

# SEEN AROUND TOWN

by Lynda Millner

## The Royal Ball

The other night, the wildest place in town wasn't the Zoo, it was the Coral Casino. As I drove up, there were dozens of people arriving as though for a red carpet movie premiere. Beach walkers were perched on the balustrade watching the free show. There was a palpable energy in the air. The Coral Casino terrace and ballroom had been transformed into a "candy store" for grown-ups. What was going on? The first annual Pacific Pride Foundation's "Royal Ball," which was completely sold out.

The dress code said "Fabulous" and everyone was, if not outrageous. Gals wore everything from short to floor-length dresses and bling was everywhere, including two guys in black sequin jackets. There were a few royal boxes that sold for \$20,000. **Leslie Ridley-Tree** was reigning over one, which was chicly decorated all in white with glimmering crystal chandeliers, and sexy, elegant purple décor. There was a private butler to cater to the group. Others with variously priced unique boxes were **Lynda Weinman** and **Bruce Heavin** and the **Betty Stephens** family.

As I entered, my senses were assailed, both sight and sound, with photo ops and eye candy everywhere. There were two Cirque du Soleil stilt walkers in 18<sup>th</sup>-century costumes, **Sparkles** scooted around surrounded by a moving table with silent auction items for sale, and **Tina Schlieske** and the Graceland Exiles performed in the ballroom and on big screens. Local lad **Timo Nunez** danced the sexiest flamenco I've ever seen (and I lived in Spain) and **Frenchie Davis** belted out songs later in the night. Butlers passed



Cirque Du Soleil stilt walkers greeting guests upon arrival the Pacific Pride Foundation's Royal Ball



Ms Millner is the author of "The Magic Make Over, Tricks for Looking, Thinner, Younger, and More Confident – Instantly!" If you have an event that belongs in this column, you are invited to call Lynda at 969-6164.



Sparkles surrounded by her moving table selling raffle tickets

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Leslie Ridley-Tree with Pacific Pride executive director David Salberg in her special cabana at the gala





Heather Kershaw, cabana designers Wendy and Ashley Smith, and Jessica Classic enjoying themselves at the Royal Ball



Brooks Branch and Gina Tolleson looking glitzy at the Pacific Pride Ball



Mayor Helene Schneider in middle with guests and greeters on the Royal Ball red carpet



Montecito residents Jim and Susan Petrovich taking in all the sights at the Coral Casino

cocktails and tidbits, plus there was a carving station with more tasty treats. Dancing went on until the bewitching hour of midnight.

Event co-chairs were **Justine Roddick** and **Christina Schlieske**. Honorary co-chairs were **Cat Cora**, **Neil Patrick Harris** and **David Burtka**.

Pacific Pride Foundation executive director **David Selberg** complimented, "**Merryl Brown** is a genius at producing sensational events. This first Royal Ball is in celebration of the four thousand clients we serve annually, from high school students to seniors and moms." It has been the foremost organization on the central coast providing LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transsexual) services for over 35 years. For more information, call 963-3636.