

Desert Scene

Celebrating and honoring philanthropic efforts in the Coachella Valley

SECTION F

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Breast Cancer Awareness supporters gathered at The Gardens in El Paseo Oct. 15 to participate in Paint El Paseo Pink, organized by Desert Cancer Foundation.

PHOTOS BY GERRY MACEDA, SPECIAL TO THE DESERT SUN



PINK POWER

El Paseo was splashed in a sea of pink last week to raise money and awareness about cancer, **PAGE F2**



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Justice and Equality Awards for all

By **Barry Dayton**
SPECIAL TO THE DESERT SUN

When **Gary D. Soto** took the stage to receive his Lifetime Achievement Award at the Palm Springs Equality Awards presented by AT&T last Saturday evening, nearly 500 attendees cheered when he said "Life is too damned short not to make a difference. You can start by telling your stories."

Soto later issued a challenge to personally match the evening's donations up to \$25,000, which the crowd matched — and topped — for an estimated total of almost \$300,000 for the evening.

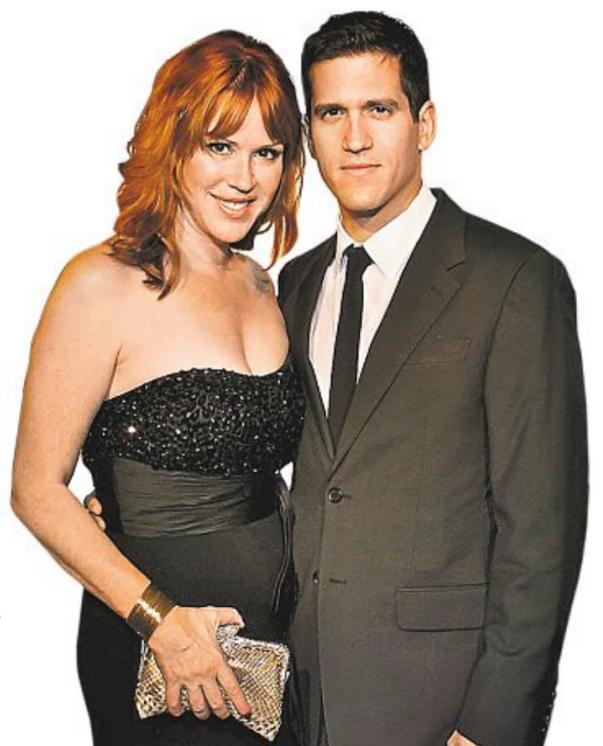
The room was already full of love and laughter from the hysterically funny **Ross Mathews** of TV's "Chelsea Lately" and "The Tonight Show" when actress **Molly Ringwald** was honored with the Equality Ally Award and New York Assemblyman **Daniel O'Donnell** accepted the Equality Leadership Award.

The beautiful Riviera Resort and Spa was the venue for this fundraising event by Equality California, our state's largest lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender rights advocacy organization. Since 1998, Equality Cali-

Please see EQUALITY, F4

Actress and activist **Molly Ringwald** was accompanied by her husband, **Panio Gianopoulos**, when she accepted the EQCA Equality Ally Award at the EQCA awards last week.

JAMES BUTCHART/SPECIAL TO THE DESERT SUN



SPONSORS OF DESERT SCENE



Survivors, supporters paint town pink

By Madeline Zuckerman
SPECIAL TO THE DESERT SUN

A record crowd of 1,000 men, women, children and pets broke both attendance and fundraising records at the fifth annual Paint El Paseo Pink fundraising event last Saturday.

Held in the grassy courtyard of The Gardens on El Paseo and coordinated by more than 125 volunteers, this Desert Cancer Foundation event raised more than \$123,000, while honoring breast cancer survivors in the valley.

The normally sedate El Paseo was a sea of pink balloons, pink T-shirts, and strands of big, shiny pink beads — one for each year that the smiling person wearing them has survived breast cancer.

“We raise all our money and spend all our money here in the valley, to benefit our residents,” said executive director of Desert Cancer Foundation, **Peggy Bilous**. “There is nothing more inspirational than seeing someone wearing ten, 20, or 30 strands of these beads. It’s proof that those diagnosed with breast cancer can conquer it and lead productive lives.”

