 days, says Galindo: 30 days to renovate, 30 to market, 30 to close. After closing costs, you can make a tidy profit in a few months and move on to the next one.

Of course, there is no textbook flip. And while it all looks like a well-oiled machine for the top guys, there are risks. Flipped homes get broken into all the time. General contractors and work crews often nickel and dime you. And you usually have a good chunk of your own money on the line. Flippers often finance their deals with "hard money" loans — as in, hard to pay back — one year, high-interest, collateral-based loans, in which the only benefit for borrowers is that lenders don't care who the borrower is. They're great if

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you can renovate and sell a home in less than a year. If you can't? Unless you have deep pockets, you're screwed.

Some flippers find their houses the way the rest of do, on the Multiple Listing Service. But about half of home flips are found through wholesalers: individuals or firms who contact homeowners to see if anyone wants to make a deal. Maybe you've got a lot of deferred maintenance. Maybe you just need to get out of your house. If you've defaulted on your payments, expect to hear from the wholesalers (notice of default is public record). Or maybe they'll just call you cold — we're seeing more of that in Vegas as low-hanging fruit gets plucked.

The wholesalers need the homeowners to sell for less than the house is worth, and they're willing to pressure homeowners: *Your house is kind of falling apart, you won't get any better than what I'm offering you now.* Homeowners may think they're selling to the wholesalers, but the wholesaler is just the middleman linking home to flipper.

Wholesalers are like *Wolf of Wall Street* types selling penny stocks back in the '80s — ambitious and tenacious, sometimes unscrupulous. "These people prey on the elderly," Galindo says. "They'll watch the death records, so if the husband or wife dies, they'll go and attack that house. They'll prey on the uneducated. They're dangerous."

But if that's true, such practices reflect poorly on flippers themselves, who may profit on homes that were obtained through shady, though still legal, means. "It's kind of like the blood diamond thing," Galindo admits. "I didn't hire the labor in Africa to dig that out, all I did was buy it." But, ultimately, you're part of the system. But the reality is, everybody is doing legal business." He says he finds most of his inventory from MLS or on his own.

WHY SO GRAY?

FLIPPERS ARE VIEWED with skepticism because of the perception that they merely perfume the pig — slap a coat of paint on an aging house and put in new stainless steel appliances, all the while ignoring existing structural issues (especially in the vintage homes of the 1950s and 1960s) — so the buyer gets a nice-looking home that may have a bad roof or need a new sewer line.

The flippers contend that it's hard to hide structurally deficient homes from anybody — and Mirando argues the dry desert conditions of Las Vegas preserve

homes pretty well. (But if you're buying a flip in Downtown, make sure your agent is experienced in dealing with older homes.)

The bigger issue with flippers is aesthetic. If you peruse the listings on Redfin or Zillow, you can easily spot the flipped homes. They're gray. The walls are gray. The faux wood floors are gray. The carpet is gray. The fixtures are white or black. The kitchen cabinets are white Shaker. There is invariably no landscaping in the backyard.

Gray is easy. It's neutral. It's cheap. And the resulting flipped home feels much the same, equal parts polished and phony. It feels like you're getting a great deal on a sweet custom crib in some up-and-coming neighborhood. But there's more choice at your KB Homes design studio.

Realtor Steve "Downtown Steve" Franklin recently threw a little shade at the flipping industry on Facebook: *As the real estate market has cooled a bit, it's nice to see flipper homes ... with their bland sameness flips ... sitting on the market longer. I am seeing their places lingering for months ... even after multiple open houses and price reductions. I like to see them get stung ever so slightly with their soul sucking flips. Y'all can leave, I think we have enough granite countertops, laminate floors, and useless gravel back yards now.*

When I asked him to elaborate, he credits flippers with saving vacant houses after the crash, houses that were being destroyed by squatters. But he contends flippers working Downtown should restore homes, inside and out, preserving their vintage details, and not rehab homes, where you wipe the slate clean. "You're entering a market in Las Vegas that is unique," he says. "Take that into consideration, and maybe change your formula to mirror what people are coming down here for."

I asked Galindo and Mirando about all the gray. Galindo puts it this way: "What the consumers have to realize, a flipper's job isn't to deliver an HGTV product that has these incredible designer finishes. At its core, the flipper's job is to deliver a clean, updated, move-in ready home." So you go with whatever inoffensive style is on trend.

Still, he prides himself on tailoring his interiors to the markets — muted mochas and cappuccinos for seniors in Sun City Summerlin, something livelier for first-time homebuyers in Spring Valley. He wants to make sure the next buyer will get five years of use out of it.

As for Mirando, he says he's changing his gray ways after he realized one of his

clients didn't much care for the color. She liked homes with more personality. Gray is a solid palette, but it has no soul. "It doesn't feel like a home," he says. "It feels like a hotel room." He's looking to warm up his color palette.

BEYOND THE FLIPPERS

BETWEEN THE FLIPPERS and the large home or apartment developers, there may be space for smaller, "micro" homebuilders to flourish. Ed and Shelly-Ann Weigert moved to Vegas five years ago from New York. They had done some home flips back East, and they tried a few here, as well. "I know both sides, the architecture and the building side," Ed says. "Why don't I do this from scratch?"

Ed went to work for luxury contemporary home developer Blue Heron; Shelly-Ann is a nurse. They flipped some homes in their spare time. Ed handled the construction, Shelly-Ann the interior design.

But they were more interested in really getting into the bones of the homes they were fixing up. "A lot of these flippers, they hide something behind the wall. We can't cover something up," Ed says. "Houses in worse shape are easier — it's better for us, because it's all coming out."

"If it smells like mold and cats, we'll take it," Shelly-Ann adds.

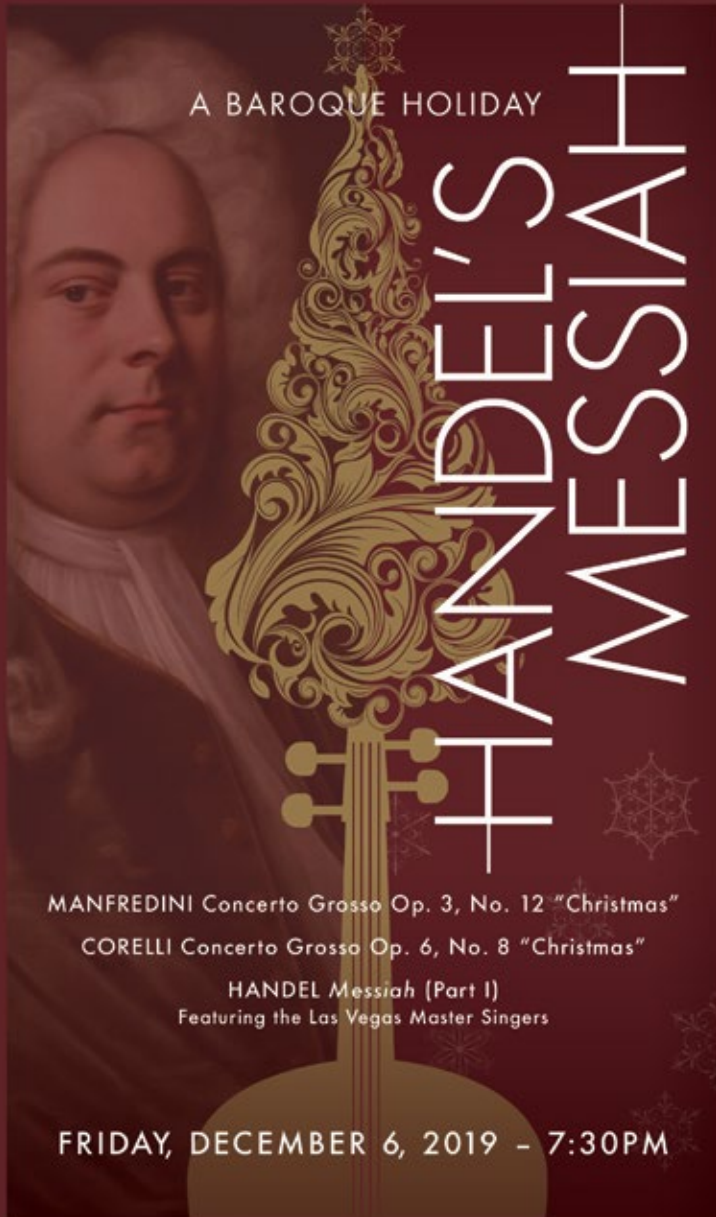
A few years ago, while working on a place in the Huntridge neighborhood, they realized that it might be better to tear down a distressed home and build something new. There is no shortage of clunker homes in Downtown. They bought an old house on Yucca, knocked down everything save the concrete foundation, then went to work. They designed a new, energy-efficient modern home — think of it as Blue Heron lite — and sold it for \$325,000, for a profit of about \$40,000 after closing costs.

That's not a steal, but it is a house every bit as affordable and new, and more stylish, than homes on the edge of town. Maybe it is a steal.

What the Weigerts represent is a new vision for Downtown Las Vegas, where tear downs are not common: a more contemporary design language, more unique than flips, but not so large or outscaled that it feels like a McMansion. They are hoping to move full-time into new-home builds like this over the next couple of years and already have a name for their business: Halcyon Homes of NV. "Vegas gave us so much," Shelly-Ann says. "I want to give back."

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ON THE SIDE OF THE ANGELS?

THE DEMAND IS there. For some it's an affordable(ish) way to get into a solid(ish) home that they might not otherwise be able to swing. A generation of homebuyers weaned on HGTV wants to try living in a flipped home (if not trying to fix it up themselves). In Downtown, people can grab a flipped home because they're drawn to the allure of urban living, Vegas style; the house's bones may not be in the greatest shape, but the interior looks up to date. Maybe that's enough.

GLVAR president Carpenter puts it this way: The average homebuyer has no imagination. They can't walk into a distressed home and see the possibilities. So the flipper does them a service. "They have to see it already done, and they fall in love."

Mirando has no doubt the flippers are on the side of the angels every bit as much as they are the angles. He knows that there's value when you take one house — a house so bad even the squatters won't stay — and you fix that house, and then maybe that one house turns the block around, and that one block may turn a whole neighborhood.

I asked Carpenter if she was aware of a single home flip turning around a neighborhood. She responded emphatically: No. But Mirando and Galindo both contend flippers have helped improve neighborhoods from Maryland and Russell to Charleston Heights.

Speaking about the 'hood around Sandhill and Tropicana, Galindo says, "I would say the flipping industry of this city has singlehandedly revamped the entire area." He goes on: "Every time we stamp our foot across the valley that's one more home that's going to stay filled with somebody who cares about it for 5-7 years, further stabilizing neighborhoods. We're huge. We're the carp in the lake, cleaning it up."

I asked Mirando what makes him most satisfied. He likes the rush of a good deal. He likes helping out somebody who's trying to get into a home. But, no lie, he really likes the money. He wants to get into that high-volume world of 40-50 a year. Then he wants to get into commercial — because you can do cooler stuff there. Like the Starbucks we're sitting in near the Silverton off Blue Diamond. It looks like a high-end ski lodge in Aspen. Now those are some dope finishes inside.

Flipping homes is a way to keep upping his own game.

"I like leveling up in life." ♦

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KINGS OF THE NORF

Often dissed and dismissed, North Las Vegas has an export it's proud of: a distinct brand of hip-hop

BY **Zoneil Maharaj**



When Trade Voorhees opens a concert, he and his North Las Vegas cohort become the main event. A crowd at least fifty strong — composed of other rappers from the “Norf,” as they call it, along with friends, relatives, girlfriends, and weed dealers — rushes to the front, some climbing onstage to become impromptu hypemen, singing along to every word and ad lib that Trade drops in his signature style of disaffected, deadpan amusement. It feels like a championship team’s homecoming, minus the ticker tape parade. The room is filled with booming cheer; fans are flailing. Trade’s their MVP.

Then it turns into a North Las Vegas all-star showcase: Rob Falco might join Trade for “Black Bag.” Jerry Shinefield might jump up — shirtless in a leather jacket, his trademark look — to perform his rowdy track “Pretty Ugly” alongside Thelonius Gawd and Trade: “Stupid how the function get / Damn they gon’ love this shit.” Elbows fly and bodies lunge in a mosh pit that’s equal parts sweat and PBR. For all its raw energy, “Pretty Ugly” might be the unofficial anthem of the Norf’s hip-hop.

