

WHAT U.S. CITIES CAN
LEARN FROM VANCOUVER

GO GHOSTHUNTING IN
THE BIG EASY

DRESS TO IMPRESS WITH
MICHAEL STRAHAN

AMERICAN WAY

OCTOBER 2015

UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL

SWEET TALKER

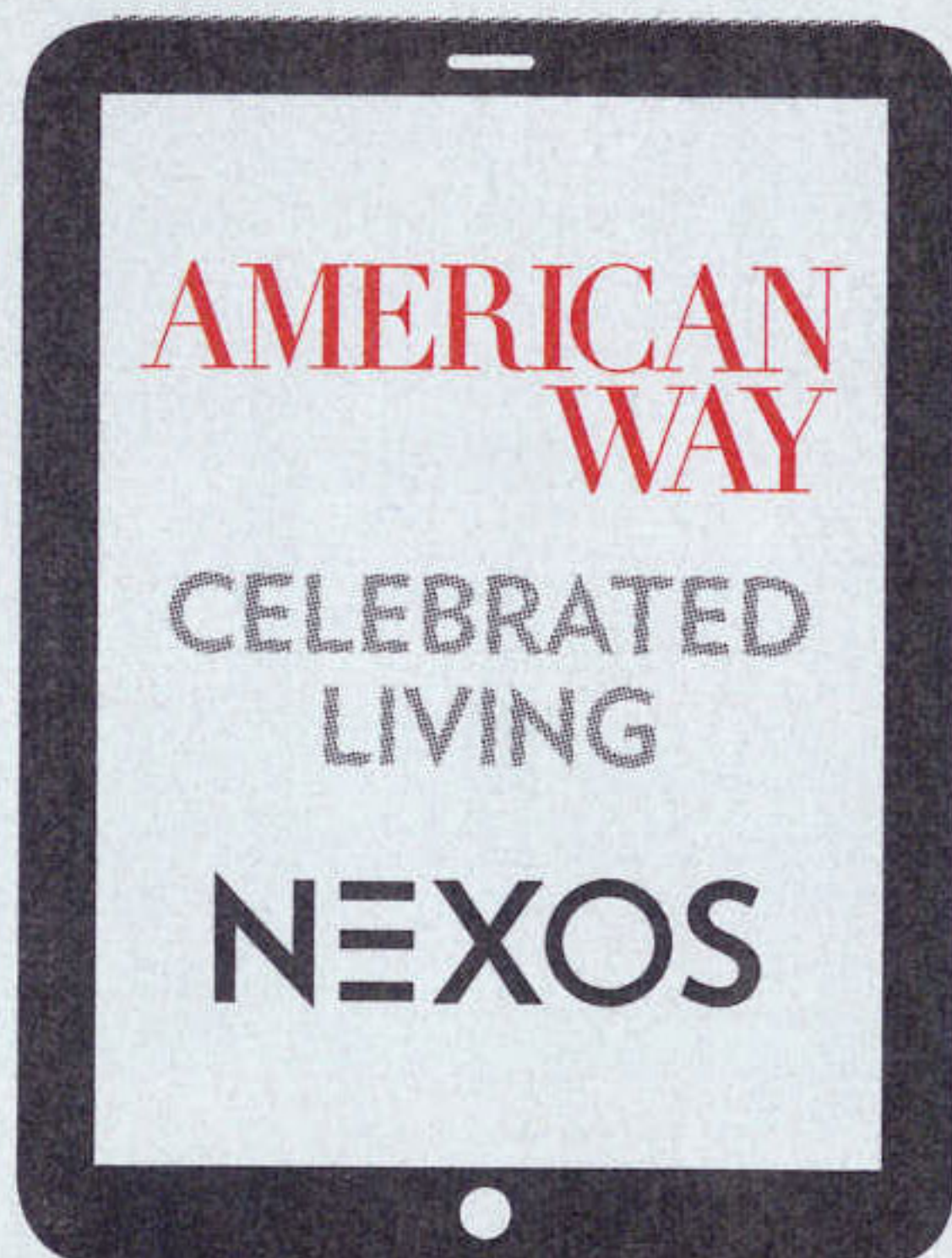
ARTIST, MENTOR, CHAMELEON
— JESSIE J CONTINUES TO REDEFINE
HERSELF, INSPIRE AND EXCITE

