

DAILY BREEZE

## PHILANTHROPY

# Benefit helps Palos Verdes Peninsula Land Conservancy protect open spaces



Key supporters and sponsors Sponsors of the PVPLC's Palos Verdes Pastoral benefit at Terranea Resort include board President Bill Swank, event Co-Chair Diana Heffernan-Schrader, William Hadley, Jacqueline Glass, Diane and Jim Staes, Janet Grothe of Phillips 66, artist Dan Dempster, and Alice Wong of Whole Foods.

By [Meredith Grenier](#), *The Daily Breeze*

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Our extended Indian summer offered a rare gift to supporters of the Palos Verdes Peninsula Land Conservancy, who dined under the stars on the Catalina terrace lawn of Terranea Resort.

The annual benefit, called “Palos Verdes Pastoral — A Garden-to-Table Dining Experience on the Peninsula,” offered passed hors d’oeuvres, a five-course dinner prepared by Terranea’s executive chef Bernard Ibarra, and six samplings of choice wines. Add to this a perfect Palos Verdes Peninsula sunset and a rain-free, balmy evening — even as other parts of the Hill were soaked.

It was Mother Nature’s gift to her prime protector, the PVPLC, which since its founding in 1988 has preserved more than 1,600 acres, restored native habitat and protected rare and threatened native species.

According to guest Bill Ailor, the conservancy’s founder, who remains on the PVPLC board, the organization is doing very well.

“We still would like to acquire a couple more acres of land around here,” he said, “particularly above the glass church.”

He added that the conservancy has made a point of protecting open spaces by working together with landowners, developers and the community.

“I think this evening is a great example of that,” he added.

The event, headed by co-chairs Diana Heffernan-Schrader and Sharon Ryan, featured food and wine donated from producers around the state, with 100 percent of the proceeds benefiting the conservancy. Terranea Resort and Whole Foods Market in Torrance were the major sponsors.

As guests filtered into this magical setting on the Palos Verdes Peninsula cliffs, they were offered the signature drink — a juniper berry cocktail, made of TRU gin, Jasmine liqueur, lemon juice, sugar syrup and topped with a purple sage flower. Served in an old-fashion glass on ice, the drink was a big hit. Terranea’s servers offered them to the sell-out crowd of about 200 at the \$250-a-plate dinner.

“It has a wonderful, aromatic essence,” said Mike Gin, who is running for Los Angeles County supervisor. “It’s a pleasure to support this land conservancy, which has been one of the leading preservation and conservation organizations in the country.”

Longtime supporter Ginny Bleier was on hand with traveling buddy Mary Graff. Other major benefactors included Rebecca Cool, Harlyne Norris, Bruce Biesman-Simons and Silver & Sage Steward benefactors Arthur and Jeanne Hadley, to name a few.

Benefactor Jacqueline Glass brought friends, including Ann and Chuck La Franchi. Glass was on hand with friend Jim Kenny.

“I support the conservancy because I love this beautiful and unusual place and want to preserve it for our children and grandchildren,” she said.

The venue at Terranea, the professional staff, the guests — many of whom seemed to be seasoned hikers, nature lovers and ecologists — all blended for an evening of camaraderie and food and wine at its best.

With many new faces in the crowd, organizers were heartened at the support the PVPLC received, not only at its annual fundraiser, but also at its frequent volunteer programs

and docent-led education programs at both George F Canyon Nature Center and White Point Nature Education Center, featuring three naturalists.

A high point of the evening was the announcement of the winner of two raffle prizes — a plein air painting by artist Dan Dempster, an East Coast artist who has become captivated by the local coastline. The painting was won by Mark Paullin. Also, a two-night stay in a three-bedroom villa at Terranea was won by Jerry Duhovic.

Even as guests reluctantly said goodbye, they left with smiles on their faces and goodie bags in their hands, filled with fig jam (made by PVPLC Development Director Susan Wilcox and Vice President Cassie Jones), a jar of almond butter, several area magazines and the recipe for the TRU Juniper cocktail. All was well in paradise!