

Russian Hill Upholstery & Décor is still located in Nob Hill, not Russian Hill.

At the Warfield: Elevation Rhythm, 1/24. Monolink, 2/28. **At the Regency Ballroom:** Dean Lewis, 1/15. Inzo, 1/23.

At the Guild Theatre in Menlo Park: Jason Crosby Performs “A Charlie Brown Christmas,” 12/20. Molly Tuttle, 12/31.

Some Bay Area connections about those last two items: Vince Guaraldi, the jazz pianist who played on all those Charlie Brown specials, was born in San Francisco’s North Beach and died in Menlo Park in 1976. He performed a set at Butterfield’s in Menlo Park (which is no more) and went to relax next door at the Red Cottage Inn (now The Cottages Hotel) and died of a heart attack. *On a side note, Johnny Costa used to play a mean jazz piano for those old Mister Rogers’ Neighborhood episodes, as the train entered the Neighborhood of Make-Believe. But that was in Pittsburgh, PA, so back to the Bay Area stuff.* Also, acclaimed bluegrass singer/guitarist Molly Tuttle was raised in Palo Alto. Wait, there’s more...

Lee Mendelson, the animator of *A Charlie Brown Christmas* passed away, ironically, on Christmas back in 2019. I remember seeing his animation studio in Burlingame. *On a similar note, here’s a little blurb I wrote in 2006:* I stumbled upon the Charles Schulz Museum in Santa Rosa a few months ago. “Sparky” is what Charles Schulz’s friends called him, and he really had quite a life for himself there. He played hockey every week at the ice rink he built next to his studio, ate lunch every day at the restaurant he built next to his studio, built a baseball field for the kids in town to play on next to his studio -- a nice life, rated G. (Someday when there’s an R. Crumb Museum I’ll bet it will be a little different.) If you walk around downtown Santa Rosa there are statues of Snoopy, Lucy Van Pelt, and other characters Schulz created for Peanuts. It was well known how much Sparky lived for drawing his comic strip. In late 1999 he announced that due to declining health he would be retiring, and that the final Peanuts strip would appear on February 13, 2000. It did, and Schulz died in his sleep on February 12, the night before it was published.

The American Revolution, the latest documentary by Ken Burns recently appeared on Public Television. And, true to form, three minutes into it there was some race-baiting wokeness to appeal to PBS’s main viewers – white liberals who live in neighborhoods full

of “Black Lives Matter” lawn signs and no black people. It implies that Benjamin Franklin got the idea to make the English colonies into a democracy from some American Indians – the six nation Iroquois Confederacy. Calling it a democracy is a bit generous. The elder women of the confederacy chose the tribal leaders who made the decisions. Chances are Franklin was inspired more by John Locke, Charles de Montesquieu, and the Roman Republic.

“For kids with parents serving time, every day can feel like a life sentence. They didn’t commit a crime—but they’re paying the consequences.” That’s from PrisonFellowShip.org, the website for Angel Tree-Prison Fellowship. How about you go to the site and donate \$25 so some kid with a parent in the hoosegow can have a gift for Christmas? I think they even give the kid a Bible to head him or her in the right direction, because kids with parents up the river have a much greater chance of ending up there or in poverty. If you like this newsletter, please do it today. If you think it sucks, do it today, too.

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The Naked Guy By Ace Backwards

1993 was a magical year for me. And whenever I think of that year, I think of the Naked Guy.

The Naked Guy — aka Andrew Martinez — was a 20 year-old UC Berkeley student who decided he had the right to go around naked in public. For an entire year he went to all of his classes completely naked. Turned out there wasn’t even a law against it — apparently because nobody had ever done it before. So it took a year before the authorities could find a legal way to force clothes on the dude. Still, the Naked Guy persisted with his nakedness until UC finally expelled him and the Berkeley cops started arresting him. In between he became a *cause celeb* and an

He was good-looking with a body that was compared to those classic Greek statues. My sidekick B.N. Duncan and I were all set to publish our fourth annual calendar featuring the eccentric street people of Berkeley’s Telegraph Avenue. I had a little chat with the Naked Guy. We always asked people for their permission before we took their picture, and made sure they had no problems with us publishing their picture. So when the calendar came out, I was surprised to hear grumbings from the Naked Guy that we had “over-exposed” him. An ironic accusation coming from a guy who walked around buck naked.

Like most people, I considered the whole Naked Guy thing “zany.” Berkeley considered him a joke. But I was beginning to realize that the Naked Guy was *serious*. With all of his talk about “social control” and “the CIA” and “revolution.” After that, newspaper articles about the Naked Guy started to take on a decidedly *un-zany* flavor. He began leaving big piles of rocks on various street corners. “To be used as ammunition against the cops when the revolution comes down,” he explained. And then he ended up getting arrested for throwing rocks at cops from a roof. Then there were stories about him getting locked up in the nut house. The last time I saw the Naked Guy was around 1995. He started in on this crazy spiel. “You and your fascist, white, European, patriarchal, Judeo-Christian, colonial, imperialist culture will one day soon collapse from the toxic poisons you’ve been spewing across the environment.” And etc. etc. It was like a caricature of every low-level Berkeley “radical chic” cliché that I’d ever heard.

Duncan and I stopped publishing the *Telegraph Avenue Street Calendar* in 2004 because we felt “the scene was no longer worthy of being celebrated.” Everything came to a head for me in one terrible week, practically on the same day, in the summer of 2006. It was a triple whammy: 1.) Cody’s Books (my main hang-out and social scene) closed. 2.) Loompanics (my main publisher) went out of business. 3.) The office building (where I had lived for the last 9 years) got sold and all the tenants got evicted. Then a couple weeks later I got into a fight with some asshole at my vending table and he hit me over the head with a chair and perforated my ear-drum, and for 6 months I was afraid I had gone deaf in that ear. So everything was going from bad to worse.

But at least I had memories of my past glories. Then I picked up a newspaper and the headline read: “*Andrew Martinez, the Naked Guy, Dies in Jail.*” He committed suicide, age 33, by putting a plastic bag over his head. So not only was my present life being stripped from me -- they were even taking away my past.

