SANTA MONICA CONSERVANCY

NEWS

ENSURING THAT THE PAST HAS A FUTURE

APRIL 2005

SAVE THE DATES:

APRIL 10TH

VOL 3 NO 2

BOOK SIGNING & LECTURE ON SANTA MONICA

Article this page

COMING IN MAY

AERO THEATER
MOVIE SCREENING

TABLE OF CONTENTS

THIRD STREET TOUR

Page 1

BOOK TALK

Page 1

CONSERVANCY BUSINESS

Page 2

ANNUAL MEETING

Page 3

PRESERVATION EVENTS

Pages 4 & 5

ANNENBURG GIFT FOR 415 PCH

Page 4

PRESERVE AMERICA DESIGNATION

Page 5

HISTORIC MURAL

Page 6

AERO THEATER SCREENING

Page 6

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD

Page 7

SM'S FIRST SKYSCRAPER

Page 7

NEW MEMBERS

Page 8

VISIT OUR WEBSITE: www.smconservancy.org

ARCHITECTURAL TOUR HUGE SUCCESS

350 VISIT THIRD ST. HISTORIC DIST.

On January 30th, three hundred fifty people walked the Third Street Historic District in Ocean Park and visited six open houses as part of the Conservancy's tour. Participants got an up-close-and-personal history lesson of the neighborhood, which features all the architectural styles that were popular in Santa Monica from 1875 through 1935. The open houses demonstrated the creative ways that vintage homes can be expanded and adapted for today's times while preserving the distinctive features that give them their rich architectural and historical value. Each participant received a self-guided brochure identifying the open houses and other significant houses in the District.

A tour of this magnitude required the dedicated hard work of many volunteers as well as the gracious hospitality of the homeowners who included Jim Bianco and Lisa Mead, Bea Nemlaha, Scott Campbell, Candra Docherty and Mike Russ, Anne Troutman and Aleks Istanbullu and Rev. Sandy Richards (the Church in Ocean Park). A huge thanks to Nina Fresco and Ruthann Lehrer who co-chaired the event and attended to



The festive tour began in Ocean Park's Library Square on the one beautiful Sunday in the middle of a rainy winter.

the myriad of tasks to make the tour run smoothly.

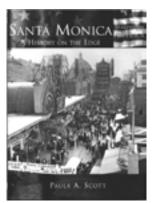
The Conservancy would like to thank the Santa Monica City Council for partially funding the tour and the city staff who worked with us to make it possible: City Manager Susan McCarthy and Planning staff Liz Bar-El, Stephanie Reich and

PAULA SCOTT TALKS ABOUT HER NEW BOOK

The Santa Monica Conservancy and the Santa Monica Historical Society Museum will co-host a free, public lecture and book signing by Paula Scott, local historian and author of the new book, <u>Santa Monica: A History on the Edge</u>, on Sunday, April 10, 2:00 – 3:30 pm. The event will be held at the Santa Monica Historical Society Museum at 1539 Euclid in Santa Monica.

Scott, a Santa Monica resident and Conservancy member, holds a

PhD from UCLA in American history. Her book provides a comprehensive look at the area's past—beginning with the indigenous Gabrielinos who lived here before the European colonization and ending with an assessment of the city today. The text is compli-



mented by fifty seldom-seen drawings and photographs. The book is one in a series called "Making of America," celebrating individual communities and their unique contributions to our national character.

In writing the book, Scott says, "I was fascinated by the way Santa Monica has been very self-consciously invented from the nineteenth century all the way to the present. I was also surprised by how many different ways Santa Monica has achieved

fame over the last century or more. Time and again this small city has grabbed national headlines for everything from aviation to bodybuilding, to movie star residents, to its unique political scene."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7

THIRD ST. DISTRICT PROVIDES A VISUAL HISTORY LESSON



Doreen Gordon and others begin their tour of Scott Campbell's beautifully restored and enlarged Craftsman bungalow at 2544 Third Street. Every detail indicates that this project is a work of love as Mr. Campbell is doing most of the work himself.

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

Roxanne Tanemori. Thanks too, to Ernest Marguez and Paula Scott who sold and signed their books on Santa Monica.

