



What's the Point?

David Pizarra

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Sand And Sea Ball

THIS PAST SUNDAY THE LOEWS SANTA Monica Beach Hotel was host to the Sand and Sea Ball produced by the Arthur Murray Dance Center Santa Monica with presenting sponsor Kaiser Permanente. The Arcadia Ballroom was transformed by David Earl Woodbury into a tribute to Dancing with The Stars.

Students from John Adams Middle School made up a quartet who serenaded the ballgoers at the cocktail reception. Ladies in ball gowns and a few gentlemen in tuxedos perused the silent auction with donations from the local hotels like the Perry's Café, Rusty's Surf Ranch, Herringbone, Orange Theory for Fitness classes. The newest bike shop in Santa Monica, aptly named The Bike Shop by owner Andrew Smith, donated a gorgeous orange bicycle to be auctioned off.

The event was to raise money for the Santa Monica Malibu Education Foundation to support the arts and to bring ballroom dance into the local schools. This second year of the ball raised over \$45,000 for the foundation, in addition to the goodwill and sense of community spirit.

"This was my dream, to build this event." Said David Woodbury. The event brought people from all across the spectrum to come out and support the schools.

Starting the evening off was a demonstration by a group of 5th graders dancing the Waltz, Rumba, Foxtrot and a Swing selection. This program was supported by Santa Monica College and Katherine Jeffrey. I must say those kids were fearless and awesome to watch – I wish I could dance that well.

The evening proceeded to have a dance contest with Santa Monica Fire Department Chief Bill Walker rocking the floor in front of some of his firefighters which was good thing since the jokes by the judges were all about how he brought the fire.

Santa Monica Malibu Unified School District Superintendent Dr. Ben Drati was a commanding force on the dance floor as he was bursting out of his black velvet tunic, which did not go unnoticed by the judges. If he brings the same level of grace and style to the district as he does to dancing, we're in good hands.

Long time Santa Monica luminary Evelyn Guerboian took over for her husband in the competition this year. She and her partner did a salsa that was quite spicy.

Not to be outdone was our own Santa

Monica Police Chief Jacqueline Seabrooks who left all her standard issue uniform at home, and was stunning in her glittery makeup and gorgeous flowing dress. "Dancing backwards in high heels is not easy. I need to catch my breath" was her comment to the emcee of the evening Thea Andrews.

Beth Hansler was the entrant from the Loews Santa Monica Beach Hotel. Her exuberance as the National Sales Director was demonstrated on the dance floor as well with a rousing tribute to that staple of the 70's, The Hustle.

Dr. Kimberly Petrick was the showstopper though from Kaiser Permanente and with her dance partner Alec, took home the trophy with their demonstration of the Rumba.

These types of fundraiser events can be dull and boring, the food is often unimaginative and mediocre at best. However, Executive Chef Zach Dallesandro pulled out all the stops on this event and managed to provide the 200 diners with a beautiful table presentation of "sand and sea" that had gold powder encrusted "treasure" in boxes, flutes of chocolate with mousse and chocolate seashells on cupcakes to celebrate the sea theme. Dinner was an amazing filet that was cooked to perfection and as usual the catering staff covered all our needs at the table with impeccable aplomb.

I would say that Linda Greenberg the Executive Director of the SMMUSD Education Foundation should be very pleased with both the quality of the execution and the monies raised from this second annual gala. David Earl Woodbury deserves a big thank you for helping to keep the arts alive in our city and schools – the people I spoke with from the Arthur Murray Dance Classes could not speak highly enough of the dance instruction, the sense of community that was built and the friendships that have been created.

This was a wonderful event and I look forward to going again next year, maybe even as a dancer... I do like sequins and rhinestones...

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