More than 850 registered walkers were cheered by the Shadow Hills High School cheerleaders as they left the Gardens and strolled from one end of El Paseo to the other, where they received pink and black T-shirts, a pink balloon, and a pink goody bag from El Paseo merchants. Breast cancer doggie bandanas were offered for a \$10 donation.

Event chair **Stu Bailey** was beaming. “This is the fifth anniversary of the walk, and in the past few years, it’s just taken off,” he said. “It brings together people whose goal is to eradicate breast cancer completely.”

Bailey also spoke proudly of the partnerships Desert Cancer Foundation has formed with hospitals, physicians, and screening centers which now provide more than \$600,000 in screenings and treatments for locals who could otherwise not afford it.

From the stage, DCF director Bilous welcomed the huge crowd and introduced emcee **Patti Daly**



Desert Cancer Foundation board president Steve Christian (from left), executive director Peggy Bilous and Stu Bailey, board member and event chair. SHERRI BREYER/SPECIAL TO THE DESERT SUN



The Walk's presenting sponsor, The Auen Foundation, was represented by (from left) by Sherry Boop, Sherrie Auen, Ernie Rubin, Ann Carter and Ogniana Masser with pooches Scruffie and Snickers. SHERRI BREYER/SPECIAL TO THE DESERT SUN

DESERT CANCER FOUNDATION

Next fundraiser: The 13th annual Gift Of Life celebration gala
Where: the Porcupine Creek Estate — now renovated and privately owned by Oracle's Larry Ellison.

When: Nov. 12
This event is to thank the community (particularly the medical community) for their support. It is an evening of delectable food and great conversation — no awards, no speeches, no staged entertainment or being asked for money. The evening will feature a rare wine and Baccarat crystal silent auction of some truly rare wines seldom available to the general public.

Cost: \$350. Seating limited to 300 guests.
Information: (760) 773-6554 or www.desertcancerfoundation.org

Caruso, herself a 13-year breast cancer survivor.

“How special is this... five years ago, there were 200 people and now look at this outpouring,” said Caruso.

Cancer survivor and board member **Julia Burt** of La Quinta, said “I was diagnosed four years ago by the wonderful doctors at Eisenhower, where I received great treatment, so if it happens to you, don’t be alarmed. Desert Cancer Foundation is here to help, and not just with breast cancer — but any form of cancer.”

It takes a village

The walk’s presenting sponsor was the Auen Foundation, and Comprehensive Cancer Center at Desert Regional Medical Center was the Provider of Service sponsor. Other underwriters included El Paseo Merchants Association, The Gardens, Sign-A-Rama, El Paseo Bank, The Oasis, and Ritzli Rover. Some local vendors were added this year, among them **Diane Kaiser**, owner of Today’s Tresses Wig Boutique, who said many of her customers are breast cancer survivors. Comprehensive Cancer’s vice

president/executive director **Teresa Whipple** spoke of their pride in being a major sponsor and also being the sole provider of services for the Breast Cancer Screening Fund. “We originated this fund with Desert Healthcare District because one in every eight women will develop breast cancer at some time in their life and we are committed to detecting it early when it is easily treatable and curable.”

Micki Greenspan, a 19-year cancer survivor, and **Marci Iglow**, a two-time survivor, were among hundreds of survivors eager to

express their gratitude, “DCF even gets help from high schools and Girl Scouts,” said Greenspan. “I support the work they do for women, actually helping them pay their medical bills,” added Iglow.

Desert Cancer Foundation was founded more than a decade ago to help residents obtain screening, diagnosis, and treatment of cancer. Its two primary programs are the Patient Assistance Program, which lends financial assistance, and the Suzanne Jackson Breast Cancer Detection Program.



Volunteers at the Tom's Shoes fundraiser included (from left) Joe Jackson, Blake Andrews and Micah Heykoop; Viceroy Hotel general manager Diego Heredia; Saks Fifth Avenue manager Eric Rodriguez, and Don Devine, also of the Viceroy Hotel. BARBARA ADY/SPECIAL TO THE DESERT SUN

Tom's supporters are a 'shoe-in' for honors

By Barbara Ady
SPECIAL TO THE DESERT SUN

OK, “So what is Tom’s Shoes?” you ask. That question was at the top of our list also, so we went to the Viceroy Hotel in Palm Springs last week with about 120 others to check out a fundraising event called “Tom’s Shoes.”

It seems that about six years ago, a man named Blake Mycoskie who describes himself as “an American traveler” was in an outlying area of Argentina where virtually none of the children had shoes and were not allowed to attend school without them.