Thanks to the following:

Bob's Market (food and drink), Dr. Robert Posek (paper shoe coverings), Fred and Colin DeMaio (banner placement), Ocean Park Librarian Ellen Braby (registration site), Roger Thornton (computer support), and CJ Bigelow and Lori Nafshun (for distributing literature). Thanks also to those who answered phone calls and e-mails, staffed the registration table and helped with mailings and publicity: Mike Bone, Ken Breisch, Tom Cleys, Peggy Clifford, Mary Hubbell, Ursula Kress, Sherrill Kushner, Bob Lehrer, Kathleen Masser, Lori Nafshun, Dick Orton, Doris Sosin, Rolfe Wyer.

CONSERVANCY BUSINESS

In the January 2005 newsletter, the landmark that may be incorporated into a new hotel complex was misidentified. At the north end at 1333 Ocean Ave., it is a Victorian House (not the Queen Anne Gussie Moran house).

RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP TODAY - HELP CONSERVE SANTA MONICA'S PAST



As a member of the Santa Monica Conservancy, you know that knowledge and public awareness are keys to preserving our historic and cultural treasures. Your membership dues provide valuable financial resources to develop and fund programs like the Third Street Historic District Tour. Your continued support will help ensure that Santa Monica's past has a future. Please renew your membership today. Thank you!

SMC NEWS STAFF

SHERRILL KUSHNER **DICK ORTON** PHOTOS BY NINA FRESCO UNLESS NOTED

CONTACT US PO Box 653, Santa Monica, Ca 70100-703 310-485-0399 • info@conservancy.org PO Box 653, Santa Monica, Ca 90406-0653

Big thanks to our hard-working docents!

Aimee Armour Jose Arroyo Deborah Bellini Julie Berger Robert Benedetti Joan Benedetti John Blanchette Laurie Brenner Donna Bright Ann Bruno Charlotte Bryant Bonnie Butler Sue Bunzel Eileen Call Glenda Callanen Marjorie Campbell Carrie Chasteen Winston Chappell Barbara Clare Edith Davie Mary Dodd Jane Douglas

Harriet Epstein Nancy Feinberg Margaret Gascoinge Joy Gibson Rosalind Groesse Linda Hensley Christina Hildebrand Arlene Hopkins Mary Hubbell Carol Kaiserman Bart Kogan Evelyn Lee Pamela Leeds Rachel Lehrer Colin Maduzia Meighan McGuire Evelyn Meggiore Annie Michelson Allyson Murphy Catherine O'Keefe Anastasia Ollszewski Eugena Ordonez

Irene Park Michael Parsons Roman Pecot Stephanie Pogorelsky Anthea Raymond James Robinson Bianca Roberts Ebba Rosenblad Leslie Salzman Sharon Silbert Patti Smith Rebecca Smith Robbie Smith Jeffrey Sturges Catherine Tracy Megan Unger Lily Vickson Caprice Walker Jill Walker Bram Weinkselbaum Janice Wright



Docents show the open living room and kitchen of a historic church converted into a residence on Third Street.

ANNUAL CONSERVANCY MEETING AT THE EMBASSY

HOTEL TOUR, ARCHITECTURE PRESENTATION, PRESERVATION AWARDS & BOARD ELECTION



Arlene Hopkins leads a group through the Embassy Hotel Apartments, site of this year's annual meeting, March 6th

The Embassy Hotel Apartments, built in 1927, served as a fitting backdrop for the Santa Monica Conservancy's annual meeting. There, Conservancy members gathered in the spacious lobby and adjoining patio, and admired the ornate ironwork, carved wood panels, and decorative tile. Members elected board members, presented awards, and heard a presentation on Spanish Colonial Revival architecture.

Each year the Conservancy presents an award to an individual or organization in recognition of outstanding accomplishments in preserving Santa Monica's unique heritage, and for promoting the value of historic preservation in the city. This year, the Conservancy presented two awards.

The Conservancy recognized Jim Rosenfield for his dedication and success in restoring the Aero Theater on Montana Avenue. Rosenfield purchased the building in order to save it, while maintaining its use as a movie theater. The single-screen theater was built in 1939 by aviation pioneer Donald Douglas as an entertainment venue for Douglas Aircraft employees. Like the aircraft plant, the theater was open 24 hours a day so that workers could see movies any time during their off-hours.

