



To: Autumn Strier

From: Marguarite Clark Public Relations

MCPR

MARGUARITE CLARK PUBLIC RELATIONS



### **Miracles for Kids raises over \$500,000**



**Miracles for Kids** ninth annual gala, held this year on October 10 with an exotic “**Miracles in Morocco**” theme, raised a whopping **\$505,000** to fund programs that benefit children with life-threatening illnesses and their families at **Children’s Hospital of Orange County** and to fund research through the **Pediatric Cancer Research Foundation**.

Nearly 500 revelers attended the popular annual “**Night of Miracles**” event at **St. Regis Monarch Beach Resort & Spa** in **Dana Point**, which featured a cocktail reception, silent and live auctions, the rollicking “**Naked Rhythm**” band performing mesmerizing Middle Eastern-style music with a lively line-up of belly dancers and a globally inspired dinner.

For more information, please visit [www.MiraclesForKids.org](http://www.MiraclesForKids.org)

(In Photo: Autumn Strier, executive director of Miracles for Kids; and Azmin Ghahreman, a board member of Miracles Kids and chef/owner of Sapphire Laguna in Laguna Beach.)

Tuesday, October 13, 2009

## SOS's "Sunday Supper Club" features 12 Celebrity Chefs

Miracles for Kids' Moroccan bash nets an impressive \$505,000

**BY DONNA BUNCE, Register Columnist**

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Talk about a warmhearted evening! When you have a five-year-old CHOC cancer patient dancing with belly dancers at the Moroccan-themed Miracles for Kids benefit Saturday night at the St. Regis Resort in Dana Point, you know why you're there. **Zoe Hunter** lights up a room with her 100-watt smile and when she's learning to belly dance, she's downright magical.

The "Miracles in Morocco" fundraiser, the non-profit's eighth annual Night of Miracles, drew a packed crowd of 497 guests to raise funds for CHOC Children's hospital of Orange County and the Pediatric Cancer Research Foundation. The fun-loving crowd enjoyed a spirited cocktail reception, which featured pomegranate martinis and a 125-item silent auction - including an amazing wine auction - as well as a chance to purchase opportunity prize tickets to win a pair of Lugano Diamonds 2.92 cts. diamond drop earrings valued at \$10,500. With just buying a \$100 ticket, you received a pair of black pearl studs! The other opportunity prize was a \$2,950 Curtis & Co. Men's Big Time Tour Special Edition watch.

The opening of the ballroom doors for dinner featured the Naked Rhythm band performing authentic Moroccan music with a cadre of belly dancers lining the dance floor. Dinner was served on rectangular tables covered in black linens and lined with a striking pin-lit display of grapefruits, pomegranates, lemons, grapes, eggplants, red roses, and pale green hydrangeas. The well-crafted dinner featured a trio of tasty hummuses and mixed olives with the accompanying flatbread, pita bread and assorted Lavash as well as a very delicious entrée duo of grilled chicken breast with chermoula spices, Merguez sausage and slow-baked barramundi bass with couscous.

Miracles for Kids founder board chairman **Curtis Green** welcomed the party goers and thanked what he described as his dynamic board of directors. Asking them to stand, he introduced **Paula Ansara-Wilhelm, DJ Burke, Kenneth Gerdau, Azmin Ghahreman, David Heil, Michael Meyer, Kevin O'Connell, Peter Quill, and Tom Swanecamp**. Green also lauded the charity's executive director and event chair **Autumn Strier** for her untiring efforts for the non-profit.



[Zoe Hunter, age 5, learned how to belly dance at Miracles For Kids' "Miracles in Morocco" benefit Saturday at the St. Regis Resort in Dana Point. The spirited little girl is in treatment at CHOC Children's for acute lymphoblastic leukemia, but you wouldn't have known it from her dazzling smile and sweet demeanor. The effort netted an estimated \\$505,000 to improve the lives of children with cancer and other life-threatening illnesses through CHOC Children's and the Pediatric Cancer Research Foundation.](#)

Miracles for Kids, Green's brainchild, was actually launched in 1998 as The Breeze Fund, an internal fundraising effort of his company, Sea Breeze Financial Services, whereby the employees donated money through automatic payroll deductions to benefit PCRF and Green matched the donations. "I was inspired to get involved when my best friend's daughter was diagnosed with leukemia," Green said, "and when, on my 40th birthday, we decided to make it a fundraiser, Miracle for Kids was born." That was 2001 and since then, the thrust has been to improve the lives of children with cancer and other life-threatening diseases by providing their families with financial support, serving as an advocate for the children and their families and providing funds to non-profits and other entities that support or conduct research focused on eradicating life-threatening childhood diseases. "We help an average of 80 families a year," Green said, "and in the new CHOC tower, Miracles for Kids was the first to fund something, in this case, a living room, for the families to get together while the kids are receiving treatment."

