



CATALINA ISLAND CONSERVANCY™

Catalina Island Conservancy Celebrates its 24th Annual Ball

Sellout Crowd Enjoyed a “High-Flying” Event at the Avalon Casino Ballroom

LONG BEACH – (April 23, 2019) – The Catalina Island Conservancy and more than 500 guests celebrated the 24th Annual Conservancy Ball on Saturday, April 6, in the historic Avalon Casino Ballroom.

Many guests arrived looking “fly” in black tie attire in honor of the event’s theme, *Soaring Over Catalina*, celebrating the public-military partnership to repair the runway at Catalina Island Conservancy’s Airport in the Sky. Attendees 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 Santa Catalina Island Vineyards wine, a handmade quilt featuring scenes of Catalina Island, collectible Catalina memorabilia and exciting trips helping to raise an all-time record of more than \$750,000 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 welcomed guests and invited attendees to join him in celebrating the successful progress of the unique partnership between the military and the Conservancy on the Airport in the Sky’s Runway Repair Project. The Conservancy, working with the Department of Defense, U.S. Marine Corps and U.S. Navy completed an Innovative Readiness Training (IRT) project that markedly enhanced the durability and lifespan of the runway at the newly named ACE Clearwater Airfield.

Elected officials – including Avalon Mayor Anni Marshall and Field Deputy Herlinda Chico representing 4th District Los Angeles County Supervisor Janice Hahn, along with U.S. Marine Corps representatives Lt. Colonel Duncan Buchanan from I Marine Expeditionary Force (I MEF) and Colonel Matthew Seay from 3rd Marine Airwing Support Squadron (3rd MAW) – spoke about this innovative partnership. All recognized the unique, mutually beneficial opportunity presented by the runway repair at Airport in the Sky.

Additionally, noting a great success, Budrovich declared victory on the Conservancy’s first capital campaign – IMAGINE CATALINA. The Conservancy exceeded its \$17 million campaign goal for the new Trailhead visitor center, 27 miles of extended trails and trail restrooms, along with general conservation work on the west end of the Island.

The Conservancy was thrilled to kick off the countdown to the grand opening of the Trailhead and grand reopening of Airport in the Sky, inviting visitors and residents to join

them later this year to celebrate the occasion.

In anticipation of continued progress, guests enjoyed a [short video](#) highlighting the history of Airport in the Sky and the progress of repairs at ACE Clearwater Airfield.

Budrovich then shared details about the highly anticipated Trailhead visitor center, scheduled to open later this spring. It is the culmination of phase one of the IMAGINE CATALINA campaign, and will serve as the gateway to Catalina's wildlands. It is the first LEED-Certified building on the Island. The Trailhead will allow the Conservancy to have a greater presence in Avalon, with its prominent location making the message of conservation, education and recreation even more accessible to the more than one million visitors to the Island each year.

"These projects help us to fulfill our mission to be responsible stewards of Catalina Island. We wish to thank all of our guests for your commitment to protecting and restoring Catalina Island. Your support of the Catalina Island Conservancy is critical to our annual conservation, education and recreation projects that keep the Island accessible for future generations," said Budrovich. "We are extremely grateful to our many generous sponsors that helped underwrite this event, including key corporate partners Edison International, Capital Group, and Jordahl Construction, along with our various community partners and individual sponsors."

Community partners included Aon - Commercial Risk Solutions, Bluewater Grill, California SwimRun, Crevier Family Foundation, Mitchell, Silberberg and Knupp, LLP, Moffatt and Nichol/Michael Baker International, Mutual of America, Rodriguez, Horii, Choi and Cafferata, LLP, and T.C. Collins and Associates. Many of Soaring Over Catalina's corporate, community and business partners, as well as individual sponsors, are generous, loyal sponsors who engage in various ways to support multiple Conservancy projects throughout the year.

About the Catalina Island 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 access to the Island's wildlands and 50 miles of biking and nearly 165 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.

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