"Jim's efforts are important, not just because he has saved the last neighborhood movie theater in our city, but because he has demonstrated that preservation can be good business," said Joel Brand, president of the Santa Monica Conservancy. "He's a developer with passion and vision that goes beyond the easiest way to make a profit, and that's a combination we don't see enough of, unfortunately."

Rosenfield worked for 8 years to find the right operator who would reuse the building in its original configuration and restore it to its original glory. The theater reopened in January under the auspices of the American Cinematheque.

"In the last 12 months, we've had 3,500 visits to our website, we've raised about \$20,000 with reserves of about \$27,000 and our organization is not yet three years old. But the true indicator of our vitality and our success is the amount of time and energy people devote to our efforts. Thank you"

-Joel Brand

The second award was presented to Tom Cleys, the Conservancy's first president. Comments president Brand, "Without Tom the preservation movement in Santa Monica would not be where it is today, and likely no



Tom Cleys left, and Jim Rosenfield

Conservancy as well. He has been the lifeblood of the organization."

When Cleys moved into Santa Monica in 1998, he became active in Friends of Sunset Park and then worked with NOMA founder Doris Sosin to form the Conservancy. Cofounders of the Conservancy elected him the first president. His initiative and energy brought the Conservancy from concept to practical reality with an active membership. He continues to contribute and is especially in the forefront of raising preservation awareness and support in his home neighborhood.

SMC Board Members Elected

Members elected to the Board of Directors included real estate visionary Mike Deasy, current board member and Planning Commissioner Arlene Hopkins, architect and past Planning Commissioner David Kaplan, current board member Doris Sosin, and environmental consultant John Zinner.

Congratulations to all and thanks for volunteering your time and wisdom to help our organization continue its mission.



The Conservancy Board, left to right: Doris Sosin, Tom Cleys Ken Breisch, Nina Fresco, David Kaplan, Mike Deasy, Joel Brand, Anne Troutman, Arlene Hopkins, and Bruce Cameron. **Not pictured:** Ruthann Lehrer and John Zinner

5 FUN EVENTS CONSERVANCY MEMBERS CAN ENJOY

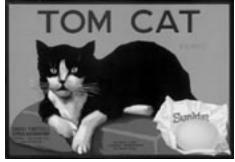


CALIFORNIA PRESERVATION CONFERENCE

Date: Sun. - Wed., May 12-15

Join the estimated 500 attendees from across California at the 30th Annual California Preservation Conference held at the historic Riverside Mission Inn. Network and learn about issues facing historic preservation in California and beyond with mobile workshops and tours, and track sessions that include Modernism, Sustainability, Landmarks of Social Change, and Cultural Landscapes.

www.californiapreservation.org



GROVES OF GOLD CALIFORNIA FRUIT BOX LABELS

Dates: Now thru Aug. 14 The California Heritage Museum 2612 Main St., Santa Monica

The California Heritage Museum presents an exhibition of more than 400 colorful fruit and vegetable box (crate) labels, historic photographs, and original boxes and crates. The Museum is located in a historic landmark house built in 1894 for the son of Santa Monica founder Roy Jones. There is also a permanent collection of furniture and pottery.

www.californiaheritagemuseum.org



OLD PASADENA WALKING TOUR, NEXT ONE MAY 7TH

Date: Sat., May 7, 9am

Reservations required. Call 626-441-6333.

Pasadena Heritage, a nonprofit organization, hosts tours of Pasadena's historic downtown four times a year. Tours include a slide presentation and a 90-minute guided walk. Old Pasadena, with its fascinating array of historic buildings, is a National Register Historic District and is one of the best examples of downtown revitalization in the country. \$10 per person.

www.pasadenaheritage.org

ANNENBERG GIFT ASSURES BEACH CLUB FUTURE



Photo: The Marion Davies Beach House was torn down in the 1950s and only a guest house and a buried pool remain.

A \$21-million grant from a private foundation is set to save what remains of one of California's most prized architectural treasures, the languishing beachfront property formerly owned by the 1920s-era film star Marion Davies, at 415 Pacific Coast Highway.

The generous grant from the Annenberg Foundation to the City of Santa Monica will

rehabilitate 415 PCH into a public recreational and educational facility. At one point the home was converted into the historic Santa Monica Beach Club. Work on the property is expected to begin within a couple years with completion anticipated in 2008.

