OB father and son start Mi Sueno Foundation for surfers in Baja

Duo donating surfboards in Mexico to grommets in need of a good break

By DAVE SCHWAB | THE BEACON

Ocean Beach Surf & Skate Shop has set up a foundation to donate surfboards and accessories benefiting less-fortunate wave riders south of the border.

And it all started with Areck Madden and his son Cole, who works at the surf and skate shop at 4940 Newport Ave., encountering a Mexican surfing dad-son duo on a recent Baja trip.

“They just felt inspired to help kids down there who don’t necessarily get the opportunity to learn to surf, or can’t afford to buy a board to learn on,” said Madison Martin, OB Surf & Skate office manager, about how Mi Sueno (my dream) Foundation originated.

“Were surfing in San Jose Del Cabo (20 miles from Cabo San Lucas) and Cole met another local kid, who turned out to be on the Mexican national surf team, and they started surfing together,” said Areck. “I met the kid’s dad. We all formed a bond right there on the beach: We made a connection.”

“We spent the whole next day with 16-year-old Luis Ochoa who was very well-spoken,” noted Cole, a Point Loma High School junior. “I was surprised by just how much love this kid had for the ocean, and how special surfing was in his life.”

Areck said he and Cole were invited over to the Ochoa’s home. “They lived in a very humble

James Armenta paints his new mural at Liberty Station Arts District.

COURTESY PHOTO

Luau Seafood Kitchen

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Effort launched to recall District 2 Councilmember Campbell

By DAVE SCHWARTZ / THE BEACON

An effort to recall District 2 City Councilmember and Council President Dr. Jennifer Campbell has been officially launched.

Recall supporters now have until early June to collect 14,421 signatures — 15% of District 2’s 96,140 registered voters — to qualify the measure on a special election ballot within six months. District 2 includes Pacific Beach, Ocean Beach, Point Loma, Mission Beach, and a portion of Clairemont.

The impetus behind the Campbell recall drive stems largely from her stance on two politically potent issues: a compromise proposal she’s offering on short-term rentals. And her support for ballot Measure E passed in November 2020 removing the 30-foot height limit in the Midway District.

“At a time when the City is facing a budget deficit, a small group of individuals are trying to force San Diego residents to spend over a million dollars for a recall that might be held a few months before a regular election in 2022,” Campbell said. “They may disagree with my policy, but don’t interfere on short-term rentals. And her support for ballot Measure E passed in November 2020 removing the 30-foot height limit in the Midway District.

Campbell’s compromise short-term rental plan is scheduled to be heard on Feb. 23 by the full City Council. An environmental challenge seeking to overturn Ewas filed back in August 2020 in San Diego Superior Court.

Reacting to the recall, Campbell’s chief-of-staff Venus Molina said previously: “It’s so disappointing because the people who are trying to recall us are the same people opposing us on short-term rentals: a fight they will never win because that ship has sailed. We cannot ban them. We cannot make them illegal. And they say, ‘If you won’t ban them, then we don’t want you.’”

Added Molina: “I can only imagine the class-action lawsuit we could probably encounter if we actually tried to remove that business opportunity from so many operators. I’m pretty sure Expedia and all the different Airbnb platforms would come after [the City]. The people pushing for our recall, would they be willing to pay for [the City’s] legal defense, and for the repercussions, the City will face if they (opponents) actually do what they want us to do remove all residential STREOS?"

Five neighborhood District 2 civic leaders are spokespersons for the Campbell recall campaign. They are Cathie Umemoto of Pacific Beach Town Council; Kevin Hastings, vice-chair of Ocean Beach Planning Board; Mandy Havlik of Peninsula Community Planning Board; Eric Cullen of Clairemont Community Planning Group; and Gary Womack, former Mission Beach Town Council president.

