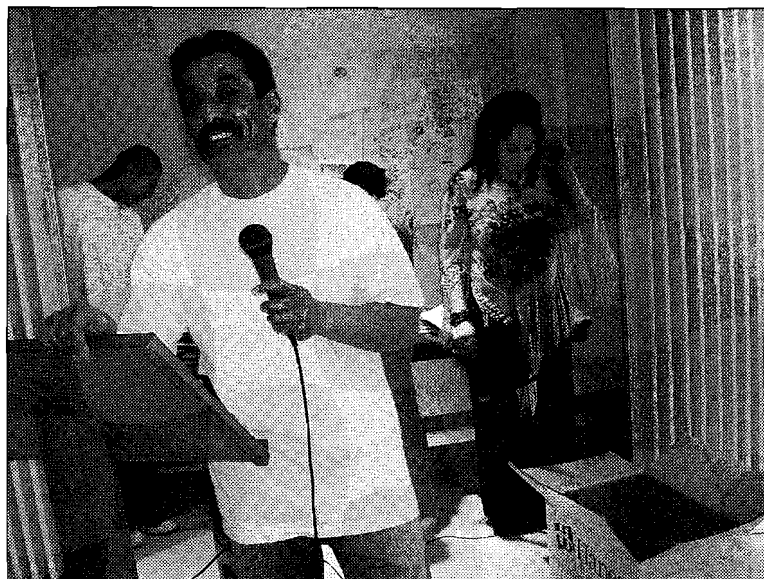


SOCIETY PAGE



**FROM OAKWOOD WITH LOVE, Rick Meija at the mural unveiling.**

Oakwood Rec Center on April 1. Part of Venice Community Housing's Community Safety Initiative, the project brought together Venetians under the guidance of local artist Juan Carlos Munez Hernandez who was assisted by artist Alex Kizo. Mauricio Gutierrez and Chris Deloney also stepped up to help.

The unveiling was awash in good vibes, a jazz ensemble, a community meal and more than a thousand combined-years of Venice residency. We ran into Oakwood Seniors Mavis Burnett and 91-year-old Navi Bailey; Carolyn Rios (who has lived across from Oakwood Rec for 28 years) sitting with Lorraine Harden, a Recreation Assistant at the park who was born and raised in the community; Omar Calderon and George Mota (who worked on the mural); VCHC's Steve Clare,

Beth Caldwell, Angela Harris and Kristen Laskaris; Addie Cooley (a Venice Resident for 43 years); Jutuan Williams (a Venetian for 65 years); Venice 2000's Stan Mohammed; community activist Tommy Walker, Bill Attaway, with even a bigger smile than he had at his

**Meija Says 'This is my life!'**

Meantime a standing-room-only crowd greeted the "Unity in the Community" mural unveiling at



**AMELA HARRIS and her dad Billie Harris.**

own opening the month before; and saxophonist Billie Harris who Attaway dubbed "a legend in Venice" (Harris regularly played the classic Venice roost, The Comeback Inn.) Community activist Rick Meija who can best be described as the lay minister of Venice summed up the spirit best when told the crowd, "Just waking up in this beautiful com-



**SERVING THE COMMUNITY at Venice Community Housing's Mural Unveiling: from (l) to (r) Guillermo De Leon, Rudy**