

Court Appointed Special Advocates

CASA By The Sea

By JEANETTE CASILLAS / CASA

TROPICAL WEATHER, TIKI HUTS, AND THE BEAT OF THE DRUM set the scene for *CASA By The Sea*, a luau “Santa Barbara style” to benefit Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) at the Double Tree Resort Plaza del Sol Rotunda.

“Aloha!” Paula Lopez of KEYT News, said as she welcomed guests. “By being here you are being important in the life of a child.” The mission of CASA is to assure a safe, permanent, nurturing home for every abused and/or neglected child by providing a highly trained volunteer to advocate for them in the court system. According to Randy Glick, CASA President, CASA advocates for 155 children and 160 more are on the waiting list. “Because of CASA’s committed staff, CASA has been able to serve more children in Santa Barbara County this past year,” Glick noted.

For the continued support they have shown CASA, Diana Starr Langley was presented with the Founders Award and Chad and Ginni Dreier with an Award of Appreciation. The Founders Award has been only been awarded twice in the history of CASA. “Diana is one woman that stands out for her passionate dedication, who has tirelessly worked for three years, and is the brains behind *CASA by the Sea*,” Maria Long, CASA Executive Director said as she introduced Langley. Glick then gave special thanks and presented the Award of Appreciation to Chad and Ginni Dreier for allowing CASA to hold a fundraising event at the Dreier Museum that made *CASA by the Sea* possible. “We love helping kids and are honored to be part of it,” the Dreiers said as they accepted their award.

World Champion surfer, best-selling author, and inspirational speaker, Shaun Tomson was CASA’s special guest. Tomson shared that for 45 years his “CASA” (house) has been the ocean. “I’m inspired

by the ocean, I learn from the ocean, and live in the universe of the sea,” Tomson added. He compared his “CASA” to how CASA serves to inspire people to share themselves and take the time to make a change and transform a child’s life. “CASA shows children that there is hope, that they need to be patient and know that a wave will come through for them,” Tomson concluded.



Mary Jane Willis, Morgan Noble, and Jackie Torres

Guests were greeted with brilliantly colored leis as they entered the rotunda. A cocktail reception where guests had a chance to mingle, help themselves at the Sushi bar, as well as peruse the auction item tables followed.

A group of Tahitian dancers from Hula Anyone entertained guests as they danced to the beat of the drums. Auctioneer, John Glines conducted the live auction. The first item up for auction was a personally autographed Shaun Tomson surf board. Other auction items included a Rolling Stones autographed guitar, a Hawaii cruise, a Tahitian pearl necklace, tours of the Dreier Museum and Reagan Ranch, among others.

At the first strum of the guitar by Grammy nominated California band, Papa Doo Run Run, guests were up on their feet ready to dance.

Jeff Barry, Honorary Chair, lent his vocals when he joined the band on stage for a few songs. According to MJ Franco, Director of Community Relations *CASA By The Sea* was a financial success.

For more information call 879-1730 or visit www.sbcasa.org.



Fred Benko, Event Co-Chair; Ginni and Chad Dreier owners of Dreier Museum; Maria W. Long, CASA Executive Director; David Beard, Event Co-Chair; Diana Starr Langley, Honorary Chair; and Paula Lopez, KEYT News Anchor and CASA By The Sea emcee



Janet Garufis, Motecito Bank & Trust and Nina Terizon



Salud Carbajal, County Supervisor with Janet Wolf, County Supervisor



Back: Tami Jones and Maria W. Long, Front: Erin Rozelle and Kim Davis



Jeff Barry, Honorary Chair



Jewell Dennis, CASA advocate and Allyson Boyington, CASA Staff



Erin Johansson and David Edelman, Cox Communications



Marty Martinez, Terri Medel, and Judge Frank Ochoa



MJ Franco, Director of Community Relations



Patrick Nesbitt, Annette Caleel, Dr. Richard Caleel, and Geoffery Palmer



Ralph MacFarlane and Diane MacFarlane



Rick Ornelas, Denise Herrera, and Betty Herrera Sitting: Tim Taylor, 2008 El Presidente, Perrin Taylor, and Anthony Borgatello



Deanna Diehlsen, Hiroko Benko, and Jim Diehlsen



Stephen Black, Susan Newman, Robbie and Rob Ogle, John Lee, Leslie Von Weisenberger, with Carla and Shaun Tomson



Business First Bank Table (Standing): Doodie Mendoza, Carlos Plascencia, Anthony Borgatello, Joanne Funari, Bill Peso, and Bibi Moezzi Sitting: Michael Mendoza, Kelly Mendoza, Ricardo Castellanos, Scott Wolfe, and Ron Wolfe

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