Hastings gave an example illustrating why he supports the recall. “The City came to the OB Planning Board with an expensive replacement of a wheelchair ramp some accurately referred to as the ‘million-dollar ramp to nowhere.’” He said. “OB Planning Board wanted the City to re-imagine the ADA access and offered up superior (and likely cheaper) alternatives. I and other board members approached Campbell about appealing the project. Rather than entertain the idea, she demanded we drop the appeal. Her staff even resorted to threats: ‘We’ll declare you a rogue board’ and ‘you’re done’ if we didn’t drop the appeal.”

Added Hastings: “She disregards community groups, and the only issue she’s led the way on were a complete 180-degree turns to long-standing interests of D2. I support this recall effort because I don’t see a light at the end of that tunnel. It would be irresponsible to let Campbell finish out her term in council.”

Havlik supports Campbell’s recall believing she is not adequately representing District 2.

“She sold out District 2 residents and came up with therapies for community problems relying on special interests who know how to codify her. And when confronted by a frustrated group of residents, her reaction is to ‘storm out.’ She has simply been a no-show, and now, she needs to go.”

Womack met Campbell during her campaign and was unimpressed. “I came away concluding she had no grasp of the issues and seemed to have trouble articulating any of her political positions except in generalities,” he said. “It became immediately obvious that she was avoiding venues requiring her to state positions. After six months of excuses that she was still coming up to speed, she disappeared altogether. She has not responded to calls and letters from her constituents in Mission Beach, who, left with no other alternative, have had to sue the City to get her attention.”

Added Womack: “She has refused to engage with her constituents on any level, lacking even the most fundamental socio-political communication skills. She chooses to diagnose and come up with therapies for community problems relying on special interests who know how to codify her. And when confronted by a frustrated group of residents, her reaction is to ‘storm out.’ She has simply been a no-show, and now, she needs to go.”

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The continuing mission of the Peninsula Shepherd Center is to help seniors keep doing things for themselves. And it is the mission of executive director Lisa Nokes to ensure that Peninsula Shepherd Center provides a support system so that older adults, age 60 and beyond, can live independently and self-sufficiently in their own homes.

The center also provides opportunities for seniors to learn and socialize.

“Peninsula Shepherd Center is a coalition of service organizations, local churches, and community groups dedicated to serving the senior population,” said Nokes. “We are dedicated to keeping seniors independent, active, and in their homes as long as possible. We have found that, by trying to keep people in their homes, that they’re so much more vital, engaged, and that they want to do things on their own.”

Added Nokes of engaging seniors: “We do this by providing a number of programs. The one we’re best known for is our Out and About senior transportation program, which combines vans and private cars taking seniors grocery shopping, to hairdressers, medical appointments – wherever they want to go.”

There is an annual fee of $65 per year for unlimited rides in the transportation program, added Nokes. Peninsula Shepherd Center seniors live in San Diego neighborhoods of Point Loma, Ocean Beach, and Midway/Sports Arena. The 60-and-over population represents 18.1% of the total population in these neighborhoods, significantly higher than the San Diego County average.

Peninsula Shepherd Center also offers the only senior lounge in Point Loma and OB located inside the All Souls’ Episcopal Church at 1475 Catalina Blvd. Seniors are able to stop by and work on a puzzle, play a game, socialize with others, and use computers. They can also come in and gain information on community resources and various senior services offered throughout the Peninsula. The lounge is open Wednesdays and Fridays from 10 a.m.-1 p.m.

Nokes noted Peninsula Shepherd Center is free to Peninsula seniors age 60 and over. Seniors must be 65 years old to qualify for the transportation program.

PSC has been especially engaged in aiding seniors during the ongoing pandemic.

“Isolation is a tremendous concern, especially for seniors, with terrible physical and emotional consequences,” Nokes said adding: “We work very closely with all of the senior organizations in San Diego. BANDING together, we’re a member of the San Diego Senior Community Foundation. It is probably the foremost organization dedicated completely to making the lives of seniors better.”

Peninsula Shepherd Center: “We’re real trying to help seniors help themselves.”

“During the recent election we had a group of people on Peninsula Shepherd Center chat and all we could do is talk and share their stories.

“During the recent election we had a group of people on Peninsula Shepherd Center chat and all we could do is talk and share their stories. And it is the mission to create new programs,” she said, citing an example.