If North Las Vegas is an underdog city — dismissed as either faceless

suburbs or stereotyped as gang-ridden ghettos — North Las Vegas hip-hop is its subversive soundtrack. It’s rebellious, ram-bunctious, a little goofy, and raw. But proud.

“We built our shit from the ground up,” says T.Rabb, another North Las Vegas hip-hop artist on the rise. “We didn’t get any opportunities.”

Consider Trade Voorhees — far from the first hip-hop artist from North Las Vegas, but one of its earliest successes. An obsessive fan of horror movies and Halloween, he raps in a surprisingly musical, stoned slacker drawl about everything from B-movie murder fantasies to the pleasures of pumpkin-carving. (“I’m not scary/ But clearly I love Halloween and horror flicks /

KILLER RHYMES

Trade Voorhees’ dark, funny, satirical style has become a signature sound of North Las Vegas hip-hop.



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NORTHERN EXPOSURE

Rap rivalries are inevitable, but a shared North Las Vegas pride takes precedence, says Big Homie Stone. “The rap game is one separation from family.”

No, I’m no freak show and I’m not gonna kill my chick/ So can you quit with the asinine questions, ideas, and suggestions?/ God, I send my blessings.”) His sound caught traction during the blog-rich days of the mid-aughts Internet.

“I’ll probably be buried in North Las Vegas,” says Trade. It’s part resignation, part pride. Born Stephan Perren, Trade grew up obsessed with metal, hip-hop, and (as you might guess from his stage name) slasher flicks. It made for a style of his own, one bolstered by North Las Vegas. He moved there at 16, and quickly fell in with the kids at the now-defunct Bueno Park, which they dubbed Steez Park. It was a playground for misfit teens — skaters, rappers, gangbangers, and nerds all hanging out, united by one fact: There was nothing to do in North Las Vegas other than slap box, shoot skate videos, and drink stolen beer.

The cultural diversity made for sonic diversity. While Las Vegas’ west side was known for its gangster rap and the east side was known for its slick-talking hustlers, the North Las Vegas sound was a mixed bag, heavily influenced by skate and Bay Area hip-hop culture.

“We were a ragtag bunch of rascals that

were just trying to find the party the next night,” Trade says. In those days, his crew listened to a lot of “hyphy” rap — a hyperactive style of Bay Area hip-hop with minimal, whimsical beats anchored by heavy bass. It wasn’t very popular outside of Northern California, but Trade latched on to it. “For us, it was like a party drug,” he says. Some of that influence is apparent in North Town’s rap roster. You can catch hints of it in Jerry Shinefield’s unhinged performances or LeRoyCHOPS’ animated delivery.

But make no mistake: “Trade is the godfather,” says 27-year-old rapper G.Reed.

Much of Trade’s early music was a mirror of those years. His 2009 track “Driving By Myself” is about going to Steez Park and having everyone try to hitch a ride. “It was so common for motherf---ers to hop in. There’s six skateboards and motherf---ers who smell like garbage,” Trade says with a laugh. “I still make songs about that park.” The skate park gave them something to do, but hip-hop gave them unity. “What made North Town dope is that we’re a fruitful group. We all do something different, we all have a different walk of life,” Trade says. They all came together

to make music, with Trade laying down production for North Town’s budding rappers the way Kanye West unlocked

Chicago’s sound.

But being the godfather doesn’t mean Trade’s raking in money. He’s been at it for more than a decade, and his rewards — fulfillment, respect — are largely intangible.

“Chasing the dream can be crushing the older you get. Slowly, you start to see this dying light in people,” Trade says from his home studio, decorated with painted Friday the 13th masks, and crowded with shelves of vinyl, drum machines, synthesizers, and instruments. During rap’s blog era, his releases would appear next to now-ubiquitous names like Wiz Khalifa, Big Sean, and Mac Miller. Now, Trade’s lucky to get a few thousand streams.

“There’s days where I won’t even come to this room because the grayness has got to me. I see my friends losing their imagination, and all I think about is chasing my imagination so I don’t lose it.” Acknowledging the fact that his music won’t make him millions, Trade’s become more creative than ever. He’s incorporating more live instrumentation in his work, and even

made a punk album by himself. He thinks of his newer music as Frank Zappa-esque, kooky and satirical. “I don’t have to hold my tongue for anybody,” he says. “Who is everybody anyway? F-ck ‘em.”

THE ‘F’ IN NORF

THERE’S A MOMENT in the Norf’s lore when the distinction between North Las Vegas rappers and everyone else was made. It was in March 2011, during a hip-hop showcase starring rappers from throughout the Valley at the now-defunct Daddy Mac’s in Henderson. It was packed with about 150 or so people. Almost every Las Vegas ‘hood was in that building, those at the show recall. “All the different sets (were there), and then this skinny black dude gets on stage and starts screaming ‘North Town!’,” Trade says.

“It just had that energy that any second some shit could pop off,” says Terry Rabb, aka T.Rabb, the emcee onstage that night. T.Rabb chose to end his brief set with his song, “Norf Town.” (He put the “f” in “Norf” as a way to distinguish the music from the gang culture, as “North Town” was

shorthand in the streets for “North Town Gangster Crips.”) The song begins with a chant of “Norf, Norf, Norf,” followed by the war cry, “Nooorf Tooown” over sinister keys and brooding bass. “The whole crowd was going crazy in the most positive, uplifting way,” Trade recalls. When Rabb left the stage, the crowd was still shouting “Norf Town.”

“The DJ couldn’t play anything else, so he played the track again,” Rabb says. Given the makeup of the audience — fans and rappers from every part of the city, representing different loyalties and groups, many of them enemies — it was a gamble. Rabb got messages on social media the next day telling him he was lucky he made it out of the venue. But he was more than alive; he was victorious. From that day on, the Norf was recognized as a musical force. “Rabb changed the perception from gangs to bars (lines of lyrics),” G.Reed says. “He was the first person to wear the North on his back.”

Rabb didn’t sound like anyone else, in

Vegas or elsewhere. A cerebral lyricist with haymaker punchlines, he fills his raps with sports references and effortless swagger. Though he isn’t flashy, he’s fashionable, often in a pair of Jordans, washed denim jeans, and T-shirt emblazoned with “North Town.” If Trade embodied the Norf sound, Rabb solidified and marketed the brand.

“No one wanted to be from North Las Vegas,” Rabb says. “Whenever I told people I was from North Las Vegas, they’d treat me like I was from the slums.”

Rabb took outsiders’ vitriol and turned it into a sense of pride, into something that belonged solely to them. Soon, almost every rapper in North Las Vegas was on board. They

became their own support network, appearing on each other’s projects, and putting on shows themselves. “Our whole thing was: whoever is on, he’s the man right now. If you’re performing, everybody’s gonna pull up,” Rabb says. “When other people would perform, we wouldn’t get on. We got that

.....
“We got that mentality that it was us against the world. It just turned into North Town or nothing.”

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mentality that it was us against the world. It just turned into North Town or nothing.”

Though some of his peers his age have put music on the backburner, 28-year-old Rabb is not going anywhere. He’s released a string of singles over the last year, with a new project, *Relentless*, in the works. “In my eyes, North Town still run this rap shit,” he says. “We’ve had more influence over this scene than anybody.”

THE NEW WAVE

RABB’S GENERATION LAID the groundwork. Those building on it are taking it to the next level — that is, exporting the Norf sound to bigger and broader hip-hop channels.

North Town runs through Ty Henderson’s blood. Better known as Toxsikk, he’s the son of Vocabb and younger brother of S-U-Preme — and one of the Norf’s biggest lyrical exports. A regular at media company Team Backpack’s live events, Toxsikk’s freestyle battles garner hundreds of thousands of views and spark hundreds of comments in debate. Onstage and on records, he’s a force. At 6-foot-3 with a hoop in his nose and long, thick dreadlocks, he looms over opponents — just making his rap-battle opponents lower the mic stand is belittling. He’s a bull of an emcee, and every line is a horn to the gut. “I’m about to open the morgue and open the door / and pick up these rappers all over the floor,” he spits in a recent freestyle clip. And at 24, he’s already a veteran, having started rapping at 10 and recording in his early teens.

“I was raised around a lot of gang bangers and street dudes. It was just wild sometimes,” he says. “I had to force myself to stay in the music to stay out of trouble.” His peers did the same. It gave rise to a tight-knit but highly competitive community. You had to stay sharp. “There’s no one in the North that’s mumbling and not saying anything,” he says.

Landry Williams, aka 24-year-old Impact RH, reps the Norf on all of his projects, with titles like *200 Miles Norf* and *Norf Pole*.

“We’re the only voice of North Las Vegas,” he says. His crew, Real Hits, is trying to make it known worldwide. CMPLX, a North Las Vegas producer who works closely with Impact RH, has secured major label placements, most notably with the song “Drama” by Canadian crooner Roy Woods and superstar Drake. Producer Blair Norf also puts on for the city — it’s right there in his name, a name linked to hip-hop heavyweights like Freddie Gibbs and Curren\$.y.



RHYME SCHEME

T.Rabb embraces his North Las Vegas identity in his tracks. “We built our shit from the ground up,” he says.

Among the most promising new acts is long-haired stoner Russell Schoenbeck, better known as Wave MMLZ, an acronym for Make Music Live Zen. The 24-year-old is a production virtuoso who can make a beat out of anything. In a series of videos posted on Twitter, he roams his house for random sounds to sample, from the ripping of takeout menus to the *chk chk* of scissors. Wave got his start in music by playing drums in a metalcore band. He’d always loved hip-hop and wrote raps, but it wasn’t until he got tired of relying on others that he dove into hip-hop. With hip-hop, he could be the entire band himself. It was when he entered the hip-hop scene that he witnessed how much pride there was for his hometown.

“I saw it was cool to be proud of being from North Las Vegas,” Wave says. “I make it a point to say I’m from North Las Vegas, because not only is that where I’m actually from, it’s different from Las Vegas. It’s more of a community.”

That kinship runs deep. Kiari Cook, aka Big Homie Stone, grew up in the same neighborhood as Impact RH. He remem-

bers watching videos of the old Steez Park freestyle sessions and going to see Jerry Shinefield and Thelonius Gawd perform when he was 15. He even named his pit bull Norf. At 23, he’s among the youngest North Las Vegas exports, blending the North Town OGs’ swagger with new-school aesthetics and getting hype on national blogs.

Stone looks at rap like a sport. After a brief falling out with Rabb last year, Stone fired a diss track at the self-proclaimed King of the Norf, but because of their community connections, the beef didn’t progress beyond that. “Me and him not family, but we consider some of the same people family. The rap game is one separation from family,” Stone says.

Stone still shows Rabb the utmost respect. He recently got in his car and heard Rabb on the speakers. Stone thought his phone automatically connected to the speakers via Bluetooth and played a Rabb track. Nope. Rabb was on commercial radio.

“That made me happy,” Stone says. “But that’s North Town. We’re always down for each other.” ♦



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FIELD NOTES

FRIENDQUEST!

How does a cynical, middle-aged homebody make friends in the digital age? A lot of swiping — in hopes of clicking

BY **Josh Bell**

I need friends.

I've always been an introvert and a homebody. I've never been particularly comfortable at clubs or large social gatherings. But that doesn't mean I'm a hermit. I like having friends I can go to concerts or see movies with, or talk with for a couple of hours over lunch, or get together with to play games. (I had a Dungeons & Dragons group in college.)

But how do you make friends in the 21st century? Real friends. The kind of friends you can share weird, dark inside jokes with. That's the kind of friendship I've always been drawn to. When I was in ninth grade, I came to school one day to find out that a fellow student had died in a car accident the night before, and nearly everyone at my relatively small private school was in mourning. Everyone, that is, except my friend Suneil and me. We didn't know the poor kid in question and spent the entire day making dark, horribly insensitive private jokes at his expense. That sounds callous, but our dark humor was our bond. Suneil helped me during some tough adolescent moments and went with me to some of the first concerts I ever attended, but I still remember stifling uncontrollable laughter at morbid jokes as a moment that cemented our friendship. That kind of friend.

Or the kind of friend who's a mentor you look up to. In my first job after college, I was a bit starstruck with my boss Jaime. She was just a few years older than me, but seemed so much more accomplished and confident. She'd already worked as an editor on multiple publications, and she was in charge of the entire arts and entertainment section of the alt-weekly where I was just a paid intern. I remember how excited I was when she invited me to her birthday party a few months after we started working together, and it felt like

an entrance into a secret clique of successful, artistic intellectuals.

