



Crystal Cove Conservancy's 2022 "Birds of a Feather" Soirée Returns, Raises Record \$618,000 For Education Programs

Crystal Cove, California, October 8th, 2022 – Over 200 sponsors and supporters danced into the night under a full moon at Crystal Cove Conservancy's 20th Annual soirée, the organization's most successful event yet. The soirée and live auction, which took place on the bluff top at Crystal Cove State Park, raised a record \$618,000 to support The Conservancy's Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) education programs at Crystal Cove State Park.

The soirée began at sunset with a cocktail reception, followed by a delicious al fresco dinner. In addition to the camaraderie and stunning ocean sunset views, Kate Wheeler, President & CEO of The Conservancy, shared stories about the impact it has on engaging students while addressing environmental challenges through conservation research and habitat restoration projects.

"Before participating in our programs – when we asked kindergartners to draw a picture of someone solving a problem in nature, they most often drew others – like grown-ups, park rangers, or animals, solving the problems. After their field experience here at Crystal Cove, they drew *themselves* solving the problems. And *that* is the point," said Wheeler.

And that point is derived from The Conservancy's belief that **the best way to learn science is by doing science**. Students coming to Crystal Cove learn alongside scientists and engineers, and the data they gather contribute to research, environmental monitoring, and ecological restoration projects. They aren't just watching science in action—they're doing it.

Wheeler then introduced the evening's special guest, California State Parks Director Armando Quintero, who emphasized the importance of making state parks accessible to all.

Following a moving speech by Director Quintero, the successful live auction kicked off to raise critical funds to support new and current programs that would expand the organization's reach into new schools. "This work is more important than ever as we see students returning to school with significant learning losses during covid," remarked Wheeler. The live auction included a prized bottle of 2013 Screaming Eagle Cabernet Sauvignon and 14 unique experiences at the Cove, including cottage stays. The fund-a-need portion saw great generosity from supporters, who understood the value their support lends to help with student scholarships for important STEM programs.

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Generous sponsors for the event include: Massen Greene Foundation, Eva and Doug Le Bon, Christine Carr/LoveLight, Lucy Donahue, Bonnie Gregory, Wendy and Fred Salter, Al Bennett and Rudi Berkelhamer, Mara and Keith Murray, Stephanie Quesada and Vince Jackson, Henry and Susan Samuelli, Michael and Sally Schreter, Shelley B. Thunen, Whittier Trust, Michael and Tricia Berns, Glenn Bozarth, Nate and Julie Chiaverini, Crevier Family Foundation, Michelle and Tim Dean, Ted and Roxana Herrick, Will and Jenny O'Neill, Teddie Ray, Sheets, Paquette and Wu Dental Practice, Karen and Eric Steen, Doniel and Jerry Sutton, Cyd and Steve Swerdlow, and several anonymous supporters.

This event was generously supported by Brian Dobbin, Inc., Foley Family Wines, Urban Gardener, Zinc Café and Market, and zpizza.

About Crystal Cove Conservancy

Crystal Cove Conservancy works to protect the historic, natural, and cultural resources of Crystal Cove State Park. Our unique public/private partnership with California State Parks means that all revenue raised is reinvested into programs that use the park as an outdoor classroom for STEM education. These programs will cultivate our planet's next generation of environmental stewards, ensuring that Crystal Cove and places like it live on for generations.

For more information, visit www.crystalcove.org.

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Image Caption: Guests enjoying the setting sun at the 20th annual Crystal Cove Conservancy Soirée, October 8, 2022. *Photo Credit: J. Christopher Launi.*



Image Caption: Special guest, California State Parks Director Armando Quintero, speaking to the Crystal Cove Conservancy's 200 guests about the value of parks. *Photo Credit: J. Christopher Launi.*



Image Caption: Auctioneer Subyn Novelle starts of the live auction with cult-wine favorite Screaming Eagle. *Photo Credit: J. Christopher Launi.*

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