“We have a new program called Peninsula Shepherd Center Connections Through Technology. We take computer tablets out to folks, train them on how to use them, then link them up to their church or the library so they can be independent. We’ve taught them how to use email and they love getting pictures of their grand-children. It has been a wonderful, freeing experience for these folks to be able to feel some connection.”

Nokes added Peninsula Shepherd Center’s programs have also gone remote hosting things like Zoom bingo and chat, where people can dial in to talk and share their stories.

“During the recent election we had a group of people on Peninsula Shepherd Center chat and all we could do is talk and share their stories. We could just talk to each other. We just had a Zoom slide show presentation by someone who has visited all 59 national parks and it was stunning.”

Concluded Nokes of Peninsula Shepherd Center: “We’re really trying to help seniors help themselves.”

Senior Shepherd Center programs helping seniors stay connected

Peninsula Shepherd Center seniors on a boat trip around San Diego Bay.

Peninsula Shepherd Center
Where: 1475 Catalina Blvd.
Contact: sdpce.org, 619-223-1640.
Shanghai Bun offers Chinese take on tapas

Nancy Qu always wanted to own her own business. She just never imagined it would be a restaurant, having had little prior experience.

But when Westy’s Bar & Grill at 1029 Rosecrans St. became available, she took on the challenge.

“I came here (U.S.) for grad school on a full scholarship,” said Qu, a Chinese native. “I was studying communications, then went to business school before getting a job as a marketing analyst. I’m a bit of an entrepreneur.”

“ar food. But the only experience I had was working one month and one summer as a waitress at an Asian buffet.”

Qu moved to San Diego with her husband, where he got a job in Qualcomm. She had been working for three tax seasons at Intuit Turbo Tax when the Westy’s opportunity arose.

“I wanted to buy a business and that one was close to where we lived,” Qu said. “We bought this business and made it Chinese. I know the Point Loma area, and there really isn’t a Chinese restaurant that’s not fast food, isn’t Americanized, and promotes Chinese culture.”

Though the ambiance of Qu’s restaurant, Shanghai Bun, is Chinese, it’s subtle and not overt.

“You can create this ambiance where people can enjoy their food and cocktails and not have it seem like they’re in a Chinese temple,” Qu said. “This restaurant doesn’t shout out Chinese. I don’t have decorated lanterns or a big Buddha or a big fish tank. I just wanted to bring Chinese food to the Point Loma community.”

Noting there are eight different regionally based Chinese cuisines, Qu decided not to concentrate on any one. But rather, she struck out to find a way to introduce her customers to all of them.

On the answer found the task of accomplishing that goal employing a cross-cultural model.

“Right before I started the business I took a Mediterranean cruise to Europe and I was in Barcelona, Spain,” she said. “They are famous there for their different tapas (small plate appetizers). So I thought, ‘People may not want to come in and order big plates. Why not try Chinese tapas?’”

On its website, shanghaibunsd.com, the eatery’s cuisine is defined as “authentic Chinese cuisine and a fine-dining experience from small-plate tapas, to big-plate regional favorites, to delicious sweet treats.”

Shanghai Bun’s menu offers a wide array of beverage and cocktail selections including a rich wine list and specialty cocktails with an Asian flair. Additionally, 14 craft beers are on tap focusing on local breweries as well as featuring trendy seasonal favorites.

The reasonably priced menu includes a Shanghai Bun sampler, various potstickers, pork, and shrimp dumplings, shrimp and pork shumai, shrimp noodle rolls, wontons, an assortment of egg rolls, scallion pancakes, beef bulgogi tacos, duck and pork sliders, sticky rice with chicken, steamed aiparubs and custard buns, among others.

Qu is happy with her career shift.

“It’s definitely the biggest challenge I’ve encountered in my life, and I’ve experienced a lot of changes, she said. “Finding staffing was the biggest challenge. But I’ve built this business and I love working with my staff now of about 10.”

Of being a restaurateur, Qu said it not only complements her personality but fulfills her.

