

Boys & Girls Club: *Go Green for Kids* Children are the Future

By ERIN J. SMITH / CASA

THE SMILING FACES OF HAPPY CHILDREN greeted guests as they arrived at the home of Betty Stephens for the 2nd annual Boys & Girls Club fundraiser on Saturday, March 21st.

“They grow so fast,” said Betty Stephens. “We need to lead them in the way we want them to grow up. It’s our job to help them to grow and guide them to become good citizens.”

Part of being good citizens involves environmental awareness and sustainability practices, themes for this year’s garden party-style fundraiser entitled *Go Green for Kids*. Guests enjoyed delicious appetizers and wine, while others sipped mojitos and margaritas against the spectacular ocean view.

As the sun set, just under 300 people packed into the tent on the brisk, spring evening. A silent auction tempted attendees with everything from guitars signed by the Eagles and the Rolling Stones to a signed Shaquille O’Neal, size 23 game shoe. “It’s all about the kids,” said Valerie Banks, Teen Coordinator for Boys & Girls Club. “Everything we raise benefits the kids, our programs, and helps us stay open on Saturdays.”

Skylar Rauch, a Boys & Girls Club participant, welcomed the crowd and got the party started with his infective enthusiasm. Paula Lopez, Co-Anchor for KEYT3’s 11 o’clock news and Boys & Girls Club alumna, served as Emcee while Kirsten Kemp Becker, host of TLC’s television series *Hope for Your Home* and *Property Ladder*, hosted the live auction in true auctioneer style. David Edelman and Bibi Moezzi co-chaired the event.

During dinner, guests watched a short film about the Boys & Girls Club created by Cox Communications, one of the event’s sponsors. Other major sponsors included Montecito Bank



Doug Reid (Zoom Motors), **Carolyn Brown** (Boys & Girls Club Executive Director), **Kristen Kemp Becker** (Auctioneer), **Paula Lopez** (Emcee), **Andrew Knox** (Zoom Motors), and **Christopher Andrini**

& Trust, the Towbes Group, and the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians. Following dinner, guests had to work for their dessert during the Dessert Dash, which involved tables competing with each other for the highest bid and the chance to make a dash for their favorite dessert.

Proceeds from the event support upwards of 1500 participants during the year and support the Boys & Girls Club efforts to provide a safe, enriching environment to keep local children off the streets and out of trouble. “The kids pay \$20 a year to participate, so no child is ever turned away. That’s why these events are so important,” said Carolyn Brown, Executive Director

of the Boys & Girls Club. “We were pleasantly surprised at the turnout for the event, and we’re so grateful that we got so much support.”

For more information, contact Boys & Girls Club of Santa Barbara at 962-2382 or visit www.boysgirls.org.



Ken Kahn and **Vicky Mejias** with Boys & Girls Club member and artist **Juan Carlos Palma**.



Back Row: **Kara Gochnour**, **Dan Aldrich**, **Carman Danalevich**, **Roy Handleman**, and **Candace Whitt**. Front Row: **Greg Wilson**, **Susan Rodriguez**, **Leanna Merritt**, and **Jim Whitt**.



Karizma Dillard, **Aleasa Sandoval**, **David Edelman** (Event Co-Chair), **Bibi Moezzi** (Event Co-Chair), **Betty Stephens**, **Andrea Pintor**, **Kiki Kjar**, and **Lindsey Fischer**.

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