



John Campbell (LJB&TC general manager), Kathryn Gayner (2016 Jewel Ball chair), Leigh Plesniak (LP president 2017), Jorie Fischer (2017 Jewel Ball chair), Annette Bradbury (2015 LP president), Cari Massaad (2015 Jewel Ball chair), Lisa Betyar (2016 LP president), Bernard Guillas (Marine Room executive chef)



Kenneth Andersen (board chair, SD Maritime Museum [beneficiary]), Raymond Ashley (president/CEO, SD Maritime Museum [beneficiary]), Jennifer Kelly, Bill Kellogg (LJB&TC president), Jennifer Edstrom (2017 Jewel Ball co-chair), Sharon Luscomb



Michelle Parker, Kelly Kjos, Alison Lee, Michelle Wiseman, Randi Hegeler, Nicole Velazquez



Bill Littlejohn (CEO, Sharp Healthcare Foundation [beneficiary]), Shawna Fallon (Sharp Healthcare Foundation [beneficiary]), Maureen Weber (2016 Jewel Ball co-chair), Marie Browning, Cathy Maywood, Kelley Albence (2016 Jewel Ball co-chair)



Jena Joyce (2014 LP president), Micki Olin (2004 Jewel Ball chair), Danielle Delaney (New Haven Youth and Family Services [beneficiary]), Lin Fioletta, Doreen Quinn (New Haven Youth and Family Services [beneficiary]), Lydia McNeil (2009 LP president)

## A million-dollar giveaway

STORY AND PHOTOS BY VINCENT ANDRUNAS • SPECIAL TO THE U-T

### THE JEWEL BALL OF LAS PATRONAS

**O**ur San Diego community benefits tremendously from the tireless work of 50 prominent La Jolla women. Their group, known as Las Patronas, began 71 years ago. Members sign up for six or seven busy years as “actives,” during which they devote much of their time planning, designing — and building spectacular décor for — one of the region’s most significant black-tie social events, the Jewel Ball. It raises about \$1 million annually to benefit local charitable and cultural causes.

Such involvement builds lifelong friendships, enhancing a sense of social responsibility and a caring for the needs of others. Most “actives” later continue contributing as “advisories,” strengthening the program and the organization. LP has justly earned tremendous respect for its ongoing accomplishments.

One might think LP members’ happiest day would be Ball night, when they can enjoy what they’ve worked for all year. But they regard a much smaller party as the highlight of their year: the annual Beneficiary Luncheon, where most of the funds they raised are distributed.

This year’s happened Wednesday, at the noted Marine Room restaurant. (It’s part of the La Jolla Beach and Tennis Club, which generously donates the Jewel Ball venue, perennially.) There, LP members hosted representatives of 10 diverse

major beneficiaries, presenting them with checks averaging \$39,000. These grants fulfilled rigorously vetted needs, such as vans and trucks, facility renovations and even re-decking materials for the historic Star of India. Each recipient organization’s representative expressed heartfelt gratitude for the much-needed support.

Many more minor grants (\$20,000 and under) are funded in two rounds (November and March). Everything’s from the \$1,015,000 raised by 2016’s Jewel Ball, “Shangri-La,” all to benefit worthy nonprofit San Diego County organizations.

Additionally, The La Jolla Light — a Union-Tribune Community newspaper — received the Spirit of Giving Award for its support of LP and for its exemplary service to the community. And LP’s Legacy Society endowment, to which all are welcome to contribute, awarded its very first grant — to the Big Sister League.

The 106 luncheon attendees enjoyed the restaurant’s spectacular ocean views, and celebrated Executive Chef Bernard Guillas created a truly gourmet experience — an innovative salad with complex flavors, chimichurri-rubbed farm-raised chicken entrée, and “Trefolis” triple dessert.

Jewel Ball 2017, “Taking Flight,” lifts off Aug. 5. Don’t miss it!