“The customers are really a big draw for me,” she said. “When I used to sit in a corporate office, you don’t get that relationship with your clients. But now I get to talk to people and know their stories and get to know them as people and about their families. You build that relationship. And it really makes you feel good when someone tells you, ‘I love your food.’ That’s really a compliment to me.”

By DAVE SCHWAB | The Beacon

The beef bulgogi tacos at Shanghai Bun.

COURTESY PHOTO

Shrimp dumpling, pork shrimp shumai, shanghai pork dumpling, and a shrimp chive dumpling.

COURTESY PHOTO

Thirty Ocean Beach businesses recognized at OBMA awards ceremony

The Ocean Beach MainStreet Association held its annual awards celebration online on Thursday, Jan. 28, to highlight local business success and to reduce a little bit of “Lemons made out of Lemons” during 2020.

“Ocean Beach MainStreet’s membership is full of small business owners who continuously go back and enrich Ocean Beach,” said Denny Knox, executive director of the Ocean Beach MainStreet Association.

“The annual awards celebration usually gathers everyone together for a night of food, fun and awards which we look forward to every year. This year has been very different, but most importantly we want to recognize the incredible individuals behind our community’s greatest successes,” Knox said.

The Ocean Beach MainStreet Association annual awards nominated OBMA members who exemplified the Ocean Beach spirit throughout the past year. Just like everything in 2020, the awards celebration looked different, but the OBMA made “Lemons made out of Lemons” and recognized some of their amazing merchants through a virtual celebration on Jan. 28.

Businesses were nominated by OBMA committee members who participate in the OBMA’s Clean & Safe, Design, Economic Vitality, and Promotion committees. Winners in each category were selected through online voting by OBMA members and the community.

The winners included:

- Lighthouse Ice Cream, which won the award for consistently keeping their storefront clean.
- South Coast Surf Shop for their amazing merchants through their storefront clean.
- OBTV for positively showcasing business through their interior mural of Ocean Beach.
- Mallory’s Furniture for consistent keeping their storefront clean.
- Lucy’s Tavern for their fun outdoor dining space.
- Mad Munch for their creative interior mural of Ocean Beach.
- Unique Home & Garden for their spacious and dynamic outdoor dining space.
- Raglan Public House for designing an inviting outdoor dining space and fun take-out food window.
- Sunnie’s Mexican Café for their sidewalk café with new bright tables and chairs.
- 3rd Corner for the best use of their parking lot for outdoor dining.
- The online voting winner is OBTV.

- Apogee for their new storefront design, window display and roll-up security door.
- Auer CB for their beautiful interior tile and bright and light exterior design.
- BBQ House for their attractive outdoor seating.
- Dirty Birds for their comfortable and dynamic outdoor dining space.
- Lighthouse Ice Cream for consistently keeping their storefront clean.
- Malloy’s Furniture for consistently keeping their storefront clean.
- The online voting winner is Lighthouse Ice Cream.

- Lighthouse Ice Cream for consistently keeping their storefront clean.
- Malloy’s Furniture for consistently keeping their storefront clean.
- The online voting winner is Lighthouse Ice Cream.

COURTESY PHOTO

Shanghai Bun offers Chinese take on tapas

COURTESY PHOTO

Raglan Public House won an award for designing an inviting outdoor space and a fun take-out food window.

The Ocean Beach Main Street Business Center.

OB TEAM PLAYER OF THE YEAR AWARDS

- Steve and Teresa Mallory for their generous contributions to OBMA programs and events throughout the year.
- Ocean Beach Town Council for re-imagining the holidays and continuing Ocean Beach’s holiday traditions.

BOAD OF DIRECTORS AWARD

- Tevia Oskin, in appreciation for her many years of service and dedication on behalf of the OB MainStreet Association.

THE COMMUNITY AWARD

The business the community felt best exemplified the OB spirit and made a vote of “Lemons made out of Lemons” in 2020 is… Ocean Beach Business Center.
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Covered California is a private health insurance exchange that was established through Affordable Care Act legislation for individuals and families not eligible for Medi-Cal. The program allows California residents to purchase quality health insurance plans to fit individual and family needs. The cost of each insurance plan is based on certain factors, including family size and income.

