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**MONTECITO MISCELLANY**

by Richard Mineards



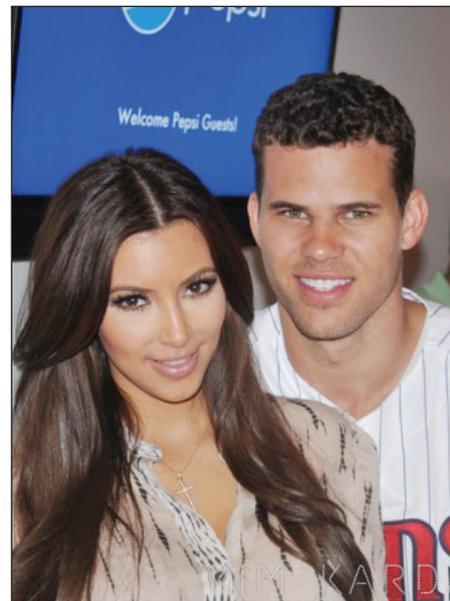
Richard covered the Royal Family for Britain's Daily Mirror and Daily Mail before moving to New York to write for Rupert Murdoch's newly launched Star magazine in 1978; Richard later wrote for New York magazine's "Intelligencer". He continues to make regular appearances on CBS, ABC, and CNN, and moved to Montecito four years ago.

**The Kardashian Kerfuffle**

The wedding of reality TV star **Kim Kardashian** to pro basketball player **Kris Humphries** was the biggest, most expensive and undoubtedly the loudest event to have been held in our rarefied enclave in years.

Helicopters clattered overhead all week getting aerial shots of venture capitalist **Frank Caufield's** mega-million-dollar 11-acre estate, *Sotto Il Monte*, on Sycamore Canyon Road, which was reportedly rented for \$140,000.

The manse was to have been the site of **Jennifer Lopez's** wedding to actor **Ben Affleck** in 2003 before the couple broke up, and the incessant helicopter traffic necessitated the installation of innumerable white balloons of all sizes to stop unofficial choppers coming in low to snap the celebrity gridlock.



The new bride and groom, Kim Kardashian and Kris Humphries

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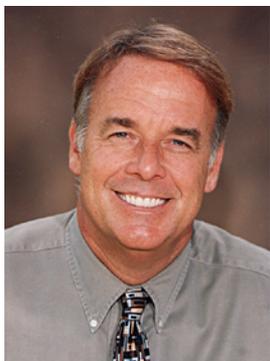
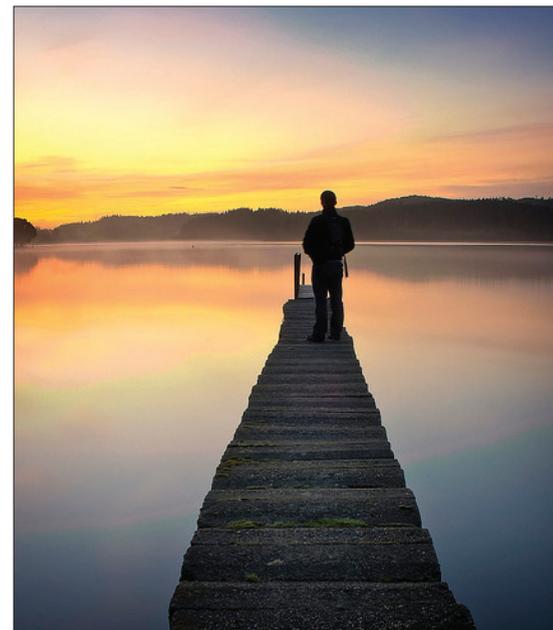
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Richard Mineards reporting on the mega nuptials

The cacophonous sound only worsened on Saturday, the actual day of the multi-million-dollar nuptials – dubbed “Project W” by E! – when helicopters whirled round and round for five hours straight, only stopping because of the darkness, nearly two hours after the twosome tied the knot.

