

EVENTS / FESTIVALS

Queen Mary's New Year's Eve

The Queen Mary
1126 Queens Hwy
Long Beach, CA
Welcome 2002 in style aboard the Queen Mary. (She's not going anywhere, so leave the Dramamine at home.) For you big spenders, book a night in the shipboard hotel and stumble to a first-class stateroom after a night of revelry, which includes a bottle of champagne, a lavish buffet dinner in the Grand Salon and full access to eight separate dance rooms throughout the ship. More reasonably priced tickets for just the parties are also available. The festivities include dancing to Top 40, big band, country western, jazz, '70s disco and Latin music goes on until 1am, with a break at midnight for spectacular fireworks over the marina. The Queen Mary is located at the south end of the 710 Freeway, on the water in Long Beach. For more information, call (310) 435-3511 or visit www.queenmary.com. (Note: You must be 21 or over to get on board.)
Dec. 31, 8pm

LAC'S New Year's Eve Celebration 2002

The LA. Connection Comedy Theatre, 13442 Ventura Blvd. Sherman Oaks. Kent Skov's L.A. Connection loves to tilt everyone's perspective. This year's celebrations is designed to continue that tradition. There will be an 8pm show and a 10 pm show. Both feature performers from LAC's talented MAD Movies Veteran All-Stars.
Dec.31 Call 818-784-1868 for info and tickets.

Gregg Karukas, Shelby Flint & Friends at the Cal State Northridge, Performing Arts Center, 18111 Nordhoff Street, Northridge. This is an intimate evening of all-acoustic, holiday jazz.
Dec. 21, 8pm

The Derby: 4500 Los Feliz Boulevard, Hollywood, CA 90027

Join The Paladins, Deke Dickerson And The Ecco-Fonics, and Big Sandy And His Fly-Rite Boys, as this exciting lineup will swing The Derby into the New Year with style and flair. The Derby has long stood for class, great music, delicious food, and of course, for jammin' parties. Various ticket packages are on sale now (see attached for details), so don't miss out! There are four types of Derby New Year's Eve tickets available: (Admission includes hats, party favors, commemorative photo and midnight champagne toast). Ticket prices range from general admission to table or booth reservations to dinner packages. CALL (323) 663-8979 or e-mail DerbyHollywood@aol.com
The Derby website: www.the-derby.com

Classic Car Night at Bob's Big Boy

Bob's Big Boy, 4211 Riverside Drive Burbank
Gleaming chrome, luscious tuck 'n' roll, paint jobs polished to mirror perfection, and boys and girls in leather. Is this the set of Rebel Without a Cause? No, little motor heads. It's Classic Car Night at Bob's Big Boy in Burbank. Don't miss out! Dec. 14, 6pm to 10pm

The Zen of Chia Pets

"In Zen ... even the most mundane objects are things of wonder."

-David Fontana, Ph.D., Wales

By Tysa Goodrich

A few Christmases ago when I was a single mom and my daughter was seven, the two of us got so sick that neither one of us could get up from the living room couch inside our small one-bedroom Sherman Oaks apartment. Luckily we had staggered our illnesses, my daughter getting sick first. For two days, I took care of her. But then the killer flu found its way into me. By Christmas Eve morning both of us lay like zombies, our heads at opposite ends of the couch, our bodies smothered in blankets, the floor around us dotted with crumpled tissues. The one constant throughout this holiday fiasco was the continuous jingles blaring from the TV set: "Ch-ch-ch-Chia" -- Chia Pets.

Once again, Christmas is upon us, and the Chia Pets are back -- thriving. What is this mysterious lure of Chia Pets, and why have their sales been steadily growing (pardon the pun) for the past 19 years?

The first trademarked Chia Pet was sold in 1982 by Joseph Enterprises, but according to Michael Hirsch, Vice President



This authentic Mexican chia goat stands one foot tall.

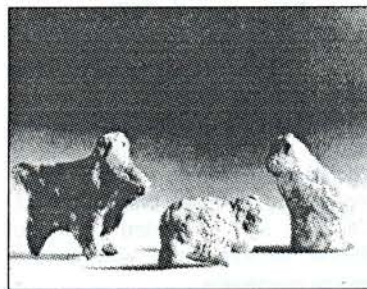
of the company, the Chia Pet is a 200+-year-old product, coming from Mayan and Inca Indian tradition. For this reason, the Chia Pet cannot be patented.

In "A Potter's Mexico" by Irwin and Emily Whitaker, I found a picture of an authentic "chivo de chia" (chia goat), photographed in Oaxaca, Mexico in 1971. At that time, Santa María Atzompa, a pottery village near Oaxaca, produced these hand-modeled figures for Christmas and Holy Week, catering to the tourist market. Interestingly enough, Atzompa's only form having its origins in traditional ceremonial wares is -- you guessed it -- the chivo de chia.

Joseph Enterprise's first Chia Pet was the ram. Keeping in

line with tradition, Chia Pets were formulated like their native predecessors, by molding clay pots into shapes of animals, keeping them hollow inside, using a kiln to fire the clay figures at a very low temperature, maintaining the clay's porosity so that when you pour water inside, the water can seep through the clay, allowing the chia seeds (already spread over the pot) to germinate.

And what about these chia seeds? They're edible and highly nutritious! According to James Scheer, who wrote "The Magic of Chia," the seed of this



10,000-year-old unbaked clay animals

desert plant is one of the most energy-giving, endurance-sustaining food products ever discovered. Chia seeds provide the essential omega 3 & 6 oils.

It dawned on me that even the idea of these sprouting clay animals, the art of pottery itself, touches a deep core within us, one of heritage and ancient tradition. People have been shaping human and animal figurines out of clay for more than 100,000 years. They began to fire their clay pots 10,000 years ago. Dr. Rivka Gonen, in her book "Pottery In Ancient Times," says, "The oldest kiln ever discovered was built in Palestine around 3000 B.C." Because the potter gives shape to the formless, making something out of nothing, her relationship to the clay has been compared to the Divine's creation of humankind.

Almost two decades of the same Chia Pet commercials -- with the exception of a few tweaks every two years to add new Chia Pets -- have been sending us to the stores to buy them. The phenomenon of this wondrous product and its Ch-ch-ch-Chia jingle has remained a soft spot between my daughter and I -- an offbeat Yuletide memory. We giggle every time we see another commercial.

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