Covered California has extended its Special Enrollment Period from February 1 to May 15, 2021 without a qualifying life event.

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6. Prescription drugs
7. Ambulatory and emergency services
8. Laboratory services and hospitalization (surgery and overnight stays)

For free enrollment help, call (619) 515-2363 or visit fhcsd.org/covered-california.
Colorful new maritime mural debuts at Liberty Station Arts District

By DAVID SCHMIDT | The Beacon

A computer software engineer by trade and a muralist by avocation, one of James Armenta’s impressionistic works now graces a wall in Liberty Station Arts District. The untitled piece, in the walkway between Moniker General and The Presley restaurant, merges classic nautical iconography. It uses maritime signal flags flanked by dazzle camouflage to communicate a message to viewers.

“They (NTC Foundation) did not give me any strict guidelines,” said Armenta of his latest mural. “They just said, ‘Our slogan this year is anchored in impressionistic works now grace a wall in Liberty Station Arts District, and we are thrilled to feature it among our many other public art installations, and we are thrilled to feature this mural alongside our many other public art installations throughout Arts District Liberty Station.”

Artist Armenta, an employee with Intuit, created the mural as part of Intuit’s “We Care and Give Back” program, which encourages employees to donate up to 40 hours of community service per year. James generously donated his time and talent to Arts District Liberty Station. Asked if painting the mural was a homecoming for him, Armenta replied, “Absolutely. I spent so much time at Liberty Station. I grew up there in a way. I felt such a direct connection.” Armenta felt privileged to tackle doing a “message” mural in such a historic place, creating something both “meaningful” and “symbolic” on a blank wall.

“I wanted to do something that looked really nice,” he said. “There was a lot of historical context I could play with, not only with the formal Naval Training Center, but about Point Loma in general.” Of how he articulated his nautical concept, Armenta noted: “It was old versus new. This old abandoned area that has now been revitalized with all these new businesses, people and a community.”

Armenta said the symbolism he came up with for his mural “used really bold, geometric kind of simplified forms.” The artist took about four days to paint his mural, varying the color tones used in standard nautical design. “Nautical flags generally are red, blue, yellow, black and white,” Armenta said. “I didn’t want to do the traditional colors. So I adapted them, made them a little more modern. They’re a little bit richer, much more vibrant and energetic, updated for the times and the context.”

Added Armenta of his mural painting: “It’s a long, drawn-out process. I do my art digitally, then I translate it. It’s really gratifying to see something I made on a tiny little laptop screen, then see it blown up to the size of a building. It’s not often you get to do something so large in the real world.” To learn more about the artist and see some of his work, visit JamesArmenta.com.

James Armenta stands in front of his new mural at Liberty Station Arts District.
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By DAVE SCHWAB | The Beacon

Valentine’s Day is near. What is there to do? Where is there to go? How best to express your appreciation for that special someone in your life?

Luckily, you’re in sunny San Diego where the weather is almost always nice, even in the middle of winter. And you have innumerable choices for how to spend the holiday.

Here are just a few options to explore in and around the Peninsula for doing the ordinary – and extraordinary – in celebrating Valentine’s Day weekend Feb. 12-14 and doing it right.

WINE AND DINE

— Winemaker-managing director Keith Rolle of Gianni Buonomo Vintners at 4836 Newport Ave. has some advice for the holiday. “No Valentine’s Day is complete without a bottle of bubbly,” he assured noting Gianni Buonomo is offering a 10% discount on their Gianni Spumante California sparkling wine, a delightful effervescent blend of 80% Pinot Noir and 20% Viognier. “Just mention the Peninsula Beacon to get your discount.”

The OB winery’s hours are Wednesdays through Saturdays, 1-6 p.m. 619-991-9911, gbvint-i.com.

— Sandy Hanshaw proprietor of The Wine Pub at 2907 Shelter Island Drive, is pulling out all the stops for this year’s romantic holiday. “We will be having live music on Friday and Saturday nights and a Valentine’s Day menu available Friday, Saturday, and Sunday nights,” said Hanshaw.