The Annenberg Foundation was established in 1989 by Walter Annenberg to provide

support for a wide range of projects including education and youth, arts and culture, civic and community, and health. Walter Annenberg was a successful publisher whose publications included the Philadelphia Inquirer newspaper, Seventeen magazine, TV Guide, among others; an owner of television and radio stations as well as a U.S. ambassador to Great Britain.

The PCH property is owned by the State of California, which granted the City of Santa Monica an operating agreement for the site. The site has several architecturally significant structures, including a guest house and swimming pool designed by noted architect Julia Morgan. Unfortunately, the property was severely damaged in the 1994 Northridge Earthquake. Final plans have not been drawn for the restoration project. The City first intends to conduct public workshops to gain feedback on how the site can best be utilized.

Hats off to the Annenberg Foundation and Wallis Annenberg, daughter of the late Walter Annenberg, for saving this historic property! With this grant, 415 Pacific Coast Highway will be open to the enjoyment of Santa Monica residents, visitors and generations to come.

IN THE WARM MONTHS AHEAD



LOS ANGELES CONSERVANCY TOUR SPRING ST., DOWNTOWN L. A.

\$30 non-members. Call 213 623-2489

Celebrate spring on a self-guided tour of old favorites and the new hot spots of downtown's urban renaissance.

What was once the Wall Street of the West is now home to a National Register Historic District, hip new lofts, nightclubs, art galleries, and hotels whose walls speak of a storied past and a vibrant future. Tour includes L.A. Times Building, Hotel El Dorado, art galleries, etc.

www.laconservancy.org



COCKTAILS IN HISTORIC PLACES

Date: Friday, April 29 at 6:00 p.m. Call 310-659-DECO (3326)

Join the Art Deco Society of Los Angeles at Boo Radley's European Antique Imports, 6825 Melrose Avenue in L.A., to meet and mingle in a glorious space filled with top-of-the-line examples of Art Deco furnishings and decorative accessories. Feast your eyes on spectacular bedroom sets, living room furnishings, accent pieces, and drink in the evening's stunning décor!

www.adsla.org

CITY OF SANTA MONICA AWARDED DESIGNATION

The City of Santa Monica was recently designated a Preserve America Community, becoming only the third California community to win designation. The other two cities are Fresno and Monterey. As of November 5, 2004, 178 designated Preserve America communities were located in 34 States nationwide.

Preserve America is a White House initiative in cooperation with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, and four U.S. Departments- Interior, Commerce, Agriculture, and Housing and Urban Development. Through this program, the federal government encourages and supports community efforts for the preservation and enjoyment of America's priceless cultural and natural heritage. It does this by recognizing communities that protect and celebrate their heritage, use their historic assets for economic development and community revitalization, and encourage people to experience and appreciate local historic resources through education and heritage tourism programs.

Benefits of designation include White House recognition; a certificate of recognition; a Preserve America Community road sign; authorization to use the Preserve America logo on signs, flags, banners, and promotional materials; listing in a Web-based Preserve America Community directory; inclusion in national and regional press releases; official notification of designation to State tourism offices and visitor bureaus; and enhanced community visibility and pride.

The Santa Monica Conservancy wrote a letter of support for the designation which Associate Planner, Liz Bar-El submitted with the application. Thanks to Liz for preparing the successful application on behalf of the city.



Left to right: Bob Young, Mayor of Augusta, Georgia; Pam O'Connor, Mayor of Santa Monica; and John L. Nau, Ill, Chairman of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation.

HISTORIC MURAL WILL GRACE CITY'S NEW MAIN LIBRARY



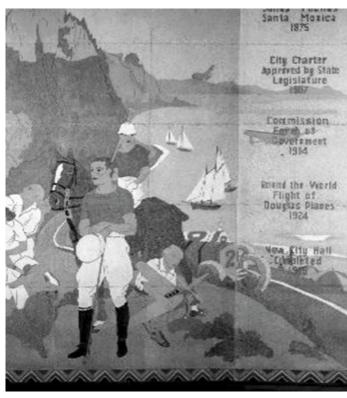


Photo: Courtesy Santa Monica Public Library Image Archives

In the 1930s, Stanton Macdonald-Wright, a Santa Monica artist and one of Southern California's premier modernists, created a 38-panel mural for the Santa Monica Main Public Library. When the Main Library moved from 5th Street to its current location on 6th Street in the 1960s, mural ownership reverted to the federal government because it had been funded by the Public Works of

Art Project. The PWAP was created to help provide economic relief to Americans who were suffering through the Great Depression. For more than forty years, the Smithsonian Institution has held the mural in storage.