**Kara Foster** gave a moving speech about her family's journey since finding their 11-year-old son **Garrett** had a malignant brain tumor six years ago. Foster told of the grim prognosis after Garrett's eight-hour brain surgery, the years of radiation, chemotherapy and drugs, during which the family became destitute, and the amazing support of friends and literally strangers, who helped them get through those unbelievably trying years. "Because of the miracles around us," Foster said, "we didn't just survive, we thrived." The good news? Garrett, now 17, is a senior at J Serra High School, where he carries a full load of classes and is a varsity golfer. After meeting Greene earlier this year and being introduced to Miracles for Kids, Foster said, "We found a place that my family can help and make a difference."

The evening honored **Carl Nolet, Jr.**, representing the family who owns Ketel One Vodka, with the 2009 Miracle Maker Award. In introducing him, Green said, "Carl has supported Miracles for Kids for years and has never hesitated or wavered with his donations."

The live auction, led by experienced auctioneer **Jim Nye**, was jam-packed with an amazing number of offerings, and guests did not hold back from bidding. **Rudy DePorter** won a walk-on part in **Tom Arnold's** new movie with **Arnold Schwarzenegger** and **Jamie Lee Curtis** that **James Cameron** is directing for \$11,000. He won a similar item last year and gave it to his son. "This year, it's my turn," DePorter joked. The Costa Rica luxury package in a 7,000 square foot Spanish Colonial manor sold twice for \$17,000 each time to **Diane** and **Philo Smith** and to **Alden Brown**. Sapphire Laguna chef/owner **Azmin Ghahreman** offered a Thanksgiving meal for 12, which sold 12 times at \$1,500 a pop, as well as a series of six cooking classes in your home that sold for \$12,000 – twice! Ghahreman, a Miracles for Kids board member, said, "I love this charity because the money we raise goes straight to the families who need it." Golf and lunch with Jerry West at the Bel Air Country Club went for \$12,000, and the Park City, Utah 10,500 square foot retreat package sold for \$11,000.

**David Heil** just couldn't keep his bidder paddle down. For \$8,000, he won tickets to the "Iron Man 2" premiere and entrée to the star-studded cast party following with **Robert Downey, Jr.**, **Scarlett Johansson**, **Gwyneth Paltrow**, **Mickey Rourke**, and **Don Cheadle**, as well as a three-night stay at the Montage Beverly Hills. But, Heil had to battle to win the Fight Club package at the MGM Grand with ringside seats for the welterweight bout between **Manny "Pac Man" Pacquiao** and **Miguel Cotton**, with tickets to see the winner take on **Floyd Mayweather, Jr.** in 2010. The final bid? \$34,000!

Together with the generous auction and Fund-A-Family bidding, some high-power underwriting and an anonymous bidder's check for \$100,000, the evening's net proceeds were estimated at an impressive \$505,000.

Pssst...**Martin Brunekis** of Aliso Viejo won the Lugano Diamonds earrings for his elated wife **Michala**

## The Spirit of Cooking and Giving

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### Cooking for a Cause comes to Costa Mesa Tonight

Written by: Alice Park Photography By: Louis Trinh



What's a better way to kick off the spirit of giving for the holidays than to bring food into the picture? On October 14, four amazingly talented chefs will come together for Cooking for a Cause featuring a comfort food theme tying into the fall at the Orange County Wine & Food Center located in Costa Mesa. The four chefs who will be leading guests through this event are chefs Azmin Ghahreman from Sapphire Laguna, Debbi Dubbs from Deb's Kitchen, Gabriel Caliendo from The Lazy Dog Café and Paul Squicciarini from the Orange County Wine & Food Center.

These four chefs will be demonstrating the preparations of their distinct cocktails in the spirit of fine dining while supporting Culinary Action Direct, the Miracles for Kids and Share Our Selves foundations, as well as the students of the Art Institute of California - Orange County and Newport Harbor High School. There will be also be opportunities to donate additional funds for these great organizations. Cooking for a Cause starts at 6:30 p.m. where guests will enjoy a gourmet cheese and wine reception while having the opportunity to meet fellow food and wine enthusiasts. You can purchase your tickets at [www.great-taste.net](http://www.great-taste.net) to enjoy a great event of fine dining while giving back for a good cause.