The Wine Pub is offering a special three-course Valentine’s menu served outside that includes a glass of sparkling wine. The first course is a choice of appetizer. The second course of entrees offers a choice between mustarded glazed salmon, ribeye steak, or house made mac ‘n cheese, with a choice of sauce. The third course, is gluten-free lava cake with raspberry sauce and salted caramel. 619-758-9255, thewinepubsd.com.

SWEETS FOR THE SWEET

— Treat your Valentine to something extra special this year. Valentine’s Day is right around the corner and Beach Sweets at 5022 Newport Ave. offers high-quality chocolates and confections which make perfect gifts for that special someone.

We have a large selection of stylish Valentine boxes and will custom design a gift box with your personal selection of our delicious treats,” said Laura Smith from the candy store. “There is no sweeter way to express your affection to those you love than with a box of our gourmet chocolates, truffles, fudge and chocolate-dipped strawberries. We also have Valentine Dog treats and gift boxes for your best friend.” 619-222-3322, BeachSweetsOB.com.

— If you crave cookies, then look no further than The Cravory in San Diego where the weather is almost always nice, even in the middle of winter. “This is our Super Bowl,” said Tracy Wagner, OBMA’s operations manager. “We have them in stock at the office, or they can by ordering on our website found under OB Souvenirs. The great thing is they ship locally by one of our artists in our farmers market, Aarica Geitner.”

“I make all-natural soy candles, with one that is decorated with Rose Quartz and rose petals,” said Geitner of Aster Rose Boutique. “It is called Love Spell. All the candles are beautiful but that one would go well for Valentine’s Day. Also, they’ll go with more of a mix of roses. Some people go for mixes like traditional red roses and orchids. We cater to customer’s specific needs. The younger generation, they don’t really go for a lot of roses. So instead, they’ll go with more of a mix of spring flowers.” 619-223-3161, flowercouponsloma.biz.

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LIFESTYLE

Wine, candy, and flowers for Valentine’s Day

— For the love of carbs. From Feb. 11-14, recently-revived bakery Con Pane will be offering a lineup of freshly baked Valentine-themed treats, including Pane Colombata Teddy Bears, Double Chocolate Shortbread Cookies, and Heart-Shaped Champagne cocktails.

— Kick-off Valentine’s Day on the course for a couple’s golf tournament. Priced at $45 per person tickets include a 9-hole shotgun round and welcome drink. Plus, The Loma Club will be giving away prizes for best dressed, closest to the pin, and more. Event will take place on Sunday, Feb. 14 from 11 a.m.-2 p.m.

— For the love of cakes. From Feb. 11-14, Ocean Beach MainStreet Association at 1868 Bacon St. is getting into Valentine’s this year offering a red “Soy Candle: Lost My Heart In Ocean Beach,” available at the office or on its website. “If you can’t be with LOVEIn Ocean Beach, this eight-ounce soy candle by Aster Rose Boutique comes scented with rose, grapefruit, geranium, peony, amber, and musk. “These candles are organic, long-lasting, especially fragrant, and cost just $18,” said Tracy Wagner, OBMA’s operations manager. “We have them in stock at the office, or they can by ordering on our website found under OB Souvenirs. The great thing is they ship locally by one of our artists in our farmers market, Aarica Geitner.”

— If you value high-end flowers, they don’t go with more of a mix of roses. So instead, they’ll go with more of a mix of spring flowers. 619-223-3161, flowercouponsloma.biz.

FLOWER POWER

— “This is our Super Bowl,” said Penn Bryan at Flowers at 2170 Chatsworth Blvd. “We have classic red roses, red roses in a don- or in two in red, white, and pink. Roses represent love and dedication. We have high-end flowers like hydrangea and peonies. Some people go for mixes like tradition- al red roses and orchids. We cater to customer’s specific needs. The younger generation, they don’t really go for a lot of roses. So instead, they’ll go with more of a mix of spring flowers.” 619-223-3161, flowercouponsloma.biz.

