

# ACT for MS astrological gala honors a Virgo

Marc Byrd, Special to The Desert Sun 10:30 a.m. PT March 25, 2017

Where in the world would one find a High School Marching Band, Cheerleaders, Fortune Tellers, Taro Card Reader, Magicians, Card Sharks, Mind Readers, Zodiac Costumes, Dancing, a Five Star Dinner, and lively music? That's easy.... a room in Indian Wells into which **Jamie Kabler** just walked!

ACT for MS recently honored Kabler, a well-known public servant, community activist, author and philanthropist at its Annual Spring Gala. Kabler's energy and enthusiasm have propelled him through demanding jobs including as Chief Protocol Officer under President Ford during the Bicentennial. Kabler's support of the Betty Ford Center (he created the Beamer Awards) has raised over two million dollars for its Children's Program. He also authored a book "The Hollywood Diet."



ACT for MS co-chairs (l-r) Richard DeSantis, Nancy Stone, and Marc Byrd. (Photo: Lani Garfield/Special to The Desert Sun)

Most recently, Kabler created the Rancho Mirage Writers' Festival, now in its 5th year and international in scope. Kabler often says, "Service to others is the rent we pay for the rooms we occupy on the earth." With that in mind, one might say that Kabler has earned the right to live in the Coachella Valley rent-free in perpetuity.

### **GALA SPONSORS**

Contributors included Houdini Benefactors, Galen Family Foundation and **Harold Matzner**; Zodiac Benefactors, **Suz Hunt and Nancy Stone**; Mind Readers, Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians, **Peggy Cravens**, Eisenhower Medical Center, **Donna MacMillan**, and **Mike & Jan Salta** Foundation; Fortune Tellers, **Steve Evans** and **Nelda Linsk**; Magical Mystery Donors **Barbara Keller**, **Marion** and **Robert Rosenthal**, and **Weinstein** Family Foundation.

Underwriters included **Nancy Stone** and **Richard DeSantis** (entertainment) Richard DeSantis (production) **Peggy Cravens** (dinner wine) **Marc Byrd** and **Al Jones** (table décor) and ACT for MS Client Table Sponsors **Duane** and **Lola Hagadone**, and **Penny Mason**.

ACT for MS Board of Directors President **Margot Nelligan** opened the program and introduced tri-chairs **Nancy Stone**, **Richard DeSantis**, **Marc Byrd**, and emcee **Jim "Fitz" Fitzgerald**. In keeping with the event's astrological theme, Stone said, "Jamie, you are a Virgo, so your destiny is to contribute knowledge, thought and imagination that benefits humanity." Then she added, "Another thing about you is your ability to be everywhere at once -- but the Rancho Mirage Mayor and City Council want to keep you here today so they have issued a proclamation making today the 2017 Jamie Kabler Day."

Radio personality and show producer Jim "Fitz" Fitzgerald, emceed and welcomed **Helene Galen** and **Harold Matzner** to the stage where Helene described Jamie, "as a remarkable man with a phenomenal ability to remember everyone he has ever met, including where, when, and all of their families." Helene continued, "He has been my partner for eight years and spends his days worrying over me, and he has been blessed with a wonderful daughter and three grandchildren."

Matzner, sticking to the magical theme, said, "I know no one who can pull a rabbit out of a hat better or more quickly than my friend Jamie Kabler." He continued, "Jamie, through your creativity, sense of purpose, willpower, and passion, you remain a source of inspiration, strength, and support for so many in the Valley and beyond."



(l-r) Faye Sarkowsky, Bobbie Holland, Lindell Campbell, and the McCallum's Betty Wolf. (Photo: Lani Garfield/Special to The Desert Sun)

Without Jamie's knowledge, some surprises were being set up outside the ballroom. Suddenly, the Desert Hot Springs High School Cheerleaders assembled in front of the stage, and Matzner shouted, "So, let's cheer for Jamie!" With that, the cheerleaders and guests began cheering, "2 - 4 - 6 - 8 - who do we appreciate? JAMIE, JAMIE, JAMIE, JAMIE, JAMIE." Meanwhile, out in the foyer, Al Jones was hiding the Rancho Mirage Marching Band -- no small endeavor! Then he quickly led them, playing their school fight song, into and around the entire ballroom. Jamie was overwhelmed and gasped, "I want to thank everyone for this honor. Thank you, Thank you!"

