

Santa Barbara Firefighters Alliance

FIRE BALL 2008

By **JEANETTE CASILLAS** / CASA

SUPPORTERS OF COUNTY AND CITY FIREFIGHTERS gathered at a private airplane hangar along with 225 patrons at the fourth annual Santa Barbara Firefighters Alliance *Fire Ball* last month.

“This was the first year we held the event at a hangar,” shared Cathy Cash, President of Santa Barbara Firefighters Alliance. “The venue allowed the firefighters to show supporters how the equipment provided by the Alliance helps save lives with actual demonstrations of jaws of life.”

The *Fire Ball*, the Alliance’s annual fundraiser, allows them to provide advanced technology safety equipment to fire departments which often aren’t funded through City and County budgets, according to Cash. The Alliance has provided local fire departments with Thermal Imaging Cameras,

hand-held GPS systems, weather monitors, search and rescue cameras, and night vision goggles that came in handy during the Zaca Fire last year.

“What the Alliance does is an example of how a private enterprise teams up with the government to reach a common goal,” explained Cash. “At the top of our appropriations process is leading edge equipment that will benefit the firefighters as well as the community.”

This year the Alliance, a total volunteer nonprofit organization, will allocate over \$175,000 to local fire departments to be used this fire season. The Alliance is also exploring the purchase of a new search and rescue dog to replace “Duke,” the current

Santa Barbara County search and rescue dog that will be retiring in December, after ten years of service. “Duke is a well trained dog with worldly experience,” shared Cash. “He



Terry Ryken, Event Co-Chair; **Cathy Cash**, SB Firefighter’s Alliance President; and **Steve Sorensen**, Event Co-Chair



Jack Armstrong; **John Palminteri**, Emcee; **Carla Sprowl**; and Captain **Eli Iskov**



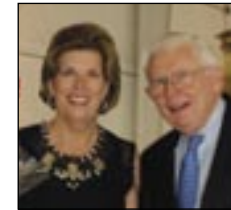
Ron Prince, City of Santa Barbara Fire Chief; **Layla Khashoggi**, Auctioneer; and **John Scherrei**, County Fire Chief



Howard Orr with **Duke**, Search and Rescue County Fire Department Dog



Back: **Diondray Wiley**, SB County FS11; **Mike McIntosh**, SB County Battalion Chief; **Mike Dalcerci** and **Ryan Riddle**, SB County FS11; **Mike Meyers**, SB City. Front: **Nikki Stevens** and **Debbie Lux**, SB County FS15



Diana and **Ralph MacFarlane**



Roger Chackel; **Karen Chackel**, Vice President of First American Title with **Patricia White**, AVP Sr. Escrow Officer of First American Title; and **Michael White**

helped in 9-11, Katrina, and La Conchita.”

Steve Sorensen and Terry Ryken co-chaired the event. Layla Khashoggi served as auctioneer and garnered a total of \$250,000. Entertainment for the night was provided by Dr. Matt Eisman, a doctor and comedian, followed by a night of dancing.

“Firefighters are amazing,” Cash expressed. “It’s a shame that it takes a fire like the Gap Fire to realize that firefighters are risking their lives on a daily basis for our community. They are true heroes.”

The Santa Barbara Firefighters Alliance is a local non-profit organization whose mission is to support the Firefighters in Santa Barbara County to maximize efficiency and safety, and to support the welfare of the Firefighters, enabling Firefighters to provide a higher level of service to the community. You can send a tax deductible donation to the Santa Barbara Firefighters Alliance to: SBFA, P.O.Box 3776, Santa Barbara, CA. 93130. For more information call 708-3565.

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