

## **B&G; gala: Go for the kids - and men**

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**Weekly Columnist**

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Psst! Attention new members of the Santa Clarita Valley and those who have been here a while but tend to steer clear of charity shindigs that wind up full-page Signal articles:

You busy tonight?

Short of walking the floors with a croupy kid or rubbing elbows with Shaquille O'Neal at a post-win jamboree, there aren't a whole lot of good reasons for not showing up at the 31st annual Boys and Girls Club auction, "Wild Safari Nights." To be held in the Valencia Commerce Center, this is the mother of all non-profit soirees. And you should check it out.

First off, the Boys and Girls Club auction is one of the most fun-filled, exciting, imaginative, madcap charity bashes you will ever attend.

Each year our beloved, devoted, tireless community benefactor-volunteer-organizers see to that. Trust me here. I know many of them and they are consummate wizards.

Proceeds from this philanthropic event benefit children of the Santa Clarita Valley. Auction monies provide more than 50 percent of the operating budget for the club, which serves 1,600 Santa Clarita Valley youngsters - many of them from lower-income, single-parent homes. A fair number of these great kids are at high risk for getting into trouble or getting hurt. The club keeps them all safe, off the streets, out of harm's way and busy doing good things like sports activities, learning computer literacy, making pals, reading and being part of a group that helps them feel valued and connected.

While previous Boys and Girls Club auctions have raised some of the biggest dollar amounts of just about any charity out here (last year's event attracted nearly 1,500 guests and drove in almost \$300,000), this year they're hoping to make it an even larger blockbuster.

Reason being, they need it to open their new 27,000-square-foot Canyon Country facility. Opening next year, that address will be a co-op haven thanks to the Boys and Girls Club, the William S. Hart Union High School District and the city of Santa Clarita.

One very special man you'll see at Wild Safari Nights is Jim Ventress, executive director and premier patriarch of the SCV Boys and Girls Club. The club and the boys and girls are his life. Go up to him and say hi. Jim's friendly, loves to talk about "his kids" and you'll probably get a hug - something he gives out about 500 times a day.

Wild Safari Nights will feature a live and silent auction teeming with fabulous goods.

Speaking of hot items for sale: Some real live men will be auctioned off! We're talking eligible chaps. Manly men. Guys with good jobs, teeth and no criminal records.

Speaking of pearly whites, one of those dapper dudes is Newhall dentist Dr. Dell Goodrick. (Now there's a fellow a gal could sink her teeth into.) Along with El Hombre de los Dientos comes a half-day girly pulchritude makeover at Monique's Day Spa in Saugus followed by a private (hic!) tour of Agua Dulce Winery. The day commences with a ring-a-ding-ding evening airplane flight over Los Angeles and the coastline followed by dinner in Santa Monica.

I bet you single ladies are rolling your pennies already.

Another bachelor to be sold into salacious Santa Clarita slavery at the jungle-themed festivity is Sgt. Andy Hernandez of the California Highway Patrol. Like Goodrick, Hernandez comes with a beautifying two-hour annointment appointment for his date mate. This is followed by a tour of the Long Beach Aquarium, some cham-pag-nee, a gondola ride along the local canals (you were expecting maybe Venezia?) and a candlelit dinner with the lawman. Sounds like one arresting night to me.

Yet another hottie to be hocked is Capt. Al Bustillos of the Los Angeles County Fire Department. You be his girl and you'll get a helicopter flight from San Pedro to Catalina Island, a day of island exploring capped off with dinner at an exclusive Avalon restaurant.

Does Wild Safari Nights sound like a cool event or what?

By attending this groovy charity gala, not only do you get the intrinsic reward of knowing you've helped the kids of this valley - and owing to the ripple effect, the world - you get to have one hoot of a good time.

By the way... when my family and I first hopped the hills from the San Fernando Valley to Stevenson Ranch in 1991, I knew all of five people in this town. My first year here, two of those friends and I attended the Boys and Girls Club auction. We were latecomers, no table seats were available - but we did enjoy a buffet meal and bought some neat things. That night I observed an amazing phenomena, the awesome synergy that evolves when big-hearted philanthropist-activists put their heads together for a worthy cause. It stayed with me.

The following year I so wanted to become part of the close-knit SCV humanitarian fabric, so I volunteered as a spotter at the auction and had a terrific time doing it.

Not only could tonight's soiree use your good company and auction paddle, the club and other SCV charities could also use a transfusion of new blood. See, our beloved, devoted, tireless community benefactor-volunteer-organizers can only do so much.

You might say there is room at their table.

We are a growing community with growing needs. We also have growing opportunities for kind folks with a flair for fun who don't mind rolling up their sleeves to work a little magic for a non-profit - all the while making friends for a lifetime.

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Extreme Makeover Santa Clarita Deadline: Signal May 2005

June 30 may be the deadline to apply for the coveted spot as Extreme Makeover Santa Clarita's newest face (and body, and hair, and...), but that hasn't stopped dozens of local residents from turning their apps in early. The hopeful crew of applicants is eager to win an once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for a complete head-to-toe makeover, and they're sharing their unique stories in an attempt to separate themselves from the herd. "We have already received so many touching applications," said Dr. Dell Goodrick, the Extreme Team's cosmetic dentist. "There are so many people out there that deserve to have their life changed for the better, and I for one can't wait to get started." This is the second time that Extreme Makeover Santa Clarita has scoured the valley hoping to change a life. The Extreme Team's first winner, Cherie Brazeal, describes her experience as a "Cinderella story." Brazeal's transformation was nothing less than astonishing; after a chin, nose, and breast reconstruction, along with liposuction, Cherie worked diligently with Cheryl Broughton of Fitness Edge Boot Camp to get in shape. The results were beautiful and can be seen at [www.extrememakeoversantaclarita.com](http://www.extrememakeoversantaclarita.com).

The recipient will receive the attention of local professionals, including Goodrick (cosmetic dentist), Dr. D. David Saadat (plastic surgeon), Dr. Marc Lussier (plastic surgeon), Cheryl Broughton (fitness expert), Margo (fashion expert), Udo (hairstylist), Candye Rucker (counselor), Dahb (makeup expert), and more. I Do Parties will arrange for the winner's coming-out party, Creative Image will provide photography services throughout the process, and Ray Carlson (attorney), Richard Schlottman (limo service), Salt Creek Grille and the Hyatt Valencia will also assist the recipient throughout their experience.

There is still time to apply for Extreme Makeover Santa Clarita. Applications are available at any of the participating professionals' locations or log on to [www.extrememakeoversantaclarita.com](http://www.extrememakeoversantaclarita.com), the KHTS website at [www.hometownstation.com](http://www.hometownstation.com). All applications must be postmarked by June 30, 2005. The winner will be announced in July