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DIANE BELL

It's out with the old for Longs soda fountain

By [Diane Bell](#), Union-Tribune Columnist

2:00 a.m. June 25, 2009

John and Sandee Wilhoit are crying the soda fountain blues.

During construction of Horton Plaza mall in 1985, there was plenty of hoopla about a soda fountain being installed in the center's Longs Drugs. For nearly a quarter of a century, the soda fountain has served as a place for locals to congregate and enjoy a sundae or an ice cream cone.

Now that CVS/pharmacy has taken over Longs Drugs, the soda fountain's days are numbered. It is headed to soda fountain heaven next month when the store is remodeled.

CVS/pharmacy spokesman Mike DeAngelis said it is being removed "to accommodate the full CVS product mix." DeAngelis said the company recognizes the attachment some customers have to the soda fountain, so a special event is planned before its removal.

Westfield Horton Plaza officials don't have any say in the matter.

"Regardless of what our personal opinions are at Westfield, we can't force someone to do something inside their store," said marketing director Rebecca Handelsman.

"What a shame," said Wilhoit, who lives in downtown San Diego. "Maybe there can be enough local resistance to change this decision."

That's not very likely, though. DeAngelis said not one store in the national CVS chain operates a soda fountain.

A hot romance

A wedding proposal wasn't on the San Diego County Fair program, but onlookers got a special treat when they watched the Burn Institute's Fire Expo at the Chevy Del Mar Arena on Saturday.

Cal Fire firefighter Fred D'Acquisto III of Rancho Peñasquitos rappelled five stories in full firefighting gear to propose to his girlfriend, Dawn Marquardt.

Several months ago, D'Acquisto, 25, a longtime volunteer at the Burn Institute, where his mother directs volunteer services, got permission to pop the question during the expo demonstration. Several folks were in on the plan — even the bride-to-be's parents and event emcee Doug Curlee, a former KUSI television reporter.

D'Acquisto rappelled with the ring box held in a leg pocket by Velcro, turned to Marquardt upon landing, got down on one knee and formally asked for her hand in marriage as nearly 200 onlookers cheered. Putting the ring on her finger was the real challenge — he still wore his firefighting gloves.

Mark your calendars

Singer Jewel is giving a private concert July 20 to benefit Promises2Kids, formerly the Child Abuse Prevention Foundation. Joan Waitt, the former wife of Gateway founder Ted Waitt, will host the event in the garden of her La Jolla estate. Tickets start at \$250. Go to Promises2Kids.org for details.

The cause is a natural for Jewel. She once lived in her van in San Diego when she was struggling as a young artist. Among those sure to attend is former San Diego Mayor Susan Golding, now CEO of Promises2Kids.

Parting is sweet . . .

When Nancy and Richard Andison wed here 12 years ago, their elaborate festivities stretched over four days and included an airplane flying over San Diego's coastline towing a banner, "Richard and Nancy Forever."

Six years later, the marriage faltered and the divorce, after six years of wrangling, was finalized recently. So the former bride, who now lives in Arizona and has a second home in San Diego, celebrated with an elaborate divorce party in Phoenix attended by lady friends from around the country, including San Diegans Betty Blair, Jayme Denton, Chris Jeffrey and Cheryl Mitchell.

This time, the onetime bride had a toy plane towing a divorce sign and a rewritten party theme: "Richard and Nancy for never." The popular drink: "Marriage on the Rocks" martinis.

Union-Tribune

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