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SHERIFF'S DEPT. WON'T DRUG-SCREEN ALL WHO ENTER JAILS

Last year, oversight board recommended stricter rules to avert overdoses

BY JEFF MCDONALD & KELLY DAVIS

When it comes to preventing overdoses in San Diego County jails, where hundreds of incarcerated men and women suffered or died from fentanyl and other drugs last year, Sheriff's Department officials have a fundamental disagreement with their civilian overseers.

The Citizens' Law Enforcement Review Board recommended in August that "all persons" be screened for illegal drugs every time they enter a county jail — employees, detainees, defense lawyers, contractors and others.

Sheriff's officials took more than four months to respond.

When they answered, they said the idea was being rejected because they were concerned about the potential health effects of repeated exposure to low-level radiation from body scanners. They also said there was no evidence that employees are responsible for the influx of drugs into jails and that screening workers would undermine morale.

"Implementing this recommendation would require us to presume staff ... are actively engaged in bringing contraband into our facilities," Lt. Edward Greenawald wrote in the December letter, released by the review board last week.

"This action would represent a breach of the trust we have placed

SEE JAILS • A16

ANOTHER STORM ON WAY, BUT RAIN'S END MAY BE NEAR

High pressure system could give soggy state chance to dry out

BY GARY ROBBINS

You'll need an umbrella again today. The storm that slammed into San Diego County late Saturday afternoon will last into the breakfast hour. And it will be followed by a second system tonight.

But good news appears to be nigh.

The monthlong, statewide wet spell that partly pulled California out of the worst stages of drought but swamped the coast and destroyed most of the Capitola wharf near Santa Cruz is about to end.

"There's one more system out there, but it doesn't look like it will come down here," Samantha Conolly, a forecaster at the National Weather Service in Rancho Bernardo, said Saturday.

"We could have a pattern change in the weather that will cause high pressure ridges to build off the West Coast and blocks storms."

All of San Diego County's weekend rain is expected to have moved off to the east by Monday afternoon.

Elsewhere in the state, flood

SEE STORMS • A2



Adriel, 3, eats some berries with the other children whom child care provider Miren Algorri (standing) serves at her Chula Vista home. Algorri, who opened her business in 1997, serves only low-income families who get state-subsidized child care.

EDUARDO CONTRERAS U-T PHOTOS

THE REAL COSTS OF CHILD CARE

Providers have trouble covering their expenses

State reimburses caregivers based on what families can pay, not costs of services; as result, basic working conditions and compensation sacrificed

BY KRISTEN TAKETA

Miren Algorri wakes at 4 a.m. and sleeps by 11 p.m. — when she can.

On weekdays and some weekends and holidays, Algorri takes care of and teaches as many as 14 children — some as young as babies, others as old as 9 — in her Chula Vista house.

The first is dropped off at 6:30 a.m. when his mom goes to work as a cook. The last, whose mom works late at a pharmacy, isn't picked up until nearly 8 p.m.

In between, the 48-year-old Algorri and her two assistant teachers make the children breakfast, lunch and dinner with foods like mangoes, oatmeal, fish, broccoli and milk. They change the

SEE CHILD CARE • A10



Assistant teacher Karina Palomino pours milk for Julian, 1, at Miren Algorri's home child care center.

About this series

This is the second part in a Union-Tribune series exploring how child care in California is falling short.

Part 1: California offers families help in paying for child care. Hardly any obtain it.

Today: The real cost of child care is more than families can pay — so providers pay the price.

Part 3: Families and providers need help, yet hundreds of millions in aid goes unspent.

Part 4: How one California city came up with its own solution to the child care crisis.

■ To read the entire series, go to sandiegouniontribune.com/child-care.

FROM RUSSIAN PERSECUTION TO U.S. ASYLUM

Federal immigration judge approves case of two Jehovah's Witnesses, one facing prison for her religion

BY KATE MORRISSEY & ANA RAMIREZ



Olga Ponomareva, 48, from Russia, walks to immigration court Jan. 5 in San Diego. A judge would later award her and her mother asylum in the United States.

ANA RAMIREZ U-T

When a San Diego immigration judge told Olga Ponomareva that she would be allowed to stay in the United States, she wanted to leap in the air.

She and her 72-year-old mother had just won asylum because of the religious persecution they experienced as Jehovah's Witnesses in their home country of Russia. She maintained her composure in the courtroom, but inside, she was elated, knowing her life was safe.

"When he finally said he was granting asylum, I was overwhelmed with joy," Ponomareva, 48, recalled, speaking through a Russian interpreter.

She and her mother soon left the courtroom to tell the news to their friends who were in the waiting room — Anna Ermak, who fled with Ponomareva and whose asylum case is still pending, and Alex Voloshanovskiy, who is part of the same Russian-speaking Jehovah's Witness congregation in Encinitas.