Two huge tents, worthy of Barnum & Bailey and decorated with huge alternating swathes of black and white chiffon, were erected over a number of days for the ceremony itself, which took place in front of an altar with a huge cross of Swarovski crystals, and the party for the 440 guests.

To avoid prying eyes, given Kim’s exclusive deals with *People* magazine, reportedly worth \$1.5 million, and E! Entertainment TV, which is airing two 2-hour specials in October, a covered walkway was added between the two

structures for privacy.

The final touches were just being put to the decorations, including thousands of white roses flown in from South Africa, which went with the black, white and silver theme, dictated by Kim, as the guests, ferried from the Montecito Country Club by shuttle buses with blacked-out windows began to arrive on the block, which had been barricaded at both ends by police and Highway Patrol to stop eager fans disrupting the activities.

Metal detectors were also in place, with phones and cameras taken away by security.

But many had seen some of the bold faced names earlier in the day at the Four Seasons Biltmore and the San Ysidro Ranch, including **Lindsay**

**MISCELLANY** Page 19 ▶



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## MISCELLANY (Continued from page 7)

Lohan, Kelly Osbourne, George Lopez, basketball ace Scottie Pippen, "Extra" host Mario Lopez, Fox News anchor Greta van Susteren, "Today" show hostess, Kathie Lee Gifford, Eva Longoria, Avril Lavigne, Ryan Seacrest and Carpinteria's Alan Thicke, whose soul-singing son, Grammy-winner Robin, sang his hit "Angels" for the newlyweds to have their first dance to.

The couple, who stayed at the Biltmore and had a pre-wedding party at a private home at Fernald Point, arrived separately at the estate, Kris, 26, in a white peak tux jacket and black pants by Ermenegildo Zegna, ferried in a white Rolls Royce Phantom, while Kim, 30, was driven in a \$500,000 white Mercedes Maybach, big enough for her much talked about strapless ivory Vera Wang gown with a Basque waist, tulle skirt, Chantilly lace appliqué and an "epic" train, although certainly nothing to eclipse the late Princess Diana's 25-foot spectacular at St. Paul's Cathedral in London in 1981.

It was just one of three Wang creations she wore with \$10 million worth of jewelry, on the specially loomed black and white carpet during the lavish festivities, switching into an ivory mermaid gown with Chantilly lace after the vows and a crepe V-neck satin dress with a circle skirt for the latter part of the glittering bash.

After the religious part of the ceremony, conducted by Pastor Joel Johnson, in the Rose Garden, former Olympian Bruce Jenner, Kim's stepfather, toasted "Mr. and Mrs. Humphries" with Veuve Clicquot and Dom Ruinart champagne, with the crystal flutes being made specially by Lalique in Paris, while the bridesmaids, including Khloe, 27, Kourtney, 31, Kylie, 14, and Kendall, looked on.

Ubiquitous chef Wolfgang Puck, owner of Spago and Cut in Beverly Hills, as well as innumerable eponymous eateries nationwide, did the catering with buffalo mozzarella and heirloom tomato salad, Agnolotti pasta with sweet corn mascarpone and summer truffles, roast chicken with Yukon Gold potato purée and caramelized Brussels sprouts on the

menu, served by 300 staffers brought in for the big, big, big occasion.

A \$15,000 10-tier white wedding cake, with chocolate-chip icing and black-and-white decorations made by Los Angeles bakery, Hansen's, topped off the gourmet array.

But not all went as smoothly as planned when Kim and Kris arrived in our Eden by the Beach after a rehearsal dinner at the Montage hotel in Beverly Hills, with another bride reportedly being left hysterical and in tears after security blocked her from attending her own pre-wedding party at the Biltmore.

"She tried to get in the bar and was stopped by security because Kris Humphries had just walked in," says one witness. "A bunch of bodyguards blocked her from coming in and she ran up to her room in tears!"