Their plight led him to start a shoe company making canvas shoes with a “one-for-one” policy. For every pair of Tom’s Shoes sold, one pair would be given to a child in need.

Today, Tom’s ships 30,000 pairs of shoes to children in 23 countries every month, and continues to send shoes to each child as they grow. The program not only allows them to attend school but protects them from injuries and soil-borne diseases.

Tom’s partners with humanitarian organizations around the world. As of September, they had given one million pairs of shoes.

An enthusiastic group of Tom’s staff were at this event, and five professional artists artistically customized each pair of shoes sold. Local artists volunteering for this event were **Dana Swanson-Patel**, **Datura Art Studios**, **Cathedral City** and **Larry Jarecki**, of Cathedral City.

Toms Shoes are sold locally at three Palm Desert stores. **Information:** www.Tom’s.com

McCallum event bowls everyone over

By Alex Hunter
Special to The Desert Sun

The McCallum Theatre held its traditional “Bowling For Bucks” season-opening fundraiser last Saturday at Fantasy Lanes Family Bowling Center in Indio.

This was the 15th year for this costume-bowling event where what you wear is as important as how you bowl. And what a hoot it was for everyone! The participants in costume thoroughly enjoyed the “Let’s Get Animated” theme. “There are so many animated characters, we thought it would be a fun theme for the party,” said **Judi Pofsky-Cohen**, manager of special events for the McCallum.

“Our teams really love dressing in costumes,” Cohen continued. “Many of them are hand-made and their imagination is awe-inspiring. It’s great fun, while at the same time helping the theater.”

After all of the bowling/laughing/dancing/merry-making, there were still more laughs when awards were presented to the winners at the post-luncheon ceremony. The hard-working McCallum staff: **June Benson**, **Liz Chambers**, **Bill Crowe**, **Rick Darius**, **Colleen Gallagher**, **Tom Head**, **Dio Perez**, **Judi Pofsky-Cohen**, and **Kajsa Thuresson-Frary** were introduced and applauded.

Trophies were awarded for best and worst bowling scores and best costumes. The high team score went to the Coachella Valley Outlaws; low team score to Muses & Patronesses. High score winner: **Bruce Watson**, low score winner: **Roxanne Regnery**. Most strikes in a row ended in a three-way tie between **Bruce Watson**, **Rick Darius**, and **Dede Soto Hammond**. Best costume winners were the “Alice in Wonderland” bowlers extraordinaire from Roxanne’s Desert Club Salon.

The event’s host sponsor was Fantasy Springs Resort Casino, and media sponsors were The Desert Sun and KDES Radio. Other generous spon-



Bowling For Bucks best costume winners were (from left) Rolland Regnery, Robert Hammond, DeDe Soto Hammond and Roxanne Regnery. KATE PORTER/SPECIAL TO THE DESERT SUN

THE MCCALLUM THEATRE

Next fundraisers:

- The Muses & Patronesses Circle, a ladies auxiliary fundraising group, is planning a fun-filled season beginning with a dressy Tea in November, a behind-the-scenes tour at the theater in December, A Hat Luncheon in January, a trip to Los Angeles in March, and their annual birthday luncheon on stage in April. For information on joining the Muses, contact June Benson at (760) 346-6505, Ext. 133.
- The iconic pop super-star Janet Jackson will headline the McCallum’s annual fundraising gala on Dec. 1. It will be her first appearance in the Coachella Valley. Information on concerts and events: (888) 430-2328 or www.mccallumtheatre.com

sors included: **Joann McGrath**, **Linda and Manny Rider**, **Joy and Harry Goldstein**, **Joan Huddleston**, Integrated Wealth Management, **Lund & Guttry, LLP**, **Lynn and Robert Zimmer**, Wells Fargo Business Banking, **Alvera and Frank Gaeta**, **Douglas Martin**, a law corporation, **Marcella Halter**, **Barbara and Jerry Lundberg**, **Barbara and Glenn Madrigano**, **Susan and Michael Oster**.

“Our generous donors have made us

“the cultural jewel of the desert,” said a message from Ted Giatas, president and CEO, “and we promise to keep that reputation by presenting only the finest in performing arts and entertainment.”

Bowling for Bucks helps to fund the McCallum Theatre Institute, which provides arts education programs, serving more than 300,000 Coachella Valley school children in the past 15 years.

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