

Conservancy celebrated its 22nd annual Ball by 'Taking Flight'

Sellout crowd enjoyed an elegant event at the Casino Ballroom

FOR THE ISLANDER

The Catalina Island Conservancy and more than 500 guests celebrated "Taking Flight" at the 22nd Annual Conservancy Ball on Saturday, April 1, in the historic Avalon Casino Ballroom.

Many of the guests donned feathers in honor of the ball's theme, and they danced into the evening to the Big Band sounds of Society Beat. They bid on one-of-a-kind auction items, including a popular Balthazar of Rusack wine, to raise funds for the Conservancy's programs to restore and protect the Island and provide educational and nature-based recreational opportunities on the 42,000 acres it stewards.

Conservancy President and CEO Tony Budrovich kicked off the evening by welcoming guests and inviting attendees, to join him

in celebrating the Catalina Island Conservancy's 45th Anniversary. Budrovich then introduced elected officials – including Avalon Mayor Anni Marshall, 4th District Los Angeles County Supervisor Janice Hahn and 47th District Congressman Alan Lowenthal – to speak. Each recognized this important milestone for the organization.

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In keeping with the theme of this year's ball, Taking Flight, guests were treated to a short video documenting the Conservancy's work to monitor the Island's seabirds. The Catalina Island Conservancy also celebrated nearing the completion of the first phase of its Imagine Catalina campaign. The evening's theme represented the vision of Imagine Catalina moving forward, as the Conservancy continues construction of its new visitor center, The Trailhead, and prepares for this summer's opening of the expanded

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U.S. Rep. Alan Lowenthal, 47th District, with four Marine couples from Camp Pendleton's "First of the First" - 1st Battalion, 1st Marines. The Marine couples enjoyed a weekend on Catalina Island with hotel, travel and activities sponsored by the members of Balboa Yacht Club in Corona del Mar. Courtesy photo

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Trekking Catalina trail network.

"We wish to thank all our guests for their generous support of the Catalina Island Conservancy and their commitment to restoring and protecting Catalina Island for future generations," said Budrovich. "We are also extremely grateful to our many sponsors who gave so generously to this event, including our Presenting Sponsor, Toyota Motor Sales, USA, Inc.; our Sponsor

Reception Partner, US Bank; our Cocktail Hour Partner, Capital Group Companies, and our various community partners."

Formed in 1972, the Catalina Island Conservancy is one of California's oldest land trusts. Its mission is to be a responsible steward of its lands through a balance of conservation, education and recreation. The Conservancy protects the natural and cultural heritage of Santa Catalina Island, stewarding approximately 42,000 acres of land and more than 60 miles of rugged

shoreline. It provides an airport and 50 miles of biking and nearly 150 miles of hiking opportunities within its road and trail system. The Conservancy conducts educational outreach through two nature centers, its Wrigley Memorial & Botanic Garden and guided experiences in the Island's rugged interior. The Island is a treasure trove of historical and archaeological sites. It also contains numerous rare and endangered animals and plants. For more information, visit www.catalinaconservancy.org.