Music at the mega-event, which included the rock group Earth, Wind and Fire, came to an abrupt halt at 12:30 am when law enforcement officers told organizers they'd have to cut the sound because of 22 complaints from neighbors, says my man with the martini, but the partying went on into the wee hours.

Kim, who is sporting a \$2-million 20.5-carat diamond ring from her six-foot-nine husband after their engagement in May following a six-month romance, is foregoing a lengthy honeymoon as she leaves for Manhattan to shoot the second season of "Kourtney and Kim Take New York" and he returns to New Jersey to play for the Nets, many of whose players were at the big bash.

Needless to say, all the Hollywood hoopla kept me busy, with slots on all three network affiliate evening newscasts, appearances on the top nationally syndicated show "Entertainment Tonight," E!, CNN and its sister station, HLN's "Showbiz Tonight," which we shot on Coast Village Road using a huge satellite truck, which caused considerable excitement with passing traffic and much amusement with KEYT-TV's senior reporter, John Palminteri, who stopped by to check

**MISCELLANY** Page 27 ▶

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out the competition.

The Kardashians, who even launched "Love," a limited edition perfume, to mark tying the knot, have now officially left Montecito.

Silence is golden!...

*Love at First Skype!*

Despite being just a tiara's toss or two from the Kardashian extravaganza and all the associated helicopter hoopla, the wedding of **Anne Towbes'** 33-year-old son, **Michael**, to **Natali Amar**, 25, at banker and philanthropist **Michael Towbes'** and wife Anne's impeccably manicured spread went off flawlessly.

The ceremony between the musical entrepreneur and the interior designer, who both work in L.A., took place in the four-acre estate's amphitheater, which was festooned with pink and white roses, intertwined with ivy, for the occasion, overseen by local event planner **Merryl Brown**.

Among the 200 guests at the sunset ceremony, at which **Kenny Loggins** sang "For The First Time" when the couple had their first dance, were Michael's sister, *Santa Barbara* magazine owner **Jennifer Smith Hale**, **Herb** and **Bui Simon**, **Bob** and **Marlene Veloz**, **Bill** and **Sandi Nicholson**, **Rob** and **Sheryl Lowe**, **Pat** and **Ursula Nesbitt**, **Barry** and **Jelinda DeVorzon**, **Ivan** and **Genevieve Reitman**, Oscar-nominee **Jason Reitman**, **Gina Tolleson**, actor **Fred Savage**, T.V. commentator **Jeff Greenfield**, and **Bob** and **Robin Fell**.

"It couldn't have been more delightful. It was all meant to be," Anne tells me. "Michael went to Israel for a friend's wedding two and a half years ago and met Nati at a club. He felt a close connection and asked her to the ceremony, but she didn't go. But he gave her his card and they Skyped every day for an hour for two months. "She ended up staying here for two months and then Michael went to Jerusalem and met her parents. They went up to Carmel where he dee-jayed at a Jaguar event at the Concours d'Elegance and, a year later at the same event, he asked Nati to marry him. I really couldn't be happier."

The bride wore an ivory lace bodiced gown with a cascade of chiffon ruffles and feather plumes by L.A. designer **Monique Lhuillier**, who has created wedding dresses for **Natalie Imbruglia**, **Britney Spears** and **Christine Baumgartner**, wife of Oscar-winner **Kevin Costner**.

And, in a most sentimental gesture, Anne wore a champagne and peach flowered sheath gown bought by her late husband, **Bob**, whose company owned KEYT-TV.

"I really wanted him to be part of the celebration in some way," she explains.