At some point between graduating from college and staring down middle age, though, everything changed. My friends got older. They got married, started families, pursued careers, and sometimes moved away. I didn't exactly follow that path.

I'm 39, single, have no children, and I work at home. So, for me, friends are pretty much the only outlet I have for social interaction. Seeing old friends get married and raise families doesn't necessarily make me feel like I'm missing out, but I do feel a bit sad or isolated when someone who's been an important part of my life shifts their priorities and moves me lower down the list.

I've learned that you can't always relive the past. A few years ago, I planned to spend a weekend at the Ozzfest Meets Knotfest hard rock festival with Suneil, who lives in Southern California. It was the kind of thing we used to do together all the time, and plan our lives around for months in advance. The festival was held at the same venue where we saw Metallica together back in 1994, one of the first concerts either of us ever went to. He hadn't been to a concert in years, since before the birth of his twin daughters. I thought it would be a treat for him to get away for some nostalgic headbanging with an old friend.

When I arrived in town, he told me that he just couldn't get the time away from his wife and kids, even for a few hours. I ended up at the concert alone, and I actually skipped the second day to head home early. It was a stark reminder that this just wasn't part of his life anymore — that *I* wasn't part of his life anymore, at least not to the same degree.

I realized that if I wanted to continue to have friends, I needed to be proactive about making new ones. But how, at age 39? It suddenly seemed so hard.

And yet it seems as important as ever. In recent years, a number of studies have delivered alarming statistics about loneliness among adults. In 2006, the American Sociological Review reported that the percentage of Americans who said they had no close friends more than doubled between 1985 and 2004. A 2011 Cornell University study found that the average number of close friends among adults had shrunk from three to two in the past 25 years. A 2018 study by insurance provider Cigna reported an average loneliness rate of 44 among adults, on a range from 20 to 80, based on the UCLA Loneliness Scale. Just the fact that a major university has developed an official "loneliness scale" is distressing enough.



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FIELD NOTES

But there's no blueprint for making friends as an adult. Parents spend tons of time fretting about whether their children are making friends, but no one in adulthood is making sure that we're properly socialized. So how do I go about making a genuine new friend?

I went on a friendquest.

HELLO, MY E-FRIEND

I TURNED TO two online outlets. With the proliferation of dating apps like Tinder and Bumble, it was probably inevitable that someone would develop an app for making friends, and that's what Patook is. Launched in 2016, it's similar to the swipe-right/swipe-left system of Tinder, allowing users to match with each other and then exchange messages.

I also tried Bumble BFF, the friend-making platform of dating app Bumble. Unlike Patook, Bumble BFF only matches people with members of the same sex, and in my initial experience, its male user base was extremely small (like, the same three people over and over). There are other friend-making apps with varying reputations, including

Friendr, but most are designed for specific activities or interest groups. (Like Peanut for moms, or Athleto for athletes; I'm definitely neither, though.)

Although I was skeptical, almost immediately after I started using Patook, I met Megan, a writer and college English professor who'd recently moved back to Las Vegas and also worked a non-traditional schedule. We bonded over our shared interest in writing and our shared disdain for children, as well as the hazards of attempting to make friends online.

Patook has a strict (and somewhat creepily paternalistic) "no flirting" policy, which includes monitoring messages for innuendo, but it's not entirely reliable. Using a swear word (in a non-sexual context, really) got one of my messages blocked — only the app never notified me, which meant that Megan and I spent a few days each thinking the other had dropped our message thread. I had flashbacks to experiences of being ghosted on dating apps (or, to be honest, of ghosting other people).

When we finally met, we got along immediately, and our first coffeehouse meet-up

was the template for many more hours-long lunches in the future. We shared thoughts on writing (Megan is opposed to stories without happy endings), living in Las Vegas (I'm still trying to convince her to prefer it over Reno, where she lived for many years), and enduring the children of friends and relatives.

The only really awkward part of our first meeting was me having to literally ask at the end, "So, are we going to be friends?"

I came home to a Patook message from Megan promising that at no time did she feel uncomfortable or offended during our hang-out, which itself seems like an uncomfortable message to receive, but it was actually reassuring. We've been friends for more than two years now, and we still exchange updates and pointers about our mutual ongoing efforts to make more friends online (and sarcastic digs about other people's children).

PLEASED TO MEETUP YOU

I ALSO TRIED Meetup.com, an old-school web platform that predates MySpace and Friendster, even. But while those social networks have faded away, Meetup is still thriving,

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FIELD NOTES

now owned by co-working conglomerate WeWork. I joined a bunch of local groups with generic names like “Las Vegas Social,” hoping to cast a wide net.

As someone who deals with social anxiety, I found the prospect of going to a gathering full of strangers far more daunting than the prospect of meeting just one specific person for coffee. My early Meetup experiences were not great.

At one group’s monthly get-together designed for new members, I walked in the door of Atomic Liquors on a packed Saturday night, made one loop around the bar, finding no indication of which cluster of people was the Meetup group, and walked right back out.

Another group held a game night at Chinatown tea house Milk Teaze, where the servers are all dressed in lingerie. I spent an uncomfortable hour drinking iced tea delivered by a barista in her skivvies, and playing Cards Against Humanity with an ungainly number of people, many of whom seemed to know each other already. I made half-hearted conversation with the guy sitting next to me, but when a pair of group members decided to break out a game they

had designed themselves, I knew it was time to leave. I was looking to meet new people, not work as a beta tester.

At a Meetup for a movie lovers’ group, I bought a ticket to see a special screening of *Vertigo* at Regal Village Square. I sat through the movie, and never figured out whether any of the solo movie-goers or handfuls of people in the lobby afterward were part of the Meetup. After taking a break from Meetup, I eventually returned to find more positive experiences, including a meet-and-greet at Hearthstone that was actually friendly and welcoming, and a networking event sponsored by a local mortgage broker that was much more enjoyable than “networking event sponsored by a local mortgage broker” sounds.

Going back to Meetup also inspired me to give Bumble BFF another shot. I connected with another newly arrived writer, an early retiree who turned out to be more of an aspiring writer than a professional, and who spent much of our one coffee get-together complaining about his extended family. We did not become friends.

I’ve also got an eye on upcoming Meetups, and pretty much every time Megan and I

get together, we update each other on our friend-making progress. I wouldn’t say that making friends has gotten easier, but it does feel like less of a chore when I know there are other people out there attempting the same thing, and there are viable ways for us to connect with each other. I suppose it’s comforting to know that it’s awkward, weird, and tricky for everyone.

And I realize that *making* friends is just the first step. Friendships require time and effort to cultivate. This is easy to forget. I make sure to stay in touch with people, even if they leave town or have their lives consumed with spouses and kids. Instead of vague plans to get together eventually, I try to always pick a specific time and place to meet. I don’t mind putting in the extra effort for something that I’ve realized is important to me.

It may feel a little ridiculous at first to say this to a stranger online, or to someone you’ve just met at a contrived social gathering, or even to a work colleague or vague acquaintance, but with all the technology we have available now, there’s really no other way to do it: Let’s be friends. ♦

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VOCTAVE: Spirit of the Season

Tuesday, December 17, 2019 • 7:30 p.m.
\$50 • \$40 • \$30 • \$20

The chart-topping, Orlando-based, 11-member a cappella group Voctave helps start the holiday season with a program of season faves!

SÉRGIO & ODAIR ASSAD

Thursday, February 13, 2020 • 7:30 p.m.
\$35 • \$25

The Grammy®-winning Sergio & Odair Assad return to UNLV to help us celebrate 15 years of guitar artistry. *The Washington Post* writes that the brothers perform like "a sort of 'uber-guitar,' two instruments and one brain.



MNOZIL BRASS

Saturday, March 28, 2020 • 7:30 p.m.
\$50 • \$40 • \$30 • \$20

You've probably never seen anything like this before. Called "seriously funny," the seven brass players in Mnozil brass weave comedy, dance, and song into their performance.

EMANUEL AX

Friday, May 8, 2020 • 7:30 p.m.
\$50 • \$40 • \$30 • \$20

Few, if any, can match the piano artistry of award-winning Emanuel Ax. Celebrate Mom with this all-Beethoven program in honor of Beethoven's 250th birthday.



**Discount not valid on prior ticket purchases. You must purchase at least 4 tickets to obtain the discount and purchase tickets in groups of 4 (4, 8, 12, etc.) in order for the discount to apply. Discount offer expires on Wednesday, November 27, 2019.*

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{ 2019 holiday gift guide }

Built to Last

Forget disposable gifts and throwaway novelties. This season, give your loved ones gifts that keep on giving



Swarovski 25th Anniversary Ornament by Mariah Carey.

This brilliant blue tree ornament commemorates Mariah Carey's 1994 hit, "All I Want For Christmas Is You." \$89, [Swarovski in the Miracle Mile Shops](#)

Compiled by *Christie Moeller and Mya Constantino*

Le Creuset Signature Skillet

This kitchen mainstay has an expansive surface, superior heat retention, and ergonomic design for many a happy family meal. Starting at \$100, [Williams-Sonoma](#) [locations](#)



Zippo "Fight Fire with Fire" Brushed Brass Lighter

Keep the flame alive with this durable, classic lighter. Zippo has partnered with Woodchuck USA to plant a tree for every collaboration lighter sold. \$62.95, [REI](#) [locations](#) and [zippo.com](#)



Roxy Rocker Chair

This modern rocking chair will rock your world — for life. Local maker Onefortythree crafts these chairs from molded plywood in walnut, oak, teak, or cherry veneer. \$650, [Onefortythree](#) [in Fergusons Downtown](#) or [onefortythree.com](#)





TAG Heuer Aquaracer
This sports watch features a rotating bezel, a screw-down crown, luminescent hands, and a sapphire crystal — as well as a timeless look that never goes out of style. \$2,300, [TAG Heuer in the Forum Shops at Caesars](#)



Tiffany & Co. "Tiffany T" Circle Pendant This mother-of-pearl pendant traced with diamonds has a crisp, modern design with high shine and elegant luster. \$2,350, [Tiffany & Co. in the Forum Shops at Caesars](#)

Northwesterner No. 6 Made in Portland with waxed canvas, durable leather, and brass hardware, Wood and Faulk's Northwesterner bag is built to endure a lifetime (or two) of escapades. \$495, [woodandfaulk.com](#)



Cutlery Wrap Fill stockings with this eco-friendly cutlery alternative. This bundle features Bambu Living utensils, a stainless-steel straw, and straw cleaner. \$25, [minimalmarketlv.com](#)



Two-tray Desk Organizer Here's an inbox that won't make you cringe. This molded-plywood desk organizer has a steel frame and brass feet. \$150, [Onefortythree in Fergusons Downtown or onefortythree.com](#)

Holiday Jolly Days

THROUGH NOV. 30 & DEC. 7-JAN 4

Bellagio Conservatory & Botanical Garden

The installation at The Conservatory & Botanical Gardens showcases harvest and holiday displays. **24/7, free.** Bellagio, bellagio.com

NOV. 5

The 26th Anniversary Holiday Cactus Garden Lighting

Celebrate the lighting of more than a million lights with live entertainment, premium gifts, and hot chocolate. Please bring a new unwrapped toy donation to assist HELP of Southern Nevada or non-perishable food items for Three Square Food Bank. **5P, free.** Ethel M Chocolate Factory and Botanical Garden, 2 Cactus Garden Drive, Henderson, ethelm.com

NOV. 5-JAN. 5

Holiday Cactus Garden

More than 500,000 lights will be strung throughout the 3-acre garden. Stop inside for a chocolate sample! Visits from Santa every **Friday through Sunday, 5-10P, free.** Ethel M Chocolate Factory and Botanical Garden, 2 Cactus Garden Drive, Henderson, ethelm.com

NOV. 5-10

Jesus Christ Superstar

An iconic musical

phenomenon with a worldwide fan base comes to North America to celebrate its 50th anniversary with a new mesmerizing production. **2P and 7:30P showings, starting at \$40.** Reynolds Hall, The Smith Center, thesmithcenter.com

NOV. 8-JAN. 5

Glittering Lights Las Vegas and Santa Tram

Nevada's largest drive-through light show, this annual event showcases 1 million LEDs and more than 400 animated displays over 2.5 miles. **Sun-Thu 5:30P-9P; Sat and holidays 5-10P. \$20-\$75 per vehicle (season passes available).** Las Vegas Motor Speedway, glitteringlightslasvegas.com

NOV. 9

Holiday Vintage Market & Craft Sale

Start your holiday shopping with a variety of unique and original gifts. Discover bargains on clothes, toys, books, and other items. **7A, Free.** Silver Springs Recreation Center, cityofhenderson.com

NOV. 9

'80s Themed Best Dam Wine Walk Dress in all your '80s wear and stroll the historic downtown Boulder City streets while shopping and sampling a variety of wines along with tasty bites. **4pm, \$25.** Grace Christian Academy, visitbouldercity.com

NOV. 16

Henderson Stroll and Roll

Grab your skates,

skateboards, bikes, strollers, and feet for this car-free street fair packed with activities for all ages. Along the route enjoy music, live performances, interactive demonstrations, and health, fitness, and bicycle vendors. **10A, free.** Along Paseo Verde Parkway, cityofhenderson.com

NOV. 16

Opera Uncorked! Timeless Tunes with Exquisite Wines

Virtuoso pianist Alexandra Le joins OLV's spirited song-birds and troubadours in musical toast to some of the greatest drinking songs ever written, paired with fine wines from around the world. **6:30P, \$30.** Stinko's Floral Shop, 1029 S. Main St., Las Vegas, Nevada 89101, operalasvegas.com

NOV. 16

Henderson Fall Festival will feature a DJ, turkey "shoot," petting zoo, games, activities, and more! **5P, \$5** Downtown Recreation Center, cityofhenderson.com

NOV. 16

New Vista Brew's Best Craft Beer Festival The festival features unlimited samplings from both local and national breweries, select spirits, live entertainment, activities, and games. **2P, \$30-\$45.** Lake Las Vegas, brewsbest.com

NOV. 21

UNLV Wind Orchestra: The President's Concert UNLV Wind Orchestra presents "The President's Concert- Honoring America's Heroes."

