



MAINSTREET ASSOCIATION

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 9, 2010

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Art Keeps on Giving in Ocean Beach

2010 Life Size Mural has been Installed as part of Beautification Program

(Ocean Beach, San Diego)****For the past eleven years, the Annual Street Fair & Chili Cook-Off Festival, hosted by the Ocean Beach MainStreet Association (OBMA), has had a unique art element that supports beautification around the neighboring businesses. OB local artist and activist Rich James began the Mural project in 1999 as a way to beautify OB and instill a sense of community pride. Since then the murals have bloomed all over town and became a fixture in Ocean Beach's local landscape. After James passed away, his mentor and local muralist, Janis Ambrosiani took the lead to help the association carry on James' tradition.

The Association uses the program to raise money for the annual fireworks as well as beautification throughout the business district. "This program allows us to get the community involved and create imagery that depicts the great lifestyle Ocean Beach has to offer," stated OBMA executive director, Denny Knox. "We sold out of art squares in the first hour and raised more than \$1,000."

This year, the Ocean Beach branch of US Bank agreed to allow the use of their East facing wall off Sunset Cliffs Blvd. to bare the forty foot mural. David Zedaker, owner of Zed Electric, volunteered to professionally install the mural. Zedaker reached out to the Association last year to offer his services and experience in sign installation since he has the proper licenses, a full contractor's license, and is bonded.

"I couldn't believe our luck that David wanted to volunteer for the job. We couldn't be happier with the results," commented Knox, "he also installed the 2009 mural

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on Union Bank, which looks fantastic.”

About the Mural Project

OB local artist and activist Rich James began the Mural project in 1999 as a way to beautify OB and instill a sense of community pride. Since then the murals bloomed all over town and became a fixture in our local landscape. Every year artists of all types gather at the annual street fair to paint the individual mosaic-type squares designed by Rich. After each street fair, Rich and his friends would install the newest mural on the wall of a local business for all to enjoy.

Sadly, Rich James passed away April 27, 2008 – before designing the 2008 mural. Janis Ambrosiani stepped in to continue his legacy and designed the 2008 mural in his honor. The mural is located on the East facing side of Bravo’s Mexican Bistro & Cantina on Bacon Street. Art enthusiasts can help keep Rich's tradition alive and join in painting the 2011 mural at the June 25, 2011 Street Fair. To see all of the art murals, visit <http://www.oceanbeachsandiego.com/ocean-beach-murals>.

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