Recently funds were awarded the City of Santa Monica, with matching money from the California Cultural and Historical Endowment, to cover the cost of shipping,

restoring and installing the mural in the new Main Library now under construction, where it will be exhibited on a long-term loan basis. The 38 panels depict the course of human development, from primitive man to 1930s Hollywood. Some of the panels portray scenes from Santa Monica Bay and refer to the film industry. They will be installed on the second floor of the new library.

AERO THEATRE SCREENING IN MAY

To celebrate National Preservation Month in May, the Conservancy will host a "Night at The Aero," with a movie screening at the newly restored, historic Aero Theatre at a date and time to be announced. The Events Committee is working on securing the movie and the star of the movie who will appear for a question and answer session following the film. We also plan to show some film shorts in which Santa Monica is the subject.

As most of our members know, the Aero was originally built in 1939 by Donald Douglas as a recreation facility for the employees of his aircraft company during World War II. While his plant was operating 24 hours a day, the Aero did the same so that workers could see movies any time during their off-hours.

Today, it is one of the few remaining single-screen, neighborhood theaters in the Los Angeles area. If you haven't been in the theatre since its half-million dollar renovation, you'll be pleased to see that the theater has new seats, movie screen, and state-of-the-art sound and projection system, while keeping its art deco interior and distinctive marquee, roofline and ticket booth intact.

Tickets will include free popcorn and soda; \$15 for SM Conservancy members, \$20 for non-Conservancy members and \$35 for movie and a discounted new Conservancy membership. A postcard will be sent to members with information about the event particulars and a press release will be sent to the media. Tickets may be purchased eventually online at www.smconservancy.org, by mail or at the door.



Photo: SMPL Image Archives

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD & HISTORIC PRESERVATION

by Joan Charles, ARB President

Increasingly, the of issue historic preservation has had an impact on the design review process of the Architectural Review Board (ARB). At these hearings, the roles of the ARB and the Landmarks Commission come together in a sort of harmonic convergence, especially when the board is asked to consider changes to buildings that are listed on the Historic Resources Inventory. For instance, an applicant may request removal or replacement of character-defining features like doors or windows. Perhaps a significant addition to an historic structure is under consideration. Or, the landmark eligibility of an entire street or district has been called into question because a property owner is proposing to remodel a single building in that potential district. Whatever the case, it is the delicate task of the ARB to ensure that any alteration to such buildings is sensitive to and maintains the historic integrity of the structure while contributing "to the preservation of Santa Monica's reputation as a place of beauty. . . . and quality."

Honoring the past while encouraging innovative new development is sometimes difficult and often controversial in a city where property values are high and the pressure

to tear down and rebuild is great. One way to ensure that everyone - city staff, board members, property owners and developers - are "on the same page" about preservation issues is through education. Last December, the ARB and the Landmarks Commission participated in a joint meeting designed to update and inform them about application of the Secretary of the Interiors' standards to historic properties. Communication among the three boards dedicated to planning issues – the Planning Commission, Landmarks Commission and the Architectural Review Board - is also key. To that end, the Landmarks Commission recently appointed Barbara Kaplan as liaison to the ARB. Her assistance with landmarks issues has proven to be a valuable resource for the board.

The stated mission of the ARB is to "preserve existing areas of . . . cultural importance and assure that buildings . . . are in good taste, good design, . . . and in general contribute to the preservation of Santa Monica's reputation as a place of beauty, spaciousness and quality." Making sure that the past is a vital part of future development is one of the ways the ARB can meet its charge.

Architectural Review Board members are: William Adams – Vice-chair, Rodolfo Alvarez, Joan Charles - Chair, Tania Fischer, Michael Folonis. Eduoard Mimieux, and Lynn Robb.

PAULA SCOTT

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

After her presentation, Scott will sign books, which will be for sale. Proceeds will benefit the two hosting organizations.

- For more information, call (310) 485-0399 or access info@smconservancy.org.
- Parking is available behind the Museum off the alley and at Santa Monica Seafood on Colorado.
- The phone number at the Museum is: (310) 395-2290.

