



## REFLECTIONS FROM KOCT'S TOM REESER



This is my last Oceanside Tide article. After a 31 year career I'm retiring as the Executive Director of KOCT-North County's Channel. It's been a great career that has mirrored the development of public access television & media.

I was hired in March 1987 by the founder of KOCT, Bob Bowditch. Bob was a retired engineer and a WWII veteran who helped in the development of radar and flew B52's during the war.

In those days we set up tripods in the old city hall to cover city council meetings. We would edit the program, add graphics and air the programs manually from our small Apple street studio.

One of my most memorable series of events were in 1988 during the City's long centennial celebration. The City entered a float in the Rose Parade and KOCT's Matthew Beck covered the entire event from the decorating of the float to its national parade premiere. We covered dual fireworks shows, theatrical productions and the 4<sup>th</sup> of July parade.



*At Left: Tom Reeser sneaks away from his desk to operate a parade camera.*

KOCT covered the Proud to Be American Day Parade after the initial Afghanistan/Iraq war in which thousands of enlisted men and women and armament filled coast highway to cheering crowds.

KOCT and the City of Oceanside successfully negotiated the best local franchise in San Diego County that resulted in KOCT replacing aging equipment with new state-of-the-art equipment and a new television studio. That 15-year franchise has since expired, and KOCT and the City of

Oceanside are now under a state franchise. Hundreds of public access stations closed with the loss of local franchises.

It's appropriate that I retire during this election season, because I am most proud of the hundreds of election programs KOCT has produced since our inception in 1981—In fact it's because of our election programming that KOCT became a 501 3 c non-profit corporation. Mayor Larry Bagley encouraged Bob to turn KOCT into a non-profit corporation which he

did in 1984. Since then KOCT has provided more, consistent election coverage of north county races than any television station—particularly important now that North County no longer has a daily local newspaper.

**At left:** *Voice of Oceanside: L-R Jim Wood, Tim Aldrich, Mayoral candidate & Rocky Chavez*



KOCT has won numerous national, state and local video awards over the past 30+ years and many young people who began at KOCT have gone on to successful careers in the film and video industry. KOCT's Living Legacy with Tom Morrow interviewed innumerable residents who were formative in the history of the City of Oceanside. Our Journalist Roundtable, Voice of Oceanside, Senior Scene and Oceanside Spectrum programs have been the beneficiaries of many great hosts like J. Stryker Meyer, Tim Aldrich, John Bonosoro, Bill Fritche, Dick Johnson, Kent Davy, Alison St John, Brian Graham, Brian Cook and Elaine Swann. KOCT's documentaries on the Pier, Civic Center, Mission San Luis Rey and the Adobes and Ranchos of North County will educate and entertain viewers for many years to come.



**At left:** *The 1988 Council wished Tom Reeser a happy birthday and posed with the KOCT staff.*

I'm glad I have a great Board of Directors who will continue to lead KOCT into the future and a wonderful and talented staff who I will miss for their great sense of humor, their talent and dedication. I'm blessed to have had a career doing what I love and proud that I helped create one of the most successful community tv stations in San

Diego: KOCT-North County's Channel!



**At left:** *1987, Bob Bowditch, Darrin McLaulin, Bill Sinatra, Matthew Beck, Joe Sage, Darrin and Tom Reeser*