7:30P, \$10. Artemus W. Ham Concert Hall at UNLV, unlv.edu

NOV. 23-DEC. 31

Cowabunga Bay Christmas Town

Featuring Christmas lights, a polar express train ride, a sledding hill, Santa's Cottage, and much more, Cowabunga Bay's Christmas Town is not to be missed. **Sunday-Friday 5:30P-9P, Saturday 5P-10P, \$25.** Cowabunga Bay, lasvegaschristmas-town.com

NOV. 26-DEC. 1

How the Grinch Stole Christmas Dr. Seuss' musical features the hit songs "You're A Mean One, Mr. Grinch" and "Welcome Christmas" from the original animated series. **Various showings, starts at \$30.** Reynolds Hall, The Smith Center, thesmithcenter.com

NOV. 29-JAN. 4

Magical Forest at Opportunity Village

Enter a winter wonderland with millions of sparkling lights, nightly entertainment, the Forest Express passenger train, Cheyenne's Enchanted Carousel, Boris the Elf's 3-D Experience, and so much more. **Sun-Thu 5:30-9P; Fri-Sat 5:30-9:30P, \$15-\$22, children 3 and under are free.** Opportunity Village, 6300 W. Oakey Blvd., opportunityvillage.org

NOV. 29 & DEC. 27

Last Friday — Just Add Water Street A foodie, arts, music, and crafts fair in Henderson's downtown area. **6-10P, free.** Henderson Events Plaza, 200 S. Water St., cityofhenderson.com



DEC. 5-14

Cowboy Christmas

From great shopping and interactive displays, to the Junior World Finals and Flint Rasmussen, there's something for everyone. **9A-5P, free.** Las Vegas Convention Center, nfrexperience.com

DEC. 5-15

Stetson Country Christmas

offers everything needed for a Western-themed Christmas. Enjoy live music, dancing, and other holiday festivities. Church services are offered on **Sunday**. **10A, free.** The Rio, countrychristmas.vegas

DEC. 6-8

Hansel and Gretel

This enduring creation features a scheming witch, a children's chorus and a ballet of angels — plus an amazing gingerbread house. **Dec. 6-7P, Dec. 7-2P, Dec. 8-2P, \$35 VIP & \$25.** Windmill Library Theatre, lvccld.org

DEC. 6-14

Nevada Conservatory Theatre: *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*

The classic novel by C.S. Lewis is brought to life as we follow Lucy, Edmund, Susan, and Peter on their adventures in Narnia. **Various times, \$28.** Judy Bayley Theater, unlv.edu

DEC. 6

Christmas Tree Lighting

is a perfect way to kick off this year's holiday festivities. Spend time with family and friends, drink hot chocolate, and enjoy the live music, all while watching the tree's dazzling lights. **6P,**



NOVEMBER 22, 23, 27, 29, 30

Mariah Carey - "All I Want for Christmas Is You" Mariah Carey, the iconic chanteuse and best-selling female artist of all time with over 200 million records sold, returns to The Colosseum at Caesars Palace this November with her Christmas concert series "All I Want for Christmas Is You" for five dates. **8:00P, starting at \$55.** The Colosseum at Caesars Palace, Caesars.com

free. Frank T Crowe Memorial Park, Boulder City, visitbouldercity.com

DECEMBER 6-8, 13-15 & 20-23

Holiday Express

Embrace the holiday magic with train rides to Santa's magical village and festive activities including photos with Santa, holiday crafts, cookie decorating, holiday stories, a nutcracker display, and more. **11A-7:15P, \$10 members; \$12 nonmembers; RSVP required.** Springs Preserve, springspreserve.org

DEC. 7

Doodlebug Bazaar Get all of your holiday goodies and gifts at the Doodlebug Bazaar. **9A, free.** Boulder City Recreation Center, 900 Arizona St., visitbouldercity.com

DEC. 7

Santa's Electric Night Parade Following the

Doodlebug Bazaar, Boulder City will be glowing for the grand entrance of Santa Claus, leading an old-fashioned Holiday parade. **4:30, free.** Historic District Streets.

DEC. 7

Great Santa Run Your registration for this fundraiser includes a full Santa suit, a medal, and the opportunity to be a part of the largest gathering of Santa's in the world! The race benefits Opportunity Village. **8A, \$40., Fremont Street, raceentry.com**

DEC. 13-14

WinterFest 2019 This year's theme is Fire & Ice and includes a variety of activities including the official tree lighting ceremony with Santa, craft vendors, entertainment, and a spectacular evening light parade. **5P, free.** Henderson Convention

Center & Events Plaza, 200 S. Water St., Henderson, cityof-henderson.com

DEC. 14

Ugly Sweater Best Dam Wine Walk

Get your awful holiday sweater judged as you taste wines and treats while enjoying the festive decorations all over town. **21+ only. 4P, \$25 individual, \$45 couple.** Downtown Boulder City, visit-bouldercity.com

DEC. 14

Las Vegas Classical Guitar Ensemble Holiday Concert

Relax with acoustic guitar music celebrating the holidays from the Renaissance to the present day. **3P, free.** Summerlin Library, lvccld.org

DEC. 14

13th Annual Night of Lights - St. Jude's Ranch for Children

Families will enjoy live entertainment, s'mores by the firepit, hayrides, cookies with Mr. and Mrs. Santa and reindeer games. **5P, \$10.** St. Jude's Ranch, 100 St. Jude's St., stjudesranch.org

DEC. 14

Jingle Bell Run

Raise funds and awareness for the Arthritis Foundation in the 5K, 10K, or 1-mile kids run. Runners receive jingle bells for their shoes and other goodies. **8A, \$25-\$75.** Tivoli Village, arthritis.org/Nevada

DEC. 14

Reindeer Dash

Don your best holiday apparel and jingle all the way down a 3.1-mile course (5K) along Pittman Wash

Trail. Afterwards, enjoy your favorite holiday music from a live DJ and visit with good old St. Nick. **Ages 5 and up. 8A, \$25-\$40.** Silver Springs Recreation Center, cityofhenderson.com

DEC. 15

Celebrate the Holidays with the Nevada Chamber Orchestra

Feel the magic and joy of the holiday season during this hour-long concert featuring festive holiday tunes and classical favorites. **3P, free.** Summerlin Library, lvccld.org

DEC. 15

Magical Forest Menorah Lighting Ceremony

Supporting the Jewish Family Service Agency, The Light of Life Menorah will stand alongside the Magical Forest's decorated holiday trees and installations. **5:30P, \$20+.** Opportunity Village, 6300 W. Oakey Blvd., opportunityvillage.org

DEC. 28-29

Kwanzaa 2019

A two-day celebration of African values, culture, and community. **10A, free.** West Las Vegas Library, lvccld.org

DEC. 31

Resolution Run

10K/5K/1M Get an early start to your New Year's resolutions. Finishers of this slightly hilly course receive a shirt and a medal. Walkers and strollers welcome. **12P, \$30-\$65.** Kellogg-Zaher Park, 7901 W. Washington Ave., tripledearers.com

The Gift of Giving

THESE CHARITABLE ORGANIZATIONS SEEK DONATIONS, VOLUNTEERS, AND OTHER SUPPORT THIS HOLIDAY SEASON.

ADULT DAY CARE CENTERS OF LAS VEGAS AND HENDERSON

As an alternative to expensive in-home care, this organization keeps your loved one home longer through visits, day centers, and social programs.

Needs: Donations, visits, entertainment, event planning, facilities support, and class leadership.
Volunteer: 702-648-3425, adulthoodcarelv.org

AID FOR AIDS OF NEVADA

AFAN provides medical case management, medical transportation, education, prevention, housing, and nutritional services for adults and children affected by HIV/AIDS. **Needs:** Host a holiday fundraising event. **Volunteer:** 702-382-2326, afanlv.org

BABY'S BOUNTY

This group provides new and gently used infant clothing and gear to babies born to victims of domestic abuse, teen mothers, and low-income families.

Needs: Help with collecting, sorting, cleaning; help with clerical work; and preparing clothing donations. **Volunteer:** 702-485-2229, babysbounty.org

BEST BUDDIES NEVADA

Best Buddies International works to enhance the lives of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities through socialization programs, job coaching, and tools in leadership development. **Needs:** Donate money and office supplies; assist with special events; become a "Buddy" to offer mentoring, friendship, or jobs to persons with IDD. **Volunteer:** 702-822-2268, bestbuddies.org/nevada

BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS OF SOUTHERN NEVADA

BBBS is a mentoring network that provides children facing adversity with professionally supported, positive relationships.

Needs: Donate toys, volunteer as "Bigs" who are interested in playing sports, hiking, reading, and other fun events with their "Littles."
Volunteer: 702-731-2227, bbbsnv.org

BLIND CENTER OF NEVADA

BCN assists the blind and visually impaired by focusing on personal development, social interaction, and meaningful employment. **Needs:** Assist with various daily programs and activities. **Volunteer:** 702-642-6000, blindcenter.org

BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF SOUTHERN NEVADA

Club programs and services promote and enhance the development of boys and girls by instilling a sense of competence, usefulness, belonging, and influence. **Needs:** Volunteer at a local club. Each location has its own needs. **Volunteer:** 702-367-2582, bgcsnv.org

CATHOLIC CHARITIES OF SOUTHERN NEVADA

The charity provides counseling services, services to pregnant women, immigration legal assistance, transitional housing, aid to low-income families, and a food bank. **Needs:** Frozen turkeys, nonperishable food, hygiene items, winter clothes, volunteers to serve the Community Meal, prepare Meals on Wheels, help in the Hands of Hope Community Food Pantry, or tutor in the English Language Program. **Volunteer:** 702-405-0597, catholiccharities.com

GOODIE TWO SHOES FOUNDATION

The organization provides disadvantaged children and children in crisis with new shoes and socks as well as other items deemed essential for good health and positive development. **Needs:** Volunteers to help participating children in selecting new shoes and socks. **Volunteer:** 702-617-4027, goodietwoshoes.org

HEAVEN CAN WAIT ANIMAL SOCIETY

Heaven Can Wait works to eliminate companion animal suffering and pet overpopulation through aggressive spay/neuter programs, adoptions, community outreach, and education. **Needs:** Work tables at events, write for various publications, assist in

fostering, adoption programs, administrative work, and clinical work.

Volunteer: 702-655-4800, hcws.org

HELPING HANDS OF VEGAS VALLEY

A nonprofit providing free assistive services to senior citizens in Southern Nevada, allowing them to maintain their dignity and independence while improving health and daily living.