OCTOBER

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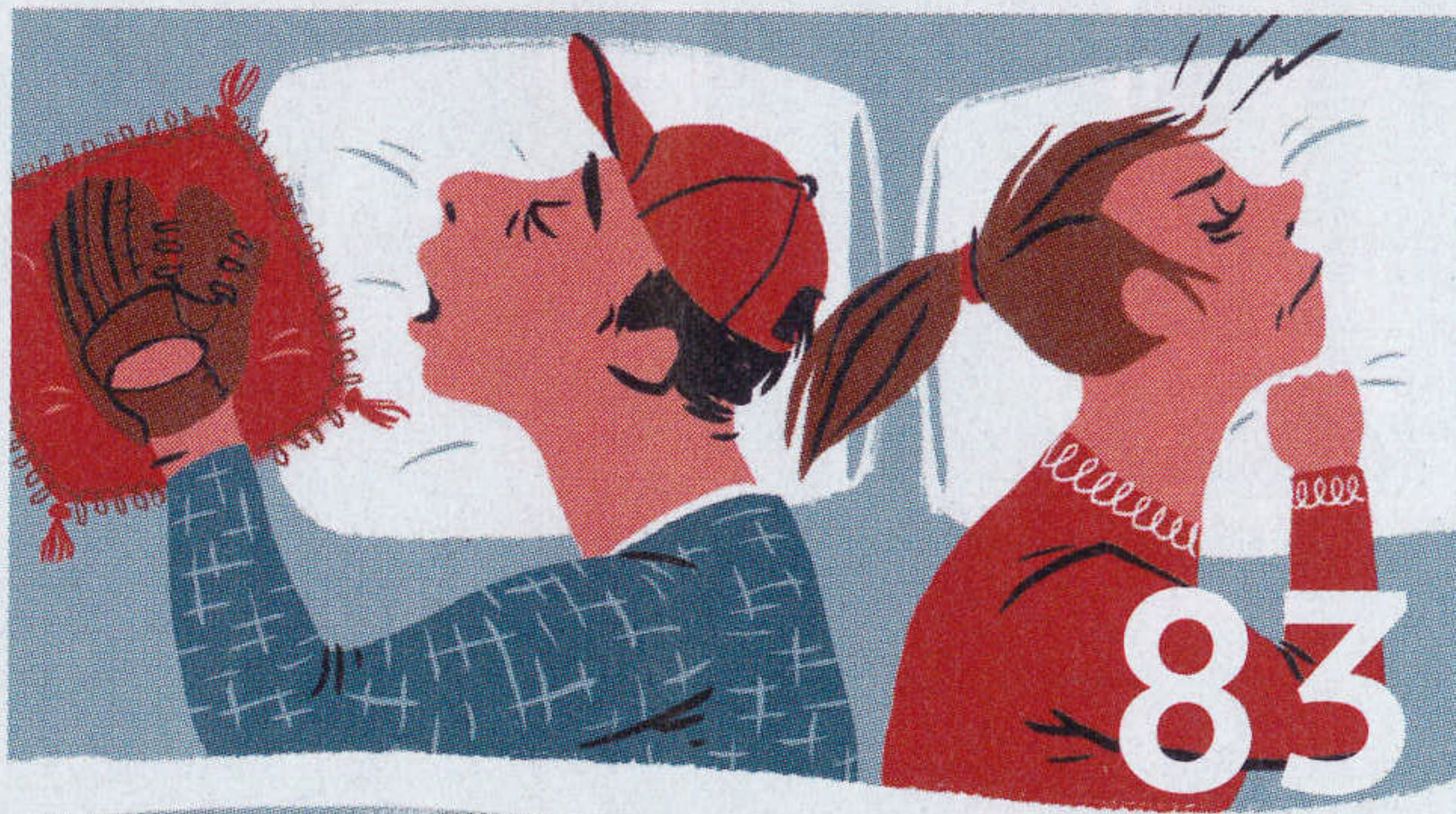


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THE LAST WORD

BY JOE MURRAY



The Duffy Life

Floating around with a drink in your hand and no cares in the world

LOUNGING ON WHAT IS essentially a floating sectional couch, I hold a cold beer in one hand and a cheese-laden cracker in the other as we chug quietly around a busy harbor in Newport Beach, California.

Passing a seal who has wedged himself onto the back of a buoyed boat to nap deeply — with no apparent regard for personal property or business hours — my boatmates' conversation turns to a general admiration for the urban-seal lifestyle.

Why do they spend the majority of their lives leisurely swimming or sunning seaside when we — who are supposedly smarter — rarely “get” to do the same activities, and when we do, the males of our species wear an uncomfortable netting in our shorts?

These sort of epiphanies hit you when you're riding in a Duffy boat, the world's most relaxing sea rig to never go 6 miles an hour because its engine is by design not powerful enough.

Newport Beach has a reputation for being quite fancy. This is partly because of its seaside location in Orange County, municipal home to an eponymously named reality show about wealthy housewives and an eponymously abbreviated teenage drama about teenage drama.

And it's partly because, well, Newport Beach is quite fancy. I've spent parts of this trip, arranged by the local tourism board, touring five-star villas, selecting ingredients from a fresh margarita bar and jutting out my lower lip knowledgeably when a server tells me where the oysters are from. It's been glorious, and I regret nothing.

But Newport Beach's true soul, I've come to believe, has little to do with glitterati or the sun-soaked angst

depicted on cable programming. It's this unassuming electric boat, created and named after a local inventor nicknamed Duffy and cheaply rentable for hours of shopping or barhopping on the harbor. Its max miles per hour matches the harbor's speed limit: 5. The golf cart of the seas, navigating it only requires a regular driver's license, and it will fit all of your friends — or

none of them, if you're a housewife upset about what Heather said about your Shih Tzu on the last episode.

Once home to John Wayne, Newport Beach features a recreational neighborhood on its Balboa Peninsula officially named the Fun Zone, which means if there is a major crime in that area, local cops will radio: “All units to the

Fun Zone.” It's a town where locals are divided on which shop has the best Balboa Bar — a rectangle of ice cream on a stick, freshly dipped in chocolate and rolled in toppings — and another local delicacy is the deeply impractical frozen chocolate banana.

In a sea-salt town as unpretentious and chill or as high-society as you want it to be, the Duffy — to paraphrase *The Dark Knight* — is not only the boat that Newport Beach needs, it's the boat that Newport Beach deserves.

We tool past the palatial homes and the giant yachts of the rich and famous. But I don't feel jealous until we pass a docked little rig with a proud paint job and a great name: *The Duffinator*.

Navigating it only requires a regular driver's license, and it will fit all of your friends — or none of them.