Orange County Wine & Food Center

1570 Scenic Ave, Costa Mesa | 714.641.9922 | [www.ocwfc.com](http://www.ocwfc.com)



October 21st, 2009

## Miracles For Kids Ramps Up Online Presence With Support From Octane360

*Redondo Beach-based Technology Company to Support Orange County-based Charity*

REDONDO BEACH, Calif. (October 21, 2009) -- (PressReleasePoint) OCTANE360, a technology-driven firm focused on revolutionizing the way businesses capture targeted traffic online, has launched an inbound marketing campaign designed to support Irvine-based Miracles for Kids (MFK), a non-profit organization dedicated to improving the lives of children with life-threatening illnesses.

According to Adam Rioux, chief executive officer of OCTANE360, his company has provided its cutting-edge new product, OCTANE, in an effort to help MFK acquire more donors and financial resources to support children with cancer and other debilitating illnesses. "We are excited about leveraging our patent-pending inbound marketing technology to fuel Miracles For Kids' donor acquisition outreach," says Rioux. A concentrated focus on garnering donations online will help MFK continue its steady growth. MFK's executive director Autumn Strier states, "Our goal is to positively impact increasing numbers of area families in need by accelerating our online presence, and we are thrilled that OCTANE -- an industry leader -- will help us do so on a pro bono basis."

Rioux says his company is focused on helping MFK significantly expand its donor base outside of Orange County. "Through our platform, OCTANE, we've created an extensive network of websites that will help identify qualified donors who would be interested in supporting MFK and its important cause," he adds. "We are honored to support this very worthy organization."

### About OCTANE360

OCTANE360 is a revolutionary Internet marketing technology firm focused on changing the way businesses and advertising companies capture targeted online traffic. OCTANE360 powers its business via its proprietary inbound marketing platform, OCTANE, a one-stop inbound marketing technology that allows anyone from a Fortune 100 Company to the most savvy of online marketers to small business owner to turn their online presence into a communication and revenue growth center. Today, OCTANE powers thousands of websites owned by a growing list of domainers, media firms, publishers, bloggers, online marketers, national advertisers and small businesses. OCTANE fuels their businesses by enabling them to capture highly sought after organic search engine ranking, targeted leads and focused consumers. For additional information please visit [www.octane360.com](http://www.octane360.com).

### About Miracles for Kids

Founded in 2001, Miracles for Kids' mission is to improve the lives of children with cancer and other life threatening illnesses. The organization accomplishes this mission by providing families with the financial support necessary to cope with a child's illness; by providing funds to non-profits and other entities that support or conduct research focused on eradicating life-threatening childhood diseases and by serving as an advocate for children and families who are fighting life-threatening diseases.

With offices in Tustin, Miracles for Kids supports programs such as the Pediatric Cancer Research Foundation, Molly's Kids Grant Program at Children's Hospital of Orange County and the City of Hope National Medical Center.

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## PRLog

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Thursday, October 22, 2009

## Part in Schwarzenegger's new film sells for \$11,000 at benefit

How much would you pay for a walk-on part in Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger's newest movie?

Area resident Rudy DePorter slapped down \$11,000 at a live auction this month for the part, although the movie, which is scheduled to begin filming after the governor ends his term, doesn't even have a final script yet. Actors Tom Arnold and Jamie Lee Curtis reportedly plan to be part of the movie's cast.

The \$11,000 was just a fraction of the \$505,000 raised at [Miracles for Kids'](#) ninth annual gala at the [St. Regis Monarch Beach Resort & Spa](#) in Dana Point. The event, which had 500 attendees, featured belly dancers and a dinner filled with couscous and hummus samplings.

The nonprofit organization focuses on helping children with cancer and other life-threatening diseases.

Another hot auction item was a Thanksgiving dinner for 12 prepared by Azmin Ghahreman, a San Juan Capistrano resident and owner of [Sapphire](#), a Laguna Beach restaurant featuring upscale global cuisine. The dinner sold 12 times for \$1,500, and six cooking classes taught by Ghahreman, who is on Miracles for Kids' board of directors, sold twice for \$12,000.

Last year the organization's gala raked in \$425,000



Miracles for Kids Executive Director Autumn Strier poses with Azmin Ghahreman, a San Juan Capistrano resident and chef in Laguna Beach who donated a Thanksgiving dinner and cooking lessons to the nonprofit's auction



# The Open Press

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# REDONDO BEACH COMMUNITY INFORMATION

## Redondo Beach News

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Posted Monday, October 26, 2009