Needs: Drive seniors to their appointments, help coordinate food drives, administrative duties, and assist with the food pantry and delivery services—bilingual volunteers particularly needed. **Volunteer:** 702-507-1850, hhovv.org

HELP OF SOUTHERN NEVADA

HELP assists the poor, the homeless, and those in crisis to receive emergency services and holiday gifts through its three signature programs: Adopt-A-Family, Turkey-A-Thon, and Toy Drive/Holiday Assistance. **Needs:** Host a donation drive, sponsor an event, assist in events planning and execution, adopt a family. **Volunteer:** 702-369-4357, helpsonv.org

JEWISH FAMILY SERVICE AGENCY

JFSA supports people of all backgrounds by providing professional social services including counseling, senior services, adoptions, and emergency assistance. **Needs:** Help with daily administrative tasks, the food pantry, driving seniors, and events held throughout the year. **Volunteer:** 702-732-0304, jfsalv.org

LAS VEGAS VALLEY HUMANE SOCIETY

The Humane Society is dedicated to improving the welfare of animals, particularly those that are stray or abandoned. **Needs:** Foster or



sponsor an animal, assist with transport rescues, socialize with cats, assist in fundraisers, help with administrative work, and donate cat food, or toys. **Volunteer:** 702-434-2009, lvvhumane.org

LAS VEGAS RESCUE MISSION

The Las Vegas Rescue Mission provides people in need with shelter and services without regard to religion or origin. During the holidays, it provides children with Christmas gifts as well as food. **Needs:** Help serve meals, sort and price items for the thrift store, assist in toy and food drives, and mentor recovery clients. **Volunteer:** 702-382-1766, vegasrescue.org

LUTHERAN SOCIAL SERVICES OF NEVADA

LSSNV provides professional social services to people of all backgrounds, including counseling, senior services, adoptions, and emergency assistance. **Needs:** Assist with assembly and distribution of holiday baskets; help with the emergency services food pantry,



office tasks, maintenance at housing units, and participate in children's toy and clothing drive. **Volunteer:** 702-639-1730, lssnv.org

PUBLIC EDUCATION FOUNDATION

The PEF offers literacy programs to children and families. **Needs:** Tutor students in reading, help with general clerical work, pick up and deliver books. **Volunteer:** 702-799-1042, thepef.org

TOYS 4 TOTS

This program run by the U.S. Marines collects new, unwrapped toys and distributes them as Christmas gifts to needy children. **Needs:** Gather toy and financial donations; help with the transportation and storage of donated toys; assist in the warehouse; help with meals. **Volunteer:** 719-317-4336, las-vegas-nv.toysfortots.org

NEVADA PARTNERSHIP FOR HOMELESS YOUTH

NPHY provides youth services, including street outreach, 24-hour crisis intervention, a full-time drop-in center, and an independent living program. **Needs:** Donate food, clothing, hygiene items, school supplies, and other needed items; assemble and distribute sack

lunches; assist with clerical tasks; help in the food pantry and clothing closet and assist in annual "It's a Wrap" holiday block party. **Volunteer:** 702-383-1332, nphy.org

OPPORTUNITY VILLAGE

OV helps people with severe intellectual and related disabilities seek independence by providing vocational training, community employment, day services, advocacy, arts programs, and social recreation. **Needs:** Work with men and women with intellectual disabilities; assist with various events. **Volunteer:** 702-888 3377, opportunityvillage.org

THE RONALD MCDONALD HOUSE OF GREATER LAS VEGAS

Ronald McDonald House Charities provides lodging, transportation, and support to families while their children receive medical treatment. **Needs:** Become a Family Room host at Sunrise Children's Hospital; assist in the office; deliveries; cleaning and maintenance; decorate lunch bags and caring cards; gift wrappers, holiday meal cooks. **Volunteer:** 702-252-4663, rmhlv.com

SAFE NEST

Safe Nest provides emergency and legal services, safe housing, and long-term

counseling to victims of domestic violence and abuse. **Needs:** Donate gently used household items; donate funds **Volunteer:** 702-821-2736, safenest.org

THE SALVATION ARMY

Offers adult rehabilitation, emergency disaster relief, victim and veteran services, and youth programs. **Needs:** Sponsor and assist with toy drives, food drives, and Christmas Angel Tree programs; participate in the Adopt-a-Kettle program through the holidays. **Volunteer:** 702-870-4430, salvationarmy-southernnevada.org

THE SHADE TREE

The Shade Tree provides a safe shelter for homeless and abused women and children in crisis, and offers services promoting stability, dignity, and self-reliance. **Needs:** Help prepare and serve meals; activities with children; organize arts projects; provide transportation; sort donations; and assist with special events. **Volunteer:** 702-385-0072, theshadetree.org

SPREAD THE WORD NEVADA

The goal of Spread the Word Nevada is to promote early literacy by giving books to children in at-risk, low-income communities. **Needs:** Help prepare books, become a mentor or reading companion at an elementary school, assist with Breakfast/Snack Time with Books programs and at community events. **Volunteer:** 702-564-7809, spreadtheword-nevada.org

ST. JUDE'S RANCH FOR CHILDREN

SJRC works with abused, neglected, and at-risk children and young adults through residential foster care, transitional living, housing, services for

homeless 18-25-year-olds, child-focused sibling preservation, emergency placement, and child nutrition programs. **Needs:** Volunteers in the thrift store and mailroom; help with maintenance of the grounds and buildings; decorate for community holiday events, and donations. **Volunteer:** 702-294-7100, stjudesranch.org

THREE SQUARE

Provides wholesome food to hungry people while passionately pursuing a hunger-free community. The Backpack for Kids program provides Clark County schoolchildren in need with bags of nourishing food for after school, weekends, holidays, and school breaks. **Needs:** Donate funds; package meals for school programs; help out at special events; box meals for the Senior Hunger Program. **Volunteer:** 702-644-3663, threesquare.org

VA SOUTHERN NEVADA HEALTHCARE SYSTEM

The US Department of Veterans Affairs honors America's veterans by providing exceptional health care that improves their well-being. **Needs:** Donate new clothing and hygiene items, help transport patients to medical appointments, and assist with admin duties. **Volunteer:** 702-791-9134, lasvegas.va.gov


YMCA

The YMCA provides personal and social change through Christian principles and opportunities to learn, grow, and thrive side-by-side regardless of age, income, or background. **Needs:** Help with holiday events, coach sports teams, teach classes, monitor activities and fundraise. **Volunteer:** lasvegasyymca.org





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THE FOUND ISSUE



• **ONE OF THE** many toys from the lost and found at Discovery Children's Museum. The lost and found sees a steady stream of toys, pacifiers, jackets, and even the occasional stroller.

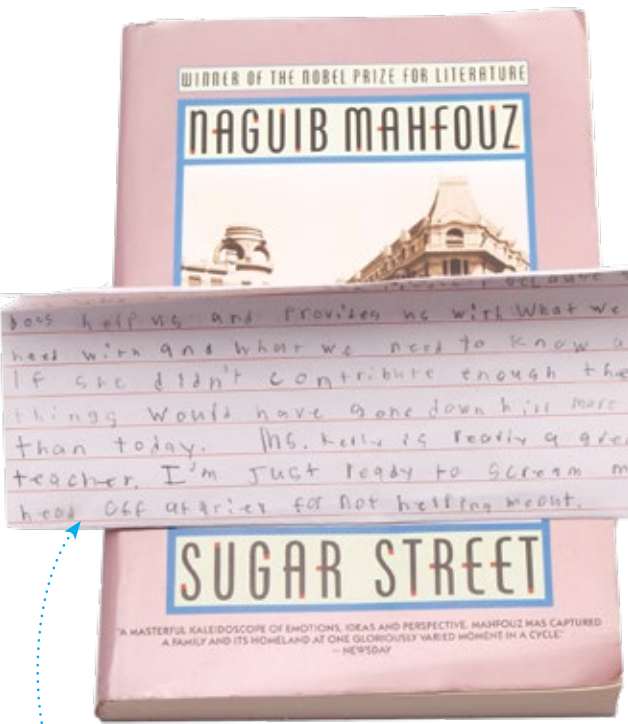
A few years ago, I found \$40 on the floor of a sandwich shop in Henderson. My first thought, of course, was *Free sandwich!* Second thought: *I should turn this in, in case the person who lost it comes back.* That's the one I ultimately heeded. But it was my third thought, admittedly zany — *What if this is some hidden-camera special in which TV jerks try to gauge the honesty of ordinary people?* — that's relevant here, because it was the only one that wondered where the money came from. Why here, why now? What's the story? Who lost it, and how much do they miss it? I began to imagine a father frantically frisking himself for the two twenties he set aside to buy his kid's birthday present, but that's just me.

This urge to affix bits of speculative significance to random stuff animates the pages that follow. A letter in a book, a flier in a closet, a wedding album in a thrift store, even a discarded carton of milk — each offers its own grabby narrative nub. Together the items and stories gathered here begin to concatenate into a richly suggestive scroll of scenelets about life in Las Vegas.

This is a great city for finding things, since our tidal surges of visitors mean an ever-changing tableau of the lost and tossed. So much is abandoned here. And the anticipatory tingle of finding something potentially cool or enigmatic will be familiar to anyone who's played one of our games of chance: the possibility that life's randomness will, however briefly, assume a fortunate shape, and pay off with an unexpected new experience. A glimpse into another life, maybe. Or, as you'll see, sometimes into your own. **Scott Dickensheets**

THINGS LOST, STORIES FOUND

These notes, letters, and found objects tell distinctly Nevadan stories — some sad, some funny, some just kinda weird



WHILE PARTICIPATING IN a beach cleanup at Six Mile Cove on Lake Mohave with Litter Free LV, I mainly cleaned up beer bottles, but up a hill from the water I came across this gun ... well, half of a gun. It was in an odd location since there was not much to shoot at, but it looks like it may have been there a while. **Hayleigh Hayhurst**

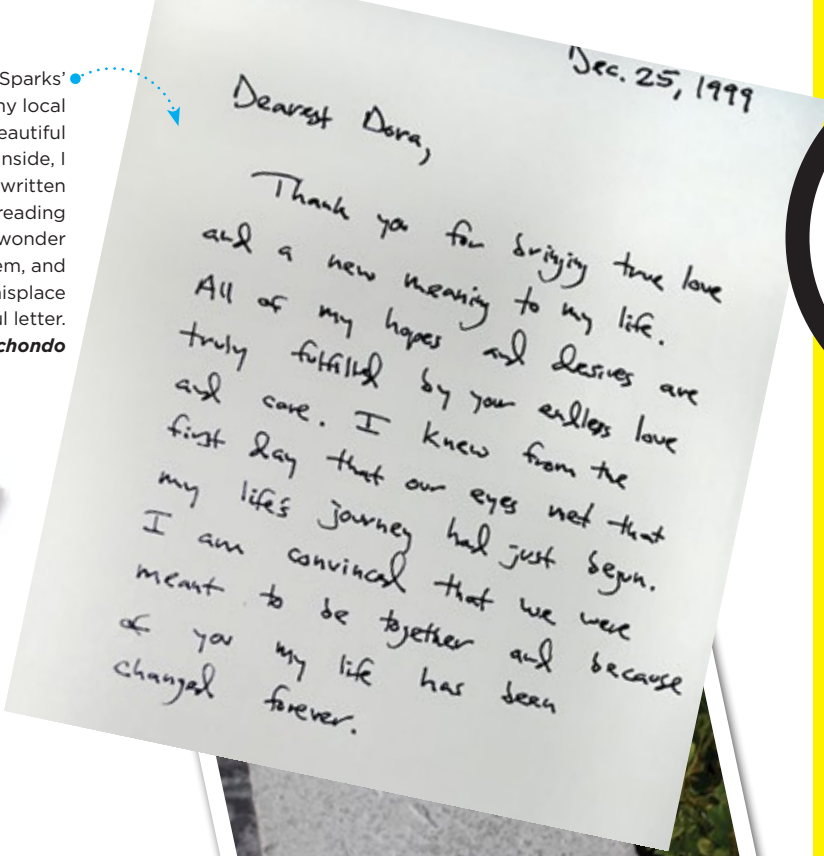


I VISIT THE old Las Vegas dump site on the far east side of town to find these beautiful mutants. These old glass and ceramics were warped by fires lit more than a half century ago as a garbage-disposal method by Atomic-era Las Vegas. **Brent Holmes**

A YOUNG GIRL pencils an anguished note to her teacher explaining why she couldn't complete an unspecified assignment — her project partner wouldn't do his share. (Boys!) The teacher writes an encouraging reply in pink ink: "I'm here if you want to scream! ... Keep up the good work, girl!" Then, thanks to the opaque workings of fate, the paper got folded into a copy of *Sugar Street*, by Egyptian novelist Naguib Mahfouz, and wound up at the Henderson Savers, where I found it two years ago. I keep it as a reminder of how pieces of one life can drift into another. **Scott Dickensheets**

I BOUGHT Nicholas Sparks' *A Walk to Remember* at my local library's bookstore. A beautiful but tragic love story. Inside, I found a real love letter written on the first page. After reading it, I couldn't help but wonder what happened to them, and why anyone would misplace such a beautiful letter.

