IT’S ALL IN THE SOUP!

THE MILESTONE Someone Cares Soup Kitchen celebrated its 25th anniversary with 125 guests at an island-themed Dreams Come True fundraiser at its Costa Mesa facility.

THE HISTORY The late Merle Hatleberg launched Someone Cares Soup Kitchen when she was 63, and was its guiding light until her passing five years ago. Her granddaughter, Shannon Santos, has since led the nonprofit as its executive director.

THE SURPRISE Costa Mesa Councilwoman Wendy Leece presented a proclamation to Merle’s daughter and SCSK’s Board President Teri Hatleberg.

THE FUN Former Costa Mesa mayor Peter Buffa served as MC, showering everyone with his famous wit.

THE FOOD SCSK chef Lorrie Sanchez organized the dinner, with appetizers courtesy of an array of Orange County restaurants. Thanks to SCSK’s volunteer chef, Jeff Peterson, for dinner, and to Dan Hamilton of Newport Bay Bakers for dessert.

THE RESULT An estimated net proceeds of $65,000 to help serve 350 daily meals to the unemployed, working poor, homeless, senior citizens, mentally and physically challenged, and children.

The Dance Continues

THE EVENT The Wooden Floor, formerly known as Saint Joseph Ballet, held its 28th Annual Concert, True, at the Irvine Barclay Theatre, showcasing 144 of its 375 under-served youth in a collaboration with three of the nation’s top contemporary dance choreographers.

THE CAUSE Low-income youth are empowered to build self-esteem, self-discipline and a sense of accomplishment through dance, academic and family programs.

OPENING NIGHT The patron party drew 200 supporters to an exclusive backstage reception, where Executive and Artistic Director Melanie Rios Glaser shared her dream of making the arts-based program model accessible to more kids. She paid tribute to Mrs. Richard Steele, who, she said, “has been a faithful patron and underwriter for many years.”

THE STUDENTS Twelve-year-old Emilio Rodriguez and 14-year-old Natasha Salgado spoke about their life-changing experiences at The Wooden Floor and charmed everyone with their wit and candor.

THE TALLY More than $266,000 was raised through underwriting and ticket monies from four performances attended by 2,500 concertgoers.

Women Rule

THE OCCASION Orange County Business Journal’s 17th Annual Women in Business Awards program and luncheon was held at the Hyatt Regency Irvine for 750 guests.

THE WINNERS Carol Taylor, president of Vanguard University, the first woman president in the university’s 90-year history; Julie Hudash, founder and CEO of Team Kids in Irvine; Scharril Tanley Jackson, CFO and administrative officer of Squar Milner CPAs, one of the country’s 100 largest accounting firms; Belinda Bain, president of California Hazardous Services, a Santa Ana company she started out of her garage 23 years ago; and Katherine Le, president of Stearns Companies in Santa Ana, the second largest privately owned mortgage company in California and fourth in the country.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER Orange County native and highly-sought-after speaker Terri Sjodin, who is principal and founder of Sjodin Communications in Newport Beach, had this advice to offer in communicating your message in business today: “One-on-one,” she said, “you have 5.3 minutes to make an impression, and a woman typically takes 17 seconds to size you up.” She recommended getting your presentation on video in order to make appropriate adjustments based on your taste, your creativity and your delivery.

THE GIFT Thanks to U.S. Bank, an advance copy of Sjodin’s book, Small Message, Big Impact, was presented to each guest.