For those who weren't able to attend the presentation by Paula Scott, her book, <u>Santa Monica</u>: A <u>History on the Edge</u>, is also available for sale at the Museum. Both organizations are nonprofit. The Santa Monica Conservancy is dedicated to preserving Santa Monica's unique cultural and architectural heritage. The Santa Monica Historical Society Museum collects, preserves, and documents the history, art and culture of the Santa Monica Bay area.

SANTA MONICA'S FIRST SKYSCRAPER IS LANDMARKED

Time literally stood still atop Santa Monica's first skyscraper following the Northridge earthquake in 1994. For the following ten years, the clock on the stepped tower of the 12-story Bay City Guaranty and Loan Association Building at 225 Santa Monica Boulevard was frozen. Last year a \$75,000 repair of the four timepieces (one on each side) started the clocks running again, and linked them to a satellite system to insure accuracy. The building was seismically retrofitted, at a cost of \$1.6 million, and rehabilitated for another \$6 million.

The building, also known as the Crocker Bank Building, was designated as a landmark at the initiation of the Landmarks Commission this January. Constructed in 1929-30, the building was the tallest in the city for more than 40 years. It served as a mixed-use office and commercial property for the headquarters of the Bay Cities Guaranty and Loan Association, the city's leading lending institution in the late 1920s. It also provided tenant office space to leading Santa Monica professionals.

It is a prominent example of the Art Deco style that was introduced in 1925 and remained an influential architectural design type until the end of World War II. Art Deco buildings are characterized by their simple geometric forms and vertical design, implemented through the use of pylons, pyramidal or stepped roofs and towers. It is one of nine sites included in the Art Deco Society of Los Angeles' walking tour of Santa Monica. Key decorative elements of the building include its zigzag pattern and reed and chevron motifs typical of the Art Deco style.

The building was designed by the eminent Southern California architectural firm of Walker and Eisen, who were leading designers of numerous landmark office buildings, hotels and financial institutions throughout the region from the 1920s through the 1940s. They also designed the Beverly Wilshire Hotel and the Alexander-Oviatt Building.

Thanks to the Landmarks Commissioners whose foresight has ensured that this important building will be preserved.





SANTA MONICA CONSERVANCY

Nonprofit Org U.S. Postage PAID Santa Monica, CA Permit No. 36

P.O. Box 653 SANTA MONICA, CA 90406-0653

SAVE THE DATE: SUNDAY, APRIL 10TH

Paula Scott Lecture, second in a series. The free lecture and book signing about early Santa Monica is co-sponsored by the Santa Monica Conservancy and the Santa Monica Historical Society. At the SMHS Museum, 1539 Euclid. Details on page 1.

From our first lecture...

ERNEST MARQUEZ, DECEMBER 5TH



THE CONSERVANCY WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS



Above: Check-in for the Third Street Tour Below: Books for sale at the Church in Ocean Park during the Thirrd Street Tour



Judy Adams Carol Agate Elena Allen Diana Austin Sarah Ben Haggai Lois Bostwick & Lori Braude Bob Brode Steven Brucciani Leigh Brumberg Tara Carson Grace Cleys William Creber Mike Deasy Vanessa Dingley Lilita Dzirkals Jose Escarce Pat Fierro Margaret Phillips & Mario Gerla James & Caroline Gerstley Jay Gibson Steve Glenn Grace Godlin Gail & Gregg Goldman

Doreen Gordon Michael Grandcolas Penny Haberman Monte Hartman Patricia Hassakis Doris Hellmund Pasadena Heritage Christy Hobart Amy Hogue Elizabeth Hurchalla Aleks Istanbullu Architects Amity Janow Avalon Johnson Zina Josephs George & Traudy Kamp Barrie Kaufman Sunny Kreis Morris Kushner Jody Landers Ellen & Stephen Mark Corrie Massey Mack Mazur Ryan and Pamela Moos Geraldine Moyle

Gail Myers Tricia Nelson Carol O'Neal Mary Ore Judy Parsons Marlene Picard Nicole Picard Jerome Robinson Laurel Roennau Shane Salley Dean Samuels Richie Selva Thomas Small Andrew Solmssen Alison St Onge Bruce & Sonya Sultan Jodi Summers Elizabeth & James Terry Catherine Tracy Arnold Vinstein Janice Wright Carol Younger Gary Zembow