

CONNECTIONS



VCAC Hosts Gala Luncheon and Concert to Honor 2007 Art Star Award Recipients

County artists and their supporters were celebrated and honored by their peers at two dazzling events because, as VCAC Board President Monica Nolan explained, "Their work has crisscrossed our entire geographic area – from Fillmore to Ventura to Thousand Oaks. And because of this, not only have the specific populations they serve benefited from their efforts, but their professionalism

dedication and commitment have in turn enriched the Quality of Life for all of us living in the County." The 2007 celebration began with the **Art Stars Awards Luncheon**, on **Tuesday, April 10** at the Courtyard by Marriott in Oxnard. **Celebrity emcee Lee Marshall** of The Boomer radio station kept things lively and upbeat true to his on-air philosophy: "If you're not having fun on the radio then, you're not doing it right." Lee introduced each of the dignitary presenters who revealed the names of the award recipients in each of eight categories. Each award recipient was presented with their personalized edition of the beautiful Art Stars statuette. The entire awards ceremony was taped by Virgin Moon Productions for showing at the Art Stars Awards Reception & Concert.



The celebration continued on **Sunday, April 22nd** when the community gathered at the **Oceanview Pavilion** in Pt. Hueneme for the "high-octane nitro jive wild and total edge" concert by Pt. Hueneme's favorite son Scotty Morris and his **Big Bad Voodoo Daddy** as they performed on the Pavilion's stage. The doors opened to reveal the lobby area adorned with student art for the pre-concert reception featuring cocktails and light fare at the no-host bar. Attendees could relive the luncheon awards ceremony as the video ran on the theater big screens during the pre-concert gala. The Silent Auction Display offered trips, wine, tickets, jewelry, books, dinners, and more. Preceding the 8:00pm concert all Art Stars Award Finalists were introduced and recognized.

The **BUSINESS SUPPORTING THE ARTS** award, recognizing individuals, businesses or corporations that have demonstrated that a commitment to supporting the arts in the county is a contribution to both a more vibrant community and their own strong bottom line, was presented by **Jane Alvarez**, representing last year's award recipient, and generous sponsor *The Ventura County Star*. The 2007 award recipient was **Armando Lopez** of Plaza Development Partners in Oxnard, who spearheaded the revitalization of Oxnard's Downtown with the new entertainment and restaurant complex and is also a partner in the downtown Plaza Art Gallery. Finalists included **Raymond Cruz**, of Cruz Consulting Group in Simi Valley with more than 40 years experience in community service and nonprofit board membership with an emphasis on cultural and performing arts organizations; and **Doug Crosse & Fred Garrett**, of Project Development Company, Inc. in Thousand Oaks, who publish "In the Spotlight" Magazine, offering complimentary editorial and advertising to a vast array of community groups, organizations, and individuals involved in the arts.

The **ARTS EDUCATION AWARD** recognizing the individual or organization that showed exceptional leadership in bringing arts education into the classroom.

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R: Celebrity Master Of Ceremonies Lee Marshall



B: Artists and supporters enjoy conversation over delicious lunch.



L: Donna Granata accepts Arts Education Award from Dr. Charles Weis



R: Mary Schwabauer presents Ed Robings Cultural Tourism Award



L: Hilda Kilpatrick accepts Tourism Award for Ventura Visitors & Convention Bureau



R: Sandra & Jordan Laby accept Arts Philanthropist Award



All photos by James E. Travers



L: Pat Richards accepts award for Artist in Community Service

BL: J. Handle Evans accepts National Recognition Award

BR: Michele DePuy Leavitt accepts nonprofit organization award on behalf of Studio Channel Islands Art Center



A: Big Bad Voodoo Daddy brought the audience to the dance floor with their crowd pleasing, high-octane delivery.



L: Sharon Kloeris welcoming the audience on behalf of the Oceanview Pavilion



R: Penny Wolcott of Pt. Hueneme was recognized with a special award for her lifetime of arts leadership.

B: Concert attendees browse the nautical art from the Ventura County Maritime Museum and the generously stocked silent auction tables.



