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Madden at helm, with white cap, in Key West race

SPORTS: Moshayedi, Madden, Bissell and other OC execs see parallels in sailing, business endeavors

By MEDIHA DIMARTINO

More than a dozen sailing teams from local yacht clubs and several prominent Orange County-based business executives are heading to Hawaii this week.

Don't call it a vacation, though.

They're testing their seamanship in one of the world's foremost sailing competitions, the **Transpacific Race**, more commonly known as Transpac.

This marks the 50th edition of the competition, which is held every two years and

► Sailing 49



Moshayedi: skippering Rio 100



1 of 3 new buildings spoken for

WeWork Goes Big In Irvine Spectrum

COWORKING: Full-office lease at new development

By MARK MUELLER

WeWork Companies Inc. has struck a deal to lease all of a just-built office in the Irvine Spectrum, and will operate one of the largest coworking spots in the U.S. at the location.

New York-based WeWork, the country's largest and fastest-growing shared operator of flexible work spaces with short-term leases, recently inked a lease to occupy all of one of the three new mid-rise buildings at Irvine Co.'s

► Spectrum Terrace 14

Stearns Bankruptcy Kicks Off Brawl

FINANCE: PIMCO, Blackstone at odds

By PETER J. BRENNAN

Stearns Holdings LLC, a one-time Santa Ana-based mortgage powerhouse, declared Chapter 11 bankruptcy last week.

That broke open—temporarily, at least—a private battle between two of the nation's preeminent investment firms—**Blackstone Group** and **Pacific Investment Management Co.**

Blackstone (NYSE: BX), the New York-based firm with a \$55 billion market cap, bought nearly 70% of Stearns Lending in 2015 on undisclosed terms; founder **Glenn Stearns** retained the rest.

Newport Beach-based PIMCO, which has \$1.8

► Stearns 50



Santa Ana operations: 583 employees in 2017, 48 as of last month

Christ Cathedral Wraps Up Renovations

DESIGN: From Crystal Cathedral to Catholic home

By A. LEIGH CORBETT

Orange County's most iconic house of worship has designs on becoming one of the most famous structures in the Roman Catholic Church.

The **Christ Cathedral**, previously known as the Crystal Cathedral, is scheduled to re-open on July 17 after a \$77 million renovation and a long-awaited mass of

► Christ Cathedral 22

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Interior Design & Construction
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Refurbished 35-acre site getting a close-up this month

3 CSUF Survey Director Anil Puri says no recession this year



12 Local EV startup proposes containers on wheels

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TENANT-IMPROVEMENT CONTRACTORS
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A Leap Got Them Second Looks

Designing Couple on Restaurants, \$23M Westin Long Beach Redraw

By KATIE MURAR

Conventional wisdom says “look before you leap.”

Call them unconventional.

Christine and Jerry Van Rooy met at California State University-Long Beach, tied the knot in 2006, and launched Santa Ana-based Vanrooy Design LLC two years later.

As colleagues and friends were laid off across real estate-oriented industries, the duo then decided on risk fueled by new opportunity: they quit their jobs and hung out a shingle.

Jerry had been working in construction; Christine was with an OC design firm counting clients among “restaurant chains, like California Pizza Kitchen and Yard House,” she said.

The goal: creative projects less-hindered by big-name brand restraints.

Personality

The couple sought “a more personal relationship” with clients, Christine told the Business Journal. An East Coast restaurant called the Dunes commissioned one of the first efforts by the new venture, a renovation of the 30-year-old, family-owned eatery.

They’ve also worked on Harley in Laguna Beach by former Haven Gastropub co-owner Greg Daniels.

Ongoing work has come from Baja Sharkeez Corp.—co-founded by Ron Newman of Red Onion restaurants fame and his son Greg—based in Hermosa



CSULB alumni Christine and Jerry Van Rooy in one of their restaurant designs

Beach and with five coastal locations including in Huntington and Newport Beach.

The Van Rooy's added hotel assignments in 2013.

Jerry and Christine, now in their 40s, have five employees, up to a dozen projects at a time, a firm with sales in the millions and 20% year-over-year growth, and a 4-

year-old daughter.

Restaurants and hotels may seem odd sectors to enter to avoid big-name brands; service providers are as chained-up as any



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Rendering: Westin Long Beach lobby 'energetic and calming'

industry. Hotels are infamous for PIPs—property improvement plans—required of owners and both business areas seek consistent looks and feels for their offerings.

