

The AZ Insider: New Valley Fundraising Parties...?

Written by Written by Kathy Shayna Shocket

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"The AZ Insider" with Kathy Shayna Shocket: Get the inside scoop on Arizona's social scene and celebrity news.



This week: New Valley fundraising parties? Now? This will surprise you...

Is the unpredictable economy raining on the social season's parade? Yes, but many committee members who are planning the upcoming gala parties- are arming themselves with colorful "umbrellas" and a Broadway attitude of "the show must go on."

Within this stormy economic climate - raising funds for charity is more competitive than ever. And one of the questions I'm asked most often now is, about ticket sales. "How are ticket sales going for several of the galas and fundraising events....and how the various charities are faring under the economic pressure?"

As the retailers are planning new events to inspire shopping – (i.e., the globally planned **Fashion's Night Out** –of which Neiman Marcus in Scottsdale took part.



The event, organized by **American Vogue** with the **Council of Fashion Designers of America**, was created to boost consumer confidence and thus support the American garment industry during difficult economic times) some fundraising committees are re-inventing their events.

Buzz for New Events

A case in point of those teaming up with retailers and creating a buzz for smaller new events - is the recent **NotMYkid benefit**. Cove Trattoria in Scottsdale, closed its doors for the private party and donated the food and wine.

Morton's The Steakhouse and **Sports 620 KTAR** hosted a first time event last month, when it closed its doors for the private Celebrity Waiter Night featuring Cardinals players as servers to benefit Cardinals Larry Fitzgerald's late mother, the **Carol Fitzgerald Memorial Foundation**. The \$250 tickets sold out and the guests bid big bucks in the auction.

In fact, at least two charities are planning first time major events. **The Rock Ball at the Ritz** is a new fundraiser for the **Solid Rock Foundation**, a Christian non-profit organization.

Summer and **Dr. Sabah Kalamchi** for example, opened their Paradise Valley home last week and hosted a luncheon to talk about the organization's new fundraiser set for Jan. 29. About 30 people turned out to sign up for the new committee. **Wright** and **Jane Gordon** revealed that **Jerry Colangelo** was named as Honorary Dinner Chairman of the dinner-auction. The attire? Rock and roll.

Sheryl Cooper, wife of rocker **Alice Cooper**, was there and broke the big news that the Solid Rock Foundation's teen center to reach out to teens through music, dance and other arts... will be built at Grand Canyon University. It's the center the **Solid Rock Foundation** has been raising funds for over the past 13 years.

New Museum Party

Supporters of **The Children's Museum in Phoenix** are creating lots of buzz about a new fundraising gala. The museum located in the historic **Monroe School**, opened its doors in June 2008.

Melissa Leonesio who is co-chairing the new party with **Tom Ambrose** says they are planning for something different than years past. "Going with the status quo fundraiser isn't good enough anymore," she points out, referring to the economy. Their committee is planning for a date in February.

And by the way.. on Friday's you can enjoy the Children's Museum free! On the first Friday of every month, from 6pm to 10pm, the Children's Museum of Phoenix will be open to the public free of charge thanks to Target... the retailer is sponsoring Target Free First Friday Nights through

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