

# the other shoe

A scam is a scam. Remember the story of Peter Pan, wherein the observer is asked to really believe in Tinkerbell in order to make her come back to life? Well, similarly, the cultural community of Santa Cruz is being asked to believe in a developer's pipe-dream called Wingspread. This Hare, Brewer and Kelley development is proposed for Aptos' Porter-Sesnon property. The truth is that we do need cultural facilities in the County. The fairy tale is that we will get them for free in the Wingspread development.

Last week this column explored the Cultural Council. I stated that I was concerned that the Council would be used to justify the huge Wingspread development. Now Hare, Brewer and Kelley has stepped up efforts to use the Cultural Council in just such a way. People on the Cultural Council have just received a letter from Rye Kelley stating that in the next few weeks "leaders in the cultural community" would be asked to assess "the best" ways local performing groups can utilize the facilities at Wingspread. Through this effort Rye Kelley can use cultural activists to justify and support his development.

The groundwork for this cooption process started long ago. A lot of the effort has been aimed at Cabrillo College and the Cultural Council. What does Cabrillo have to gain by this development? Cabrillo needs more facilities for performing artists and it seems to have bought the concept of Wingspread hook, line and sinker (and you thought Cabrillo College officials were non-political?). Let's explore some of "the connections" between Cabrillo and Wingspread, between Wingspread and the Cultural Council, and between the Cultural Council and Cabrillo.

We'll start with Tim Welch. For many years, Tim was the Community Services Dean of Cabrillo College. While he had this job, Tim was hired by Rye Kelley presumably to be the Cabrillo link to Wingspread. Since Tim kept this employment quiet, many were critical of the potential conflict of interest when the news leaked out. Tim has since resigned from Cabrillo and now works for Rye Kelley to promote Wingspread. It was his signature on last week's letter from Wingspread to Cultural Council members.

Another important connection is Hal Hyde. Hal is President of the Cultural Council and currently a member of the Cabrillo College Board of Trustees. Hal is retiring from Cabrillo's Board and has thrown his support to Board candidate Steve Weldon, a local attorney. Weldon works for the law firm which represents Hare, Brewer and Kelley's Wingspread efforts.

Weldon is also past president of the Cabrillo Music Festival. It was under his leadership that Hare, Brewer and Kelley started donating huge sums of money to the Cabrillo Music Festival. These sums of money have brought such "stars" as Dave Brubeck to the Festival, thus boosting attendance and pushing even harder the need for a new facility to accommodate this growth. Weldon was a member of the Cultural Council's sub-committee on Facilities' development. He also wrote the by-laws for the Cultural Committee. Are you beginning to see what I mean?

This Wingspread connection started long ago with the development of the Facilities Plan by the Cultural Council.

