

BUSINESS

BRIEFS

Business owners meeting set

ESCONDIDO — The next meeting of the Comerciantes Latinos Asociados (CLA) will be at 7:15 a.m. Feb. 6 at Redwood Town Court, 500 E. Valley Parkway.

The CLA is an association of professional business owners committed to the enhancement of the community. The upcoming meeting will feature guest speaker Kent Davy, editor of the North County Times. For information contact Bill de la Fuente, (760) 414-9661.

— Ruth Marvin Webster

Networking breakfast scheduled

ESCONDIDO — A Business Before 9 networking breakfast, hosted by the Escondido Children's Museum, will take place from 7:30 to 8:30 a.m. Friday in the Art Studio Building in the northern edge of Grape Day Park, between the Center Art Museum and the Historic Train Depot.

Admission is \$5 for members. Contact Lisa Manthe at (760) 745-2125; lmanthe@escondidochamber.org.

— Ruth Marvin Webster

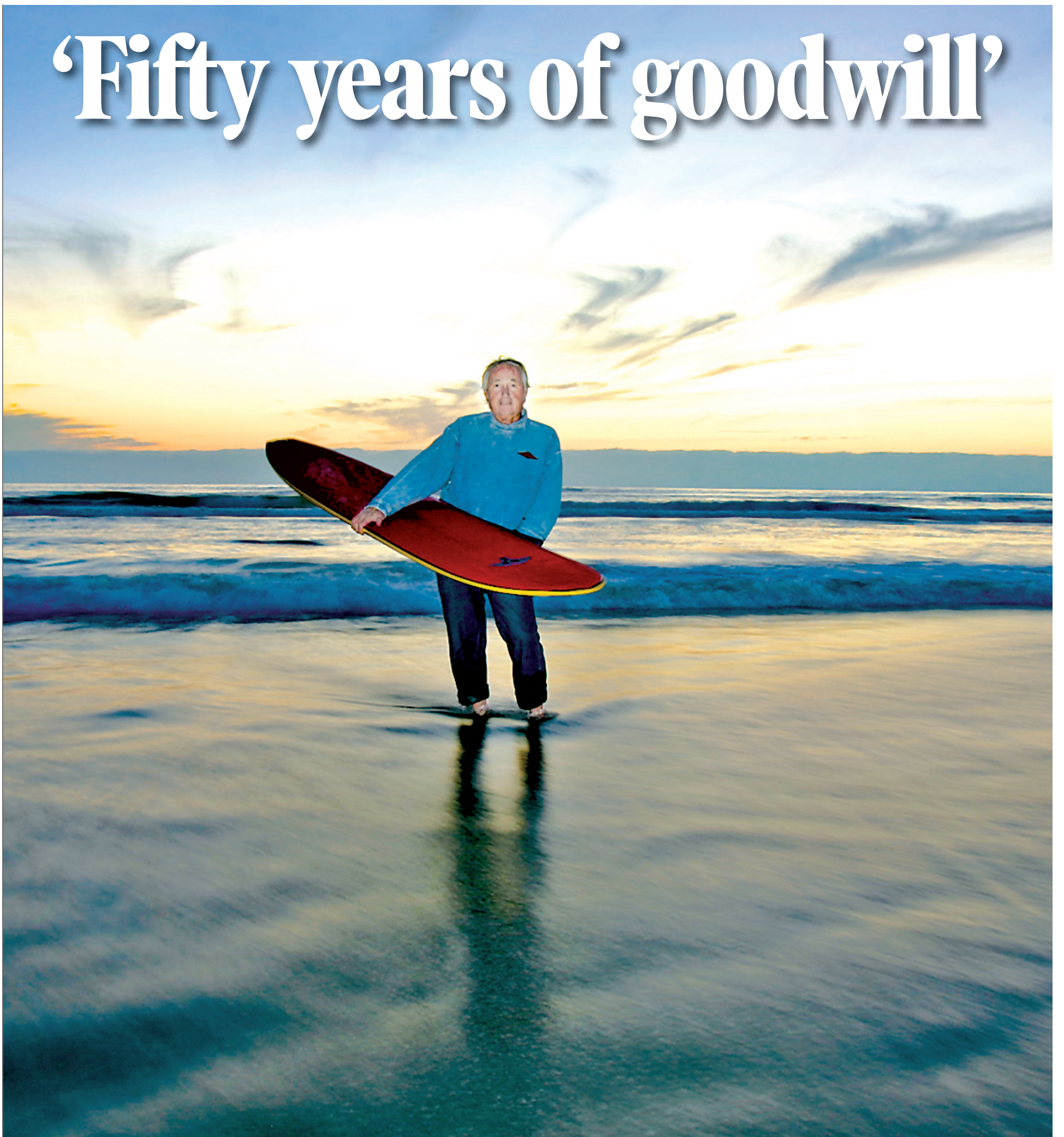
Center for Entrepreneomics to be launched

