

Friends of Marin Center 2008 B.B. King Gala January 11, 2007

The Blues Supper Club was a sensational hit. The joint was jumpin'! Guests arrived at 6 PM in the white tent behind the Redwood Foyer and found themselves in a beautifully blue shimmer of a room, crowned with two large chandeliers made of masses of tiny blue lights, and the jazzy artwork of Logan Franklin. A delicious southern comfort buffet with jambalaya, pulled pork, tomato bisque, baked beans, hush puppies, corn bread, green salad and potato brava was beautifully presented by Marcus Lee and his staff at **An Affair to Remember**, who have been the caterer-sponsor of every FOMC gala for many years, and are definitely a big part of the reason that every year this festive event gets bigger and bigger! Last year the event got too big for the Redwood Foyer and expanded to a tent. This year it needed a bigger tent! After how much fun this year's gala was, no doubt next year's will require something even larger.

At the other end of the tent **Moylan's Brewery** served up beer, while wine and champagne donated by Gold Star member James Mochizuki, was being poured so generously, a new case was sent for.

Each sponsor had a table for their guests, which gave a nice intimacy for their enjoyment, and the rest had full use of undesignated tables and bistro tables, enjoying the mix and mingle of old Friends and new.

When it was time for the performance, all the guests headed into the auditorium. The first half of the concert was the Tommy Castro Band, which blew the house away. During the intermission, Gala guests could return to the gala tent. The second half of the concert was an intimate evening with B.B. King. He sat in his chair with Lucille on his lap and told stories, opined, and generally charmed the socks off over 2000 devoted fans, who savored every moment of their time 'sitting at the feet' of this absolutely brilliant musician, who has so rightfully earned his title as King of the Blues. He would burst into song, his voice incredibly powerful for his 82 years, and play his strings in such a way that all the heartstrings in the house were equally plucked. His band had quite a bit of personality and talent as well, and they got the audience singing back up. Not a person in the house was unaware of what a special treat this was for all.

When guests returned to the tent for the after-party, they were greeted with three choices of desserts. Fortunately they didn't have to actually choose. They could just have them all: A buffet of **Emporio Rulli** bite-sized pastries, **Ben & Jerry's** do it yourself ice cream sundae bar, and **Melting Pot's** chocolate fondue and strawberries. Coffee and tea were also served, as well as more wine and champagne.

The drawing for the raffle was a big hit, as Marty Rubino and Jayle Hale did a tandem reading of the chosen tickets and prizes such as dinners, massages and hot tubs, a limited edition print by local artist Logan Franklin. The raffle raised \$2000 as a nice addition to the evening's great fundraising success.

And then the crowning event of the whole evening was the arrival of Tommy Castro and his bass guitar player Scott Sullivan. Tables were cleared away to make room for all the bodies wanting to dance, and honey, the joint was jumpin'!

All of this was made possible thanks to the generosity of the sponsors and of the donors who participated in FOMC Board President Ida Baugh's matching program. Jayle Hale,

executive director of FOMC, has a creative genius for creating a party, and with the help of her amazing league of friend volunteers and the gala committee members, she has pulled off her most amazing triumph yet! All graphics for the event were designed by Stephanie Noble, and printing was donated by **Unicorn Printing Specialists**. The **Marin Independent Journal** donated advertising space to thank the wonderful sponsors who make it possible for **Friends of Marin Center** to do the life enriching work of *Assuring Access to the Arts* for all.

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