

# Sparkling Starry Soiree nets \$32,000 for ill children

By Dave Casadei  
Independent Newspapers

Scottsdale-based Starlight Children's Foundation Arizona continued its generous ways March 21 after raising \$32,000 during its annual Sparkling Starry Soirée.

The 25-year-old foundation known for donating Fun Centers and PC Pals to area hospitals raised enough to not only fund one new Fun Center and two new PC Pals,



## FROM The Editor

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but also provide money for families with seriously ill children. Fun Centers are mobile entertainment units containing a Sharp AQUOS LCD television, state-of-the-art Nintendo Wii with all the latest video games, as well as a DVD player with movies. PC Pal laptops are a high-tech solution for hospitalized children to stay in touch with family, friends, and other patients as well as keep up with schoolwork. The event was conducted in a newly built, custom home in Silverleaf north Scottsdale and included entertainment by jazz artist Jay Soto. Guests mingled during a cocktail reception and light dinner by California Pizza Kitchen, which was followed by a silent auction featuring a variety of items including an Aerosmith-autographed electric guitar, a Wii MTV Rock Band set and a John Elway-autographed Broncos helmet.

Guests who donated \$100 received a glass of champagne and a cubic zirconium stone. They also earned a raffle ticket for a one-carat diamond.

Adding to the festivities, custom jewelry and gems were displayed, a 2006 Yellow Ferrari 550 Maranello was showcased, and quality cigars were offered to anyone interested.

Starlight also recognized Honorary Chairman Jim Piccolo, founder of the Frank Edward Piccolo Foundation and president of Nouveau Riche Corporation, for his many contributions. Mr. Piccolo touched on the importance of helping young, sick children



Submitted photo

Back row, from left, Jo Ann Yeo, community development officer; Deborah Malone, leadership council chair; Sandi Hveem, council member; Joe Vail, council member; and Sara Kerr, young professional council member for Starlight Children's Foundation Arizona. Front, from left, Carla Decker, council member; Dr. Honora Norton, council member; Sonya Lee, council member for Starlight Children's Foundation Arizona; Paula Van Ness, CEO for Starlight Children's Foundation; Shonna James, communications chair; Julie Gavin, social chair for young professionals; and Theresa Weber, Great Escape coordinator for Starlight Children's Foundation Arizona.

on behalf of current and future generations.

"Working with Starlight Children's Foundation has proven to be a wonderful way of reaching beyond our known limits of compassion and fulfilling children's dreams of hope," Mr. Piccolo said. "It's a privilege to work with such an organization that is truly unique among others, and we are proud to help chair this event."

A live auction wrapped up the evening featuring exclusive packages from a private jet getaway to Las Vegas to see Barry Manilow in concert to an Alice Cooper-autographed guitar and a backstage entertainment pack-

age with Jazz musician Dave Koz.

Starlight Community Development Officer Jo Ann Yeo believes this year's soiree may have outdone the foundation's 2008 event.

"Last year, Starlight Arizona touched the lives of more than 50,000 seriously ill children and their families statewide," Ms. Yeo said. "We hope the success of this year's event will help us reach even more. The money raised will help Starlight provide media and entertainment to brighten children's lives through Fun Centers, PC Pals and Great

Escapes."

For 25 years, Starlight Children's Foundation has been dedicated to helping seriously ill children and their families cope with their pain, fear and isolation through entertainment, education and family activities. Starlight's programs have been proven to distract children from their pain, help them better understand and manage their illnesses, and connect families facing similar challenges so that no one feels alone. Call 480-280-5289 or visit [www.starlight.org/arizona](http://www.starlight.org/arizona).

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