



Times

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Zoning Administrator Limits Short-Term Rentals on Avenida Aragon
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50 Years Later, Tomson Inspires Shorecliffs Middle School Students
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Pumped!

San Clemente Celebrates Grand Opening of County's 1st Pump Track at Steed Park

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The long-awaited San Clemente Pump Track celebrated its grand opening on Saturday, April 26, at Richard Steed Memorial Park, with some bikers and skateboarders getting to test the new asphalt track amid rainy weather.
Photo: Angelica Escobar

sanclementetimes.com

Train Service Thru SC Halts 6 Weeks During OCTA's Emergency Rail Repairs

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PRESCHOOLERS CREATE SURFBOARDS CELEBRATING SAN CLEMENTE

BY ELLA BOYD

Surfing and creativity have a long, symbiotic history, and the latest update in that story comes from the children at The Gratitude Garden Preschool in San Clemente.

The Drew Brophy Art Studio in San Clemente was scheduled to host an auction and art show on Wednesday, April 30, featuring surfboards-turned-mosaics by the students of The Gratitude Garden Preschool. These local children, ranging from 2-6, have worked together to reimagine and display their favorite spots around town through tiles, paint, and overall creativity. The funds raised from the event will benefit the Satya Kids Foundation, a California nonprofit 501(c)(3).

Each surfboard reflects the positive memories of San Clemente's children. "Each student picked their favorite places based on fun memories or meaningful times spent with family and friends," said Brooke Canepa, a teacher at the preschool. "It's all about helping them feel connected to their community."



Teacher Brooke Canepa (left) with her transitional kindergarten class and their "Best of San Clemente" surfboard. Courtesy of Dr. Dustine Rey

Canepa conceded there were ups and downs that came with the creative process, but these proved to be valuable, teachable lessons.

"Working with mosaic tiles is not an easy task," she said, laughing, "and trying

to get the mosaic tiles to look like what the children came up with was a bit difficult. But in class, we always talk about how sometimes some things don't work out the way we planned, and that it's OK if ideas change. Luckily, the kids were

amazing at listening during the process, and they did an absolutely amazing job making their places come to life and look like the real thing on the board."

Sharing this observation was Shannon Stevenson, also a preschool teacher at The Gratitude Garden.

"During the creative art process, we had a couple ups and downs from scratched paint that needed touch-ups to figuring out how to mod podge images without bubbling," she said. "But the kids got really creative with things they enjoy doing at the beach. Our live photos came out really cute, capturing their excitement and joy, like one friend who said, 'I feel like I really was surfing in the sandbox on a big wave.'"

While the boards are all dedicated to various favorite places around town, including the Beach Trail, Vista Hermosa Sports Park, Courtney's SandCastle, Starbucks, Target, In-N-Out Burger, and the animal shelter, one class decided to dedicate their surfboard to the late surfboard-shaper and local legend Terry Senate. Senate worked out of the Los

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Molinos “Surf Ghetto” and passed away in November 2024. The board’s custom stand was built by Senate and Brophy, making the artwork deeply personal and a generational bridge through creation.

The idea for the tribute came from Stevenson, who lived with Senate in the final months of his life. “Terry took my family in with a loving heart,” she said, noting that “Terry’s son, Trey, is actually the godfather of (her) children.”

“Terry has always been someone with a heart of gold and someone who always went out of his way to help those around him, whether it was needing somebody to talk to, being a friend, or telling a joke to brighten your day,” she added.

“One of my favorite things while living with Terry was going down to the surf shop and just hanging out, talking and telling stories, being one with the surf community and sharing the love and simply just bringing people together. He was all about his love for his community.”

The surfboard honoring Senate features the San Clemente Pier and California’s state fish, the Garibaldi, representing local pride and a broader sense of unity. “I feel in my heart, he is 100% with us and enjoys this board,” Stevenson said. “It was meant to be.”