### **A MAGICAL DINNER, AUCTION & LAUGHS**

Returning dinner chair Peggy Cravens outdid herself this year, crafting a creative five-star dining experience. A "mysterious" crab cocktail was served – smoking -- in a blue-lit bowl (thanks to a little dry ice). The unique salad was then followed by a choice of filet mignon, coconut chicken, or vegetable strudel and the desserts were topped with an edible white chocolate photo disk of Jamie's face.



Rancho Mirage Mayor Ted Weill with Gala HOUDINI Sponsors Helene Galen and Harold Matzner. (Photo: Lani Garfield/Special to The Desert Sun)

Professional Auctioneer **Robert Aguilar** with The Stokes Auction Group conducted a "Fund A Need" donation auction for urgently needed services. Then the main auction offered deluxe vacations, golf, an African safari, and a Spy Party for 25 guests with a retired couple who were CIA operatives. It was the most successful ACT for MS Gala Live Auction ever.

The entertainer, **Greg Wilson**, known as "The Gentleman Magician" has been a TV and stage star since he was six years old and he recently won the "FU" award from Penn and Teller on their "Fool Us" TV show "Fool Us". Aguilar solicited the ever-artsy, **Donna MacMillan** (wearing a feathered rooster costume) and **Diane Rubin** to be part of his disappearing egg trick. Galen's granddaughter **Katie Galen** volunteered and was returned safely to her grandmother after "her Lady-In-A-Spiked Box" trick.

#### **DANCING, FLOWERS & GUESTS**

The returning ACT for MS "Rocketeers" performed for their third Gala. Al Jones, Gary Hall, Jerry Green, Chuck Hilliar, and Marc Byrd shot 60 cannons of Mylar streamers and confetti over the dance floor to announce "dance time" with music by the Tea for Two duet with **Giuseppe Viola** and **Adriana Ortega**.

The creative table centerpieces were black and gold top hats resting on tinsel and ribbons with glittering rabbits popping out of the hats. Giant playing cards, Taro cards, magic wands



and tabletop stars completed the floral magic designed by Marc Byrd and his team from Beverly Hills. Design partner **George Martinez** and designer **Ines Gutierrez** were hosted by Al Jones and Marc Byrd who underwrote the table décor.



The audience cheers for Lifetime Achievement award recipient Jamie Kabler. (Photo: Lani Garfield/Special to The Desert Sun)

Guests seen enjoying this magical evening included **Katie Galen, Arthur and Patty Newman, Ogniana Masser, Shellie Reade, Bob Reade, Gary Hall and Jerry Green, Palm Desert mayor Jan Harnik and her husband Brian, RM mayor Ted Weill with wife Jenny, Marge Barry, Michael Childers, Nancy Tapick, Betty Francis, Gad Amith, ACT for MS Executive Director Lupe Ramos Watson, Carl Gilmore and Michael Smith, Carol Probst, Don Alexander, Jim and Carol Egan, Ann Heavey, RM Councilman Dana Hobart and wife Vicki, Raju Mehta, Peggy Jacobs, Norma Greer-Fishkind, Betty Wolf, Mike and Sally Traidman, Michael and Christine Gennet, Mary Silver, Bill and Cissie Bramer, Craig and Maryann Farnsworth, Marie Staudhammer, Kay Hanson and Michael R. Davis, DeAnn Lubell, Carl Gilmore, Nachatar and Susanna Chandi, John Sacchi and Stephen Simoni, Cash and Betty Baxter, Sarah Milmet, Mitch Blumberg, Lindell Campbell, Diane Rubin and Lenny Eber, Bill Nicholson, Liz Armstrong, Angie Gerber, Vern Kozlen, Aubrey and Lori Serfing, Betty Callies, Chuck Hilliar, Bob Archer, Hal and Diane Gershowitz, Faye Sarkowsky, Sid Craig, Gene and Barbara Berlanti, David and Marguerite Wilson, Anne Pope, Maddy Redstone, Bill and Cyd Osterman, Dorothy Meyerman, Jerry and Barbara Keller, Tyrone Hofmann,**

**and Jim and Peggy Greenbaum.**

Additional Board of Directors present included **Ann Greer, Phil and Rose Richards, Burt and MariEllen Boss, Bill and Barbara Marx, and Carol Morton.**



Auction excitement started early with Nelda Linsk, Don Alexander, Patty Newman, JoAnn Davis, and Carol Probst. (Photo: Lani Garfield/Special to The Desert Sun)

Information on ACT For MS and its client services (and the upcoming summer event "Jazz It Up!") phone 760-773-9806 or visit [actforms.org](http://actforms.org).