

The Dream Foundation: *Celebration of Dreams*

By Robert F. Adams / Special to CASA



Diana MacFarlane and Donna Karan

A GLITTERING EVENT WAS HELD AT THE BACARA RESORT AND SPA in Santa Barbara on Friday, November 18th, when famed actress Barbra Streisand bestowed the Dream Foundation's Founder's Award upon quintessential fashion designer Donna Karan.

At this affair, in addition to Ms. Streisand, celebrity guests who honored Ms. Karan included the legendary Blues Brother Dan Aykroyd, with his wife, actress Donna Dixon, and the Dream Foundation Ambassador at-large Priscilla Presley, who shared "Donna truly takes care of people and the Dream Foundation provides dreams that we all need."

Also strolling the red carpet were the hilarious actor Brad Garrett (*Everybody Loves Raymond*) with his girlfriend Isabella Quella; cast members from *Glee*, Naya Rivera and Amber Riley; *American Idol* singer Pia Toscano; the sixteen-year-old music sensation, Jackson Guthy; as well as the honoree Donna Karan. All were greeted enthusiastically by 600 guests.

Held amidst the five-star luxurious surroundings, this was a lavish fundraising celebration for the work that the Dream Foundation provides. The Foundation fulfills dream requests for adults whose life expectancy is limited, offering hope, one special dream at a time. As of this date, over 13,000 dreams have been granted. While final numbers aren't in, it appears as though Dream Foundation netted well over \$500,000 for the evening.

After welcoming remarks from the event committee, who included Sheryl Lowe and Diana MacFarlane among others, Dream Foundation Director Thomas Rollerson thanked everyone in attendance, saying "perfection lives in the hearts of those that give" also noting that the gala proceeds "will go directly to the families in need." He then dedicated the event to the late Stephen John Redding and Chris Edgecomb, both major supporters of the organization. Lead sponsor Lizanne Falsetto, CEO of thinkThin, gave a toast; and the president of Saks Fifth Avenue, Ron Frasch, introduced the dramatic fashion show, presenting a preview of the Donna Karan Spring 2012 Collection. The clinging fabrics and bold earth tone patterns displayed by the energetic pony-tailed models to a musical backdrop of sultry Haitian drums were amazing to witness and a true highlight of the event. Kathryn McCormick, Robert Roldan, Jeff Thacker, and Anya Garnis, from television's *So You Think You Can Dance* entertained guests with incredible tango routines, and party-goers were treated to singer Pia Toscano's signature rendition of the Pretender's song, *I'll Stand by You*, as well as a few of Jackson Guthy's original tunes.

A wisecracking live auction then ensued, held on the runway platform, with the vocally ambidextrous Dan Aykroyd as the chief auctioneer, with able assistance from 6'8" tall Brad Garrett and comedian Sean Kelly, a dynamic trio.

On the podium Barbra Streisand gave tribute to her long-standing friend, stating "Donna doesn't just dress people, she addresses them, mind, body, and spirit. She is a creative visionary. Passionate. Forceful. Nurturing. Extremely hands on... and generous to a fault... you can't help falling in love with her!" A standing ovation by the gala audience

was held for Ms. Karan being honored for the Urban Zen Foundation's work and its associated Wellness Initiative, which provides holistic healing programs in New York and in Los Angeles. Onstage Ms. Karan graciously accepted the prestigious award, a winged trophy, citing the Dream Foundation's work and humanitarian-based efforts on behalf of those facing misfortune.

Afterwards, guests were entertained by cast members from the smash hit series *Glee* featuring Naya Rivera and Amber Riley. A finale performance by Grammy-winning singer Macy Gray brought the house down to conclude the fun-filled gala.

Supporters and donors attending included Dream Grant Recipient and theatre-major Sarah Parrish, actor and producer James Brolin, Alan and Tanya Thicke, Jean Paul & Eloise DeJorio of Paul Mitchell and Patron Tequila, director Ivan Reitman, *Glee* Executive Producer Dante Di Loreto, *JAG* actor David James Elliott, *The Bachelor's* Andrew Firestone and Joana Kerns, Lynda Weinman and Bruce Heavin, Michael and Anne Towbes, Lady Lesley Ridley-Tree, Jody and Mark Shields, Steve and Caroline Thompson from Cabana Home, Bui Simon, Ann Luther, Terrence Ryken, and Luci and Rich Janssen.

This elegant event was a smashing success for the Dream Foundation and its programs that offer hope and comfort on a continuing basis.

Live auction items included trips to Italy, Malaysia, Ireland, a five-star African Safari, a private dinner with actor Morgan Freeman, VIP tickets to Donna Karan's Fashion Week show in the Spring, and a visit to a luxurious Malibu boot-camp, amongst other auction items. Co-sponsors of the event included thinkThin, Donna Karan, Bacara Resort & Spa, CKE Restaurants, Revelry Event Designers, as well as the live auction donors: The World - Residences at Sea, Crystal Cruises, The Ranch at Live Oak Malibu, Strictly Vacations, American Airlines, Singita Game Reserves and Beyond Africa.



Donna Karan and Barbra Streisand



Amber Riley, Dante Di Loreto, Glee Producer, and Naya Rivera



Bruce Heavin, Lynda Weinman, and Pia Toscano



Dan Aykroyd, Donna Dixon Aykroyd, and Priscilla Presley



Bui Simon; Thomas Rollerson, Dream Foundation Founder & President; Arlene Montesano; and Sandi Nicholson



Macy Gray



Brad Garrett and Isabella Quella



Sarah Parrish, Dream Foundation Dreamer and her mother Sherry Parrish



Lady Leslie-Ridley Tree and Brian King



Michael Armand Hammer and Theresa LaFond



Erica Brown, Terry Ryken, Gail Pearl, and Bernard St Croix



Kim and Soren Kieler



www.dreamfoundation.org

For more information about the Dream Foundation call 564-2131 or visit www.dreamfoundation.org

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