



Enoch who? Sanders? What?

Why a mid-20th-century violinist keeps popping up in City Hall e-mails

by Eric Wolff

Enoch Light. Famed violinist. Head of Enoch Light and the Light Brigade. Minimalist audio-recording innovator. Inventor of the gatefold album cover. Current mayor of San Diego. Wait—huh?

Yeah. That's an easy conclusion to reach when flipping through documents connected to City Attorney Mike Aguirre's report on the too-tall Sunroad Enterprises building near Montgomery Field. Blogger Pat Flannery posted some of those documents, which led activist Kathryn Rhodes to put in a public-records request for "correspondence to or from "Enoch Light," which is believed to be Mayor [Jerry] Sanders' pseudonym."

Even ex-mayor and conservative radio host Roger Hedgecock assumed the name had become an e-mail "nom de guerre" for Sanders.

Could this all be true? Is the codename a dastardly ploy designed to help the mayor and his team avoid releasing public information? And why Enoch Light? Does the mayor have a taste for obscure stereophonic music we were not previously aware of?

Hedgecock put the question to Sanders directly on his show. Sanders denied it, saying it was "a domain name" for the mayor's office. It didn't make sense. CityBeat gets lots of e-mail from the mayor's office. None of the domains in the headers say "Enoch Light."

CityBeat asked Aguirre if he had tried to get any answers.

"According to the people in the mayor's office, it's a name that's used to schedule the mayor into his appointments," Aguirre told CityBeat. "On the e-mails that have Enoch Light on them, those are the e-mails, according to their people, that indicate that he was in attendance at those meetings, that they were scheduled for him to be at those meetings."

For the city attorney, that was bad news, because his documents showed an Enoch Light meeting four days after Aguirre brought suit against Sunroad, with land-use honcho Jim Waring and Sunroad big cheese Aaron Feldman in attendance. "It was confusing to us because it was Enoch Light's meeting," Aguirre said. "But we couldn't figure out who Enoch Light was."

Wait a minute—the mayor told Hedgecock it wasn't a code name for him. Still confused, CityBeat called Fred Sainz, Sanders' spokesperson.

"Enoch Light is the mayor's scheduling program," Sainz said. It was assigned before the mayor arrived in office, he said.

So it's not a codename; it's his calendar? We asked Sainz to use it in a sentence. He couldn't.

Finally, it was Sainz' assistant, Kevin Klein, who offered the most coherent

explanation in an e-mail responding to CityBeat's own records request.

"'Enoch Light' is the name of the Novell Groupwise account that the Mayor's scheduler uses to maintain the Mayor's calendar," he wrote. "The only 'correspondence' that would contain the words 'Enoch Light' in it would be appointments sent to/from the Mayor's scheduler to/from one or several of the other people listed in your request."

In subsequent e-mails, Klein clarified that whenever Sanders' scheduler, Cynthia Lewis, puts an appointment into his calendar, it sends messages to relevant staff indicating they have an appointment. The "From:" field on the e-mail is from Enoch Light.

"I actually just filled a request last week for 'all correspondence' to/from Enoch Light," Klein added. "I produced nearly 3000 sheets of paper at \$.25 and as I went through them for redactions, I noticed that literally, every single piece of paper was simply an appointment or a 'denied appointment.'"

David Rolland and Kelly Davis contributed to this story.

Write to ericw@sdcitybeat.com and editor@sdcitybeat.com.

7-11-07

© 2007 Southland Publishing, All Rights Reserved