

SNOW A Go Go GALA

Aids Homeless Children

By **Debby Peterson**
Special to CASA

STORYTELLER CHILDREN'S CENTER annual gala broke its own fundraising record last weekend, raising more than \$250,000 for the homeless and at-risk children who attend its preschool. Greeted by falling snow as they entered Earl Warren Showgrounds, the 450 attendees of the "Snow A Go Go" gala found themselves in a winter wonderland complete with go-go dancers, sequins, mini-skirts, and a bar made of ice.

"The theme was cold but the people were hot!" said co-chair **Valerie Rice**, referring to both the generous donations and the hip 60's attire. **Suzanne Deardorff** and **Tiffany Foster** also co-chaired the event.

Storyteller relies on private donations for more than 60 percent of its funding, making this gala event critical to meeting its yearly operating expenses. "Every year our funding shifts from being a little less government to a little more private, and every year we need a great event to make things work," said **Jon Clark**, president of the Storyteller board.

Storyteller provides quality, tuition-free early childhood education for 100 homeless and at-risk children annually, as well as comprehensive support services for their families. But there are more homeless children in Santa Barbara than there are resources to take care of them, and at any given time 50 to 80 children languish on the waiting list for a spot at Storyteller.

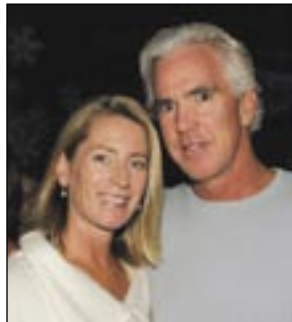
The transformation of Earl Warren — a venue usually reserved for rummage sales and cat shows — into a mecca of white was nothing short of amazing. "We really wanted to change that building into something that people wouldn't expect," said event planner **Kyle Irwin**.

During the cocktail hour, guests sipped "ice-tinis" and champagne while go-go dancers danced on stages around the room. After an all-white dinner of endive salad, roast pork, white beets, and pasta prepared by Duo Catering, KTYD's **Matt McAllister** presided over the live auction, which raised double the amount of last year's auction. DJ **Michael Smith** kept the dance floor packed the entire night, with guests joining the go-go dancers on stage.

Top sponsors included Deckers Outdoor Corporation, Valerie and AJ Rice, and Elizabeth and Kenny Slaughter of Investec.



Storyteller Executive Director **Terri Allison** with the Hutton Foundation's **Pamela Hamlin**



Board Member **Kenny Slaughter** with his wife **Elizabeth**



Committee members **Robyn Bartling**, **Jessica Schaeman**, and **Lizzie Peus**



Committee Member **Jen Markham** with husband **John**



Storyteller Board Members **Jon Clark** and **Jodie Willard**



Nancy and Kevin O'Connor



Event co-chairs **Valerie Rice**, **Suzanne Deardorff**, and **Tiffany Foster**



Board Member **Jo Saxon** and husband **Ken** with **Jessica Schaeman**, and board member **Michael Schaeman**



Co-chair **Val Rice** with event planner **Kyle Irwin**, and **Joanna Kerns**



Jim and Dagny Dehlsen with **Deanna** and **James Dehlsen**



Storyteller board member **Yvette Giller**, with executive director **Terri Allison**, and board members **Michele Cuttler** and **Julia Rodgers**

Photos by Daniel Montoya and John Stocklin for Door 9 Studios

For more information about Storyteller, call 682-9585 or visit www.storytellercenter.org.