

AZ Insider: This Extravagant Party's Budget Will Surprise You!

Written by Written by Kathy Shayna Shocket

Kathy Shayna Shocket has the inside stories on people making a difference.



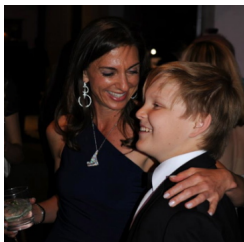
Kathy reveals how the fundraiser with an extravagant Broadway ambiance produced a soiree with a modest budget.

It was a unique evening of Broadway meets Las Vegas for a night at the museum. In fact, **Ben Stiller** and the producers of the hit movie "Night at the Museum" should take note of the Children's Museum of Phoenix for their next sequel. If they tried to re-create the museum's recent black tie gala they would probably envision needing a big Hollywood budget. But the planners of this soiree could tell them how to do it on a modest budget!



(12 News' anchors **Kim Covington**, **Faye Fredricks**, **Tram Mai** and **Caribe Devine** taking the night off for a girls' night out.)

The gala's extravagant ambiance boasted Cirque de Soleil type entertainment with ariel acrobatics and violinists performing during the dinner and a cocktail party with an abundance of lavish gourmet food and wine served up by celebrity chefs (including Chef **Beau MacMillon** of **Elements** at the Sanctuary Resort.) Yes the culinary fare at the numerous food stations during the cocktail hour was plentiful and high-end - but it was ALL donated by the vineyards and restaurants serving during the cocktail hour !



(**Lisa Handley**, pictured with son **Spencer** was presented with the Kids at Heart Award)

Having the soiree at the museum as opposed to a ballroom was not only less costly, but it showcased the museum and its exhibits. And of course, the sponsorship support of **Bank of America** and **Lodestar Foundation** makes all the difference in the evening's success in raising money and awareness for the museum's programs.

Another great idea was having the centerpieces for the dinner tables designed by 50 students from the ASU **Herberger** Institute for Design and the Arts. They created the unique pieces from table using recycled and reclaimed materials. Event Chair **Michelle Clarke** and her committee creatively planned the cocktail hour which inspired the 500 guests to mingle throughout the museum and were then escorted by an entourage of performers into a colorful and whimsically decorated tent for dinner.

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(Donna Egan of Target pictured left, and Michelle Clarke pictured on right)

The guest list for this party was impressive. Among the local celebrities were the group of 4 television anchors from 12 News who attended just for fun (not as emcees) and Channel 3's **Yetta Gibson** who emceed during the dinner.

Robert and **Penny Sarver** were honorary chairs and **Lisa Handley** of **MidFirst Bank** and **Target** were honored for their community support. **Target** has provided substantial funding for the museum's programs. **Lisa** has steadfastly served on the museum's board and was among those who helped raise funds for the \$13 million capital campaign, resulting in the birth of the museum.

This Cirque de Musee is a vibrant example of embracing the "fun" in fundraiser, and that was reflected by the partygoers who stayed for the after party until 1 a.m.



Kathy Shayna Shocket is a **Reporter, Photographer and TV-Field Producer** based in Phoenix. She is a former **TV reporter** and her stories have been published in **TIME** magazine, **PEOPLE** magazine, **MONEY** magazine, the **Hollywood Reporter** and the **New York Times**. You can reach her at redcarpetgirl@aol.com