

BURLINGAME DAILY NEWS

Powered by **topix**

Aug 21, 2008

Monday Aug 18



Adria Murray / Daily News

Laura Hannink rides her horse Indiscreet over a jump during the \$10,000 Maple Leaf Farm Ryman Memorial Speed Class competition on Aug. 8 at the 38th Menlo Charity Horse Show.

Riders go for the blue at Menlo Charity Horse Show

By Adria Murray / Society Columnist

On Aug. 8, as athletes from around the world took the international stage at the Opening Ceremony of the Summer Olympic Games, national horse riding champions took the field of Atherton's Menlo Circus Club to compete in the 38th Menlo Charity Horse Show's premier jumping event. Twenty-eight gold medal, er, blue ribbon hopefuls competed in the \$10,000 Maple Leaf Farm Ryman Memorial Speed Class as part of a benefit evening featuring fine dining, wine tasting, socializing, and of course, winning.

Preceding the elegant "Show Time" dinner gala, benefiting the Vista Center For the Blind and Visually Impaired, was the Ryman Memorial Speed Class competition and ringside cocktail hour in the Tom and Stacey Siebel-sponsored VIP tent.

The six-day horse show that began on Aug. 5 featured riders of various skill levels, from amateur to world-class competitors, who competed in three rings for titles in hunter, jumper and equestrian classes.

For a second year, rider Karl Cook took first place in the Ryman Memorial Speed Class, in which riders clear jumps in any order they choose. The colorful jumps, sponsored by local businesses, are fashioned to look like buildings, barns, shopping bags and gift boxes, among other things. Atop his winning horse, Notories Utopia, Cook was presented the blue ribbon by class sponsors Alex and Cathy Mendez, of Maple Leaf Farm private stables in Los Altos Hills.

Applauding Cook from prime seats in the VIP tent were dinner gala underwriters Bob Flury and Bob Bryant, of Flury Bryant Design Group, and their wives, event committee member Pat Flury and Sandra Bryant. Bob Flury said giving money to a great cause is preferable to spending it on advertising.

"I love sponsoring this event, even though I don't know a thing about horses," said Flury, adding jokingly, "Plus, the club always has a great wine selection."

Also mingling in the tent and sampling wines from Wild Horse Winery and Vineyards, Teira Wines, Horse Play, Gruet and Orchard Hills Atherton Vineyard were show sponsors Jim and Marsha Hannay of Rector Motor Car Co. and Kevin and Catherine Harvey of Rhys Vineyards.

Featuring an Audi fantasy road trip, a private jet flight card from Sentient Flight Group, Jaeger-LeCoultre Reverso men's and ladies' watches donated by Shreve & Co., and sapphire and diamond drop earrings donated by Darren McClung Precious Jewelry, among other big-ticket items, the night's auction grossed an

impressive \$95,000.

For the past 18 years, Vista Center For the Blind and Visually Impaired has been the horse show's nonprofit beneficiary, annually serving more than 1,900 individuals with sight loss in San Mateo, Santa Clara, San Benito and Santa Cruz counties. Vista Center's mission is to foster independence and improve clients' quality of life.

Making sure festivities went off without a hitch (in its giddy up) were VIP tent ambassador Susan Martin and her husband Gary Martin, dinner chairwoman Nancy Collins, auction co-chairwomen Catherine Larsen and Stephanie Ross, and show committee members Don DeFranco and Suzanne Rischman.

Show founder and co-chairwoman Betsy Glikbarg was busy throughout the evening greeting the more than 400 dinner guests and sponsors, most of whom she considers "friends." Event committee member Nan Chapman says Glikbarg can remember the names of every person on the 120-member event committee. And Chapman should know, she has gotten to know Glikbarg very well over the years, considering the two have worked together on the show since its beginning in 1970. At that time, the event committee had only six members.

Glikbarg and Chapman actually grew up together, and their mothers were good friends. But Chapman conceded, "We hated each other. Our mothers always made us play together."

But somehow, after college, the two managed to settle their differences, and years later built one of the top charity horse shows in the nation.

Not too shabby for a pair of former "frenemies."

E-mail Adria Murray at amurray@dailynewsgroup.com.