

Idols in Ontario

Season 8's American Idols rock local arena

For those of you who've been glued to your television sets on Tuesdays and Wednesdays since January rooting for your favorite *American Idol*, getting out of the house was just the thing.

On July 17, fans of America's #1 reality show got to catch *American Idol 2009 Summer Tour!* at Citizens Business Bank Arena in Ontario. The first-ever Idols stop in Inland SoCal, the sold-out concert hit all the right chords. Enthusiastic concertgoers took full advantage of the unique opportunity, waiting hours in the hot sun for autographs.

The top 10 contestants from Season 8 performed in reverse winning order, starting with Michael Sarver, who came in tenth, and building up to a solo by Season 8's winner Kris Allen.

Adam Lambert, Allison Iraheta, Anoop Desai, Danny Gokey, Lil Rounds, Matt Giraud, Megan Joy, and Scott MacIntyre mixed it up alone and in duets, like Lambert and Iraheta's hot "Slow Ride."



The special performance was sandwiched into the Ontario arena between back-to-back concerts in L.A. and San Diego.

As the talented young singers make their way across the country all summer long, auditions for Season 9 are already underway.

"American Idol gives undiscovered talent the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to perform live every week on the show," posts Simon Fuller, the show's creator and executive producer, on its website. "And now the tour will give America the unique chance to see these newly discovered starts performing in their own hometown." 🇺🇸

—Allie B. Kagamaster



Comprehensive care

New center offers continuing support for cancer patients




Riverside and San Bernardino Counties' Women's Health Initiative Program, begun in 2007, is expanding to serve a broader range of client with a greater array of services through its new Breast Cancer Resource Center.

The WHIP acts as a portal into the healthcare community for indigent, young, un- or underinsured women with breast problems, placing eligible women under the care of either East Riverside Health Clinic, Arlanza Family Health Clinic or Dr. German Krisol, who are responsible for providing medical care. Funding for this service comes from grants from the Susan G. Komen Foundation and the Riverside Community Health Foundation, which specify the program serve more than 300 women a year.

"So far this year we're ahead of our goal," says Program Director Rosa Olaiz of the number of women the organization has helped. "And we want to reach even more people with our Resource Center."

The BCRC is free to all clients regardless of their insurance or income level, and it ministers to family members as well as cancer patients. "Now we can provide counseling services for the children and spouses of cancer patients," says Olaiz. In addition to counseling, the BCRC offers a resource library, a meditation room, support groups and workshops on nutrition, as well as free wigs, scarves and other necessities for women with cancer. The BCRC is staffed by volunteers and funded through solicitation and fundraisers. "We really look for community support," says Olaiz.

Currently, community activist and Riverside attorney Teresa Rhyne is putting together an advisory committee. "I have initially contacted breast cancer survivors, but I'd also like a few folks who are in the business — doctors, nurses, etc. — as well as family members of those affected by breast cancer," she says of her recruiting efforts. The committee will assist the Inland Agency with determining what sorts of resources are most helpful to women and then obtaining those resources, she says.

The BCRC, which opened in August, will host its open house in October, Breast Cancer Awareness month. 

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Budget crunch

California universities feel the pinch

To resolve California's \$25 billion deficit, Governor Schwarzenegger slashed education by \$4.3 billion. That means significant belt tightening by area colleges and universities, many of which serve more students than they did a decade ago with significantly less money. So how are they managing?

The California State University system, which includes CSU San Bernardino, is reducing student enrollment by 40,000 students; increasing student fees by up to \$800 on top of the \$300 fee increase for full-time undergrads adopted in May; freezing salaries and hiring; furloughing management and executives; and suspending or curtailing infrastructure projects to accommodate its \$584 million budget cut.

The University of California system, which includes UC Riverside, is reconciling \$800 million in state funding reductions by furloughing 108,000 full-time-equivalent positions from 11 to 26 days, saving around \$200 million; increasing student fees; refinancing debt

[to gain \$100 million offset against the shortfall]; and instituting across its 10 campuses about \$300 million in cuts determined by those chancellors. For UCR those decisions included reducing labs and eliminating courses, curtailing faculty hiring from 47 to 17, eliminating 100 full-time positions and reducing faculty and staff by 15 percent.

Of course, reducing student enrollment and classes in these two systems puts more pressure on community colleges to accommodate students. Unfortunately, community colleges are reeling from their own shortfall. They too are increasing student fees and turning away students, some estimates of which run as high as 200,000.