Anne Towbes' son, Michael, ties the knot with Nati Amar

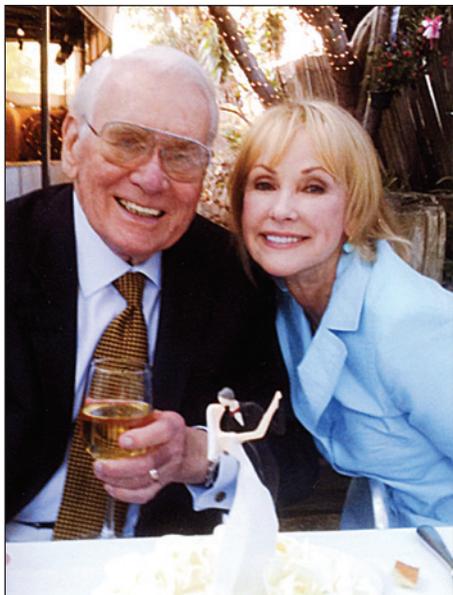
And, in another nod to the past, the diamond from Anne's 25th anniversary ring was worn as a wedding ring by Nati, who will live with her husband in Laurel Canyon when they return from their Hawaii honeymoon.

And, no, the event will not be a two-hour special on E!...

*Montecito Magnate Proposes on Royal Wedding Day*

Aviation fan **Tom Wathen**, 81, is flying high!

The Montecito resident, who used to own Pinkerton, the world's oldest private security company, has just re-married and is off on honeymoon this week on The Savannah, his 118-ft motor yacht.



Aircraft maker Tom Wathen and new wife, Carol, wing way to New England honeymoon (photo by Jane Burkemper)

His wife, **Carol Scott**, a widow, is an old family acquaintance, but romance only took hold a year ago when he was invited to dinner at a friend's home and Carol was also there.

"It evolved from there and we began courting," says Tom, who is known for his hobby of restoring and re-building vintage airplanes.

He even has his own airport, Flabob,

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in Riverside, which is now the home of the Thomas W. Wathen Foundation.

By coincidence, the couple got engaged on the day of the royal wedding of **Prince William** and **Kate Middleton**.

"It certainly wasn't planned that way, it just happened!" laughs Tom. "We had dinner together at the Birnam Wood Country Club."

Three months later the tony two-some tied the knot at Lake Elkheart in Wisconsin, the site for an annual family reunion.

Now, as I write, Tom and Carol are checking out the joys of Martha's Vineyard, Nantucket and Sag Harbor....

*May I Say Who's Calling?*

If you can't quite afford a butler, the annual gala at the Santa Barbara Zoo on Saturday (27) might be your answer.

Among the items up for auction at the Zoofari Ball, bidders can now buy the use of my dulcet English voice, which has been used for narrating documentaries and TV commercials over the years, as well as anchoring, commentating and corresponding on national network and cable shows.

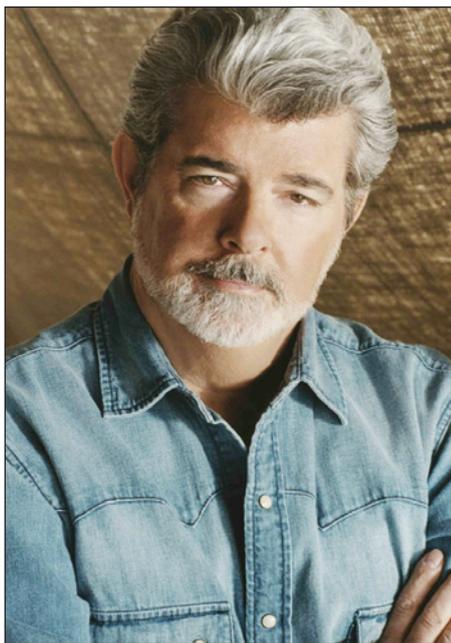
Under "Answer Like Royalty," a reference to my coverage of the British Royal Family over the decades – most recently for Prince William's wedding and his visit to the Santa Barbara Polo Club, with his wife, Kate, for NBC –, the listing says: "The dulcet British tones of columnist and bon vivant **Richard Mineards** can grace your outgoing voicemail message.

