

MUSIC LEGEND

Randall Kane's beat goes on

Bio-K

Catalyst Club founder dies at 85

7.28.09

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SANTA CRUZ — Randall Philip Kane, the founder of The Catalyst nightclub in downtown Santa Cruz, died Monday morning at his home in Corralitos. He was 85.

Kane died of congestive heart failure, his brother Russel Kane said. A memorial date is pending.

Russell Kane said his brother should be remembered in the hue of nightclub lights and quality music. Kane lived passionately as an artist and intellectual, father and husband, employer and social engineer, his brother said.

"If he wanted to be an artist, he could have done it, but he chose to be a business man instead," Russell Kane said. "But he never lost the passion for it."

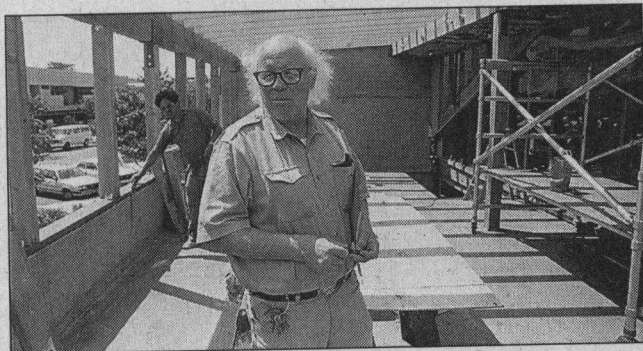
Randall Philip Kane was born in Minnesota on Oct. 9, 1923. His family moved to Ohio when he was about 13, but before they left, Randall Kane made his mark.

At age 12, he used his tongue to paint a mural inside the family's home featuring monkeys paddling down a river in a canoe, his brother said.

"My mother wouldn't let anyone touch it," his brother said. "It was wild."

Kane watched with horror five years later when Pearl Harbor was bombed, and at 17 signed up for the Army the first thing the next day. He served for five years as a military police officer in the Pacific Theater, rising to the rank of corporal, which he jokingly bragged about in later years.

After Kane graduated from Ohio State University, he went on to Columbia University in New York, where he earned a master's



DAN COYRO/SENTINEL FILE

Randall Kane oversees the remodeling of his Catalyst nightclub in June of 1988.

RANDALL PHILIP KANE

BORN: Oct. 9, 1923.
DIED: July 27, 2009.
HOME: Corralitos.
OCCUPATION: Retired.
EDUCATION: Bachelor's degree, Ohio State University; master's in Fine Arts, Columbia University.
SURVIVORS: Children Randall, Jr., Jonathon, Benjamin, Brian, April and Rebecca.
SERVICES: Pending by Mehl's Colonial Chapel in Watsonville.

degree in fine arts.

He moved to California in 1954, a year after marrying his wife, the late Caryl James Underwood. They had six children, all of whom survive.

Kane's three-year stint as a dean for the San Francisco Institute of Art didn't satiate his need for adventure and art. Instead, he turned his attention to a coffee shop on the ground floor of the old St. George Hotel on Front Street in Santa Cruz.

"He gave birth to The Catalyst," said Gino Krum, who worked 10 years as a bartender for Kane. "It was the best nightclub around

because he wanted it to be."

He later relocated the club to the former site of a bowling alley on Pacific Avenue.

Kane owned The Catalyst for 34 years, making it one of the most popular nightclubs between Los Angeles and San Francisco. Once he put in the best sound system he could afford, big name bands and artists like Red Hot Chili Peppers and Neil Young came to Kane to book a show.

"Randall Kane created what is arguably the most impressive club venue on the planet," said Tom Miller, concert programmer for Don Quixote's International Music Hall in Felton. "I'd be surprised if any other club could create a list of bands equal to what The Catalyst has booked over the years."

The patrons remember Kane for the venue, but his employees remember him as an eccentric man who loved to ride his bike in rainbow suspenders, solve the New York Times crossword puzzle, hang out at The Catalyst bar on Friday night happy hour and see people succeed.

"He wasn't always politically correct," Krum said. "But The Catalyst changed everyone in this town, and so did he."

Mehl's Colonial Chapel in Watsonville is handling arrangements.