

## **Carrie Fisher full of zany charm in San Jose**

By Sal Pizarro  
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For the record, I was 11 when "Return of the Jedi" was released, so it's entirely possible I've got some adolescent Princess Leia issues.

But I wasn't alone being slack-jawed and tongue-tied when **Carrie Fisher** popped in at a reception and dinner attended by San Jose Rep board members and supporters before her one-woman show, "Wishful Drinking" on Friday night.

Up close, with sparkling blue eyeliner and a tattoo on her right ankle, the 51-year-old's blend of normalcy and celebrity was disarming. It wasn't even too awkward when she asked the dinner guests, "Is anybody mentally ill?"

Fisher bounded from table to table at the pool patio of The 88, the swanky condo building that sprouted up next to the Rep's Hammer Theatre Center. We were at a table with board member **Elaine Knoernschild**, whose husband, **Harvey**, got a big hug from Fisher when he said he went to school with her mom, **Debbie Reynolds**.

Board member **Sam Prather** got one, too, when he told Fisher that he's been a fan of hers since the 1970s. "I'm still catching up to you," she quipped, saying her memory has been spotty because of electroshock treatment.

And while I heard several reports that Fisher was wobbly on Wednesday's opening night, she was in hilarious form Friday. The limited-engagement show continues through Saturday before heading to Hartford, Conn.

**EARLY DONORS:** The fifth-graders at San Jose's River Glen Elementary School seem to have their hearts and heads in the right place. The school follows the PeaceBuilders program, which is supposed to create a caring school climate, and holds a PeaceBuilders party each year to raise money for local charities.

This year, the students decided to support their local libraries, and counselor **Karen Kochenburg** sent a \$200 check to the San Jose Public Library Foundation.

**Mary McClane**, the library foundation's executive director, told me the students' donation will be recognized on the donor wall of the Willow Glen Branch Library, which has its grand opening Aug. 23.

**CLASSIC ARTIST:** Talent gets recognized at any age. Just ask **Anadel Law**. The Palo Alto resident lives at Classic Residence by Hyatt, which had an art contest for residents at each

of its 19 retirement communities around the country. Two rounds of judging were held locally, with the final decisions being made at the corporate office in Chicago.

In Palo Alto, Law's beautiful watercolor, "California Pastoral," was selected and will be featured on a set of elegant note cards.

**AWARDS:** Some good news for a few residential nursing facilities in the South Bay recognized for outstanding patient care by My InnerView, an independent research firm that honored 299 facilities nationwide (including 13 in California).

Among the local honorees were Villa Siena, a residential care and nursing facility operated by Daughters of Charity in Mountain View, Los Gatos Meadows and Valley Convalescent and Rehabilitation Center in Watsonville.

**TRANSITION:** There's been a change at the top for AIDS Coalition Silicon Valley, which annually hosts the Walk for AIDS Silicon Valley and the Unmask the Mysteries Gala.

**Dane Dugan**, who had been the event supervisor for the San Mateo County Fair, took over last week as executive director, replacing **Marta Donayre**. **Ray Mueller**, events coordinator for the AIDS Coalition, said Donayre had moved on to "pursue other opportunities."

**RELIEF CONCERT:** A couple of entertainers with Silicon Valley ties are taking part in a concert in San Francisco on Saturday to support relief efforts for victims of the recent natural disasters in China and Burma.

"American Idol" semifinalist **Paul Kim**, who hails from Saratoga, and Burmese-American songstress **Natalise**, who went to Stanford University, will be joining San Francisco band Mud at the concert. Doors open at the Glas Kat Supper Club (520 Fourth St., San Francisco) at 6 p.m. Tickets are \$40 at the door.

**MASTER OF HISTORY:** I pretty much swore off school after I graduated from the University of California-Santa Barbara with my oh-so-useful bachelor's degree in political science, but **Ron Rossi** has given me some hope that it's never too late to go back.

A founding partner in the San Jose law firm Rossi, Hamerslough, Reischl & Chuck, he recently was awarded a master's degree in history from San Jose State University at age 64. Clearly, he's got the tenacity of a lawyer: He started the process back in 2001.

**GETTING JAZZED:** I'm loading an album of Cuban music onto my iPod and dusting off my Panama hat to get in the mood for "Havana Nights," the San Jose Jazz Festival's fundraising gala Saturday.

Two bands - Tito y su Son de Cuba and Orquesta La Moderna Tradición - will be filling the Mexican Heritage Plaza with music during the evening.

The festival itself gets going Aug. 8. For tickets to the gala, call (408) 287-7557, ext. 2316.