"Your callers will be delighted that you can't answer the phone when they hear this greeting, personalized just for you, inviting them to leave a message... or whatever else you desire. Professionally recorded."

Not quite Jeeves, but one tries...

*In A Galaxy Not So Far Away...*

"Star Wars" director **George Lucas**, who eight months ago acquired a \$20 million oceanfront estate in Carpinteria, would appear to be on a buying spree.



Director George Lucas, anything but conventional

Lucas, who is worth an estimated \$3.25 billion by *Forbes*, plans to knock down the six-bedroom, four-bathroom contemporary home on 1.7 acres and erect a property more to his tastes, as I exclusively revealed here in this illustrious organ.

Now, I hear, the filmmaker, who was joint creator, with **Steven Spielberg**, of the archaeologist-adventurer character Indiana Jones, has splashed out \$15 million on buying and restoring an Italian convent in Passignano sul Trasimeno in Umbria.

He has spent several millions on renovating the buildings, with only the 13<sup>th</sup>-century church remaining unchanged.

Lucas has even made a documentary about the property's restoration, which he screens in the build-

ing's new cinema.

A religious experience bar none, no doubt...

*Vine Tasting at QAD*

More than 40 wineries and eateries displayed their wares at the 10th annual Taste of the Vine fundraiser for the Sansum Diabetes Research Institute at the exquisitely located QAD headquarters campus in Summerland, when a record 400-plus guests raised in excess of \$90,000 for the cause.



Where there's a Will, there's a way, for local author John De Herrera

Event chairman, **Ellen Goodstein**, and coordinator **Susan Wilson**, put the event's popularity down to "word of mouth" and the locale, with its sweeping views of the Pacific.

"Very few public events are held here, so this is a rare opportunity to come and enjoy it," says Susan.

KEYT-TV's ubiquitous **John Palminteri** conducted the live auction, which included trips to Buenos Aires, Argentina, and a game lodge in Kruger National Park in South Africa.

I'll drink to that...

*Will's Worthy Words*

William Shakespeare's Elizabethan writings may be some of the world's most popular plays, but not the most digestible, written as they were, in sometimes-incomprehensible Olde English.

But Montecito writer **John De Herrera**, 46, who studied art and literature at UCSB, is doing his best to make The Bard more palatable for a younger audience.

He has just published "Hamlet/Macbeth," which he describes as a simplified, more understandable version of the playwright's words.

"Most translations seeking to unearth the plays from the Elizabethan are academic in nature," John told me at a bijoux launch bash at Tecolote, the lively literary lair in the Upper Village.

"My translations leave as much as

possible unaltered.

"It is my hope to create an initial understanding for some, a better understanding for others, and a renewed interest in the original works overall."

This is John's second book, his first being the novel, "The Kingsnake In The Sun," five years ago, which is now going into its third printing.

His latest project took three years to come to fruition, given a change of direction midway through. He feels it has enormous potential in high schools and the state university system.

Next up for a language makeover? "Othello/Romeo and Juliet."

"It is important to be able to decipher Shakespeare," adds John. "They really are great works, if you can understand them..."

*Bach 2 Rock*

Local musician **Patrick Maiani** is out to prove his Bach is better than his bite.



Ballet and Bach, the perfect combination for Patrick Maiani

In a collaboration with State Street Ballet, Patrick is presenting "Bach 2 Rock Live," a brand new outreach program featuring music from Beethoven to Scott Joplin,

It premieres this Saturday at the Gail Towbes Center for Dance...

Sightings: Rappers **Jay-Z** and **Ludacris** checking out the scene at Lucky's... Fox News host **Greta van Susteren** dining at the Biltmore... **Don Johnson** and family chowing down at Cava

Pip! Pip! for now

Readers with tips, sightings and other amusing items for Richard's column should e-mail him at richardmineards@verizon.net or send invitations or other correspondence to the Journal



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