"I felt that joy," Ermak said in Russian. "I was also overwhelmed with joy."

Ermak, 40, is hopeful that this means she, her husband and two children will also win protection in the United States. After the

SEE ASYLUM • A17

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ARTS

OMA's lasting 'Legacy'

Two-part show celebrating the Oceanside Museum of Art's 25th anniversary features 130 works from mostly local artists

BY SETH COMBS

As an independent curator with dozens of exhibitions under her belt, Danielle Deery is used to the time-consuming research that goes into the job. But when she was approached by the Oceanside Museum of Art about curating an exhibition that explored the entire 25-year history of the institution — from its humble beginnings inside the Gill Building on Pier View Way in 1997 to its current expansion — Deery knew then that it might be one of the more demanding, albeit exciting, exhibitions she had ever curated.

"It was a huge challenge; 300 exhibitions, thousands of artists and tens of thousands of pieces to look through," recalls Deery, who had been working on a show at OMA West, the museum's annex gallery at the Seabird Resort, when she was approached by the museum about a 25th anniversary exhibition.

The result is "Legacy: 25 Years of Art and Community," an ongoing exhibition that attempts to encapsulate the length and breadth of the institution's programming over the years, as well as to convey the museum's commitment to supporting local and regional artists. The exhibition is presented in two parts across two galleries inside the museum, one devoted to "The Early Years" (1997-2011), the other to "The Recent Years" (2012-2022).

"It was a great way to reconnect with the museum," says Deery, who has curated over 30 past exhibitions at OMA and once worked as the museum's director of exhibits and marketing. "We got to expand it into this double show, two parts of a larger exhibition. That was really exciting because I got to pull in even more artists. The challenge, of course, was that there were so many great artists that the museum has worked with over the years."

The result is rather astounding, with the "Legacy" exhibitions spanning 25 years and 71 exhibitions and featuring 130 pieces of art from 112 artists, most of them regional or local artists. This latter point is one that Deery says is certainly one of the more lasting legacies of OMA and one that the institution has reaffirmed as it gets set to expand the museum to the neighboring Fire Station 1 building on Pier View Way.

"The museum has played a huge role in helping to develop that support for regional artists, highlighting the history and the important movements that developed here," says Deery, who points to local artists such as Ethel Greene, a surrealist artist who is now getting some much-deserved attention as a figurehead in the local art scene. "The other museums in San Diego are definitely older, but I think that OMA has and has always had their own path that they are forging."

Combs is a freelance writer.

'Legacy: 25 Years of Art and Community'

"The Early Years" runs through Jan. 29. "The Recent Years" runs through Feb. 19.

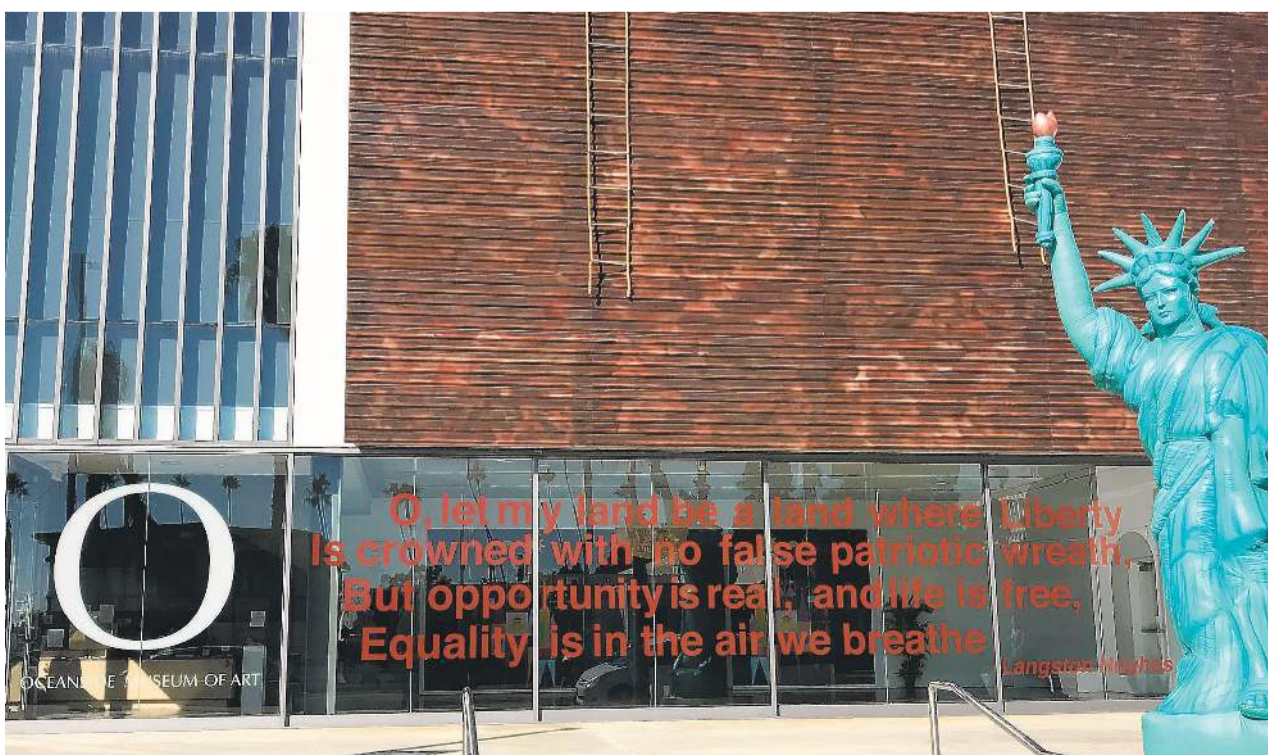
Hours: 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Thursdays, Saturdays and Sundays; 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. Fridays