The Press Enterprise reports that the Riverside Community College District, which faces a \$16.5 million budget gap, plans to cut about 1,000 classes at its Riverside, Moreno Valley and Norco campuses. Not surprisingly, applications are up there about 50 percent.

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Less is more

Agency dissolution produces more businesses



Like a dandelion scattered by the wind to multiply in other fertile ground, the break up of Wilkin Guge has spawned several new creative businesses. Namesake Andrew Wilkin, the creative force behind WG, has gone on to start Andrew Wilkin LLC; media strategist Shannon Carlson launched media buying firm 3 Olives Media; and PR professional Kim Munkres has opened Thunderwheel Communications. But in this case the parts may be greater than their sum. That's because these professionals offer

clients a customized collaboration of services, specializing in their own industry while offering unparalleled access to periphery services through strategic partnerships with each other.

"We're accustomed to working together," says Munkres so when clients require services beyond what each company offers, the principals are quick to pick up the phone and call each other, she says. "We're scalable now," she says of her firm's more manageable size.

Thunderwheel has only five people and Munkres will soon start a search for a senior account manager, bringing her total to six. "What sets us apart," she says, "is that we have no intention of becoming a large agency." That mindset, she believes, enables her to form more essential relationships with her small group of handpicked clients. "We become part of their team."

She currently counts among her clients the University of Redlands, Ontario Convention and Visitors Bureau, Chicago's CCC Information Services and the non-profit House of Ruth. She's looking to add a only couple of more clients to create a "synergistic mix," where clients may share common interests or benefit from each other in some way.

It's a selective approach to running a business and serving clients, challenging the notion that bigger is better. 📌

Healthcare help

California Baptist University this school year graduated a record number 1,063 students at its recent commencement ceremonies, including 34 nursing students who were the first the to school's nursing program in 2005.

The baccalaureate degree in nursing at CBU is the only four-year nursing degree program in Riverside County. 📌

RV Re-do

Inland SoCal's RV business continues to diminish

In March, Area9 reported on the sad state of Inland SoCal's RV companies, noting that Riverside's Fleetwood Enterprises and Pacific Coachworks were the only two left standing after National, Weekend Warrior and Alfa Leisure recently shuttered. Well, scratch that. Riverside's Fleetwood Enterprises has now sold



its motorized recreational vehicle business ("Fleetwood RV") to American Industrial Partners head-quartered in Decatur, Ind. for about \$33.2 million. This, after it closed its

folding trailer subsidiary, which accounted for losses in excess of \$80 million in 2007 and 2008. Meanwhile, Fleetwood terminated about 700 RV employees and is looking to sell its manufactured housing division, for which Phoenix's Cavco Industries has already offered \$28.9 million.

Despite years of reorganizing, Fleetwood Enterprises filed Chapter 11 in March to "restructure our overhead, pursue potential buyers, and definitively resolve our debt issues," said Elden L. Smith, Fleetwood's president and chief executive officer.

Seems it's now up to Pacific Coachworks, currently on life support, to keep the RV dream alive here. 📌

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Waterwise



Riverside's Blakely family won a waterwise yard makeover in the Greater Riverside chambers of Commerce's Keep Riverside Clean and Beautiful (KRCB) program. Ian Davidson Landscape Architecture donated services along with the California Landscape Contractors Association, Inland Empire Chapter. Riverside Public

Utilities (RPU) and Western Municipal Water District each pitched in for a quarter of the cost. Thanks to the drought-resistant plants and trees that replaced grass and the drip irrigation that replaced sprinklers, the Blakely family has reduced water consumption by 52,000 gallons a year. 🇺🇸

