

ORANGE COUNTY BUSINESS JOURNAL

JUNE 27, 2011

Bren Hosts Guests Richer Than Him; Fairgrounds Fissure

Family members of Saudi businessman **Prince Alwaleed bin Talal**, *Forbes'* 26th-richest person in the world, were staying at **Pelican Hill** last week, the Insider hears—although the “Arabian **Warren Buffett**” himself wasn’t among the guests. With a listed worth of \$19.6 billion, Alwaleed tops Pelican’s owner, **Irvine Company** chief **Donald Bren**, by \$7.6 billion ... UCI’s two-year-old law school has received a much-anticipated seal of approval—“provisional accreditation” from the **American Bar Association**. “We worked hard to make sure the law school was accredited at the earliest opportunity,” Chancellor **Michael Drake** says. The school will be eligible for full accreditation in three years ... The state-appointed **OC Fair Board** and its longtime swap meet operators **Bob and Jeff Teller** (**Tel Phil Enterprises**) have been on the same side of the so-far-successful effort to keep the **OC Fair & Event Center** in Costa Mesa out of private hands. But things are coming to a head between these shaky allies. The weekend swap meets are as much a fairgrounds fixture as the fair itself. But business has been declining for several years, and along with it the volume-based rent collected by the



OC Insider
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board, from the \$5 million level down to a guaranteed-minimum of \$2 million. With the board’s take ris-

ing from the fair, concerts and new events such as the **Barrett-Jackson Collector Car Auction** (back this past weekend), the swap meet’s contribution to total board revenue has plummeted from about half to less than a tenth. Fair Board President **David Ellis** says the swap meet is a victim of **eBay** and the Internet: “The public figured out they didn’t have to go to a parking lot to buy their sweat socks.” The board needs to boost revenue if it is going to make good on a profit-sharing deal with the cash-strapped state that it has touted as an alternative to the state selling the property. And that, Ellis says, means the board may have to consider other uses for the swap-meet site. Jeff Teller disagrees: “Between the uncertain future of the fairgrounds, the ongoing recession and the recent spate of bad weather, we’ve faced a perfect storm of challenges. However, it should be noted that when we *are* open, our daily numbers are actually up!” What’s needed, he says, is “better fair board leadership, an improved economy and favorable weather conditions” ... Aptly named: UCI runner **Charles Jock**. He took second in the 800-meter final at the NCAA championships in Des Moines, Iowa, just 0.04 seconds behind the winner ... *Mr. Big*: **Cal State Fullerton’s Mike Trueblood**, a mentor to kids as well as family businesses, is this year’s national Big Brother of the Year ... New **OCBJ** arrival: **Isabella**, to **Mark and Angelina Mueller** ... Vintage car buffs, take note: Gen. **William Lyon** displays 10 **Dusenbergs** at his **Lyon Air Museum** by **John Wayne Airport**, July 9 to 24.

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