

Globe trotters say hosting scholars is second to none

By Laura Eversz

Clancy and Jerry Zerg had a full house recently when they hosted eight Fulbright scholars from around the world.

The event was sponsored by the Los Angeles International Visitors Council (LAIVC), whose Citizen Diplomat members invite potential international leaders—chosen by U.S. embassies—into their homes or offices. The organization's mission is to increase respect, mutual understanding and cooperation between the L.A. region and the rest of the world.

Jerry Zerg figures he and Clancy have been hosts two to three times a year over the past 30 years.

"It's a way for them to get to know our country better," he said.

Guests at the dinner in February at the couple's Highland Ave. home included Fulbright scholars—ages 25 to 35—from Purdue, Syracuse, Harvard, Penn State, Drexel, American and Memphis universities. The students hail from Afghanistan, Brazil, Chile, India, Korea, Lithuania, Poland and Russia.

"They asked us pretty provocative questions, including how we feel about the President and current administration," said Jerry. "The gal from Chile asked about illegal immigration."

He and his wife look forward to the meetings. They are big travelers, having visited more than 75 countries, "but the knowledge we've acquired from meeting people through the visitor's organization is second to none. There is no apathy... they are all socially-minded people who sometimes know more about what's going on in our country than people who live here," said Jerry.

"It's so enriching. I would highly recommend to others



THE ZERGS have hosted potential international leaders from around the world for the past 30 years.

to get involved in the organization," he added.

For more information, go to www.ivcla.org.

Five with 'Good Hearts' are praised for their public service

Five community members were honored for extraordinary public service and arts consciousness at the eighth annual Good Hearts Award Ceremony on Valentine's Day at The Counter restaurant.

The event, called Romancing the Miracle Mile, was sponsored by the Miracle Mile Civic Coalition, and co-hosted by The ARTery, J.H. Snyder Company and The Counter.

Melody Kanschat, president of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, received the Lifetime Achievement award for her leadership and vision in the fine arts.

Brad Burlingame, president of West Hollywood Marketing & Visitors Bureau, was honored for his work with United We Plant trees for 9/11.

Dan James, co-chairman of Prime Group/Park La Brea, was praised for enhancing the Miracle Mile's historic neon skyline and support of the Miracle Mile Safety Summits. Nikki Ezhari, deputy district

director for Councilmember Tom LaBonge, was recognized for her community public service in the successful beautification and enhancement of Miracle Mile's Wilshire median and historic neon signs.

Randy Murphy, director of facilities for the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, was honored for his chairmanship of the coalition's Wilshire Median Advisory.

The awards ceremony also recognized local grass roots partnerships between the fire department and community, such as the model Adopt A Fire Station program at Fire Station 61, Battalion 18 and mentoring adoptions at fire stations 52, 58, 76, 77 and 40.

Healthy babies are the focus of 2011 March of Dimes campaign

Hundreds of agents, district managers and employees with Farmers Insurance Group of Companies gathered to kick off the 2011 March of Dimes fundraising campaign on Feb. 23.

"This marks our 23rd year as a March of Dimes supporter," said Jane Massey, March of Dimes COO.

March of Dimes is a non-profit organization with a mission to improve the health of babies by preventing birth defects, premature birth and infant mortality.

"It might be difficult to top our achievements of 2010, where we raised \$2.65 million in one day and \$4.7 million overall," Massey added. "But...I know I can count on our thousands of Farmers family members across the country as we once again raise money to help all babies be born healthy."

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