



## CATALINA ISLAND CONSERVANCY

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### **Catalina Island Conservancy Celebrated its 23rd Annual Ball *Sellout Crowd Enjoyed an “Adventurous” Event at the Avalon Casino Ballroom***

AVALON – The Catalina Island Conservancy and nearly 500 guests celebrated the 23rd Annual Conservancy Ball on Saturday, April 14, in the historic Avalon Casino Ballroom.

Many guests arrived in adventure inspired black tie attire in honor of the ball’s theme, *Adventure Starts Here*, and they danced into the evening to the Big Band sounds of Society Beat. They bid on one-of-a-kind auction items, including a hand-painted Balthazar of Rusack wine, helping to raise more than \$650,000 for the Conservancy’s programs to restore and protect the Island and provide educational and nature-based recreational opportunities on the 42,000 acres it stewards.

Conservancy President and CEO Tony Budrovich kicked off the evening by welcoming guests and inviting attendees to join him in celebrating the successful progress on two important milestones of the Conservancy’s **IMAGINE CATALINA** campaign. First, he highlighted the completion of Trekking Catalina, which added 27 miles of new and enhanced trails, as well as new eco-friendly restrooms to the Island’s interior. Budrovich then enthusiastically shared details about the highly anticipated Trailhead Visitor Center scheduled to open later this year. The new Trailhead Visitor Center is prominently located where most people enter Avalon, and like the night’s theme suggests, adventure starts here for visitors wanting to learn more about how to explore Catalina’s 42,000 acres of wildlands.

Budrovich also welcomed elected officials – including Avalon Mayor Anni Marshall, Field Deputy Herlinda Chico representing 4<sup>th</sup> District Los Angeles County Supervisor Janice Hahn and California State Senate District 26 Senator Ben Allen – and invited each to speak. All recognized these important milestones for the organization.

With the progress of the **IMAGINE CATALINA** campaign, the Catalina Island Conservancy is working to create new opportunities for visitors and residents to explore California’s best back yard: Catalina Island. Trekking Catalina and the Trailhead are vital to understanding how to best use Catalina Island and will contribute significantly to the life-long learning, scientific research and enriched engagement with nature that the organization offers to all ages.

The Conservancy was thrilled to kick off the countdown to the grand opening of the Trailhead Visitor Center and to invite visitors and residents to join them later this year to celebrate the occasion. In anticipation of the opening, guests enjoyed a short video highlighting just a few of

the many adventures that start at the Trailhead and dive deep into the interior: hiking, biking, camping, Conservancy Eco Tours and so much more!

“We wish to thank all our guests for their support of the Catalina Island Conservancy and their commitment to restoring and protecting Catalina Island for future generations,” said Budrovich. “We are also extremely grateful to our many sponsors who gave so generously to underwrite this event, including our Key Corporate Sponsors, Capital Group and Edison International; our Sponsor Reception Partner, Bluewater Avalon; and our various community partners and individual sponsors.”

#### **About the Conservancy**

Formed in 1972, the Catalina Island Conservancy is one of California's oldest land trusts. Its mission is to be a responsible steward of its lands through a balance of conservation, education and recreation. Through its ongoing efforts, the Conservancy protects the magnificent natural and cultural heritage of Santa Catalina Island, stewarding approximately 42,000 acres of land and more than 60 miles of rugged shoreline. It provides an airport and 50 miles of biking and nearly 150 miles of hiking opportunities within its road and trail system. The Conservancy conducts educational outreach through two nature centers, its Wrigley Memorial & Botanic Garden and guided experiences in the Island's rugged interior. Twenty miles from the mainland, the Island is a treasure trove of historical and archaeological sites. It also contains numerous rare and endangered animals and plants. The Island is home to 60 species – and counting – that are found only on Catalina. For additional information, please visit [www.catalinaconservancy.org](http://www.catalinaconservancy.org).