Monica Anchondo



LOOK WHAT I FOUND!

Strange, funny, and WTF? episodes of everyday serendipity

I found a couple of letters written in Japanese from the 1800s in a library book at UNR which hadn't been opened since the letters were left there. **Lesley Elizabeth Cohen**

While I was hiking the Toiyabe Crest Trail two years ago, a mesquite tree snagged my favorite commemorative bandana and pulled it out of my pocket. Days later, on the way back to the car, I spotted it, still sitting there in the tree! **Heidi Kyser**

I found a very old rusted tobacco tin in Calico Basin under a rock. Inside of it there was half a mining claim. Apparently, this was a way to protect yourself from your partner stealing the mining claim — you each got half and it could only be filed when you were together. **Pauline Van Betten**

A fat, black, possibly hot .357 Magnum. **Adam Russell**

When my grandparents had a ranch house where the current McCarran parking garage is, we would find cow skulls, horse skulls, Western-looking bottles, wagon wheels. **Sean Jones**



I FOUND THIS wedding memento box at the Goodwill on Cheyenne. The box, which reads "A Token of Our Wedding," contains memories from the lives of Charles and Barbara. The couple was married in Cleveland, Ohio, in October 1927. Inside, the box includes photos of the couple by their cars, a photo with the note "last picture 1979," an old preserved rose, Barbara's birth certificate from April 1906, and a death certificate from the City of Cleveland Division of Cemeteries in 1938 for Tony, Barbara's father. It's common for people to donate an entire house of items to Goodwill when their loved ones pass away, but old photos, such as these, are commonly donated by mistake. **Hayleigh Hayhurst**



THIS WAS SCRAWLED on a wall near the Mirage. It caught my attention because it has more verve, personality, and playfulness than your typical urban tag. **Andrew Kiraly**

I FOUND THIS letter in an antique desk I bought at a thrift store a year and a half ago. I am guessing the author is an elderly woman who has lost her independence and freedom and is upset about it. I hope she's alive and well, but I suspect that her belongings were donated to the thrift store after her passing. **Amanda C.**



Special thanks to Found Magazine for the additional Vegas material.

LOOK WHAT I FOUND!

Once on assignment in Searchlight, I was interviewing a woman at her antique shop. At the end of our chat, I asked her if she ever knew my great great uncle, who used to run a cattle ranch in the area. She disappeared into the back and came out with my great great Uncle Eb's branding iron, which I immediately bought. **Henry Brean**

Our flashing neon Nativity box is one of the most unusual thrift-store finds I have ever encountered. My then 5-year-old found it at Deseret Industries. It wasn't until we got it home and put the batteries in that we learned it played the opposite of Silent Night. **Ginger Meurer**

On the shore of Lake Mead, I found a discarded broken smoke detector ... with an extremely tiny dying bat inside. Despite my efforts, it did die. According to people who know about these things, it was a relatively rare kind of Mexican bat, so its journey/life path was something a bit remarkable. I used a soft, slightly moist towel to shelter it, but it died like a black piece of weird orchid that had traveled as far as it could. Perhaps the mother is still on the strange wing. **Kris Saknussem**

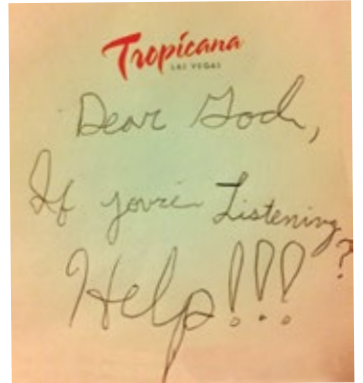
I found a gram of cocaine in a Valley Bank bathroom downtown (in 1983). I got lots of work done that afternoon. **John Curtas**

I'm always amused to find abandoned jet skis and boats in the desert. **F. Andrew Taylor**

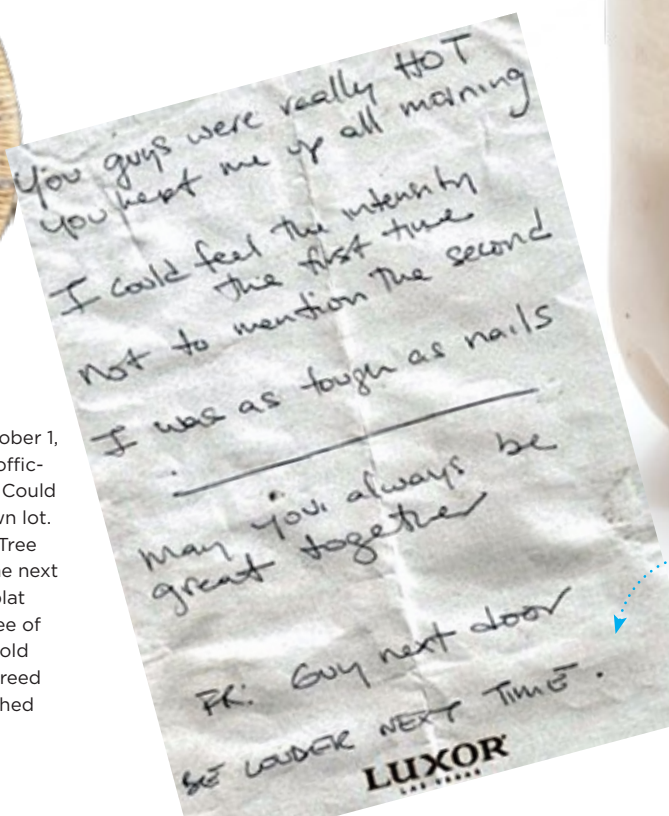


AS WE STRUGGLED with the unbearable news of October 1, landscape architect Jay Pleggenkuhle called our city offices. He wanted to create a community healing garden. Could the city provide a site? That day, we found a Downtown lot. Jay's design included one tree for each victim, plus a Tree of Life that would become the heart of the garden. The next day, Jay's friend Mark Hamelmann went to the lot to plat locations for the trees. Spotting a likely site for the Tree of Life, Mark kicked the dirt to check its consistency. A gold chain anchored in the soil clung to his boot. As Mark freed the chain from the heart of the garden he found attached this pendant — the Tree of Life. **Brad Jerbic**

LOCAL ADMAN AND writer Brian Rouff remembers the address: 1701 E. St. Louis. It was a 5,700-square-foot home that once belonged to legendary Strip bandleader Jack Eglash. Hoping to flip it, Rouff and his family moved in for a couple of years to renovate. Last day before moving out: In the closet of a rarely visited room, feeling atop a high shelf, Rouff found this poster for the first Las Vegas Jazz Festival. Check out that talent! The house later burned down, but Rouff preserved it as the haunted home in his novel *The House Always Wins*. **Scott Dickensheets**



I FOUND THIS note tucked up in the ceiling-light fixture in the entryway of my hotel room. I barely noticed the shadow of the item through the smoky glass and decided to reach my hand up and figure out what it was. This person must have been pretty desperate since it was such a weird and deliberate spot to hide a note to God. **Lynsey P.**





I CAME ACROSS this abandoned car on Mount Charleston. When I asked a forest ranger about it, he said the car is so old that it is likely considered historic trash, so they will not remove it. "Historic trash" is a term for trash that has reached a certain age so that it now has a historical significance to the area and should not be removed.
Jackie Spicer



IN THE Las Vegas Wash near Maryland and Flamingo, I stumbled upon a gallon of spoiled milk with "For Everyone" written on the front in black ink. Must've been the neighborhood wash's gallon of milk.
Mya Constantino

THIS WAS FOUND on the floor of the hallway of the Luxor Towers at the Luxor. My theory is that a couple, overjoyed by the election victory of Obama the night before, had celebrated in a time-honored fashion in the wee small hours — apparently within the hearing of "The Guy Next Door." **Lisa K.**

MEMOIR

Party

in The

Back!

My trashy adventures Dumpster-diving in the '90s
BY ANDREW KIRALY

There was always good stuff in the Dumpster behind the strip mall on DI and Sandhill. The shopping center had a Pizza Inn and a photo hut, so you would have to dig through a few archeological strata of slimy cheese and grease-soaked boxes to get to the treasure: the photos. The photos were discards and rejects, often sunspotted with bad flash or overexposure, but their entertainment value was undiminished. The majority of the glossy 8 x 10s were of people walking over hot coals, their faces taut in transports of ecstatic fear and exhilaration. (The ritual was, we surmised, the culmination of some personal empowerment seminar that took place in the mountains.) There was another category of photos, too, more mysterious and strange. The photos were of middle-aged women posing in ornate blackstrap bondage gear, sometimes in oddly innocent poses of tenderness or supplication with a taxidermied bear.

Behind the Albertsons on Charleston and Bruce, we would raid the Dumpster to dig up cardboard flats of bruised apples, oranges, and pears for matches of fruitball, a made-up sport of ours that basically entailed whacking fruit with planks wrenched from pallets. By the time we were done, the back loading-dock area smelled like the misty epilogue of some psychedelic Skittles typhoon. Further east on Charleston, we would find leather straps, buckles, and the occasional prosthetic limb in the garbage behind Carefree Footwear. They always had a vaguely haunting quality of loss and grim adaptation.

It was 1989. We were a crew of young, dumb skate rats, and we were apparently immune to hepatitis. Dumpster-diving was a spiritual supplement to the presumed subversion of skateboarding (which was a *crime*, man). These were the days when garbage was still just garbage — who would want *that?* — and not the raw material for tabloid scoops, identity theft, or doxxing. Dumpster-diving offered us a glimpse into a subterranean stream of Las Vegas secrets: our desires, our alter egos, our hidden aspirations, our wastefulness. That's a fancy philosophical gloss applied retroactively; at the time, we'd guffaw and gleefully publish our finds in our oh-so-subversive Xeroxed punk 'zines.

I'm embarrassed to admit that this wasn't just a phase, wasn't just some florid but fleeting syndrome that grew out of suburban boredom. At first, we would routinely raid a few Dumpsters after

JUNK UNITED

We grabbed a bunch of stuff from our junk drawers to make a meta-junk drawer!

1 When I was young, my cousins put troll dolls all over my house. I got tired of it and hid them all, then forgot them. Imagine my surprise when I opened a junk drawer 12 years later to find more than a dozen troll dolls staring up at me! **Hayleigh Hayhurst**

2 In 2006, I was one of 20 finalists for Oscar Mayer's "Sing the Jingle, Be a Star" competition. I sang to Mayor Goodman and rode down the Strip in the wienermobile. I didn't win the \$5,000 top prize or land a part in a commercial, but I got some free bologna. **Mya Constantino**

3 This is a coin from Washington, D.C., that I brought home from a family trip. **Brent Holmes**

4 This bear-head bottle opener has been sitting in my kitchen drawer, patiently waiting *years* to be placed in a home with a backyard worthy of its grandeur. Okay, fine, I might be over-hyping it, but the time has come to take him from "junk" to decor. **Christopher Smith**

5 Years ago, I bought, like, a hundred of these arcane patches at a military surplus store and give them out as prizes at my chess club. **Andrew Kiraly**

6 When I was an exchange student to Belgium in the mid-'80s, I commemorated my first foray into pubs by collecting coasters. I keep them in a kitchen drawer as if I'd actually take them out and use them, after all these years. **Heidi Kyser**

7 Camping in the Mojave Desert, I saw a surveyor's wooden stake on the side of a road. Heeding the words of conservationist/curmudgeon Edward Abbey, I removed it. Not wanting to waste a stick, I carved this small stirring spoon while waiting for the morning coffee to brew. **Scott Lien**



MAY ALSO CONTAIN: Chris' designer AIGA cards, Pearl Jam limited beer packaging; Mya's photo of her childhood best friend's family, copy of *Going Vegan* by Linda Blair; Andrew's embossed watch, Moleskine notebook; Heidi's used birthday candles, pocket knife; Scott Dickensheets' purple fan; Hayleigh's cassette tape; Brent's plastic rose, orange monster head; Scott Lien's green pen from an old friend, Thee Swank Bastards pin, and Railroad Pass matchbook.

