



**Peter and Peggy Preuss (she's Opening Weekend chair), Debbie Turner (Grand Jubilee sponsor; Jubilee chair; honorary chair), Susan and Bill Hoehn (Emerald sponsors; she's Jubilee chair), Sue and Peter Wagener (she's Opening Weekend chair), Sheryl and Bob Scarano (Grand Jubilee sponsors; she's Jubilee chair)**



**Irwin and Joan Jacobs (honorary chairs), Katherine and Dane Chapin (she's LJMS board president), Brenda Baker and Steve Baum (honorary chairs)**



**Ted DeDee (LJMS president/CEO) with Pamela Hinchman (fiancée), Marina and Rafael Pastor (he's LJMS board vice chair), Barbara Enberg, Mayor Kevin Faulconer**

# The Conrad's elegant debut

STORY AND PHOTOS BY VINCENT ANDRUNAS • SPECIAL TO THE U-T

## LA JOLLA MUSIC SOCIETY CELEBRATION

**M**uch has already been written about the La Jolla Music Society, and about The Conrad; the Society's new performing arts center. And rightfully so — LJMS has been bringing stellar musical performances to the area for a half-century. Its new \$82 million complex is a wonder to behold and experience — for both architectural beauty and acoustic excellence.

The center is named for the man whose vision and generosity gave the project its biggest single impetus — Conrad Prebys. Over the years, he gave many millions to worthy charitable and cultural causes in the San Diego area, while living a low-key lifestyle and never seeking public recognition. Congenial and unassuming, everyone seemed to like him immediately. But people had trouble pronouncing his unusual surname, so dubbing the new edifice "The Conrad" seemed to make more sense...

Unfortunately, this dear man succumbed to cancer almost three years ago, and never got to see the project's completion. But The Conrad will stand as a venue for cultural greatness for decades to come — entirely fitting for a man known for saying, "Music is my connection to the sublime."

Prebys gave \$30 million to the project, and his life partner, Debby Turner, gave another million. Many others contributed substantially, and extreme care was taken with design and construction to maximize the center's excellence. The Conrad opened last weekend with a fabulous three-evening celebration merging social and performance activities. Peggy Preuss and Sue Wagener chaired the Opening Weekend; Jubilee Chairs were Debbie Turner

(Friday), Sheryl Scarano (Saturday), and Susan Hoehn (Sunday). Turner also did Friday's ribbon-cutting, along with major donors Joan And Irwin Jacobs (for whom the JAI salon is named), and Steve Baum and Brenda Baker (namesakes of the 513-seat Baker-Baum Concert Hall).

Friday's black-tie festivities began with cocktails and hors d'oeuvres. Giuseppe Catering offered sumptuous Russian, German, Italian, French, and American specialties at stations named for classical composers. Following celebratory speeches and the ribbon-cutting, guests experienced the concert hall's superb acoustics (and stunning lighting effects). A series of accomplished musicians performed classical works — interspersed with hits by Freddie Mercury and George Harrison. Video graphics, a ukulele virtuoso, and an incredibly elastic dancer completed the mix. Desserts followed in the courtyard.

Saturday evening featured famed multi-platinum singer-songwriter Seal's soaring hour-plus performance, followed by a reception in the JAI. Both evenings sold out, with 500 guests. Only 120 tickets were offered for Sunday — a more intimate affair — and all were quickly snapped up. Chair Susan Hoehn dressed impeccably for the 1920s-1930s Jazz Age theme (as did many guests). Décor featured feathers, flowers, and pearls and the menu was wonderfully tasty (and totally thematic). New York's eight-member jazz ensemble, The Hot Sardines, closed with an absolutely boffo performance in The JAI.

Overall, the weekend netted \$1.1 million for LJMS' outreach programs.



**James Beyster, Mary Ann Beyster, Elaine Darwin, Jeannette Stevens, Lehn and Richard Goetz**



**Andrew Viterbi, Audrey Viterbi, Bill and Tricia Kellogg, Martha and Edward Dennis**



**Honoree Marlin Burnham, left, and emcee Bill Geppert**



**The honorees, from left, Bishop Cornelius Bowser, Imam Taha Hassane, Steven Binder and Kim Sontag-Mulder.**



**Bill Sailer, left, with wife Dorian Sailer, Congressman Scott Peters and Chris Hulbert.**



HAYNE PALMOUR IV U-T PHOTOS

**Bobbie Gilbert, left, Barbara Sawrey, honoree Father Greg Boyle and Congresswoman Susan Davis during the National Conflict Resolution Center's 31st Annual Peacemaker Awards dinner at the Hilton San Diego Bayfront last Saturday.**

# Making peace

## NATIONAL CONFLICT RESOLUTION CENTER

The National Conflict Resolution Center held its 31st annual Peacemaker Awards dinner last Saturday.

The dinner raised \$1,045,000, a record high for the event. Proceeds will benefit the center's Avoiding the Pipeline to Prison Initiative and the center's work to unite people, cultures, and organizations through civility and communication.

Father Gregory Boyle, a priest who has spent three decades running a gang intervention and rehabilitation program in Los Angeles, was among those honored at Saturday night's event held at the Hilton Bayfront.

Boyle was recognized as the National Peacemaker for his work with Homeboy Industries, which assists 10,000 gang members annually through job training, classes, tattoo removal and other services.

Boyle's 2010 book, "Tattoos on the Heart: The Power of Boundless Compassion," was a New York Times best-seller.

He was also the subject of a 2012 documentary, "G-Dog," and the recipient of a California Peace Prize.

Also honored was local business leader Malin Burnham, who received the Philanthropy in Peacemaking award.

This dinner also recognized four "Community Heroes:" **Steve Binder**, a deputy public defender, for his work combating homelessness through the San Diego Homeless Court Program.

**Imam Taha Hassane**, director of the Islamic Center of San Diego, for bringing together people of different faiths to tackle divisive issues.

**Bishop Cornelius Bowser**, for efforts to prevent gang-related gun violence through the Community Assistance Support Team.

**Kim Sontag-Mulder**, president of the National Organization for Women's San Diego chapter, for work on gender equity.

U-T STAFF