

Starry, starry nights



with Vincent Andrunas

Ramin Pourteymour recently hosted Mainly Mozart's elite donor group, Club Amadeus, at his modernistic La Jolla Farms abode. Arriving guests enjoyed champagne, congenial conversation, warm weather and beautiful views of the estate. Most took care to place their name cards on seats on the shady side of the tennis court, where they later enjoyed a concert featuring Los Angeles Philharmonic concertmaster Martin Chalifour on violin and renowned musician Dana Burnett on piano. They played a variety of selections, including — of course — some Mozart. Afterward, the music lovers savored wines, appetizers and desserts.

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Friends and supporters of Ronald McDonald House Charities of San Diego enjoyed a hearty "ROMP!" at the gala of the same name, atop the group's San Diego facility (which, since its expansion to 47 units, is the biggest Ronald McDonald House in the world). The facility provides more than just lodging; it's really a home away from home for families with seriously-ill children being treated at San Diego area hospitals. Amazingly, 20,000 families a year use the facilities at some level or other.

Mary Drake chaired the fundraiser, which began with a reception featur-

ing fun foods like little corn dogs, fried sea bass and turkey meatballs. The dress was "playground chic," which allowed broad interpretation — from tuxedos and evening gowns to jeans and sneakers (and everything between). A Kabuki curtain opened at 7:30 p.m., revealing a dining area decorated with tiny lights, brightly colored fresh flowers, lollipops and candy necklaces.

A father told the poignant story of a seven-month stay at the Ronald McDonald House with his wife and terminally-ill son. Guests learned that 10 percent of the annual budget comes from McDonald's restaurants; the rest from donations and fundraisers. A live auction offered exciting items (including a goldendoodle puppy), and a truly delicious dinner was served.

Entertainment was stellar — The Guadalajara-based musical duo L'Orpheus (tenor Jorge Jimenez and violinist Gerardo Ponce) played near dinner's end, and multiple-Grammy winner Vikki Carr donated her time to perform. She sang with the band, spoke with the crowd between numbers, did an a capella number or two and even an impromptu duet with tenor Jimenez.

The event was very successful, and officials announced that the entry will be renamed "The Mary and Hudson Drake Entrance to the Ronald McDonald House."

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Ever-generous Joan Waitt hosted yet another fundraiser at her fabulous La Jolla estate. It was a benefit for Hospital Infantil de las Californias (HIC), just a half-mile south of the international border, which has provided essential medical care for the neediest children on both sides of our border

since 1994.

A gigantic tent, erected to ward off threatened rain, ensured everyone's comfort. Inside was a huge silent auction, dinner seating and a full stage. Reception fare included mini-burgers, tasty crab cakes and tequila shots, preceding a full sit-down dinner. John Moores, personally and through the Padres, has been the hospital's biggest benefactor. He bid \$25,000 for a \$500 wine basket at Steve Hammon's live auction, and later gave another \$25,000 when pledges were called for. Numerous other generous bids and pledges came from the 375 guests, making this fundraiser an exceptional financial success.

Famed singer-songwriter Emmylou Harris performed, making the event a great entertainment success as well. She'd never done a private event in San Diego before, but played her heart out for nearly 90 minutes in this intimate setting.



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Club Amadeus: 1. Radomir Bojanic and Nancy Laturno Bojanic (MM executive director), Esther Nahama (Club Amadeus chair), Ramin Pourteymour (host), Brandi McClain **ROMP!** 2. Tim Malott (RMHC board chair), Emelyn Malott, Phil Stewart, Mary Drake (Event Chair) and Hudson Drake, Phil Lennartz (RMHC President and CEO) 3. Judy and Peter Corrente, Peter and Olivia Farrell, Valerie and Charlie Ewell **Hospital Infantil:** 4. Jennifer Roach, Betty Korreich, Mel Katz, Kristi Pieper, Marilyn Miles 5. Tom Telfer, Briant Howes, Emmylou Harris, Joan Waitt (host and honorary chair), Clint McClellan (HIC board chair), Richard Berwick (event chair)