

P.J. Corkery

Item, whozegotanitem? ...



HERE'S Strange de Jim's pal Jay Leno on those fires down in Malibu: "That was Governor Gray Davis trying to burn down California for the insurance money. ... California's so broke, they're cutting way back on education. Now seven or eight students are going to have to have sex with the same teacher..."

"I think we have a Harry Connick Jr. in the making here in S.F.," enthuses Diane Shields, who knows her pianists and saloon singers. (She's a soulful pal of Michael Feinstein.) The lad she's talking about is Spencer Day. Spencer made his Plush Room debut over the weekend. "He had the place rocking," says Diane. "The audience was almost in a stampede." Spencer is indeed a terrific jazz/blues vocalist, pianist and composer. He works with a quartet of four equally personable musicians. "He's so at home on stage, and he's a whole 24 years old!" reports Diane. He's going places. He was on CBS's "Star Search" Wednesday p.m. ...

Friday-Sunday, January 17-19, 2003

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Friday fishcakes



FRIDAY, JAN. 17 — It's been a big week for local guys on the tube. Spencer Day, the hot young vocalist, composer and pianist, was on CBS' "Star Search" Wednesday. He was the only classy thing on the show. But he won, and now goes back for another show. ... Spencer, do what you have to do to get the career going, but hurry back to the Plush Room. ...

Bruce | Bellingham

Hello in there



ONCE A WEEK or so, around 8 in the morning, you might see Fearless Lily's Greeting Project at McKesson Plaza, where Post St. meets Market. Lily is a one-person project. She's a gregarious, attractive woman in a multi-colored patchwork jacket, who stands on a little rug and simply says hello and smiles to everyone on their way to their daily gigs. "We need more cheerful people like this," says Katja Kaiser. "I did not see her today. I have to say that miss her when she's not there." ... Who says one person can't make a difference? ...

"Star Search" vet Spencer Day opened The Plush Room Monday to a full house and a varied act with lots of enthusiasm. There is little that Spencer won't try. Sitting intermittently at the piano, he sang Ellington, Porter, Gershwin and Mingus. He also has a gift for song writing. And a range: he got all those Brook Benton low notes on "A Rainy Night In Georgia." Sipping a martini on stage ("Here. Smell it. It's really gin, you know."), Spencer doesn't look old enough to drink. He can take his time before actually living The Rat Pack stuff. Backed by Finn Kelly, on piano ... Daniel Fabricant on bass ... Brian Carmody on drums and a versatile Yair Evinine on cello and guitar, Spencer camped it up on a few numbers with Trixie Carr, who is effervescent and charming. ... Last night, Spencer introduced a new song, "I'm In Love In San Francisco." Composer Allen Joy hopes it will be a new anthem. Even better than the tune, "San Francisco." Of course, "Inna-Gadda-Da-Vida" in Esperanto is better than that awful old thing. ...