

## Joan Kroc Theatre for the Performing Arts opens

*by Kathy Rei –*

With The Salvation Army Ray and Joan Kroc Corps Community Center now complete, and the Performing Arts Center officially open, San Diegans had a reason to celebrate.

The recent Festival of the Arts weekend brought hundreds to the Performing Arts Center for a fabulous weekend of events. Friday night featured eleven local performance groups from poets to choir and concert band, to theatre and dance. Kroc Center employee Sheryl Faw was a shining star, starting off the evening singing “The Star Spangled Banner.” Friday evening events were an opportunity for the community to bring children, friends and family to experience the new theater.



Saturday evening’s gala fundraiser was filled with guests partaking in an “Epicurean Extravaganza” and pre- and post-concert entertainment. Sixteen of San Diego’s finest restaurants provided a signature entrée and appetizer pre-concert and dessert after the concert, all hosted by San Diego Magazine.

Jim Fitzpatrick, CEO/publisher of the magazine and San Diego Metropolitan Advisory Board member, along with his wife Jan, co-chaired the event. Barbara Hunsaker, long-time Army volunteer and advisory board member, served as event committee chair.

Legendary artist Tony Bennett dazzled a packed house with his memorable tunes, including his most notable, “I Left My Heart in San Francisco.” The highlights of the evening were Joan Kroc accompanying Bennett on piano, playing “Our Love Is Here to Stay,” her favorite song, and the announcement officially naming the center the Joan Kroc Theatre for Performing Arts.

Sunday’s Celebration of Praise held in the theater featured the Pasadena Tabernacle Songsters in a program of music, song and prayer. The worship service was attended by Territorial Commander Commissioner Linda Bond, Lt. Colonels Alfred and Sherryl M. Van Cleef, Southern California divisional leaders, and Army officers from across the division.

Majors Tim and Cynthia Foley are Center administrators.

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Many were also present for the Tony Bennett concert on Saturday, including Lt. Colonels Don and Debora Bell, San Diego leaders during the planning, development, construction and dedication of the Kroc Center.

“We are so grateful to Mrs. Kroc for bringing us Tony Bennett for the gala opening of the Performing Arts Center,” said Lt. Colonel Doug O’Brien, Sierra Del Mar divisional commander. “The entire Festival of the Arts weekend was spectacular, and will be remembered for a long time by San Diegans and The Salvation Army.”

The Joan Kroc Theatre for Performing Arts is the grand finale to the 12-acre Center, which in less than a year has over 6,000 memberships.