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# VENTURA BREEZE

Your Hometown Paper

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February 18 - March 3, 2015



Mary Joyce Ivers was all smiles after being honored as Supervisor of the Year.

City of Ventura  
2014 Employee  
and



Here's to great places, good people, and wonderful experiences.

Ventura Family embarks on  
an ocean voyage

by Danielle Brubaker



Sam Ponar and Alex Benke stand in front of the sculpture at Marina Park that they helped purchase and install. The bronze sculpture, a mermaid with a lute rising out of the ocean, is at the park's west point next to the breakerwater.



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## Ventura Family embarks on an ocean voyage

by Danielle Brubaker

On early Tuesday morning, February 10th, the Rigney family of four waved farewell to the rugged California coastline and sailed off into the morning fog on their planned trip around the world. Throughout the next 5 years, Eric, Leslie, and their two sons Trent (11) and Bryce (13) will be visiting a plethora of places, including the South Pacific, Mexico, French Polynesia, and the Galapagos and Easter Islands.

One of the places they plan on

staying for an extended length of time are the Marquesas Islands, where the boys will actually be enrolled in school for a year. The family also hopes to visit Asia and the countries of Thailand, India, and Indonesia.

The planning of this ocean voyage dates back to before Leslie and Eric tied the knot. They began dating in college, but didn't take an ocean voyage together until they sailed years later

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Sam Povar and Alex Benke stand in front of the sculpture at Marina Park that they helped purchase and install. The bronze sculpture, a mermaid with a lute rising out of the ocean, is at the park's west point next to the breakwater.

## Sam Povar, a true Ventura hero

In an article in the April 20, 2011 Ventura Breeze Sheli Ellsworth wrote.

"When Sam and Orianna Povar bought a second home in Ventura in 1981, he had no idea he would dedicate his retirement to making the city a better place. "We lived in Encino and just wanted to escape from LA on the weekends." But the Povars fell in love with Ventura's weather, its diversity, its location

getting married this year) and Audrey. Michael and Paulette will continue with Sam's public-private partnership with some of the projects that he has started, and some of their own thru the memorial fund Michael is setting up with the City of Ventura.

Among those is a plan for a Chumash Outdoor Museum, located on Thompson Blvd. which was underway but stalled due to Sam's illness.

Also it was Sam's intention to erect tile murals on the wall at Povar Plaza depicting Ventura for the next generation to enjoy.

Ventura is lucky as his family will continue to make these projects happen and keep Sam's Ventura legacy going.

### **Ventura family embarks on an ocean voyage**

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to the Hawaiian Islands and then to San Francisco. Over 3,000 miles and almost a month long, Eric's ultimatum remained the same: "If you don't want to sail around the world, then don't marry me." He wanted to see if Leslie was 'wife-material' - turns out she was.

Leslie said that all major decisions throughout their married life were made with this ocean voyage in the back of their minds. "It was all about saving our money. We bought small houses and inexpensive cars."

Leslie has left a 12-year career as an opera singer and Eric has left a job as a post-production executive with Sony Pictures. While they have both quit their jobs, Trent and Bryce have had to drop out of school for the duration

of the voyage. However, Leslie and Eric plan on 'home' schooling them in various subjects while onboard, including science, math, Spanish, French, history, geography, etc.

Bryce and Trent will also be doing a multitude of hands-on activities, such as learning the art of navigation, learning repair, how to use the radio for communication, learning photography and videography skills, and deep sea diving to study biology or geology. However, when asked what they most looked forward to on this voyage, they replied in unison, "Surfing!"

Both Trent and Bryce are avid surfers and hope to meet many surfers throughout their ocean voyage. The boys are also excited about a few other things, including pig hunting, spearfishing, riding on elephants in Thailand, and climbing palm trees to grab some coconuts.

Eric is no stranger to the open seas. In 1974, when he was only 14, he sailed to Hawaii and then at age 16, he sailed to the French Polynesian Islands. On both trips, as well as a few others, Eric was accompanied by his uncle Bill Kodut, who was there Tuesday morning to see the family off.

"It is an amazing thing for Eric to take this opportunity," Kodut said. "How many men have this as part of their prenup?"

Kodut will meet up with the family once they get to Mexico and then sail with them all the way to Tahiti, where he will then fly back to the U.S.

The Rigney's 42-ft, 34,000 lb. boat is certainly equipped for the ocean

journey. Leslie and Eric have read books on medical information, filled up 20 gallons of gasoline and 200 gallons of water, and packed multiple things, including 5 surfboards, folding bikes, and even a rudimentary gurney.

So here's to great places, good people, and wonderful experiences. After 40 years of dreaming and 25 years of planning, the Rigney's have finally said goodbye to good old Ventura. Visit [www.rigneyskandu.com](http://www.rigneyskandu.com) for more information as well as frequent updates from the Rigney family themselves, such as videos and documentation of their many adventures.

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