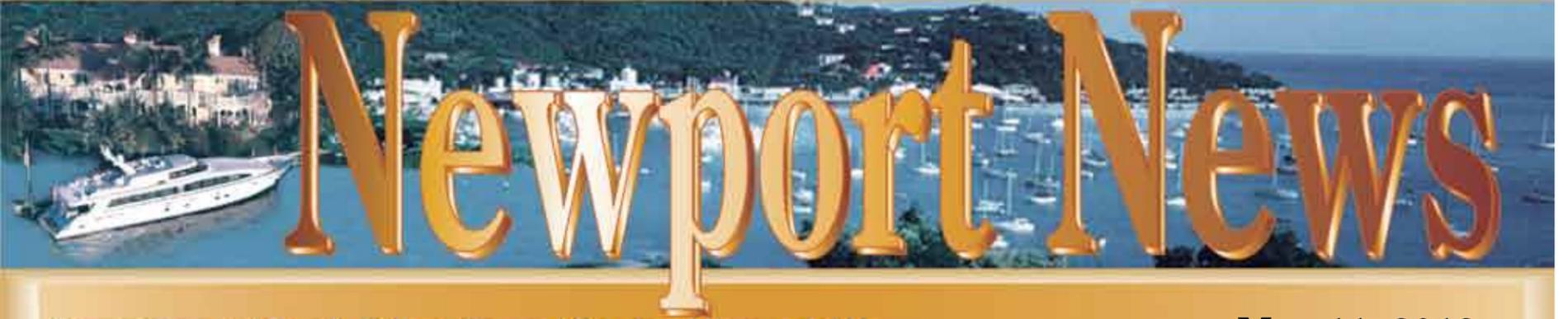


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May 11, 2012

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Society Scene

by
Kelly Bennett

Exclusively for the Newport News



MERCY HOUSE NETS MORE THAN \$170K AT EIGHTH ANNUAL "LIVING WITH HEART" GALA

Mercy House, one of Southern California's premier advocates of the homeless, netted more than \$170,000 at its eighth annual fundraising gala, Living with Heart, held at the Fairmont, Newport Beach Hotel. The gala's 280 guests participated in silent and live auctions that contributed more than \$70,000 to the evening's total proceeds, plus an additional \$50,000 from the "Lift Your Hearts" direct donation campaign.

The tone of the evening was set with a champagne reception and silent auction in the Bambu Garden at the Fairmont. It was an exceptional spring evening and spirits were high. Guests were invited into the ballroom at 7:30 for dinner and the program. Founder and Chairman Father Jerome Karcher gave a blessing, and the evening started with excitement.

The program included video and stories about Mercy House programs, services and clients across Orange and San Bernardino Counties and the operation of the Armory Emergency Shelter Program for Orange County.

Following dinner, multi-instrumentalist virtuoso, dynamic vocalist Ellis Hall and Saxophonist/Singer/Songwriter Mindi Abair, who was just recently featured on American Idol with Phil Phillips, got the party started by rocking the house with their incredible musical talent. They also kicked off the live auction with priceless rare autographed Braille music sheets from the blind musician (Hall), and a backstage concert package from Abair. Sold twice, these packages brought in \$12,000 for the organization.

Additional highlights of the live auction, led by Joel Burlingame of Stokes Auction Group, included a weeklong, five bedroom, "Paradise Retreat in the Mexican Pacific Riviera" which sold for \$7,750; a "San Diego Chargers Owner's Suite for Four" which sold for \$6,500, a trip for two to Napa Valley; and a "Four Course Dinner Party for Four" with Orange County chef elite, Anahita Naderi for \$2,750.

"This week marks my 22nd year with Mercy House," said Executive Director Larry Haynes. "I want to extend my deepest thanks to my Board, staff, and our supporters who have made our amazing growth possible. What a great ride this has been! I especially want to acknowledge everyone who contributed to the success of this year's event. It just gets better every year!"

Mercy House provides housing and comprehensive supportive services for a variety of homeless populations, including families, adult men and women, mothers and their children, persons living with HIV/AIDS, individuals overcoming substance addictions, and some who are physically and mentally disabled.

The agency assists residents in the areas of economic, emotional and spiritual wellbeing to enhance their self-esteem and sense of personal pride. With an emphasis on accountability, integrity and self-sufficiency, Mercy House believes that providing dignity and respect to each individual is the agency's guiding principle. Visit www.mercyhouse.net for more information.



Musical Guests: Ellis Hall and Mindi Abair



Mercy House Founder & Chairman Father Jerome Karcher and Executive Director Larry Haynes



Paige Rumbaugh, Board Member Lisa Rumbaugh (center) & Mark Rumbaugh



Payal Patel, Shirish Dayal, Maya Patel & Sunil Patil, Tarsadia Foundation



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Photos by: Stephen Freeland