

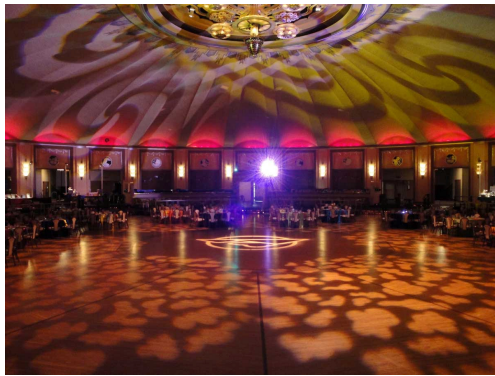


## CATALINA ISLAND CONSERVANCY

**PRESS RELEASE**  
CIC #10

Contact: **Bob Rhein (714) 785-6636**  
[brhein@catalinaconservancy.org](mailto:brhein@catalinaconservancy.org)

### CATALINA ‘ROCKED’ DURING 15<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL CONSERVANCY BALL



*Avalon Casino Ballroom*  
Photo by Jen Poyer

AVALON, California – The Avalon Casino, shrouded in black mesh for restoration, was given a temporary facelift of colorful, intertwined inflatable tubing for the 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Catalina Island Conservancy Ball, held Saturday, April 10.

Three hundred and seventy guests from the Island and the mainland converged onto the Casino’s historic dance floor to enjoy an evening of dining, dancing, and silent and live auctions. True to its theme, “Catalina Rocks,” the tables at the Ball were festooned with Catalina rocks – a tribute to the Island’s rugged interior formed by plate tectonics and volcanic activity.

And, in celebration of the tremendous biodiversity of Catalina’s near-shore waters, guests were treated to a screening of the Conservancy’s latest video, “Blue Boat Home.” The video follows water on its voyage from the skies above Catalina to the land and back to the sea, making the connection between the Island’s watersheds and human interactions that can impact water quality.

Dr. Ann Muscat, Conservancy President and CEO, applauded the 12 Southland yacht clubs that had been busy for the past several months helping the Conservancy prepare for the gala.



*The Caballeros, and Caballeras Conservancy Support Groups turned out to support the Ball with the gentlemen dressed in their best boots, blue jeans, bolo ties, belt buckles and hats for the occasion.*

Photo by Bob Rhein

“Our yacht club partners are an integral part of the Conservancy team,” she said. “We are appreciative for their participation in making the Ball a success.”

The big surprise came halfway through the evening when Randy Gordon, CEO of the Long Beach Chamber of Commerce, was about to start the live auction. Alleged technical difficulties resulted in the lights dimming. Two hardhat-clad maintenance men circulated through the crowd, their “walkie talkies” crackling with chatter. A mysterious guest suddenly leapt from his table to join them. Before long, the three had the crowd enthralled as they belted out selections from Italian opera. At one point they exited their coveralls and formal attire and in fitted black t-shirts led the audience in a rousing sing along to Queen’s, “We are the Champions.” In fact, all three singers were operatic tenors of the British performance group Anonymous Artists who had assumed the role of maintenance men and a mystery diner.

There were many exciting live auction items presented by Gordon in true auctioneer style, including an incredible Alaskan fishing trip; a commissioned plein air painting by Joe Paquet; a one-of-a-kind 12-liter etched and hand painted bottle of Rusack Vineyards 2007 Syrah, decorated with a vintage scene from Catalina Island; a five-night stay in a two-bedroom apartment located in the best part of Paris – the Île St. Louis; eight days and seven nights at the Volcano Honeymoon Chalet on the Big Island of Hawaii; and a ten-day/nine-night expedition for

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two exploring the Galapagos Islands with Lindblad Expeditions aboard the National Geographic ship *Endeavor*.

“We are proud to say that after expenses, every penny raised at the Ball will be spent on the Conservancy’s conservation, education, and recreation programs,” Muscat said. “The 2010 Ball was a special and memorable celebration of one of the world’s great ecological treasures.”

The hit of the evening, as always, was a table-side visit by Tachi, the Conservancy’s Island fox ambassador. Conservancy Wildlife Biologist Calvin Duncan escorted Tachi to more than 20 ball goers who “raised their paddles for Tachi.”

Of course the Caballeros, and Caballeras equestrian groups, turned out to support the Ball with the gentlemen dressed in their best boots, blue jeans, bolo ties, belt buckles and hats for the occasion.

Jackie McDougall, the Conservancy’s Chief Development Officer whose department coordinated the event, also thanked Ball Co-Chairs John Cotton, Jane Trevor Fetter, Blanny Hagenah and Ann Muscat for their efforts. “We are very grateful to the many volunteers who made the Ball such a success for the Island,” McDougall said.

Just before the doors opened for the Ball, a Pre-Ball Sponsor Party was held at the historic Catalina Country Club which was built for William Wrigley’s baseball team, the Chicago Cubs. The club, which is open to the public, offers an eclectic mix of Spanish Colonial design, original Catalina pottery and Chicago Cubs memorabilia.

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