

# DATEBOOK

## THE FEATURES PAGE

### THE IN CROWD

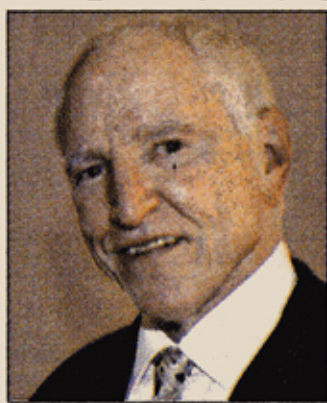
Leah Garchik

## Cheek-by-jowl party by party

**J**im Hormel's 70th birthday was celebrated with New Year's Day tennis-and-tea at the San Francisco Tennis Club. Guests, including **Rita Moreno** in Wimbledon whites and her faux-Gatsby husband, **Lenny Gordon**, were asked to dress for tennis in the year of his birth. The political contingent included **Nancy Pelosi**, **Mark Leno** and **Susan Leal**; **Dianne Feinstein** couldn't make it, but a proclamation is promised. Hormel's closest pals warmed up for the festivities with a New Year's Eve black-tie dinner at his home near Buena Vista Park.

Across the Golden Gate Bridge, diners enjoying New Year's festivities at the Lark Creek Inn were on their third course at around 10:15 p.m. when the lights went out. The blackout lasted until just before the new year, but candles were produced, and dinner and dancing went forward. The real heroes, said general manager **Ron Vale**, were the folks toiling in the kitchen, which without air-conditioning "must have been 150 degrees," said Vale.

Elsewhere around the country, things were less civilized. In New York, **Debbie Harry**, 57, arrived in her Mercedes convertible at a snazzy and crowded New York party at Discotheque on New Year's Eve, took one look at the line outside, and drove away into the night. This was probably a wise move because a bouncer at the hot Manhattan nightclub Spa wound up in the hospital with a broken nose, reported the New York Post; and **Puffy Combs'** party at Opium in Miami was a "disaster," a club insider told the New York newspaper. Combs "has overstayed his welcome everywhere, from Miami to St. Tropez. Nobody wants him and his ugly, dangerous entourage



**Jim Hormel:** Was a New Year's baby

in their club anymore."

In Las Vegas, the Rev. **Al Sharpton** rang in the new year in the company of **Angie Dickinson** and **F. Lee Bailey**; on the island of Mustique, said the New York Daily News, **Mick Jagger's** cold kept him from going out (he and Harry could have rented a video and shared a mug of Ovaltine). And **Britney Spears'** plane was delayed, so she missed most of her party at the Hudson Hotel in New York but arrived in time to take part in the grand American New Year's experience, watching the ball drop on TV.

#### HERE TO STAY?:

**Adam Davies**, whose new novel "The Frog Prince" describes a young man who works as an editorial underling, as Davies once did, has just moved to San Francisco at the suggestion of his New York book publicist. His resume also includes teaching college English, but his job search here has been fruitless, and he needs money, he told TIC, so he's sold his car. If that conjures an image of a penniless artist huddled in a bus shelter waiting for

Muni, erase it. He's going to buy a Vespa, *très* trendy.

Davies has connections. His New York book party, in September, at the very happening Michael's restaurant, was hosted by **Liz Smith**, **Dominick Dunne**, **Joel Schumacher** and his agent, **Esther Newberg**, with **Barbara Walters** and **Graydon Carter** in attendance. The well-connected author's link to this set is his ex-step-mother, journalist **Cynthia McFadden**, a good pal of Smith's. In addition to a party mention in the New York Times, his book received a Wall Street Journal review ("Mr. Davies captures young love wonderfully") and mentions in the New York Observer, Entertainment Weekly and Us Weekly.

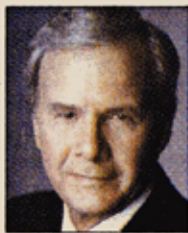
In New York, he says, his "bad-influence friends" included "questionable people who party all night" — it's hard to tell whether this is sincere or sarcastic — but he's making new friends here, including **Michael Chabon**, the Pulitzer Prize-winning novelist who's considered youngish around here and might wince at the new kid's description: "I grew up on him."

#### BROKAW REFLECTS:

**Tom Brokaw**, native of Yankton, S.D. (described in Chronicle reporter **Wyatt Buchanan's** story about the lowest house prices in the country), e-mailed

praise to Buchanan. The newsman warned, however, that the reporter was likely to get complaints from the city fathers about not mentioning major Yankton attractions: Riverboat Days, churches, the new art museum "and, ahem, the new auld Brokaw bike and nature trail."

**Brokaw said he and his wife** celebrated their 40th anniversary.



**Tom Brokaw:** Unknown?