Where: Oceanside Museum of Art, 704 Pier View Way, Oceanside

Price: Free to \$10

Phone: (760) 435-3720

Online: oma-online.org



Six pieces that encapsulate a 'Legacy'

SELECTIONS FROM 'THE EARLY YEARS':

◀ "Skyscape With Landscape," 1978, Ethel Greene

From the exhibition: "Ethel Greene Surrealist Painter" (2002)

A beloved artist on the San Diego scene, Ethel Greene's work is finally getting its due, and this piece is emblematic of her brilliant surrealist style. Curator Mark-Elliott Lugo curated her first solo exhibition in 2002 and, with 40 of her works on display at the time, it remains the largest solo show to date. Deery says early exhibitions like this one helped "highlight the history and the important movements that developed here."

◀ "Along the Merced River," 1924, Maurice Braun

From "Masterpieces of San Diego Painting: Fifty Works From Fifty Years: 1900-1950" (2008)

Known for his lush landscapes, Braun is one of the most revered artists in the California school of impressionism. Curated by local art historian and avid collector Bram Dijkstra, "Masterpieces of San Diego Painting" was the first exhibition staged in OMA's Central Pavilion when it opened in 2008.

◀ "Sunbathe Barbie at Bombay Beach," 2005, Jen Trute

From "Lowbrow Art: Nine San Diego Pop Surrealists" (2009)

From alleyway murals to small gallery shows, San Diego is filled with art of the pop-surrealist variety. OMA distinguished itself by recognizing the movement's Southern California roots, best represented in Trute's satirical tribute to the Salton Sea waterfront. Former U-T art critic Robert Pincus called the painting "meticulously executed," and Deery remembers the exhibition as a "killer show."

SELECTIONS FROM 'THE RECENT YEARS'

◀ "The Tot (Follow Your Dreams: Hanging Heart Spot Companion)," 2015, Richard Becker

From "100 Artists, 100 Years: The San Diego Museum of Art Artists Guild, 1915-2015" (2015)

This steel piece from the sculptor certainly stood out in 2015 when it was displayed in "100 Artists, 100 Years," an intrepid exhibition that curator Lugo called "a rare opportunity for viewers to experience in one venue the diverse range of art created in San Diego over the last one hundred years."

◀◀ "Art Disposal Service Uniform," circa 1969, Bob Matheny

From "Spitting in the Wind: Art From the End of the Line" (2014)

There was no greater champion of local art than Matheny, a conceptual artist best known for helping to define the San Diego art scene in the 1960s and '70s alongside Richard Allen Morris and John Baldessari. This uniform, first displayed at the Dave Hampton-curated 2014 exhibition "Spitting in the Wind," is from one of Matheny's more idiosyncratic projects, the San Diego chapter of the Art Disposal Service, which encouraged artists to take their excess works to the dump.

◀ "Of Fence," 2017, Marcos Ramírez ERRE and "Lady Liberty V2," 2017, Omar Pimenta

Presented at a time of extreme political rhetoric surrounding the Mexico-U.S. border, the "unDocumenta" exhibition, curated by Alessandra Moctezuma, was a bold, beautiful exhibition that served as a rejoinder to militarization of our border region. This photo, capturing aspects of binational artist ERRE's "Of Fence" installation on the facade of the museum, is presented in "The Recent Years" as testament to the museum's willingness to make decisive statements in a time of divisiveness.

OCEANSIDE MUSEUM OF ART PHOTOS