

# Scoops

With Marci Marks



Varoom- Varoom!

The weather was just perfect for strolling the CBS lot and checking out the vintage cars on display from the Television Motion Picture Car Club for the second annual Flavor of LA on Sunday, May 20. There were so many restaurants this year we couldn't try them all, but we did sample food from local restaurants such as Ceremony, Barrel & Ash, The Woodman, Frida, Casa Vega, Bollywood Bites, and Sun Organic Cafe plus ice cream from Salt

& Straw, and craft beers from The Woodman and MacLeod Ale. Winemaker Golden Star Vineyards was back with their Purple Haze, one of our faves from last year, plus a new rose, Tempranillo Rosado. The Antelope Valley winery is having a new crush tasting party on Sunday, June 10, sounds like fun. Next year, we'll have to pace ourselves so we can try everything at Flavor.

## Bentley's Beat

Dave Alvin and Jimmie Dale Gilmore  
*Downey to Lubbock*

Album of the year? Could very well be, because for those who love true blue rootsified music, Dave Alvin and Jimmie Dale Gilmore have combined for a wild-eyed run at greatness. There is such a vivacious joy to these songs--fast or slow, happy or sad--that it is absolutely impossible to resist them. The match of the Californian and the Texan is an inspired choice, because what each does so well is very different from the other. Alvin kicks hard, slashes and burns on guitar and sounds like he could be a bronco rider if the need called. Gilmore is more a spirit of the wind, one with an all-seeing eye and a gracious heart. Together they blend like dynamite and dams. Know that if you're looking for music that makes the world turn on its axis and humans fall in love with life, both Downey and Lubbock have given us their favorite sons who are more than up for the journey. This is an album truly born from immaculate inspiration. Feel and heal.

Nicki Bluhm  
*To Rise You Gotta Fall*

San Francisco artists have a definite aura about them. Maybe it's the sophistication that comes from living with the fog horns and the cable cars in the city, or possibly it's that mixture of cool and hot that those there carry with them. Nicki Bluhm surely has both those qualities covered. She's made albums with her band The Gramblers, ex-husband Tim Bluhm (also of Mother Hips) and others, but the singer's new solo album feels like she's

By Bill Bentley

reached down the deepest in herself and zeroed in on what makes her great. Swinging out on a branch can do that to you. Working at Sam Phillips Recording brings with it the southern mystery of Memphis, and writing with others like Ryan Adams and producer Matt Ross-Spang, fresh from work with Margo Price and Jason Isbell, opened up a few vistas. In the end, though, this is all Nicki Bluhm, and marks a time in her life for a big step up. It's a true solo album that belongs with other great collections no matter where the artist is from, and a spotlight-turning moment for Bluhm. Her voice shines from the Embarcadero all the way to the Pacific Ocean. San Francisco's finest.

Lamont Dozier  
*Reimagination*

John Hiatt, and likely many others, says the best way to discover if he'd written a good song was to play it without a band in front of an audience. It would soon become obvious if it passed the test as a keeper. Lamont Dozier, along with Brian and Eddie Holland, has written some of the very best songs of the past 50 years, usually in the service of Motown's biggest stars. From the Supremes' "Where Did Our Love Go" to little-known gem "In My Lonely Room" by Martha & the Vandellas, the writers have few peers. For this inspired idea of taking some of those classics and stripping them down to their core, usually with just acoustic guitar and keyboard, Lamont Dozier has flown his own colors high. Sure, he has special guest vocalists like Gregory Porter, Lee

The annual Memorial Day BBQ at the home of Bob and Senja Ricketts is always a welcome kickoff to summer. With many of the usual suspects in attendance, Bob had several grills going and led the crowd in singing the national anthem. Afterwards, the BBQ turned into a backyard hootenanny, with Bob and Tex from the Groovy Rednecks and Laura from Talkin' Treason, among others, joining in.



Bob Ricketts directs



Bob and Tex from the Groovy Rednecks and Laura Smith from Talkin' Treason

The Museum of the San Fernando Valley was named Nonprofit of the Year by California Senator Robert Hertzberg for Sen-



Stevens (L) Hertzberg and Langa in Sacramento

ate District 18 and honored June 6th in Sacramento as part of California Nonprofits Day. Michel Stevens, the Museum President said, "As an all-volunteer museum, this award reflects the drive and hard work put in by all our volunteers, including our past and present board members, docents, Valley-based artists, interns, tour guides, speakers, curators, Friends of The Museum, alliance partners and our original founder Dr. Gerald Fecht." Museum Vice President Jackie Langa expressed the mission to present facts and stories of our Valley heritage and to work with community partners to present a complete picture of the history, arts and culture of the San Fernando Valley.

Sherman Oaks resident Donna Russo called to say that six episodes of Donna on the Go are up on youtube and submitted for Emmy consideration in eight categories. Created, written and directed by Peggy Lane, the series is a lighthearted look at getting around with disabilities. Good luck Donna, you go girl.

Ann Womack, Todd Rundgren, Rumer and, yes, Sir Cliff Richard, but they're almost beside the point because Dozier himself is the one turning night into day, darkness into light when he takes the microphone. This is exactly why Lamont Dozier is in the very highest pantheon of modern songwriters. Do not miss.

Barry Goldberg  
*In the Groove*

When it comes to blues keyboard players, today the list starts right here. Barry Goldberg has the kind of credentials that don't stop, from The Electric Flag to Bob Dylan (who co-produced Goldberg's early '70s album). The Studio City resident is all in on his latest instrumental fest, produced by fellow Studio Citizen Carla Olson with a who's who of the blues crew in the house. There are several Goldberg originals and a few barn-burners originated by Sil Austin, the Cyclones, Milt Buckner and others. No matter what is being played, though, Barry Goldberg knows exactly where to go on his keyboard to find the bluest notes possible. He then twists and turns and delivers them in a way that makes the soul sizzle like only a few players still can. This isn't music that's taught in school. It was primarily taught on the streets of Chicago's South and West sides in the '60s when Goldberg was there with Charlie Musselwhite, Paul Butterfield, Michael Bloomfield, Steve Miller and more. Over a half-century later, all went on to become masters of the blues. Barry Goldberg has waited his whole life to record this set, and there was no way he

wasn't going to nail it to the wall. Blues or lose.

Leo "Bud" Welch  
*Late Blossom Blues*

With the way time is whistling through with a relentless speed, it's a minor miracle such a down-home-put-it-in-the-alley blues man like Leo "Bud" Welch still exists. He walks slow, a little twisted up from his 81 years on planet Earth, but when he straps on an electric guitar and then starts blowing soul-curling harmonica, time stops. This is no recreated circus act from the big city. This is a man who wakes up cold in his Sabougla, Mississippi shack every morning, sometimes with just enough money that day to scratch out coffee and a couple of meals, but always carries his head high, dressed in white shirts, shined shoes and a dark suit. Because blues has never been about the low-down sadness that afflicts us all. It's about rising above that sadness, striding into a new day where thriving is the theme song and love is the answer. This documentary is an unflinching glimpse into that world, and captures the minor miracles of those who walk with grace every single day. This award-winning documentary film shows how Welch, with the hard work of true-believer manager Venice Varnado, a Gulf War veteran, take on the experience of a lifetime. It must feel like winning the lottery late in life as he tours the world, and don't forget: when Leo "Bud" Welch and only a very few others like him are gone, there will be no more. Ever. Bless their hearts.