INTERVIEW

FINDING Feeling

BY

Vintage treasure hunter Veronica Torres-Miller knows a good find when she feels one

BY MYA CONSTANTINO

In a tiny storage space Downtown, Veronica Torres-Miller, prop-stylist and founder of Nostalgia Resources — a vintage rental and styling company — keeps her collection of aged doors, Persian rugs, rows of wooden chairs, towering stacks of tables, and colorful vintage trunks.

Torres-Miller, who was born in Buenos Aires and moved to Las Vegas in 1998, took her longtime love of antiques and, with her husband, David W. Miller, transformed it into Nostalgia Resources in 2013. They often travel throughout California, Arizona, Nevada, and elsewhere to explore garage sales, flea markets, and antique stores.

Now, six years later, pieces from her collection, which includes everything from ornate 1970s peacock chairs to vintage campers, serve as backdrops for desert weddings, photo shoots, and film productions — seamlessly imbuing every environment she creates with a dash of nostalgia.

“Being in contact with all these objects that have stories and history brings me so much joy,” Torres-Miller says.

What’s the most interesting thing you’ve found? Any interesting people you’ve come across while searching?

That’s tough; they’re all characters. There was an older Asian lady who contacted me when I first started the business. She lived in a compound in the Nellis area that had a big gate and wall around it. She was getting rid of stuff because her husband had passed away. Her husband was a collector of things and had all of it spread out onto the yard. Then, she took us into her home and showed us these ornate Japanese porcelain dolls with elaborate kimonos, and wall art she wanted us to buy. I think they belonged to her family because she really valued them. She had a bunch of beautiful collectibles, but they weren’t my style. So, I asked if I could walk around the



FINDERS, EATERS!

Tasty rarities and legit ingredients abound in Vegas — if you know where to look

- Find authentic Japanese dried ramen bowls with toppings like *agedashi* tofu and scallops at **Nakata Japanese Market**. (nakatamarket.com)
- Get spicy with olive oil infused with rare Tunisian Baklouti peppers from **Big Horn Olive Oil Company**. (bhooc.com)



- Dishes are fragrant with beefsteak plant — a cousin of mint — from **Laos Market**, a Downtown gem. (702-366-0881)
- Grab bags filled with savory *kalonji* at **India Market**. The midnight-black seeds feature a savory, onion-like flavor. (indiamarketlv.com)



yard again. We found this ornate iron base for tables, green military chairs, and the coolest locker that we now use at home. There was a small house in the yard that was falling apart. It was around a hundred years old and had this pink door left on it. We asked, “Can we take the door?” She was really surprised. She thought I was weird. I felt bad saying no to her collectibles because she thought there was more value in those things. (They) might’ve been more valuable in general, but I really liked the junkier stuff I had found.

What style do you usually look for?

I look mostly for things that look aged. I usually mix things. I don’t like to have everything from one era. So there’s a boho side of me that loves the peacock chairs and all of that. I make macramé, so those chairs go great with creating boho environments. And then the other side I would say are pieces from the ’40s, ’50s, and ’60s that have character.

How did you find your vintage green camper?

Through this older man on Craigslist. He was from Utah. The camper was kind of like his man cave located outside of his house. He had a TV in there and air-conditioning, and that’s where he went to watch his football games and stuff. I think he was having second thoughts the whole time. He didn’t want to let it go. I told him, “We could send you pictures of what we do to it,” and he said, “No, it’ll make me really sad, I’ll miss it even more.”

When you’re searching for these pieces, what differentiates between something that is a good find and something that’s not?

I’m very instinctual when it comes to all of this. I don’t rationalize it very much; it’s more about how they make me feel. I don’t think about the value and the resale and all of that stuff. It just has to look a certain way. I have to like it and can picture it in environments, because I create environments and vignettes. It has to be a little rough. I like texture like this (touches aged royal blue trunk). I don’t like shiny, super-perfect things. It has to be a little bit imperfect. If not, it doesn’t attract me. (Points to vintage trunk). This is a bright blue color, but you can tell it’s gone through its years. I like them to show time and usually go for things that have their patina. I like when they come in good condition but are not too pompous or too precious.

What does “found” mean to you?

Found is often discovering things you didn’t know you wanted or needed. Discovery, surprise, wonder. That’s why I like the phrase “lost in the found.” ♦

- It’s the perfect time of year for goulash made with sweet and hot paprika from **Hungarian Market** by McCarran International Airport. (budapest-delica.com)
- Splash out in high style with a rare bottle of 1989 Chambertin Grand Cru red wine from

the retail shop at **Marché Bacchus**. (marchebacchus.com)

- Wrap it up with a delicious chia or chorizo Mexican flatbread from tiny **Tortillas de Harina Sonora** on North Lamb Blvd. (702-349-3310)
- Want to grill

something “offal”? Try the fresh lamb tongues from **Afandi Restaurant & Market**. (afandil-asvegas.com)

- Toast Nevada’s spirited history with Old Sam Spiced Gin distilled in Goldfield. It’s on the shelves at **Khoury’s Fine Wine & Spirits**.

(khourysfinewine.com)

- Pick up gourmet Italian pasta on discount at **Home Goods** locations. Look for styles like lengthy, tubular candeled or swanky black-and-white “tuxedo” farfaline. (homegoods.com)

Greg Thilmont



Once, on a visit to Mount Charleston, I found a stone shaped like a perfect heart. I carried that stone while staying on the mountain, but left it to spread love after I left.

Mary Manning

In 2011, my dad passed away. Mom immediately wanted all his stuff donated. While rifling through it all, I found my own birth certificate. (I was adopted.) The *original*. I waited 47 years to learn ... wow.

Lisa Ledl Yalich

We found a vintage Armani tie in a sofa we bought at the Salvation Army as-is yard — sold the tie at Buffalo Exchange for more money than we paid for the couch.

Elicia Aslin

I found a vial of mercury in my uncle’s room when I was about 8. My cousin and I would sneak it out when he wasn’t around and play with it for hours. No gloves. No hand-washing. Just sheer toxic ’80s fun.

Angie Negrete-Markle

I found a dog corpse in a gutter in 10th grade. I took the skull home and cleaned it up and later used it on my guitar’s headstock in my Misfits cover band. **Brian Garth**

I found my great-grandmother’s journal from 1910, and in it she had written and brilliant and cynical poem about men. **Kristy Totten**



to pass through the iron entry gates under her name, Suzette Whitmore, before she's erased from the records.

She was born in Algeria in 1926 and ended up here after meeting my grandfather during WWII. She was married with three kids to a very stereotypical Western cowboy named Sidney — who turned out to be a stereotypical gay Western cowboy instead. Divorced, in the mid-1970s she worked as a cocktail waitress before starting a cigarette concession business at the MGM, Desert Inn, and Bally's, which lasted 20 years.

My grandmother and I were always somewhat estranged; her love came in short waves. She valued appearances and was a socialite in the heyday of Vegas

— I could only imagine the stories she never shared.

Every Halloween, my cousins and I would begin by saying “Hello” to my grandmother, then comb the streets for candy. Our yearly ritual meant closing out the night at a house at the end of the block, where we'd follow the white roses up to the front steps, and find a bucket of candy that was always left untouched by the other kids. We could help ourselves. Even after I passed the acceptable age of trick-or-treating, I drove to the neighborhood each year to check the candy bucket, hoping to keep the tradition alive.

This year, no bucket. I realize my grandmother probably wasn't the only resident to die recently. I head for home.

A few houses from the exit gates, I see a clear bag full of 4-by-6-inch photos someone had thrown out with a slew of trash. Stopping, I toss the bag into my car, along with a box of magazines, and an 8-track player. For the second time tonight, I understand that someone — a man named Jerry, according to the social security information I found next to some spoiled cheese — had died.

Some time passes. I decide to clean out the garage, where I had stowed the dead man's trash. Digging through the items, I come across 40 or so Polaroids that Jerry must have taken. I hand a stack of them to my mom, who's nearby hunting scorpions. Some of the images looked like a holiday party, others had “rodeo” written on the back; some were dated from the 1980s, others looked like a different time altogether. Strange, seeing the faces of people I don't know, lives that were lived and now are gone, and wondering what comes after this, living forever or pure nothingness.

But not as strange as my mother passing me an image and saying, “Hey, it's Suzette” and looking down at a picture I found in a dead man's trash to see my grandmother. It's not the most flattering image, one she would probably hate that I let be published, but at this moment I feel more connected to her than I did when she was alive. Here she was during one of so many nights or stories she would never share — proof my grandmother was more than just the person I barely knew. ♦

SERENDIPITY

THIS PICTURE OF YOU

Finding an unexpected glimpse
of my late grandmother




BY MIKAYLA WHITMORE

The moon oozes a yellow haze, darkness fills the sky, and a few children dressed as monsters run through the street. It's after 10 p.m. on Halloween 2014. I'm driving through the Las Vegas Country Club at 12 mph, on my way out after failing to score the same bucket of candy I've been collecting every year since 1990. If you're wondering, I'm 26.

It's weird being here. This is the first trick-or-treat since the death of my grandmother, who lived in here; this is the last year I'll be able

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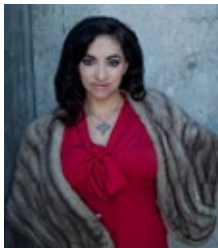


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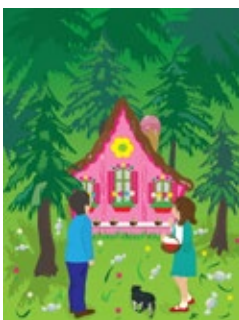


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The Guide

ART THROUGH NOV. 26

Imagine Nevada

This annual invitational exhibition brings Nevada artists and poets together to share their visions, their voices, and the ideas that can be shared through art and verse. **Free.** Nevada Humanities Program Gallery, 1017 S. First St., nevadahumanities.org

THROUGH DEC. 7

Block 17

The exhibition is a diaspora of sorts, showcasing the artists of African heritage living in the Las Vegas area. **Free.** Donna Beam Fine Art Gallery at UNLV, unlv.edu

THROUGH DEC. 7

Through the Eyes of Hans Van de Bovenkamp

Renowned for his monumental sculptures, the artist's beautifully crafted wood sculpture will wow the viewer. **Free.** The Studio at Sahara West Library, lvccld.org

THROUGH DEC. 10

Pizzazz Art

The installation includes the

bright and colorful abstract paintings created by retired musician and pit boss James Pa-kala. **Free.** Spring Valley Library, lvccld.org

THROUGH DEC. 17

Suchness of Light

Artist Yasmina Chavez's exhibit is made of concrete photography, developed with light directly touching the surface of photosensitive material. **Free.** Summerlin Library, lvccld.org

THROUGH JAN. 11

Les Folies Bergère

An exhibit featuring photographs, artwork, documents, and costumes from the big stage show that debuted at the Tropicana in 1959. **Free.** Charleston Heights Arts Center, 800 S. Brush St., artslasvegas.org

THROUGH JAN. 12

Through Her Lens

Women in Focus presents landscapes, portraits, and more by local female photographers. **Free.** Sahara West Library, lvccld.org

MUSIC NOV. 6

The Composers Showcase of Las Vegas

Original material from Vegas songwriters and composers are performed in an informal cabaret setting by the area's leading theatre performers and musicians. **10:30P, \$25-\$30.** Myron's Cabaret Jazz at The Smith Center, thesmithcenter.com

NOV. 7

The Jazz Eclectic Concert Series (Vol. 7)

Headliner John Daversa has worked with jazz greats such as Michael Bubl , Herbie Hancock, The Yellowjackets, and many others. **7P, \$29-\$39.** Myron's Cabaret Jazz at The Smith Center, thesmithcenter.com

NOV. 9

California Guitar Trio & Montreal Guitar Trio

Six guitar masters from around the world play a set spanning jazz, classical, world, rock, and so much more. **5P and 8P, \$39-\$59.** Myron's Cabaret Jazz at The Smith Center, thesmithcenter.com

NOV. 10

Las Vegas Brass Band: Salute to Veterans

Selections will include some of the band's favorite patriotic and significant pieces from throughout their history. **2P, free.** Main Theater

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The Guide

at Clark County Library, lvccld.org

NOV. 10 Songs of Autumn

Acclaimed pianist and composer Alex Clements and his outstanding ensemble of musicians will welcome the autumn season with beautiful renditions of songs featuring timeless jazz standards and originals. **2P, \$20.** Starbright Theatre at Sun City Summerlin, scscai.com