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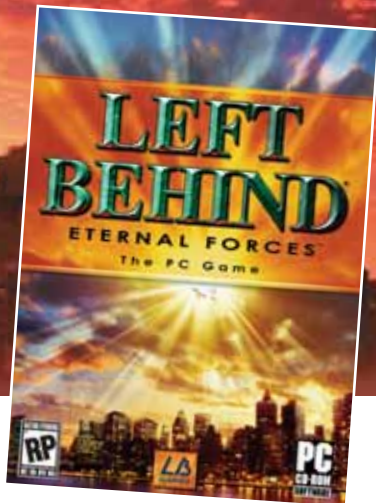
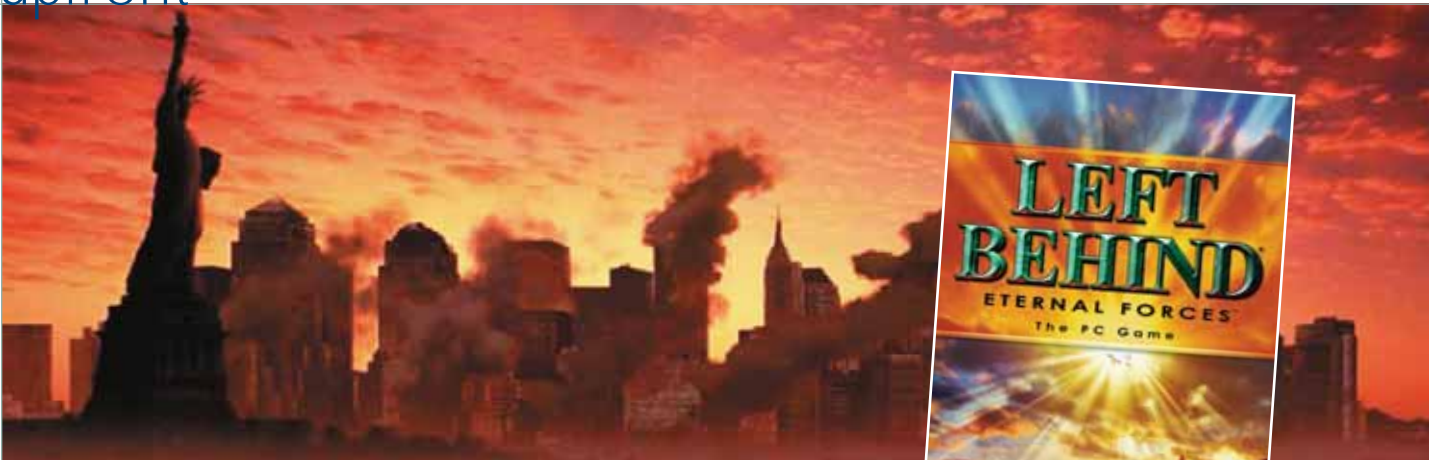


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Major distribution

Games sales aren't left behind in this recession

Video games sales may be one of the few areas of the economy that have continued to grow throughout the recession. PricewaterhouseCoopers predicts that the sale of software video games will reach \$21.6 billion by 2013 in the U.S. alone.

Helping ensure they ride that wave, Murrieta's Left Behind Games, maker of Christian video games based on the Left Behind series of novels, announced last month a distribution agreement with Jack of All Games to distribute its products to major North American retailers. Jack of All Games, the distribution subsidiary of Take-Two Interactive Software, works with

top retailers including Wal-Mart, Amazon.com, Best Buy, Eurpac, Fry's Electronics, GameStop, Target Stores, Toys R Us and Hastings. Prior to the agreement, LBG sold its products through a direct-to-store distribution channel or through distributors to Christian booksellers association and inspirational marketplaces.

LBG's primary product, Left Behind: Eternal Forces, is a real time strategy game played by one person or online by up to eight players on personal computers. 🇺🇸



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This year's Comic-Con International San Diego convention came and went but Riverside Art Museum's "Strips, Scripts and Scapes: Contemporary Comix in Southern California," a comic-themed exhibit influenced by progressive artists affiliated with the Southland, is on display through August 22 [riversideartmuseum.org].

"Comics are an old medium, and the artists in this exhibit are really pushing the medium forward by trying new ideas," says Lee Tusman, Curator of Adult Education for RAM. "From strip to strip comics show how things progress and change."

The storytelling exhibition features the work—a diverse range of printed, hand-drawn and collage comics art—of Sammy Harkham, Johnny Ryan, John Pham, Mike Bertino, Travis Millard, Rusty Jordan, Souther Salazar, Brent Harada, Walt Holcombe, Martin Cendreda, Mary Fleener, Taylor McKimens, Roberta Gergory, Mark Todd, and Esther Peal Watson and Megan Whitmarsh.

