



# Zoofari Ball

## Pirates of the CHANNEL ISLANDS

By **JOHN PALMINTERI** / Special to CASA

**T**HERE MUST HAVE BEEN one giant crash along our coast recently. Without much notice a massive, rustic ship from days gone by appeared above East Beach, and we were over run by pirates and their cohorts, doing what they are known to do. But this time, instead of the thieves stealing from the mainlanders, we turned the tables, and came away with a treasure chest of funds for the Santa Barbara Zoo.

The 22nd annual Zoofari Ball had a "Pirates" theme that drew a sold out crowd and exhausted the city's supply of costumes from that era.

At every turn there was a growling man, carrying a sword, wearing a gold buttoned vest, and sporting some unfashionably long hair flanked by a companion wearing a full, layered dress, stylish boots, and jewelry that could have come from a private collection once lost in the Caribbean.

Zoo Director **Rich Block** had some curly, brown locks to go with his burly appearance when he flashed a smile and said, "Person to person, they love the zoo. They are genuinely excited about the facility."

Block says the funds raised will go right to work. In October a major construction

project begins on the east end of the property. That's where there will be a new fox exhibit, and a long awaited exhibit for the rare, California Condor. The work will take a year to complete.

Once it's finished, the zoo will have six Condors in captivity for the public to see up close. The birds will have a view that spans out to the bird refuge and the Montecito hills, one of the most prized vistas in the city.

The Zoofari supporters were able to see their contributions every step of the way at the annual ball. They were greeted by two bird keepers including **Miguel Carbajal** who was holding "Merlin" a black raven that made you think of Edgar Allen Poe immediately.

Tropical drinks were set up at a pirates bar that guests grabbed as they strolled passed the flamingos, elephants, penguins, and gibbons toward the pirates party at the top of the zoo lawn.

Live and silent auction items, kept the crowd busy along with skewers of shrimp and scallops. That was just to get their taste buds flowing, before the giant buffet feast laid out by **Rincon Catering** that nearly burst everyone's outfit for the night.

The decorations, including special pirates coves for dining and piles of loot that appeared to come off of a real tall ship wreck, were professionally supplied. The Zoofari committee and staff then went over the top at

each table with skulls, beads, coins, and chests of simulated valuables that made guests feel like they had just landed at a secret beach.

On the dance floor guests were bumping into many big contributors including Zoofari founder **Ted McToldridge** and his wife **Nancy**, **Ginny** and **Chad Dreier** alongside jewelry craftsman **David Harris** of New York, La Presidente **Kelly Magne** and her husband **Michael**, **David Edleman** of Cox Communications, and **Bill Brace**, who has been at all 22 events.

"I love it here," said Brace who visits zoos nationwide. "None of them hold a candle to ours."

Board member **Barry Semler** said, the event captures a wave of enthusiasm for the zoo right now. He said, "there is an enormous amount of change in progress here." He said it's going to offer something for all ages in Santa Barbara and for guests from around the world. "The zoo needs to be experienced by the young and old."

The event ended as a taste of the Caribbean passed overhead with the remnants of Hurricane Dean in the sky, and a light passing shower falling on a hot summer night.



Kirk Martin and Rande Martin



Don and Linda Fareed



David Asbell and Scott Orlosky



Zoofari Honorary Chairs Alan and Patricia Griffin



Toni Simon



The auctioneer, Vivica Ferrell



Shawn Stackpoole with the bird Saffron



Andy and Christine Muray of Andrew Muray Vineyards, Zoofari Ball wine sponsors



Ralph MacFarlane, Arlene Larsen, Milt Larsen, and Diana MacFarlane



Miguel Cargajal with the raven Merlin



Leslie Von Weisenberger and Dean Flowers



Paul and Leigh Cashman



Teresa Bryant, Mike Bryant, Alyce Faye Cleese, Lady Leslie Ridley-Tree, John Cleese, and Ray Winn

Zoofari Ball photos by **John Palminteri** and **Priscilla@SantaBarbarascene.com**  
For more information call 962-5339 or visit [www.sbzoo.org](http://www.sbzoo.org)