

VENTURA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

11/6/23

MY NAME IS BARBARA MEISTER AND I HAVE LIVED IN BEAUTIFUL VENTURA FOR OVER 55 YEARS. MY LATE HUSBAND, LARRY, AND I HAD BEEN IN BUSINESS FOR 46 YEARS AND I TRULY BELIEVE IN SUPPORTING LOCAL BUSINESSES AND LOCAL NON-PROFITS. I HAVE ALWAYS HAD STRONG FEELINGS ABOUT GIVING BACK TO OUR COMMUNITY. I PREFER TO GO TO FAMILY OWNED RESTAURANTS AND I HAVE ALWAYS SUPPORTED LOCAL GROUPS INCLUDING CASA PACIFICA, THE VENTURA BOYS AND GIRLS CLUB, THE VENTURA EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP AND THE CULTURAL ARTS ORGANIZATIONS. WE HAVE COME A LONG WAY SINCE OUR LOCAL THEATRE GROUP, THE PLAZA PLAYERS, WAS HOUSED BEHIND A BOWLING ALLEY.

FOR 25 YEARS, VENTURA HAS BEEN PRIVILEGED TO HAVE RUBICON THEATRE COMPANY, A PROFESSIONAL GROUP (AND THERE IS A DIFFERENCE!). I HAVE BEEN A RUBICON SUPPORTER SINCE ITS INCEPTION. AS A TEACHER OF GIFTED STUDENTS IN VENTURA UNIFIED FOR MANY YEARS, I REALIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF THEATRE IN THE LIVES OF OUR CHILDREN. I WAS CHAIR OF THE RUBICON EDUCATION OUTREACH COMMITTEE FOR MANY YEARS AND WE HAVE INTRODUCED THEATRE TO THOUSANDS OF STUDENTS OVER THE YEARS FROM OXNARD, SANTA PAULA, OJAI AND VENTURA AS WELL AS OTHER CITIES!! WHAT AN ACCOMPLISHMENT!! MOST OF THESE ATTENDEES HAD NEVER EXPERIENCED LIVE THEATRE. WE HAVE OPENED UP A WHOLE NEW WORLD FOR THEM!! BUT WE CANNOT DO THIS ALONE. AS A NON-PROFIT, WE ARE SEARCHING FOR DOLLARS FROM THE SAME PEOPLE WHO GIVE OF THEMSELVES AND THEIR RESOURCES TO SUPPORT A MYRIAD OF WORTHWHILE ORGANIZATIONS. I TRULY BELIEVE THAT RUBICON HAS EARNED THE RESPECT OF OUR CITIZENS AND THEY APPRECIATE WHAT THE RUBICON HAS DONE FOR OUR COMMUNITY. WE HAVE HELPED TO MAKE VENTURA A “DESTINATION!” PEOPLE ARE COMING FROM SURROUNDING AREAS AND THEY ARE RETURNING. THE RUBICON IS A YEAR-ROUND HAPPENING!! WE HAVE MADE A POSITIVE ECONOMIC IMPACT.

NOW, AFTER THE PANDEMIC, WE AS CITIZENS NEED YOUR HELP AND SUPPORT OF THE ARTS. RUBICON AND THE ARTS ARE AN EXCELLENT INVESTMENT AND ARE AN ESSENTIAL PART OF OUR COMMUNITY LIFE!! THANK YOU FOR BEING THE FIRST BOARD OF SUPERVISORS TO TAKE THE IMPORTANT STEP OF PROVIDING FUNDING. I HOPE THAT YOU WILL PROVIDE SPECIAL AND EXTRAORDINARY SUPPORT TO HELP THE ARTS RECOVER AFTER THE PANDEMIC AND THAT YOU WILL ALSO CREATE AN ANNUAL GRANT PROGRAM. THANK YOU.

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