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was presented by **Dr. Charles Weis**, Ventura County Superintendent of Schools. The 2007 award recipient was **Donna Granata**, Founder & Executive Director of Focus on the Masters in Ventura whose curricular based *Learning to See* youth program for elementary and middle school students uses examples of local artist's work drawn from the FOTM archives. The Finalists in the Arts Education Category included: **Deborah "Benji" Dobson** of Camarillo who served as both a visual and performing arts teacher for Los Senderos School where she brought art instruction to every student; and **Brian Bemel**, Founder & Artistic Director of Performances To Grow On in Ojai, which presents a rich schedule of educational, imaginative and engaging theatrical events that introduce students to a variety of artistic and cultural traditions.

NONPROFIT ARTS ORGANIZATION AWARD recognized the organization that demonstrated a commitment to serving the community and local artists alike so that both would thrive. Presenting the award was **Georganne Lees**, representing the Arts Council of the Conejo Valley, last year's recipient of the Nonprofit Arts Organization award. The 2007 award recipient was Studio Channel Islands Art Center **Studio Channel Islands Art Center (SCIART)** in Camarillo on the campus of Cal State University Channel Islands. The studio maintains a year round schedule of art shows in the largest exhibition space in Ventura County while its 22 artist studios serve as a hub for creativity and arts education. The Finalists in the Nonprofit Arts Organization category were: **Camarillo Community Theater** which conducts a year 'round program of family oriented performances and Pinky's Playhouse to introduce children ages 2 to 10 to live theater. **Santa Susana Repertory Theatre**, based in Thousand Oaks, employs professional actors to bring the works of authors such as Dickens and Shakespeare to life in their Classes for Schools programs. **Javier Gomez**, Founder & Artistic Director of **Teatro/Inlakech Cultural Arts Center** in Oxnard, where for 29 years the organization has provided free afternoon and evening classes and staged theatrical productions to train and highlight the talent of Latino performers.

The largest category was **ARTISTS IN COMMUNITY SERVICE** which speaks to the commitment individual artists make to using their talents and skills to serve both their colleagues and their communities. The award was presented by **Betsy Chess**, the 2006 award recipient in the Arts Education Category. The 2007 award recipient was **Pat Richards**, artist and arts activist from Camarillo who has a long career helping bring the arts to the larger Ventura County community, including her key role in establishing the Studio Channel Islands Art Center in Camarillo and the new SCIART West in Oxnard's burgeoning downtown cultural district. The Finalists in the Artist in Community Service award included: **Christine Beirne**, visual artist & musician from Ojai, who uses her multiple talents for the benefit of many area nonprofits, having recently spearheaded a wildly successful "Who Got Framed?" fundraiser and exhibition for Buenaventura Art Association; **M.B. Hanrahan & Moses Mora**, of Ventura, who have been working tirelessly from the original conception of the Tortilla Flats Mural to the current mural preservation drive to establish a permanent home for the historical artwork commemorating a now lost community; **Ira Nepus**, jazz trombonist from Thousand Oaks, who, though a busy studio musician and nationally known music advisor, assists local nonprofits and local youth and youth musical groups with both musical and career guidance; **Linda Stiegler**, actress, director, & musical director, though residing in Thousand Oaks has a working relationship with almost every nonprofit theater company in Ventura County as actress, director or musical director; **David Tuomi**, of Thousand Oaks, generously donates his professional video and audio editing skills for the benefit of a number of community organizations, including the Arts Council of the Conejo Valley "Arts Scene" public access TV show, and the Every Now and Then Theater's "A Christmas Carol" radio show. **Thomas Van Stein**, fine artist, has donated many oil paintings to Ventura County's Commemorative World War II Aviation Museum to enhance their displays. The History Channel selected his work to be used in a feature about the museum that was broadcast nationally last summer. **Penny**

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Wolcott, a resident of Pt. Hueneme, has served her community as creator of their official Harbor Days more than 50 years ago and more recently realized her life-long dream of staging and producing her own theatrical show at the Oceanview Pavilion last summer. Penny was recognized with a **special award** for her lifetime of achievement in serving her community through the arts. In accepting her award she lauded her colleagues in the audience for their efforts on behalf of arts education in the schools but cautioned the audience not to forget that seniors are a group that should receive special attention with arts programming. She also admonished the seniors to remain actively involved in the arts as a way to add joy and a sense of accomplishment and involvement in their communities.