SAN MARCOS — On Thursday, the San Diego North Economic Development Council (EDC) will introduce the Center for Entrepreneomics, a business center that will serve as a regional clearinghouse of information and resources for entrepreneurs and a support system for new business development in North County.

A press conference will be held at 1:30 p.m. in their office, 100 N. Rancho Santa Fe Road, Suite 124, to introduce the service partners and outline the center's operations. As part of the center's launch, there will be an introduction of a new game called Entrepreneurial Empire at 12:15 p.m. Saturday at Tri-City Medical Center's downstairs conference area. For information visit <http://entrepreneomics.com/events.html>.

— Ruth Marvin Webster

'Fifty years of goodwill'



Tom Morey, 70, invented the first Boogie board in 1971. Now, Morey and his partner Chuck Herpick are developing a new prototype soft skimboard with the hope of revolutionizing the skimboard industry. Sean DuFrene | sean@tlnews.net

Tom Morey continues to reinvent surf industry

By Ondine Brooks Kuraoka | Special to Today's Local News

OCEANSIDE — When Clark Foam went out of business in December, Oceanside resident and surfboard visionary Tom Morey, 70, was grateful he had opted not to use Clark Foam in the first place.

Clark Foam was the world's primary manufacturer of foam surfboard blanks, the building blocks of fiberglass surfboards. As the surf industry scrambled to keep its equilibrium, Morey kept selling his boards as fast as his shop could make them.

After breaking his nose and ribs several times while surfing, Morey invented the Boogie board in the '70s, providing a safer experience for wave riders the world over. He went on to develop the first soft surfboards with Mike Doyle. The Morey-Doyle boards are now widely used by beginners in surf classes but are heavy and, in Morey's words, "pretty clunky."

Ten years ago, Morey began developing the Swizzle board, a soft, lightweight, high-performance surfboard. Though touted as ideal for beginners and women due to its mere 14 pounds, it has gained a reputation for being a first-rate board for any level surfer.

The new boards utilize polyethylene and polypropylene finishes. Polypropylene is an uncrushable material used in automobile bumpers. "These boards really slip in the water. They're more slippery than fiberglass. So here's a board that's faster, friendlier, safer, maneuvers great and is lightweight," Morey said. "Fortunately, they

don't have these materials overseas. This is something that we can make in the U.S., and we're willing to license the technology. We can't make all the surfboards, you know," Morey said.

Long known as a surf legend, Morey's investment in improving surfboards comes from the heart. Morey's latest designs are the pinnacle of wisdom from the waves, influenced by generations of fellow surfing masters.

Morey's wisdom is buoyed by a love of mathematics and science. He has a bachelor's in mathematics from the University of Southern California and previously worked in aerospace engineering for Douglas Aircraft and Boeing, where he was assigned to develop alternative methods for building lightweight aircraft structures.

Chuck Herpick, Morey's business partner since 1998, has surfed with Morey since he was 12. They graduated from the same high school in Laguna Beach, where they both became lifeguards and played the ukulele, hanging out with Hobie Alter, Bob Simmons, Mickey Dora and Gidget.

