

## A Night At the Tait Museum in Los Gatos

### Touch My HeART '08 is a spectacular success

By [Alastair Dallas](#) 02/26/08 7:54 am | Updated: 02/27/08 10:41 am

Touch My HeART, the annual fundraiser for the Museums of Los Gatos usually attracts a who's who of Los Gatos, a town filled with artists and art supporters. This year's event coincided with a night of wind and rain, but everyone came anyway and the party was fabulous.

Over 200 artists, volunteers, and paid attendees crowded into the Art Museum at 4 Tait for an evening of food, wine, music, and art. New this year: Local artists created nearly 300 pieces of small art and everyone could choose one piece to take home.



A Night at the Tait Museum

The patio was enclosed by a tent with hot air blowing in from somewhere and rain dripping every so often at the connection to the museum, but it didn't matter. Everyone stayed dry; the food, catered by Pat Smith's Extravaganza, was marvelous; and everyone had a last glimpse of one of the Tait's most successful exhibits: the large scale object paintings of **Gordon Smedt**, who was on hand to answer questions.



Indian Store founder **Janice Benjamin** and her husband, photographer **Ken Benjamin**

Attendees were greeted by Morning Rotary Club President **Tim Lundell** in tuxedo at the door and his wife, Arts Commission Chair **Penelope O'Neill**, welcomed everyone to the event.

The Cool Cats of the Morning Rotary sponsor Jazz on the Plazz, the series of free summer jazz concerts at the Town Plaza, and jazz master of ceremonies **Michael Jacobi** was on hand to announce a new partnership between the Museums of Los Gatos and Jazz on the Plazz.



Take-home art: Guests could choose a piece created especially for the event. Morning Rotary President **Tim Lundell** chats with architect **Greg Stowers** at the far end of the table

"Once again this summer, we are bringing to our little town the finest jazz performers on the planet," Jazz on the Plazz organizer **Teri Hope** told the crowd. This year's lineup includes "jazz hunk" Nestor Torres. There will be a private party for jazz lovers this August at La Estancia, the estate of Larry Arzie and David Stonesifer.

Michael Jacobi announced the new slogan: "Jazz tonight...jazz tomorrow," referring to a scholarship for young jazz performers that is kicking off this year. In April, jazz appreciation month, San Jose Jazz teachers will hold a master workshop at the Tait Museum for talented young people.



Mayor **Barbara Spector** and Planning Commission Chair **Joanne Talesfore**

Three of five councilmembers attended: Mayor **Barbara and Ira Spector**, Vice Mayor **Mike and Kim Wasserman**, and **Joe and Pamela Pirzynski**. Mike Wasserman was the evening's master of ceremonies. Planning Commission

Chair **Joanne Talesfore** was there with her husband, **Nick**, and Vice Chair **D. Michael Kane** cut an elegant figure (as usual). Historic Preservation Committee member **Len Pacheco** and Arts Commissioner **Valerie Hopkins** were glimpsed across the crowded room, as well.

**Rick and Julie DiNapoli**, Edelen Ave. neighbors of the mayor, were there--Julie is the Club Secretary of the Morning Rotary. **Stephanie Matthews**, **Dan Turkus**, new Executive Director **Elke Groves**, and former director **Laura Bajuk** and her husband **Douglas Debs**, all managed to avoid the camera.



Designer **David Stonesifer** donated the prize money his art won back to the museum.



**Christy Bohnet, Lou Bermingham, and Louise Rathmann**



Artist **Donna Orme** of the Los Gatos Art Association, and her husband, **Sam**



Artist **Gordon Smedt**, whose larger-than-life work surrounded the party.



Former Los Gatos High School Vice Principal **Al Simon**, former mayor **Sandy Decker**, and current Vice Mayor **Mike Wasserman**. Wasserman and Simon represent the Kiwanis Club of Los Gatos



Museum supporters **Sarah and Craig Parks**



Los Gatos Morning Rotarians (l to r): Secretary **Julie DiNapoli**, Planning Commission Vice Chair **Michael Kane**, former president **Ginger Taylor McDonald**, incoming president **Kathy Linton**, and **Mary MacDonald**



**Mark Groo** and Los Gatos Coffee Roasting Co. founder (and former arts commission chair) **Teri Hope**



**Gil Decker** (left) and **John Hopkins** take a turn serving wine. Your bartenders are the former Assistant Secretary of the Army and a founder of San Jose's prestigious law firm Hopkins & Carley



Touch My HeART Committee member **Gretchen Bell**



CASA founder **Joanne Rodgers**, her mother **Pat Elliott** of Florida, and artist **Alyce Parsons**. Ms. Elliott would appreciate it if everyone votes for John McCain, please.



**Larry Arzie** (left) admires designer **David Stonesifer's** award-winning art



Marianne Lucchesi Hamilton of the Weekly Times and her husband, Doug



Councilmember **Joe Pirzynski** was spotted across the crowded room





Volunteer **Audrey Barker** is in 7th grade at Fisher Middle School



**Kathleen & Steve Clarke, Carol & Klaus Gruetzner**. Steve is president of the Museums of Los Gatos board; Carol created the Historical Walking Tour.



Mary Ellen Comport



Artist Noreen Christopher



Touch My HeART '08 at the Tait Museum



Other members of the Touch My HeART committee: **Kim Karloff**, **Elke Groves**, **Noreen Christopher**, **Christine Currie**, and **Sandy Decker** (Photograph courtesy of Elke Groves)