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A walkin' we will go, for Venice, he knows

BY MELISSA MASATANI

It's been a long road to this point, but Jeffrey Solomon doesn't take any of it for granted.

"I really believe that God's given me more than anybody should rightfully have," Solomon says. "I live in a condo right at the beach, I have a wife that anybody would kill for, I have the greatest life that anybody could possibly have, and now I get to give back as much as I get."

Solomon is the driving force behind the new Venice Beach Walking Tours, using the stories he has amassed after living in Venice for more than 40 years. Beginning Friday, July 4th, Solomon will lead tours of Ocean Front Walk with stops at various street performances, murals, and "the oldest house of ill repute." Each site will be colored with an insider's perspective on this historic and eclectic beach community.

"I was walking on Ocean Front Walk and I came up with the idea that nobody is showing people my beloved Venice," he says. "I was part of the original Venice Council in the '70s, belong to Venice Community Trust, and I'm involved in anything nonprofit. ?

"My wife had just come back from Europe, where she had taken a walking tour of Rome [and] she told me, 'Why don't you do this and offer a great service, and donate a portion of this to all these organizations that you support?'"

With his "spring collection" of shoes — the heels are spring-loaded — Solomon will add the walking tours to his long list of ways he has helped others and been active in the Venice community. Each tour will begin at 11 a.m. and end at Danny's Venice Beach Bistro with lunch, but "every tour will be different."

"I'm going to take care of [tour-goers], and will tailor it to the magic of the people I meet," he says. "I love to help, with networking, and I love helping other people be good neighbors, because that's what we need, is breaking down the walls and barriers between us."

And it is this helpful spirit that make the tours so special, it is Solomon's selfless nature that is sure to draw the crowds to experience the Venice Solomon holds dear.

"By the time I'm 130 I don't think I'll be doing this anymore, but I want to bring along a young person to train them, to perpetuate it," he says. "I anticipate [the tours] will be going on forever, it just won't be me, but I'll have started it."

The 1.5-mile tour is from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Friday through Sunday on Ocean Front Walk.

Information, (310) 396-1585,

[www.venicebeachwalkingtours.com/.](http://www.venicebeachwalkingtours.com/)