— Ask The Trust & Estate Attorney

Question: What happens to my minor children if I pass away?

Answer: If you don’t nominate guardians for your minor children and both parents pass away, a judge will decide who your children live with. This person may not be who you would have chosen to care for your children. It will depend in part who the interested parties are and who files a petition for guardianship. It is important to have a Nomination of Guardian document that is signed by you and it is important to discuss your wishes with the person you are nominating to make sure they are on board.

Join us online for an exciting information event!

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THE LAST DANCE – Jean Isaacs retires from San Diego Dance Theater

By DAVE SCHWAB | The Beacon

San Diego Dance Theater artistic director Jean Isaacs is hanging up her dance shoes on Jan. 31. She was honored for her 24 years of distinguished service with San Diego Dance Theater on Jan. 8 at Liberty Station’s inaugural First Friday event.

The Jan. 8 tribute to Isaacs’ legacy included feature clips and excerpts from her time with the company celebrating her prolific artistry and the training she has provided to San Diego Dance Theater and the San Diego dance community.

Of the timing of her retirement, Isaacs said, “I’ve done professional dancing for 47 years. Right now, I just need to take a breather.”

Noting “people know me mostly as the founder of San Diego Trolley Dances, which I trademarked,” Isaacs pointed out “those trolley dances now exist elsewhere including San Francisco.”

In partnership with San Diego Metropolitan Transit System, SDDT has presented Trolley Dances for more than 20 years. Created by Isaacs to make dance accessible “to the people,” trolley dances are conducted twice each fall. Tour guides lead 70 to 100 audience members on and off the trolley at three or four stations. More than 50 dancers typically perform newly commissioned works addressing social justice issues like immigration, homelessness, and climate change.

Isaacs and her ex-husband, a psychiatrist, moved from Boston to San Francisco where she studied dance. The couple came to San Diego in 1971 where Isaacs’ husband completed his residency and Isaacs began working with SDDT founder George Willis. She taught technique, choreography, and improvisation at the UC San Diego Department of Theatre and Dance for 25 years.

Of her achievements, Isaacs said: “Mostly, I’m a dance maker. What I do is create work for the theater movement. Playwrights would write dances into their plays, and I would do the dance sequences. They’d write a play, I’d put in the moves. That was a big part of my career.”

Isaacs is a critically acclaimed, award-winning choreographer whose work has been presented in Switzerland, Germany, China, Mexico, Guatemala, Canada, and Poland, as well as on both U.S. coasts.

Isaacs is also the co-founder of the San Diego Dance Alliance, Three’s Company and Dancers, and Isaacs/McCaleb & Dancers. Her work has been commissioned by the San Diego Opera, the La Jolla Playhouse, The Old Globe Theater, Goodman Theater, The San Diego Repertory Theater, the Berkeley Repertory Theater, Long Wharf Theater, and for the “New Wave” Festival at the Brooklyn Academy of Music.

On advice she’d give to aspiring dancers, Isaacs said: “Don’t let people tell you you shouldn’t do it. Have fun with it.”

Concerning the prospects for earning a living in dance, Isaacs said: “It’s hard work. You have to really love it. I say, ‘Go for it.’”

San Diego Dance Theater was founded in 1972 by George Willis, professor emeritus of Dance at San Diego State University. His goal was to bring joy, comedy, and theatricality to modern dance and to train young dancers.

Jean Isaacs was appointed San Diego Dance Theater’s artistic director in 1997. Under her direction, SDDT earned its reputation as a company of professional dancers committed to unconventional and deeply courageous programming.

George and Jean expanded access to the stage for dancers of many nationalities, races, ages, and physical abilities. San Diego Dance Theater is also known for cross-border projects and summer dance workshops, as well as the yearly site-specific performance Trolley Dances.

Isaacs’ company is in residence at Dance Place San Diego at the NTC Promenade. She has directed the San Diego Dance Theater School there while creating dances for her beautiful company, which has included some of the region’s most accomplished dancers.
**LEGAL ADS 900**

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