The **LOCAL GOVERNMENT AWARD** was presented by **Hugh Ralston**, president and CEO of the Ventura County Community Foundation. The award recognized the local government that has promoted and supported the arts as being central to the well-being of their community. The 2007 award recipient was **City of Thousand Oaks** which made a strong commitment to the arts when it opened the Thousand Oaks Civic Arts Plaza with its two state-of-the art theaters in 1994; provided visual art exhibit space in the Thousand Oaks Community Gallery in 1991, and has an extensive municipal art collection that began in the 1980's. The Finalists were: **City of Camarillo** for their long and continuing support of the Camarillo Community Theatre, and most recently with the collaboration with Studio Channel Islands and The Camarillo Chamber of Commerce to expand the Art & Jazz festival to a citywide event benefiting many local organizations; and the **City of Moorpark** for their acquisition of the High Street Theater, now the High Street Arts Center; and the annual citywide Moorpark Arts Festival; and the creation of the Moorpark Arts Commission.

Cultural tourism was recognized with the **ED ROBINGS CULTURAL TOURISM AWARD** memorializing the late Ed Robing's dedication to promoting the cultural amenities of our county to the traveling public. This award was presented by **Mary Schwabauer**, Chair of the Ventura County Community Foundation Board. The 2007 award recipient was **Ventura Visitors & Convention Bureau** through numerous tourist based publications and co-sponsorship of many special events, the Bureau emphasizes the unique natural and cultural attractions of Ventura and their Ventura County neighbors. Finalist for the award was the **Fillmore & Western Railway** with an active marketing campaign to draw out of town visitors, this vintage train runs on the weekends and packages imaginative attractions such as plays and other special events such as the "Museum and Murals" train on it's 2 ½ hour scenic ride through the Heritage Valley.

The **ARTS PHILANTHROPISTS** award spotlighted individuals or families that have demonstrated their commitment to supporting arts education, the local artists, and county arts organizations thus leaving a permanent legacy to the community. **Mary Schwabauer** also presented this award. The 2007 award recipients were **Sandra & Jordan Laby**, founders of the San Buenaventura Foundation for the Arts, have diligently supported efforts on

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behalf of the visual and performing arts for twenty years. In addition, together and separately, the Laby's have served nearly all the major arts organizations in the county. The Finalists were **DR. PETER CANNON** of Ventura, is one of the founders of Studio Channel Islands Art Center who continues to be a major supporter of the programming through financial contributions and community involvement. He has also served on the board of the Ojai Music Festival, and has spent 50 years collecting and making art; and **MAUDETTE BALL FINCK** of Ojai, bases her devotion to the arts in Ventura County on experience, knowledge and passion. She is an experienced artist, arts administrator, expert juror, panelist, and lecturer. During her service on the Ojai Arts Commission a Public Art Ordinance was passed by the Ojai City Council. She and her husband Frank have established a foundation that provides student scholarships.

The **NATIONAL RECOGNITION AWARD** was presented by **Hugh Ralston**, who invited 2007 honoree **J. Handel Evans** to join him at the podium while he briefly summarize Evans' dedication to the educational and cultural life of our county. J. Handel Evans, who served as the planning president of California State University at Channel Islands, brought two visions to the campus that was to be carved from an abandoned state hospital facility. He wanted to make it a world class facility without abandoning the site's history and he wanted a cultural hub for the center of the university. To accomplish the first he brought an internationally renowned architect, Sir Norman Foster, with a reputation of blending the old with the new to build the library. To accomplish his second vision, an exhibition venue to showcase both regional and world-class artists was needed. So he gathered local arts leaders who responded by organizing the establishment of Studio Channel Islands Art Center which is entering its tenth year offering a multifaceted program of globally important exhibitions, artist-in-residence studios, student internships, and interpretive programs for schoolchildren.

■ Call for Nominations for the 2008 Art Stars Awards will be available soon at www.venturacountyarts.net or for more information call (805) 658-1123.

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For detailed information about the Artist Directory visit:
<http://www.venturacountyarts.net/aboutdirectory.html>

ARTS-IN-THE-CLASSROOM MINI-GRANTS

PURPOSE - The Ventura County Arts Council Arts-in-the-Classroom Mini-Grant Program was established to provide a source of support for the elementary schools to partner with local cultural organizations and artists to bring standards based arts into classroom.

