

Stunning Mission Gala Honors Claudia and Randy Redwitz and Raises \$300K for Preservation and Education

Incredible Digital Mapping Display Featured in the Mission's Ruins

San Juan Capistrano, Calif. (September 18, 2024) – The highly anticipated *Romance of the Mission* benefit gala was held on the historic grounds of Mission San Juan Capistrano on September 13 with 420 guests in attendance. Claudia and Randy Redwitz were honored for their long-standing support of the Mission while the operatic trio *Forte* performed a spectacular concert in the Ruins of The Great Stone Church (Circa 1812). For the first time, the concert featured a digital mapping and projection display imaginatively bringing the Ruins back to their potential original condition. Proceeds of approximately \$300K will support the preservation and stewardship of the county's only mission.

With deep roots to San Juan Capistrano, Claudia and Randy have supported numerous Mission causes over the course of 20 years. They've helped guide education programs and preservation efforts including the Gate Preservation House Project and Mission Store which returned the original 18th century space to museum and interpretive space.

Mission Preservation Foundation President George O'Connell said, "Their help and care have truly made the Mission better and we were excited to recognize them this year."

An evening highlight was a live concert in the Ruins of The Great Stone Church featuring *Forte*, an outstanding operatic trio of male vocalists who were finalists on *America's Got Talent*. The concert featured a first-ever digital mapping/projection display developed by Brite Ideas founder Greg Christy and his creative team. The incredible visuals of swallows, stained glass windows and the Retablo were projected throughout the set which included stirring renditions of *Somewhere* from *West Side Story*, *Pie Jesu* and the gala tradition, *When the Swallows Come Back to Capistrano*.

The historic Mission bells were rung by Mission bell ringers Nathan Banda and Michael Gastelum as guests made their way to the Central Courtyard for dinner coordinated by Inn at the Mission San Juan Capistrano Executive Chef Adrián Hernandez.

The Reverend Monsignor J. Michael McKiernan offered the dinner blessing followed by a deliciously curated four-course, plated dinner served by the Inn at the Mission San Juan Capistrano team led by General Manager Matt Harrison. Wine pairings were generously provided by Dr. Rudi & Diana Brutoco Family of Brutocao Cellars while the beer service was donated by Matt Ewing of Mission Brewery in tribute to Tony Moiso, Gilbert Aguirre and George O'Connell.

Major underwriters included George and Eden O'Connell/O'Connell Family Foundation, The Moiso Family, and many special Mission Preservation Foundation supporters. Kerry and Gavin S. Herbert, Jr. of Roger's Gardens oversaw the evening's floral design and décor while Lugano of Newport Beach gifted exquisite flower stud diamond earrings valued at \$18K for the opportunity drawing. Additional opportunity drawing items were generously donated by Discovery Cube Orange County, Inn at the Mission San Juan Capistrano, Sonance Foundation, Sunstone Hotel Investors and Waldorf Astoria Monarch Beach Resort & Club.

Brand Enhance Parking & Hospitality, BBJ La Tavola Specialty Linen, 3:16 Bakery Shop and Signature Rentals contributed to the exquisite dinner and concert experience.

For more information and a complete listing of donors, friends, and supporters visit www.missionsjc.com. To learn about how to pledge for next year's gala on September 19, 2025, contact Mechelle Lawrence Adams at 949.234.1311.

About Mission San Juan Capistrano

Known as the "Jewel of the Missions," Mission San Juan Capistrano is a historic landmark and museum that features exhibits, five-language audio tour, festivals and public programming. As Orange County's only mission, the site is home to Serra Chapel, the Ruins of The Great Stone Church (circa 1796) and original padres' quarters. Founded on November 1, 1776, by Saint Junipero Serra as the seventh of 21 California missions established by Spain, Mission San Juan Capistrano is owned by the Diocese of Orange and receives no church or state funding. The Mission Preservation Foundation, comprised of business and community leaders, is its fundraising entity committed to ensuring education, preservation and its long-term historic and religious significance.

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