

The 11th Annual

MILITARY BALL

By **Andria Watson** / CASA

SACRIFICE AND COURAGE in times of war were the theme of the 11th Annual Military Ball that featured guest speaker **Tom Brokaw**, who gave thanks to generations of veterans and toasted the 237th birthday of the Marines. The event took place on Saturday, November 10th, at the Barcara Resort and Spa.

"Left, right, or in the middle, we are all bound together in peace and in war," stated Tom Brokaw, a nationally recognized T.V. commentator and journalist, to the crowd of 300 people.

The Military Ball was started by well known and respected philanthropist **Pierre Claeysens** in 1997. The Ball was organized as a way to honor and remember veterans in the Santa Barbara area. In 2003 **John Blankenship** founded the Pierre Claeysens Veterans' Museum & Library, which has continued and supported the annual Ball. Blankenship gave the opening welcome at this year's event.

"Brokaw gave a message to all Americans tonight that needed to be heard," commented General **Fred Lopez** Ret.

The event continued the tradition of Posting of Colors by the USMC Color Guard, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance, led by **Leon Tice**, a Bataan Death March survivor. Then the National Anthem was sung under the leadership of Sergeant **Dave Gonzales**.

"There was flawless ease and compassion in Brokaw's words and respect in his voice. It was a pleasure to listen to him speak," said ret. Navy Captain **Ben Short**.

In attendance were two Auchwitz survivors, **Norman and Rose Jaffe**, who were dancing to '40s and '50s tunes by the live band, The Swing Shift, by **Tom Henson**. "Think of everything those two have seen, and they're still with us," Brokaw pointed out.

Grilled prime filet of beef and Santa Barbara prawns with a black truffle béarnaise and asparagus was served for dinner, and a delicious cinnamon apple provence with Tahitian vanilla bean ice cream and caramel walnut sauce was prepared for dessert.

The rest of the night was spent exchanging experiences, and sharing war stories while doing the Charleston on the ballroom floor. Claeysens words resonated the entire event: "To be killed in war is not the worst that can happen. To be lost is not the worst that can happen... to be forgotten is the worst."



Auchwitz survivors **Rose** and **Norman Jaffe**



Joan Roberts and Sergeant Major **Robert Fourties** Ret.



The United States Marine Color Guard



Top: **Robert Johns** and **John Chufar**



Standing: **Perry** and **Suzanne Perkins**, **John** and **Hazel Blankenship**, Sitting: **Ralph** and **Diane MacFarlane**, and **Tom Brokaw**.

Scholarship sponsors included Diane and Ralph MacFarlane, The Rabers, Community West Bank, American Riviera Bank, Fess Parker Winery, Woods Claeysens Foundation, Northrop Grumman, Raytheon, Hayward's Design Center, John and Hazel Blankenship, and the Santa Barbara Navy League.



Mildred and Colonel **George Woolsey** Ret.



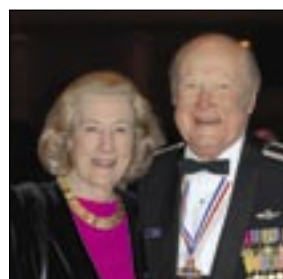
Robert Johns and **Harriet Meaker**



Peter Jordano and **Gerd Jordano**



Judge **Floyd Dodson**, **Billie Dodson**, **Diane Arguelles**, and Dr. **John Arguelles**



Barbara and Colonel **Ben Walsh** Ret.



Lynn and **Robert Burtness**



Kay Yee, **Danny Ramirez**, **Eve Somers**, and **Donnie Yee**



Seated: **Ed Beltran**, **Norma Lagomarsino**, Honorable **Robert J. Lagomarsino**, and **Donna Brown** Standing: **Livianna Beltran**, **Dennis Merenbach**, **Lynn Merenbach**, **Richard Rogers**, **Rose Jaffe**, **Mrs. Rogers**, **Norm Jaffe**, Sheriff **Bill Brown**, and Police Sgt. **Dave Gonzales**



Seated: **Dick Skare**, **Daryl Skare**, **Leonard Paredes**, and **Keri Rodriguez**, Standing: **Cliff Meznarich**, **Sophia Meznarich**, **Larry Rodriguez**, **Julie** and **John Slagle**.

See more **Photos by Priscilla** at santabarbaraseen.com
Contact her at priscilla@santabarbaraseen.com • (805) 969-3301