



# Susan Yerkes: 'Idol' a site for Trump tactics

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Want to wipe out the competition when "American Idol" comes to S.A. this week?

Take some hints from another reality show winner, whose talent for the art of the deal helped him outlast the competition on "The Apprentice."

Kelly Perdew, the clean-cut West Point grad and former Army Ranger who won the Trumpster's TV contest in its second season, made a recent stop in S.A. to share his success secrets with a different kind of audience — employees at insurance giant USAA.

Perdew, who put in two years in Military Intelligence with the Army, was already a bright young entrepreneur before he took on the "Apprentice" competition. But the publicity from the show propelled him to a new level of fame, and a new world of opportunity.

After a year or so with the Trump organization in the wake of his win, Perdew has developed a TV show called "GI Factory," which he also hosts for the Military Channel, and written a book titled "Take Command: 10 Leadership Principles I Learned in the Military and Put to Work for Donald Trump." The principles he refers to are flexibility, integrity, duty, passion, planning, loyalty, perseverance, teamwork, selfless service and impeccability.

Will what worked for Trump work for "American Idol"? There's only one way to find out.

## Military might

Perdew's positive business philosophy was the primary reason USAA hired him to speak to employees here (and around the country, via teleconference), says USAA spokesman Paul Berry.

Of course, the celebrity Perdew enjoyed as an "Apprentice" winner didn't hurt. Nor did the fact that he's been a USAA customer for nearly 20 years.

Business aside, Perdew told me he's fielded quite a few personal proposals from female fans. And no, he's still not married. As far as being available for dating, he responded cagily: "I don't think my girlfriend would like that."

## Stop, thief!

What kind of total jerks would steal a bunch of giant flowers?

That was the question S.A. artist Mister Danny Geisler was left to grapple with after vandals stole part of a big, bright bouquet of wooden flowers he made from wood scrap and installed in a dumpster at Blue Star for Contemporary Art Month.

Around 6 p.m. Sunday, Geisler says he was told by witnesses, two young men drove into the Blue Star complex in a Silver Pathfinder, and ripped a 10-foot orange flower from the dumpster bouquet, tied it to the top of the truck and drove off, stopping at La Tuna for a beer. A few hours later, someone made away with two more of the huge flowers. The thieves apparently then tried to steal a giant purple thistle from the installation, but only managed to break it to bits.

Geisler says he thought the exhibit, which was brightly lit at night, would be safe. The loss of four of the eight flowers it took months to create for the "From Dumpster to Dumpster" piece is demoralizing, he says, especially after he won the Critics' Choice Award for Bravery for the piece at last week's Contemporary Art Month Awards.

Geisler says he won't ask questions if the giant flowers are returned to the exhibit, which is scheduled to stay in place through mid-October. Seems like they'd be tough to hide, anyhow.

If you spot a couple of guys trying to stash some cool-looking giant flowers, pass on this message: "Take 'em back!"

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*Susan Yerkes' column appears on Mondays, Wednesdays and Sundays. Call her at (210) 250-3542, or e-mail [syerkes@express-news.net](mailto:syerkes@express-news.net). Cheers!*

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