Herpick recalled the joy of learning how to make a surfboard from Morey. "When you have your hands on it, you believe in it. It makes it easy to pass on what a great product it is," Herpick said.

Herpick describes partnering with a friend much like a marriage. "You have to make sure you're with the right person. Then it's a matter of compromise, respect and love. That's probably the most important thing, to love people. We both try to pass that on in our everyday lives. It's been easy because Tom has 50 years of goodwill behind him."

Morey sells his boards directly from his Web site and through word of mouth. The boards are crafted in a local shop. "We're not mass producing anything. There's

a great deal of craftsmanship in putting one of these boards together," Morey said.

"I'm burned out on surf shops," Morey said of his decision to sell directly. "We're not interested in trying to convince the wholesale buyer that this is the product he should get. He has to convince his clerk that this is the product he should try and move. That clerk has to convince the customer. The customers are usually conservative. They simply want something that looks like a surfboard, that looks like what they've seen before. If it doesn't, they don't know what questions to ask."

Morey encourages entrepreneurs to focus energy on the expanding online market. "The world is changing so rapidly with the World Wide Web, making it possible for the smallest ma-and-pa shop to have as much presence as IBM. If your Web site is cool, people will come to it."

Morey also reminds business owners to celebrate growth, no matter how small. "If you're looking at an XY chart of someone's growth and there's a shallow positive slope, that's as good as it gets. If the slope gets steeper, it gets worrisome. If the slope is going downwards, then it's also worrisome. But as soon as things are getting better, take a breath, take a look and be thankful for where you are right now because it doesn't get any better than that."

When they need a break from business, Morey and Herpick play ukulele at local care facilities for the elderly. Morey also plays regularly at the Salt Creek Grill in Laguna Beach.

Morey and Herpick are seeking the next generation of surf industry visionaries. "We're looking for younger people that are interested in getting in and staying in for a long time," Morey said. "We want to pass the baton."

Cal State puts Gateway founder in executive hot seat

Waitt, 11 senior executives join lineup for university's two-unit course In the Executive's Chair

By Heather Chambers | heather@tlnews.net

SAN MARCOS — When Cal State San Marcos students meet for In the Executive's Chair this semester, they'll have a chance to pick the brain of Gateway founder Ted Waitt.

Waitt and 11 senior executives joined the spring semester lineup for the university's popular two-unit course, which meets Wednesdays from 1 to 2:50 p.m. in the newly built Markstein Hall 125.

The course, in its third year, is a take on the Bravo cable TV series "Inside the Actor's Studio" and is part of the College

of Business Administration's Center for Leadership Innovation and Management Building (CLIMB) program.

The course aims to provide students with wisdom from successful business leaders, knowledge of how leaders think and make decisions, awareness of the importance of selecting the right employees and the reality of balancing work and family. It is co-taught by Dr. Rajnandini Pillai, associate professor and executive director of CLIMB, and adjunct professor Bruce Nichols, former president and chief executive officer of Formulabs.

"I think it's one of our most valuable classes," said Dennis Guseman, dean of the College of Business Administration. "How often do you get an opportunity to really learn life's lessons from very suc-

For information about In the Executive's Chair, call Cal State San Marcos College of Business Administration, (760) 750-4242.

cessful people?"

College administrators relied on their own extensive network of business leaders to select speakers, something Guseman said the college stresses to its students. "It operates just like business — through contacts and networking," he said.

In the past, its speakers have included the former CEO of Reef footwear, the former owner of Musicmatch, and the president and CEO of Buck Knives.

"Usually, the people we contact are very excited about having an opportunity to speak to the students," Guseman said.

On Feb. 22, Ken Markstein, president and CEO of Markstein Beverage, will visit the college. Markstein's family, who lives in Rancho Santa Fe, donated \$5 million for the construction of Markstein Hall.

The building's capacity could allow up to 120 students to register for courses in the future, according to Regina Eisenbach, associate dean of the business college. The class reached its limit of 70 students for the spring semester.

"It's an elective but a very popular one," she said.

The course is open to students and members of the campus community for free, space permitting.

Reach reporter Heather Chambers at 760.752.6745.