

FIFTEEN INTERESTING THINGS I LEARNED IN MY FIRST SIX MONTHS AT CBTS* WHICH YOU MAY OR MAY NOT KNOW

By Anon-Ee-Mouse

- *First Thing: Nobody calls it "Carlsbad-By-The-Sea".
- Get to know all the people at the front desk. They are your buddies and not just there to filter visitors. They know everything about everything and have the keys to the kingdom, literally. Dial "0" is your best friend. They'll even open the doors for you without you fumbling for your fob if you're nice.
- If you use your key instead of the fob reader to open the main doors you won't have to wait so long for them to close so the baddies don't come in. I'm told this also works on the way out if you use the right door instead of the left but haven't been able to prove it.
- If you need to know something really important that the front desk can't answer, then find Mika IV and ask her. If that fails ask Willie because he's been here forever and knows everything, except lately now that he's been Taylorized he seems harder to find.
- If you really really need something done maintenance-wise first call Andrew at 2396 and put in a work order, then go find Joseph.
- If you want to swim in the Grand pool then be sure you know the door code to get back in the building, otherwise you'll be dog-paddling to eternity, or until you're rescued, whichever comes first. The door code is 1-2,3-4, duh! (- no, the "duh" is not part of the code - oh, forget it). Incidentally, if you need an extra towel there is a supply in the ladies restroom (OK to enter guys --- just knock). Please be sure to return it to the "used" hamper when finished.
- You'll meet hundreds (seemingly) of new people. You have two choices- go with the flow and get involved, or go hide. I recommend the former (but

it's OK to hide for a little while).

- To keep track of the dozens of new faces you'll need some way to jog your memory. I like to make little notes in the phone Directory, like "uses red walker". (Well, that actually didn't work out very well- do you know how many red walkers there are around here? And people cheat - they don't use them all the time). I try to remember only one or two new faces a week so, with luck, I'll never get to know everybody. But it really doesn't matter if you call Bill "Dan" once in a while - the slight, like everything else, will be soon forgotten. In a pinch you can always say "Hi Jim" (or Jean as the case may be) and you'll be right much of the time.
- Sometimes Darlene's new prospects ask "What's it like here?" Best answer I've heard is "half high school, half cruise ship, with the best and worst of each".
 - After a few days here you'll want to get down to the real beach, where there's sand, -- on the beach rather than just at it. There're two ways to get there; option A, down all those stairs at the end of Grand, and then back up, or option B, use the elevator in the Ocean building. This is somewhat complicated but is possible. First, use your magic fob to open the gate to the Ocean Terrace, that beautiful, underused space on the roof of the Ocean Building. (Great place to watch the sunset if you can skip dinner-- bring an umbrella if it's Pelican Season). OK, where were we? Find the elevator and punch in the code 1-2-3-4-* (that's "star", the tricky part) on the security pad then push the "DN" button and go to the first floor. It's somewhat of a labyrinth and does have a few stairs (but not as bad as option A) and eventually you'll reach the sand, passing a shower on your way which you can use to rinse off if you're actually so foolish as to get in the ocean. Now, to get back (IMPORTANT) - there are two entrances from

the beach to the Ocean building; North, and South, both behind identical black gates. You want North, repeat, North, otherwise it's a long slog back up to the street, especially if you're barefoot. Retrace your steps, using your magic key, to get back to the roof.

- (Sorry that was so long)
- In a few days you'll likely venture into the "Village" as it's called. I'm told that Hennessy's offers free dinners on your birthday, or Thursdays, or something, and Sushi Yama across the street in the Village Faire isn't bad if you're into raw fish and don't mind the noise - pardon me, music - from the Coyote Grill downstairs. For lots of info on attractions etc. visit the Visitor's Center - the old railroad station between Grand and Carlsbad Village Drive (locals call it Elm).
- Now, about the call buttons. The pendant-on-a-chain that you were issued as well as the red button by the toilet if pressed call Assisted Living who will come to help you. Just be aware that the pendant is "water resistant" but not necessarily waterproof, so if you're planning to wear it in the shower it's best to put it in a plastic baggie. Also, if you're feeling not quite right and need an aspirin don't call Assisted Living (hereafter referred to as "AL") - they'll most likely refer you to the Sea Shell. But if you're really sick someone from somewhere will be on your case promptly. If in doubt, just dial "0" for the front desk and let them sort it out.
- Remember to flip your flipper and slide your slider, otherwise the desk will call you at an inconvenient time. If you don't answer the phone they'll knock on your door at an even more inconvenient time.
- If you ask nicely, Cindy will give you a personalized, laminated ID

card with your picture, emergency info and CBTS logo that's handy to carry with you at all times when you're out and about, in case you don't have your more formal ID.

- If you're going to be off-campus (aahhh) overnight or longer, fill out an "away" form in the "Away" book at the front desk so security doesn't have to come looking for you thinking you've wandered away again when they find your flipper not flipped in the am. They hate wild goose chases.