Teacher Shannon Stevenson (center) with her preschool class and their surfboard dedicated to the late Terry Senate and his influence on surf culture. Courtesy of Dr. Dustine Rey

“I’m hoping the community members will walk away with a happy heart full of love, joy, and of affirmations – not only for themselves, but for those around them,” she added. “The world could be such a happier place if everybody helps spread that joy. These boards show the love, joy, soul of each individual and the greatness they accomplish when together.”

Canepa agreed, adding that “the kids



Teacher Vicky Simon (center, top row) with her preschool class and their surfboard inspired by things that grow. Courtesy of Dr. Dustine Rey

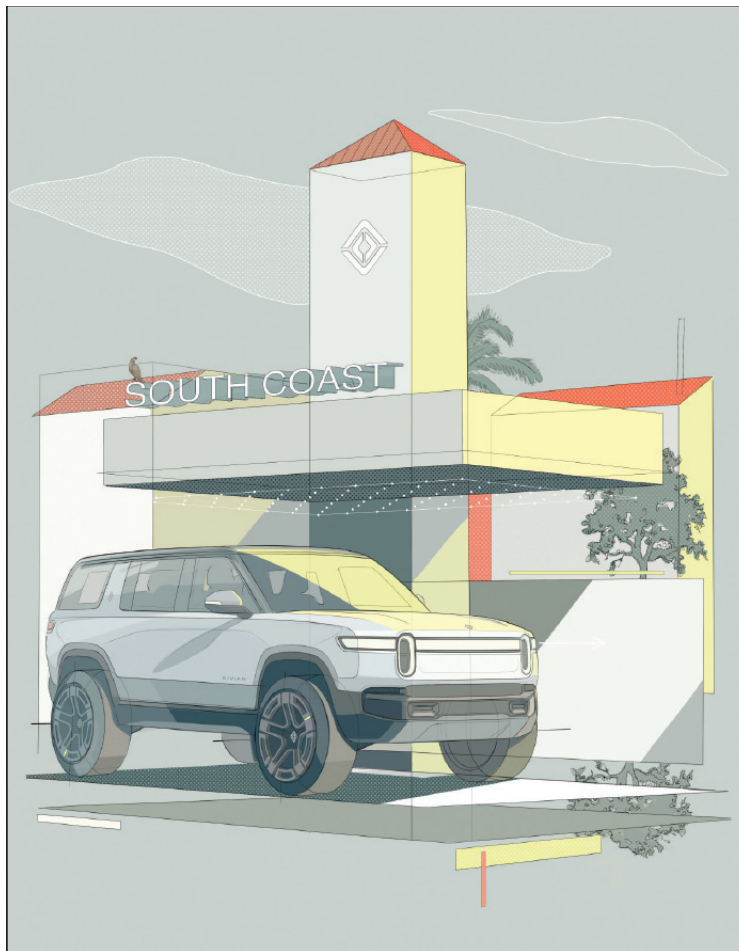
are sharing their memories and inviting us to see the beauty in the small, familiar places that help us grow.”

Stevenson finished by saying that there is also a feeling of empowerment that comes with viewing these boards, and the hard work of the students.

“We can be brave, we can be strong, we can be loving, we can be caring, but it all just takes that first step and spreading

that love and joy with others,” she said.

Ella Boyd is a writer and photographer. Her work appears in The Surftime Journal, Powder, Surfer, Daybreak Magazine, The Inertia, and The Encyclopedia of Surfing. In 2023, she was a finalist for the Follow the Light Surf Photography Grant Program. She mostly logs, but rides a surf mat or kneeboard if the conditions call for it. You can find her work here: ella-boyd.com/ SC



Rivian South Coast Theater

Upcoming Events

- May 3 Rivian Presents: Circadian Rythms & Shell Island with Special Guests
- May 7 Rivian Kids: Little Currents with the Ocean Institute
- May 8 Rivian Presents: The Hermit of Treig
- May 10 Rivian Presents: Butterfly in the Blizzard with Kimmy Fasani
- May 17 Rivian Presents: Art and Life with John Makens
- May 24 Rivian Presents: Moana
- May 29 Rivian Presents: Christa Funk: First In, Last Out
- May 31 Rivian Presents: Let it Kill You with Cliff Kapon

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