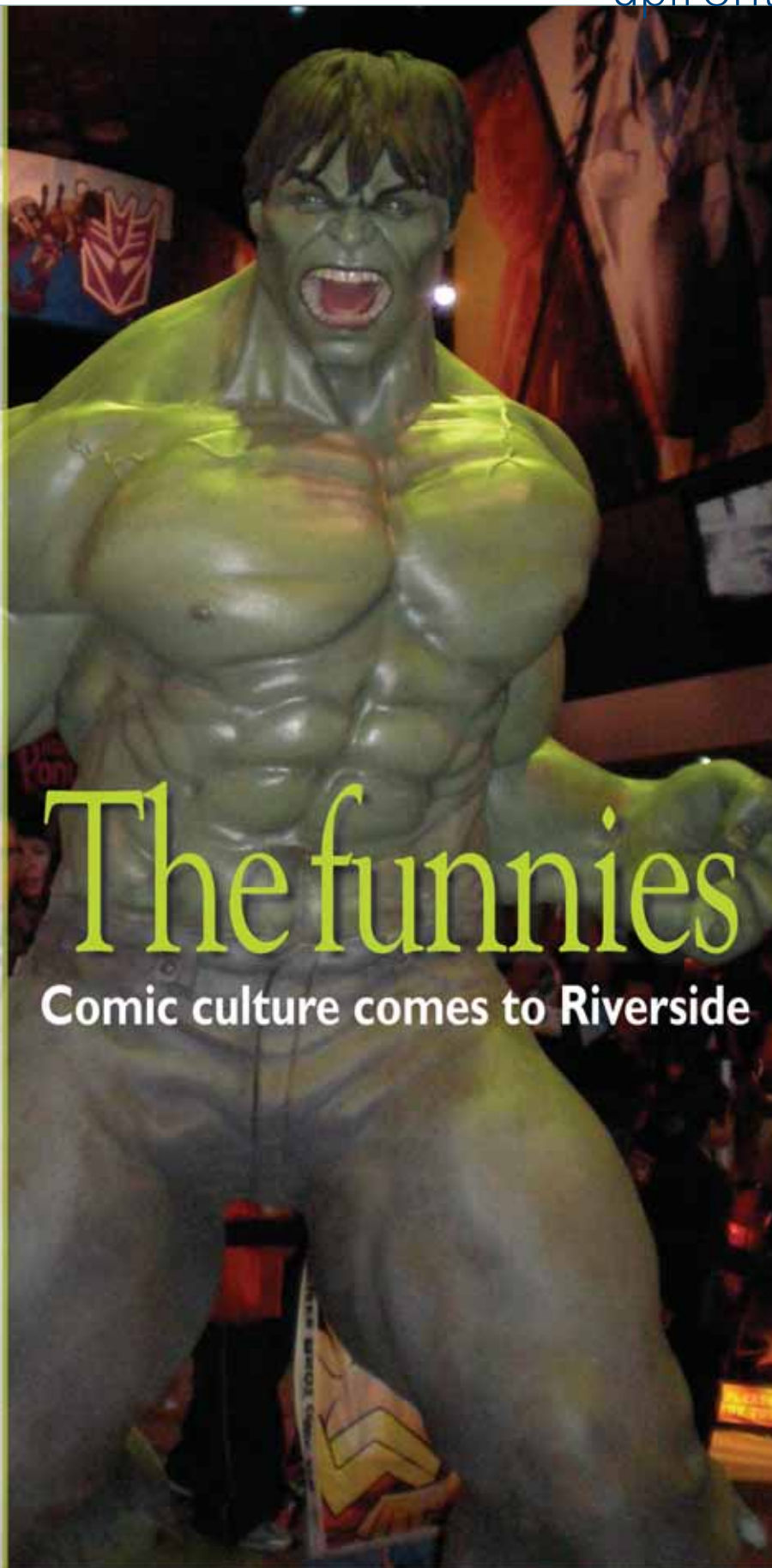
Whitmarsh's "Giant Sculpture," a five-foot tall hand embroidered pile of fabric trash that embodies the gallery center, was two years in the making.

Her fabric monument embodies space like Marvel's Iron Man and Hasbro's super-sized transformer at this year's Comic-Con, and like last year's colossal Incredible Hulk.

Tusman, who timed the exhibit to open during Comic-Con season, says participating artists are telling stories that are fantastical but not science fiction. "We're not talking super heroes, long capes and underwear here."

While the annual Comic-Con celebrated its 40th year and boasted popular super heroes such as actor Robert Downey, Jr. (Iron Man), director Peter Jackson (District 9), and the popular Twilight crew, RAM's slice of comix culture reached a brand new audience.

"This is the first exchange of its kind in the area," says Tusman. 📍—Allie B. Kagamaster



The funnies

Comic culture comes to Riverside