

# Golf, Guitars & A Good Cause

Celebrities and PGA TOUR professionals arrived en masse to turn the usually laid-back town of Celebration, FL into a weekend scene of revelry and good sport – all for a great cause: raising money for over 15 local charities aimed at improving the lives of children.

Stars checked in to the elegant Celebration Hotel and then the Town Tavern on Saturday, March 18 to begin the festivities of the third annual Robert Gamez Foundation Celebrity Invitational. Lucky patrons were thrilled to catch site of Josh Taylor (Days of our Lives and BH 90210) and were entertained by Gary Valentine (King of Queens) and Burton "Bubba" Gilliam (Blazing Saddles). The only thing missing was the campfire.

Foundation board member Jimmy Ippoliti wined and dined Mike Reno (Loverboy), John Cafferty, Darius Rucker (Hootie & the Blowfish) and many more stars treating them to the "Celebration experience". Brother Jeff was even on hand to give younger fans a thrilling ride in his Ferrari.

Sunday Morning began with an additional golf day with celebrities - including 7-time CY Young winner Roger Clemens – for the major sponsors: Ginn Clubs & Resorts, First Guarantee Mortgage, Mona Lisa Development, Valero Texas Open and Cardinal Health. This was a great tune up for the Pro-AM with the Tour pros and celebrities on Monday.

The Golf Channel was onsite for Sunday evening's gala held at the Orlando World Center Marriott to film the final episode of The Daly Planet, capturing John Daly bidding \$5,000 for his good friends, Sister Hazel's guitar – forget that he gets them free (John also paid \$100 for a glass of lemonade from the Meury-McCarthy-Caughorn Kid's Lemonade Stand, which raised over \$1,300).

Celebration's finest businesses came out to support the cause with generous sponsorships. Seen waving paddles vigorously along with some very interesting dance moves were

Gaw Realty-Mirasol (Pattie Gaw), Infusion Capital (Kelly McCarthy), Overture (Cookie Kelly), Celebration Realty (Kim Hawk), Ron & Madge Smith, Tom and Arabelle Brown and Celebration Health. Thanks also to our fun "out of towners", Brassfield & Gorie, Interstate Distributors, The Ritz-Carlton, All Fired Up and Mega Prints.

Volunteers from Florida Hospital along with Mark Bebermeyer, Ann



By Scott Seigel  
Photos by IPI Photography

Whelen and Joe Davidson transformed the otherwise typical hotel ballroom into a trendy SoHo night club, the perfect setting for Hootie & the Blowfish, Sister Hazel, John Caffery, Michael "Tunes" Antunes and Mike Reno of Loverboy to take center stage.

Silent and Live Auction items were in the "Wow" category with jewelry from Tiffany, Doron Diamond Merchant, artwork by world-renowned artist Jamali and fabulous trips. The auction was very spirited with several ladies vying for a trip of a lifetime to Hollywood and a personal tour of Days of our Lives with Josh Taylor. And, everyone wave to the Wilks' as they drive their new Columbia NEV around town, donated by Wheelz of Celebration.



John Daly

The party continued at the Town Tavern with "Tunes", Michael Antunes and Mark Macri

wowing the late night crowd. Gary Valentine and Robert Gamez proved they have no future in singing.

Monday's Pro-Am was a huge success pairing amateur golfers with a celebrity and PGA TOUR star. On hand were Pat Perez, Olin Browne, Carlos Franco, Rich Beem, John Cook and many others including the crowd favorite John Daly. John did not fail to entertain shooting playing barefoot and shooting a course record 63.

"We're fortunate to have such a fine facility with a first-rate management team and staff in our back yard", commented Robert Gamez on the fabulous job the Celebration Golf Club did as host of the event. Trophies and great prizes were awarded at the luncheon provided by Ruth's Chris Steak House. The Golf Channel was also on hand to shooting footage for the nationally televised "Inside the PGA TOUR" which will air Tuesday, March, 28. Special thanks to the Market Street Café for providing breakfast for attendees prior to the golf tournament.

Scott Siegel, Chairman of the 2006 event, projects this year's proceeds to exceed \$400,000. The Gamez's attribute the success of the event to the hard work of the Board including Bill Bona, Jim Caughorn, Gene Garrote, Lynn Gamez, Kim Hawk, Jim Ippoliti, Kelly McCarthy, Mike Mekdec, Jim Murphy and Richard Staley.

The Robert Gamez Foundation has a long history of providing funds to children's charities, notably Florida Hospital's Celebration Health. Due to the fabulous success of the event the Board has been able to grant money to many worthy causes including Boys and Girls Club, Help Now Shelter, Make-a-Wish, MD Anderson and Children's Home Society. 🙏



Josh Taylor of Day of Our Lives



Robert Gamez welcomes guests to the Gala.