NOV 12-13

Jesse Cook: Follow the Road
The guitar virtuoso has sold 1.5 million albums worldwide. **7P, \$39-\$65.** Myron's Cabaret Jazz at The Smith Center, thesmithcenter.com

NOV. 13 Contemporary Voices: A Celebration of New Composers

This show features the music of Jake Rubstad, Eric Whitacre, Mack Wilberg, and George Machain. **7P, \$15-\$100.** Reynolds Hall at The Smith Center, thesmithcenter.com

NOV. 13 UNLV Contemporary Jazz Ensemble and UNLV Jazz Combo

The UNLV Jazz Concert Series features performances by exceptional groups from the UNLV School of Music, Division of Jazz and Commercial Music. **7P, free.**

Main Theater at Clark County Library, lvccld.org

NOV. 15 Chyna

The cutting-edge band plays everything from classic to current rock, top 40, pop, and country. **7P, \$15.** The Summit at Sun City Summerlin, scscai.com

NOV. 15 Music of Billy Joel Starring Michael Cavanaugh

The star of the Broadway musical *Movin' Out* plays the hits of the Piano Man. **7P, \$30-\$55.** Myron's Cabaret Jazz at The Smith Center, thesmithcenter.com

NOV 15-16

Dido and Aeneas
UNLV Opera Theater presents Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* and Heggie's at the Statue of Venus. **7P, \$10.** Lee and Thomas Beam Music Center at UNLV, unlv.edu

**NOV. 18
NEXTET New Music**
Enjoy an evening of 20th and 21st century contemporary music by living composers. **7:30P, free.** Lee and Thomas Beam Music Center at UNLV, unlv.edu

**NOV. 19
Marlon Asher**
Asher is a Trinidadian reggae singer from Enterprise, Chaguanas. Ages 18+ only. **7:30P, \$25.** Brooklyn Bowl at The Linq, brooklynbowl.com

NOV. 22 UNLV Choirs: Winter Concert

Performing will be the UNLV Concert Singers, UNLV Chamber Chorale, University Chorale, and Las Vegas Master Singers. **7:30P, \$10.** Artemus W. Ham Concert Hall at UNLV, unlv.edu

NOV. 23

Anka Sings Sinatra: His Songs, My Songs, My Way
Legendary singer-songwriter Paul Anka salutes the Chairman of the Board and also performs his own hits spanning 60 years. **7:30P, \$45-\$149.** Reynolds Hall at The Smith Center, thesmithcenter.com

NOV. 24 Beethoven 250 Project

This concert features Beethoven's Sonata No. 4 in A minor; the Piano Sonata No. 28 in A major; and Beethoven's Symphony No. 2 in D major. **4P, free.** Lee and Thomas Beam Music Center at UNLV, unlv.edu

THEATER & COMEDY

NOV. 1-10

The Flick
Set in a rundown movie palace in Worcester, Massachusetts, the play follows the comedic conversations of three underpaid movie ushers who do the labor necessary for keeping it running. **Thu-Sat 7:30P; Sun 2:30P, \$20.** Black Box Theatre at UNLV, unlv.edu

NOV. 5-10 Jesus Christ Superstar

In celebration of the iconic musical's 50th anniversary, award-winning director Timothy Shearer and choreographer Drew McOnie bring this production to life. Ages 10+. **Tue-Sun 7:30P; Sat-Sun 2P, \$40-\$128.** Reynolds Hall at The Smith Center, thesmithcenter.com

NOV. 26-DEC. 1 How the Grinch Stole Christmas!

The classic children's book is now a live musical, featuring sets and costume designs based on Dr. Seuss' drawings. **Tue-Fri 7:30P; Sat 8P; Sun 7:30P; Fri-Sun 2P; Fri-Sun 11A.** Saturday's 11A show is a sensory-friendly performance! Reynolds Hall at The Smith Center, thesmithcenter.com

DISCUSSIONS & READINGS

NOV. 7

Phaan Howng
The visiting artist will speak about her large-scale landscape paintings, sculptures, performances, and installations. **7P, free.** Marjorie Barrick Museum at UNLV, unlv.edu

NOV. 7

Las Vegas Stories: The Lost Restaurants of Henderson
Author Sharon Damon will discuss Henderson's beginnings and its long gone restaurants, diners, and casinos. **7:15P,**

free. Jewel Box Theater at Clark County Library, lvccld.org

NOV. 21
National Geographic Live: Between River and Rim

Pete McBride & Kevin Fedarko made an expedition on foot across the entire length of the Grand Canyon. They share their experiences of their 750-mile trek, accompanied with stunning visuals. **7:30P, \$20-\$49. Reynolds Hall at The Smith Center, thesmithcenter.com**

NOV. 22
Las Vegas Story SLAM

November's theme is "Thanks," but don't let the theme get in the way of a good story! Tell or listen to five-minute personal stories. **6P, free. The Center for Science & Wonder, 1651 E. Sunset Road, lasvegasstoryslam@gmail.com**

NOV. 23
Televation 2019
Master storytellers engage you with stories that range from personal, historical, folk tales, puppetry, and humor! **1P, free. West Charleston Library, lvccld.org**

DANCE
NOV. 13
Native American Dance & Music with Derrick Suwaima Davis

Davis (Hopi/Choc-taw) returns to celebrate Native American Heritage Month, share his culture, and demonstrate why he is a world championship hoop dancer in this program for all ages. **10A,**

free. Main Theater at Clark County Library, lvccld.org

NOV. 14-17
Brushstrokes of Motion

This dance concert features lighting design from production and management majors. **2:30 and 7:30P, \$18. Alta Ham Fine Arts at UNLV, unlv.edu**

NOV. 22
So You Think You Can Dance Live! 2019

The top contestants on the hit TV show perform the most popular routines of the season, as well as numbers created specifically for the tour. **7:30, \$29-\$85. Reynolds Hall at The Smith Center, thesmithcenter.com**

FAMILY & FESTIVALS

NOV. 1

First Friday
From crafts to food to everything in-between, this is the place to celebrate all things artsy. Cockroach Theatre offers 20-minute vignettes, multiple food trucks offer dining, and booths of all sorts offer one-of-a-kind items. **5-11P, free. 1025 S. First St., fflv.org**

NOV. 11

Veterans Day Celebration
Enjoy live music, dancing, an all-you-can-eat American themed buffet which includes bottomless non-alcoholic beverages and a chance to celebrate and honor all of those who served in uniform for our nation. **4P, \$15. The Summit at Sun City Summerlin, scscai.com**

Vegas PBS



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Friday, November 22 at 9 p.m



Great Performances: Kinky Boots

Friday, November 29 at 9 p.m



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RANDOM ACCESS MEMORY

Droll, odd, tragic, and awkward moments from the many Novembers of Las Vegas history

BY **Chip Mosher**

NOVEMBER 1, 1915: A newspaper ad for “Dr. and Mrs. Dr. Chamley & Co., the greatest cancer specialists living,” promises to cure folks in their homes, using a rare island plant, “of any cancer or tumor, without knife or pain, before it poisons deep glands or attaches to bone.”

NOVEMBER 2, 1982: Little-known Republican U.S. Senate candidate Chic Hecht, “in the most stunning election upset in the nation,” defeats longtime Nevada Democrat Senator Howard Cannon.

NOVEMBER 3, 1955: U.S. Supreme Court Chief Justice Earl Warren’s daughter, Nina “Honey Bear” Warren, 22, has surprised her father by eloping to Vegas to marry Dr. Stuart Brien, 33, of Beverly Hills.

NOVEMBER 4, 1960: Four days before the presidential election, bookmakers here list Sen. John F. Kennedy an 8-5 favorite over Republican candidate Richard Nixon.

NOVEMBER 5, 1982: Gaming industry head honchos are “infuriated” after Las Vegas FBI Chief Joe Yablonsky “compares legalized gambling with legalized prostitution.”

NOVEMBER 6, 1955: Suspected ice cream parlor burglar Alden Kelley, 34, has admitted to shooting and killing police officer Wilber McGee, 33.

NOVEMBER 7, 1918: With more than 125 reported cases of influenza in our city, including 12 deaths this week, there is “difficulty getting sufficient caskets for the dead, as C.B. Faust, the town’s undertaker, is also bedridden with the flu.”

NOVEMBER 8, 1939: The Green Shack nightclub on Boulder Highway celebrates its seventh anniversary.

NOVEMBER 9, 1958: Handyman Jack Rainsberger, 23, has confessed to recently murdering local stenographer Erlene Folker, 23, by slashing her throat “in a human sacrifice ritual in the desert.”

NOVEMBER 10, 2006: The Nevada Supreme Court has upheld a lap-dance ordinance “prohibiting exotic dancers from fondling patrons with the intent to sexually arouse them, including rubbing breasts against patrons’ faces and grinding buttocks into patrons’ groins.”

NOVEMBER 11, 1905: Frank Manuel, the blacksmith, “is building a cottage at Bonnevillie and First streets for his family arriving here in a few days from Maine.”

NOVEMBER 12, 189,998,619 BCE: Dinosaurs the size of Doberman Pinschers walk through the wet sands of the Vegas Valley on talon-tipped toes.

NOVEMBER 13, 1963: In the news, President Kennedy recommitments to his Space Program proposal to Congress more than two years ago “to put a man on the moon by 1970.”

NOVEMBER 14, 1934: Inspector Ken Rankin, 33, is the first person killed working at Boulder Dam when “crushed by a bucket carrying eight cubic yards of liquid concrete.”

NOVEMBER 15, 1916: Gov. Boyle has proclaimed today as “Nevada Honey Day, hoping to stimulate the culture of bees in the state.”

NOVEMBER 16, 1992: Funeral services are held for popular former UNLV cheerleader Valerie Pida, 25, who died recently after a 12-year battle with Hodgkin’s disease.

NOVEMBER 17, 1963: A Gallop Poll survey shows, a year before the next presidential race, that President Kennedy (who spoke in Las Vegas two months ago) leads all possible opponents “by a wide margin, due to his appeal to women voters.”

NOVEMBER 18, 1973: In a *Review-Journal* headline President Richard Nixon declares, “I’M NOT A CROOK!”

NOVEMBER 19, 1973: Scientists at Chemtec Corporation, located in the BMI Complex in Henderson, are developing a promising plan to process cow manure into food.

NOVEMBER 20, 1934: At Ward’s Cash Stores, hamburger is 10 cents a pound.

NOVEMBER 21, 1963: A Rutgers University study has concluded that “Nevada has the highest percentage of alcoholics and per capita alcohol consumption of the 50 states,” inspiring local pundits to suggest changing the state’s motto from “Battle Born” to “Bottle Born.”

NOVEMBER 22, 1963: Today’s *Review-Journal* headline reads: “JFK DEAD.” Below it is a black and white photo of the doomed president in the back seat of his limousine, with the caption, “Kennedy grasps head

after assassin’s bullet hit.”

NOVEMBER 23, 1992: Regarding the increase of teenage thrill-killing in Vegas, prosecutor Dan Seaton says, “In my 22 years on the job, the biggest change in violent crime is that more young people are using violence to make themselves happy.”

NOVEMBER 24, 1958: Casino executives see the possibility of the new government taking over Mexico in December as “a real threat to legalizing wide-open gambling there.”

NOVEMBER 25, 2011: Endorsed by County Commissioner Steve Sisolak, Occupy Las Vegas, a local offshoot of Occupy Wall Street, a group protesting against corporate greed, takes to the Strip and local shopping malls to repeatedly yell at holiday shoppers and tourists: “It’s time to change the planet! It’s time to change the planet!”

NOVEMBER 26, 1930: Police round up “at least 40 undesirables per day,” as people out of work across the nation flock to town.

NOVEMBER 27, 1958: John “Bunny” Breckenridge, an actor in the soon-to-be-released film *Plan 9 From Outer Space*, has been arrested in California for allegedly having an orgy in Las Vegas with two boys, ages 11 and 13.

NOVEMBER 28, 1930: Nevada officials propose a bill to the Legislature for a \$5 per day wage for work on Boulder Dam, and that “aliens be prohibited from employment on the project.”

NOVEMBER 29, 1973: Area resident Haakon Hanson, 40, reports seeing a UFO over VoTech High School.

NOVEMBER 30, 1934: Some Las Vegas are still thinking about *Tarzan* author Edgar Rice Burroughs, who spoke here this past week.

Sources: Las Vegas Age; Las Vegas Morning Tribune; Las Vegas Review-Journal; Las Vegas Sun; CityLife



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