- Now about the dining room. If you go in for a meal and the hostess invites you to "start a table" she's not suggesting that you run down to the wood shop (key at front desk) and build furniture, but rather to be seated at an empty table where in short order someone very interesting will join you and start a conversation. Go for it. Also, if your server (i.e. wait-person) comes by and asks politely if she should "fire your order", she's not offering to burn your meal to a crisp (although it may be too late if you've ordered the flatiron steak), but rather implying that you've dawdled over your salad far too long and if you want your meal you'd better say so now because the kitchen is going to close soon. By the way, "S.F." in front of a menu item does not mean "San Francisco style".
- On the other hand, if you are asked to "join a table" it's a fun way to meet new people, who also will be very interesting. But if you really want to be alone just ask for a seat in the "pit". This really won't help much because you'll soon get drawn into the conversation at the adjoining table. However if you really want to be by yourself, your request will be honored.
- While we're on the subject, if it's nice weather and you ask Larry to reserve a table for you in the courtyard, you get bonus points.
- If someone invites you to dinner don't show up at their door, bottle in hand, expecting canapes and conversation. With few exceptions (penthouses, Martini Club) all entertaining takes place in the public areas because, let's face it, most of our apartments are just too darn small for guests.
- While you were on the wait list you got invited to a long list of fun social functions. Now that they have your money that treatment is over and you don't get invited anywhere except when new friends invite you to dinner. It's up to you to sign up if necessary (terrace BBQ's etc), show up and have fun.
- Wine is confusing. First, it's gauche to bring wine to a dinner party on "social" nights (when the wine's free) unless it's a really special bottle for a really special occasion. Otherwise, if invited to dinner it's nice to bring a bottle (when invited ask your host if you should bring red or white, which will give you a clue as to what to do - they will say it's not necessary- don't believe it). In a pinch you can always order a bottle of ten-buck Chuck off the menu, but don't do it too often. The Sea Shell sells neat carriers.
- Bananas. But you already know about the bananas.

- Yes, it is possible to order a take-out meal on "special menu" nights (those when the weekly menu shows a blank). Just find a copy of the menu, write your name and extension on it and where you want it delivered, and circle the items you want. The people are very accommodating, it's just the rules that are obtuse. But it's a lot more fun to join the party.
- Speaking of fun, some say that the Grand building is Party Central but seems to me there are fun people all over this place. Even the rich ones down in the Ocean building are nice once you get to know them.

- There are libraries galore at CBTS. One of the more interesting ones is the "Research Library" way down past the MP (multi-purpose room, also known as Wii Lanes) in the billiards room where the pool table is. It's probably locked - the billiards group are a territorial lot -- key at front desk. This is not to be confused with the Resource Room (where the mail boxes are), or the other "RR", the Rochambeau Room, where all the chairs are.
- While we're here, remember to look through the binders on the shelf under the TV and indicate in the activities book, as well as in the "Interest" one, which activities you might be interested in. This is a real help to the Activities Committee which is as much in the dark as you are as to what might be interesting.
- While in the Resource Room (the big library) you may have noticed a couple of computers, aside from the ones dedicated for resident use, with DAKIM on the screen. (There's one in the Grand building too.) This actually is a useful memory-enhancement program thoughtfully provided by CBTS for your benefit. Should you wish to take advantage of this, fill out a registration form at the front desk and eventually someone (Ozzie?) will enter you into the system. In the meantime if you want to get started, ask a friend if it's OK to use her account.
- Yes, Virginia, there is a chapel. It's on 3 South across from that other seldom-used room, the paperback library. The chapel's rather small but a nice place to meditate, or hide, depending on your need.
- You will see lots of publicity for Le Cage which is a place down in the dungeon with a lot of really neat stuff for sale. (Yes, it should be "La" – it's a long story). If you can't find it after the third try call Gracie and she will give you directions. Also they will help you dispose of the stuff in those six boxes you still haven't unpacked.
- Rest assured that CBTS has your best interests at heart. There are even stashes of food and water around the complex which can be drawn on in case of emergency. If there is a true emergency someone that knows where these are and has the keys to the doors will show up. Trust me.
- We are fortunate to have wi-fi (free!) throughout the complex. Just know that if it goes down you can't use your own browser to sign back on. You have to go to Internet Explorer where you can sign in on the CBTS page, then go back to your own browser. It is also not yet possible to connect your

Smart TV or similar devices to the CBTS wi-fi – they can't have everyone streaming Netflix at once. This may change when we get faster service.

- There is a website for CBTS Residents (www.cbtsresidents.com – the “www” is essential). At present this is a read-only site with a lot of useful information on history, finances, organization etc. and with links to orientation items like this opus so you may wish to check it out. We are also promised a hard-copy bulletin board for residents' use but don't hold your breath.

- While we're talking about technical stuff, when setting up your telephone system consider including a plain-vanilla corded phone that doesn't need AC power to function so you'll have a life-line to the outside world in case of a power outage. (Of course, cellphones serve that purpose too unless you're in the MP room or the Ocean building or some of the other dead spots,)
- It doesn't do any good to push on the elevator doors to keep them open - just wave your arm.
- The color scheme for the Grand building must have been chosen by someone from UCLA. If Darlene had had a say it would have been red and gold.
- John Wayne stayed here (CBTS was once a hotel-- some people think it still is) during the filming of the 1949 war epic "The Sands of Iwo Jima". No one knows exactly where so if CBTS wants to charge you extra because you're staying in the John Wayne Room, ask them to prove it.
- The correct title of the popular Latin song which starts "Quando, Quando, Quando" is Quando, Quando (two Quandos only). This doesn't have anything to do with CBTS but might win you a prize on a cruise ship.

Well, that's all that I can think of off the top of my head but I'm sure there's more. Most of it is probably covered in the Residents Handbook and I really intend to read it, someday. In the spirit of full disclosure it did take me way more than six months to discover all these things, and I still keep finding unknown gems so consider this a work in progress. Meanwhile, here are a few remaining minor mysteries to ponder:

- Does anyone know why my phone jingles a bit at 3:56 am?
- Why there is a phone book dated 1999 in the cabinet behind the menu desk in the Grand building?
- Is there really a manual release to the garage gates?
- Why the restroom at the Ocean Terrace doesn't have a sign on the door?
- Why the pepper flakes are bigger than the holes in the shakers in the dining room?
- OK, there're more than 15 things but if I'd said 38 you wouldn't have started to read this.
- Now you're counting to see if there are 38.
- And someone is looking for that phone book.