ELIGIBILITY

- Ventura County elementary schools that partner with a Ventura County artists or 501(c)(3) cultural organization.
- All programs must adhere to the guiding principles contained in the *Visual and Performing Arts Framework for California Public Schools, Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve*.
- All arts disciplines will be considered.
- Only one application per school can be funded.
- Arts-in-the-Classroom mini-grant funds can be used to pay for artists and art supplies.
- Arts-in-the-Classroom mini-grants are intended to be seed money to be matched dollar-for-dollar by the schools. In-kind is not acceptable as a match.

2004-2007 ARTS-IN-THE-CLASSROOM Mini-Grant Program schools, districts & arts providers (A partial list from a total of 32 schools)

- Banyan Elementary, Conejo Valley Unified**
- Kingsmen Shakespeare Company**
- Las Posas School, Pleasant Valley Elementary, California Poets in the Schools**
- Sierra Linda Elementary, Oxnard Elementary, VCSS Artist-in-the-Classroom**
- El Descanso Elementary, Pleasant Valley Elementary, Performances to Grow On**
- Lemonwood Elementary, Oxnard Elementary, Covenant Players**
- Meiners Oaks, Ojai Unified, Performances to Grow On Village of Tales**
- Piru School, Fillmore Unified, VCSS Artists-in-the-Classroom**

Questions should be directed to the Ventura County Arts Council at (805) 658-2213 or info@venturacountyarts.net

VENTURA COUNTY ARTS COUNCIL'S IMPORTANT IMPRINT ON OUR CULTURAL COMMUNITY

The Ventura County Arts Council (VCAC), a Partnership for the Arts, promotes:

- Artistic excellence
- Accessibility to the arts for everyone in Ventura County
- Support for artists and arts organizations
- Cooperation, communication and mutual support among arts organizations, artists and the community

The following summarizes the Ventura County Art Council's achievements in its four primary areas of commitment.

Grantmaking:

- Arts-in-the-Classroom Mini-Grant Program brings artists into the classroom and takes students to galleries, museums and theaters
- The National Arts Program of Ventura County is a visual arts exhibit that recognizes the artistic talent of county employees and their immediate families
- The Arts & Culture Endowment Fund for Ventura County, recently established by the VCAC at the Ventura County Community Foundation, will eventually provide operation grants to cultural organizations in the county through the Ventura County Partnership for the Cultural Arts Fund

Capacity Building:

- For the past four-years, has co-sponsored, with the City of Ventura, Technical Assistance Conferences for visual and performing artists and arts organizations.
- Established an online Artists Directory that includes artists and cultural organizations in all disciplines

Facilitation:

Joint Marketing and Advertising

- Annual Ventura County Arts Week, a ten-day celebration of the diversity of the arts in every community in the county
- Annual co-op advertising by community arts groups and artists in the county visitor & convention bureau destination guides.

Audience Expansion for the Arts

- Sponsors ongoing bi-monthly Art Exhibits at the County Government Center
- Sponsors changing monumental Sculpture Exhibit in the County Government Center Courtyard
- Assists organizations with start-up assistance and fiscal receiver services, such as the Rancho Camulos Plein Air Day and the Ventura County literary Arts Society
- Assists in planning Public Art, such as the project to honor Cesar Chavez at the Cabrillo Economic Development Corporation farm worker housing project

Advocates and Supports Education

- Arts-in-the-Classroom Mini-Grant Program
- Coordinates Elected Officials' visits to county classrooms during Youth Arts Month
- Sponsors an Annual Student Art Exhibit & Competition
- Facilitates InnerSpark/California State Summer School for the Arts recruitment meetings and honors county grant recipients at an Art Scholars Recognition Reception
- Received a grant to develop an Artist in Residency program for incarcerated youth at the County Juvenile Detention Facility

Collaboration:

- Hosts an annual Art Stars Awards Ceremony that honors notable contributions of money, time and talents to the arts
- Collaborates with the Ventura County Community Foundation to offer Technical Assistance Workshops expressly for the cultural arts community



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