## Arts and Crafty: The Wingspread / Cabrillo / Cultural Council Connection

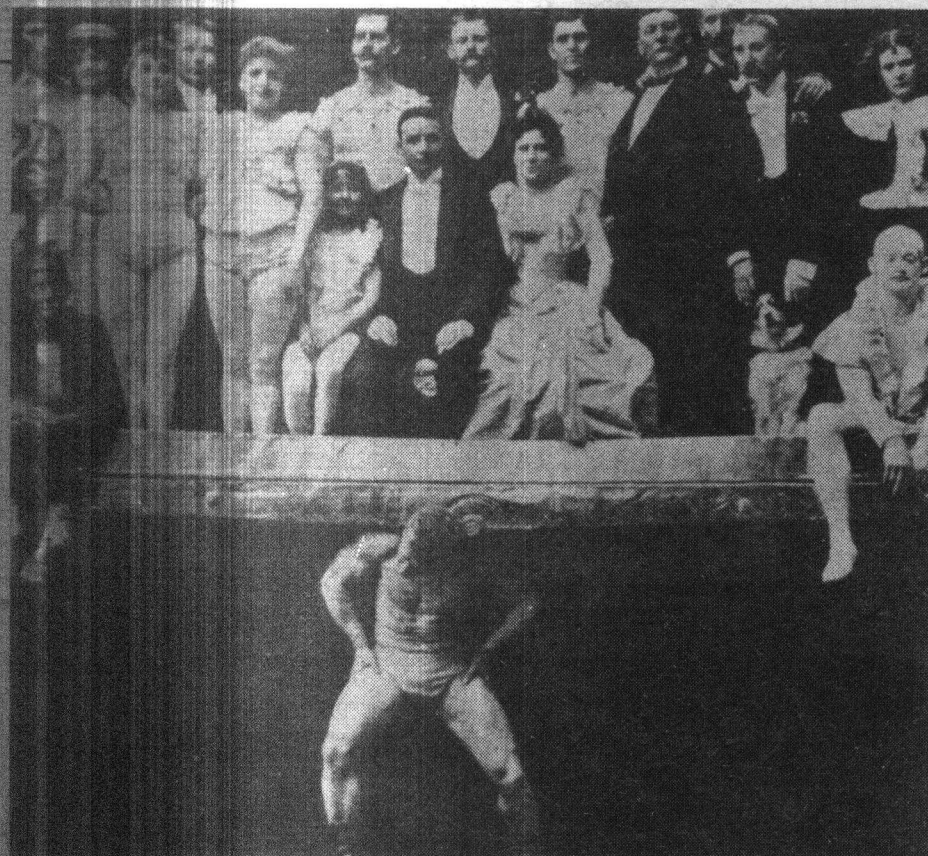
George N. Vermosky

This plan was designed to survey, assess and recommend needed cultural facilities in the County. Hare, Brewer and Kelley's Wingspread development was cited by the plan as being needed by the County and of especial value to Cabrillo College.

The plan "takes no position" on the environmental or economic concerns of the development. However, the plan does state that the developer will contribute about 85% of the \$8 million cost of the facilities. The remaining \$1.2 million will no doubt be raised from you and me. After all, it's but a paltry sum to come out of the community (do you detect a note of sarcasm?). The cost of maintaining the huge complex can't be borne entirely by the ticket buyers, the plan states. The cost will be subsidized by Wingspread's 600-plus rental units.

Oh, but don't forget, the resort-rental units will also be subsidizing over 113 units of "artists-in-residence" low-income housing (says a lot about artists, doesn't it?). So these units have a huge subsidy job head of them. The way I figure it, at a time when rental units cannot even support themselves, let alone arts and the poor, this is somewhat of a *mythological* development. Since the money being siphoned off the rentals to run the performing arts center will be managed by a non-profit corporation, it's just logical to assume that the developer will have to control the corporation and therefore the performing arts complex. Voila! You now have the magical concept of Wingspread.

Oh, "don't look a gift horse in the mouth," you say. Well,



maybe not, but let's look further at the "connections."

The Cultural Council is heavily loaded with Cabrillo Administrators. John Peterson, President of Cabrillo, has long been a member. Recently added were Manual Osorio and Billy Glover to further round out administrative representation by Cabrillo.

Moving away from Cabrillo for a moment, take Beverly Grova, the assistant executive director of the Cultural Council. Her father is Mr. Stekoll, the Scotts Valley developer who has hired John Brissenden as a development consultant. Mr. Brissenden was one of the co-producers of a promotional event staged by Wingspread promoters at Pajaro Dunes earlier this year. John Brissenden's wife Patti is an aide for Assemblyman Sam Farr. I could go on citing these connections for hours.

The sum total of all these links means *god knows what* at this point. But it is a sure bet that Hare, Brewer and Kelley have covered the cultural bases. Through contributions, employment and other subtle inducements, the Wingspread developers have amassed quite a list of people who would have a hard time being critical of them. Now that the developers are stepping up their campaign let's at least all be aware of the motivations behind all these efforts.

Unlike the little fairy in *Peter Pan*, this development will only fly with additions to the "good thoughts" by cultural leaders. It will take over 600 rental units—and potentially a whole heck of a lot of community money—to make the thing work. Anyone who believes the story coming from the developer that Wingspread will be a self-supporting complex should take a common-sense look at the finances. It would be nice to believe but it is, after all, a fairytale. □