

Thursday, October 1, 2009

Crystal Cove Alliance's Prohibition Party

Discovery Science Center's "Out of This World" Gala and Arts Orange County's Arts Awards Raise Funds for Good Causes; Pacific Symphony Celebrates Carl St. Clair's 20th anniversary with the Orchestra

BY DONNA BUNCE, Register Columnist

The Crystal Cove Alliance took its 410 guests on a trip back in time for its "Prohibition Party and Jazz on the Beach" party Saturday night, September 26th, at the Crystal Cove State Park Historic District in Newport Coast. They transformed the beach into an exclusive speakeasy to celebrate the Cove's unique history and raise funds, later estimated at \$180,000, for their mission of restoration and education.

CCA's President and CEO **Harry Helling** filled me in on the Cove's rum-running history during Prohibition in the '20s and '30s when the first cottages were being built. "The rum runners thought the Cove was the ideal spot to bring liquor to shore because it was dark, close to a harbor and far from the city," Helling said. "The early Cove kids, who scoured the beaches for bottles of alcohol that the rum runners dumped overboard if they thought they were being pursued, would sell them for a couple of bucks."

Students from Chapman University's CAST theater group set the tone for the party dressed in period costumes. Serving as official greeters, they later enticed guests to the dance floor with their spot-on Charleston and jitterbug dancing. The "Heidi Ho" password led guests through the speakeasy door and onto the beach, where white lined dinner tables sparkled on the sand as the waves lapped the shore and the sun was setting and spreading its rosy-hued rays over the cove. Guests, many of them dressed in period clothing, posed for photos in front of a 1926 red liquor truck loaded with liquor barrels and sampled the period cocktails selected especially for the event, including a version of a bathtub gin fizz that I can vouch was good! Dinner, inspired by the cuisine from the era, was created by the executive chefs from the St. Regis Resort, **Frederic Castan**, The Resort at Pelican Hill, **Jean-Pierre Dubray**, and Montage Resort, **Matt Leonard**.

The Brenna Whitaker Jazz Orchestra, which entertained throughout dinner and later for dancing, played music from the '20s and '30s, including popular tunes of the day, *Is You Is, or Is You Ain't My Baby*, *It Had to be You*, *I'll Be Seeing You*, and *Cow Cow Boogie*. The seven-item live auction, with KOCE-TV's **Ed Arnold** at the helm, featured a two-night stay in Crystal Cove Cottage #22, the newly-renovated Park and Marine Research Facility. Interior designer **Carol McMahon** provided luxury furnishings, Helling will lead a tidepool exploration, there is dinner at The Beachcomber, and a massage on the ocean-view deck. The package sold six times for \$3,500 a pop!



Students from Chapman University's CAST theater group set the tone for the Crystal Cove Alliance's "Prohibition Party and Jazz on the Beach" fundraiser at the Crystal Cove State Park Historic District in Newport Coast on Saturday. The 410 guests, many of them in '20s and '30s attire, enjoyed the transformed "speakeasy" beach to celebrate the Cove's unique rum-running history and raise an estimated \$180,000 for the alliance's mission of restoration and education. **BALDEMAR FIERRO PHOTOGRAPHY**

CAA Founder and President Emeritus **Laura Davick**, who now serves on the board as Director of Public Affairs, is happy about the way things are moving forward. "We've secured \$3 million in funding and will soon begin our Phase II restoration effort, which includes restoring the outdoor education commons and making the Beaches Cottage into a museum, among other things," she said. "After that, all that will be remaining will be the north beach area and the restoration of the 17 cottage rentals."

Davick's parents met as teenagers at Crystal Cove and later, when they married, acquired Cottage #2, now known at the Shell Shack, when Laura was one-year-old. "I feel like every day I get to work on Crystal Cove to make it a better place keeps a smile on my face," said the committed Davick.