Serendipity

But Christine and Jerry debuted their design house just as “boutique” became a hotel buzzword and an indie vibe showed its profitability legs, even as foodies from fast casual to fusion hijacked significant portions of restaurants.

The 1980s and '90s experience economy—designing spaces and running enterprises geared to lifestyles over mere commodity exchange—morphed into a full-fledged “innovation and social design” approach. This now connects to design psychology principles that seek to consider spaces based on how they’ll be used by people, employees or visitors. Vanrooy Design projects also highlight natural elements—lighting and layout, for instance—so restaurant patrons or hotel guests feel “like they want to stay forever.”

More happy happenstance came in the form of phone calls.

Greg Newman’s mentioning of the couple to a frat brother added to the restaurant side, nabbing Vanrooy Design work for several locations of sandwich eatery **Mendocino Farms**.

The hotel portion picked up when the couple, traveling in Geneva at the time, got a call from the **Marriott** family—yes, that one—to create a new restaurant at one of several dozen properties owned by family members through a trust. A successful effort there got them design work on the renovation of the entire hotel.

“That was one of the luckiest breaks we’ve had,” Christine said.

Then came another: a Marriott family staffer recommended the firm to a big buyer of hotels in several states.

Hospitality

The firm is now set to complete for them one of its largest projects so far as part of the \$23 million redo of **Westin Long Beach**.

The 460-room Westin, on Ocean Boulevard, across from the **Long Beach Convention Center** and near U.S. government offices, was bought by Boston investors

Rockpoint Group LLC and New York hotel operator **Highgate Hotels LP** in September 2017 for \$85 million.

A few months earlier, Highgate partnered with **Morgan Stanley** to pay \$57 million for the 109-room **Pacific Edge** hotel in Laguna Beach; a year later it acquired the 826-room **Westin Las Vegas** with **Cerberus Capital** for about \$196 million. Trade and media reports peg Highgate’s hotel buying at more than \$1 billion over the last decade—including a half-dozen prominent New York properties and totaling about 30,000 hotel rooms.

The Long Beach work includes refurbished guest rooms, custom art installations, a 110-seat restaurant, **Navy Proof Food & Spirits**; and a new lobby with white marble and oak finishes, neutral colors and brass lighting elements for “a refined interior that feels both energetic and calming,” Jerry said.

Elements continue to include industry moves toward blending indoor and outdoor spaces and using brighter colors and natural lighting, such as the addition of a sun-filled atrium at the Westin.

And the personalized serendipity continues: Jerry and Christine are working on the renovation at Westin Las Vegas. ■



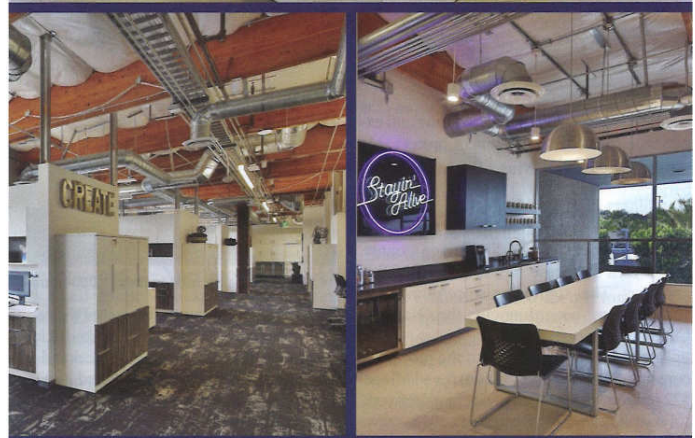
Van Rooy in Europe



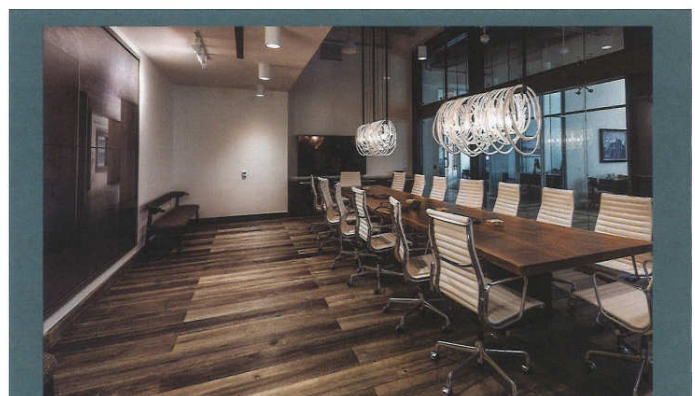
Harley days: lighting Laguna Beach



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