

LIFE & STYLE

Pledging Allegiance



Honoree Steiner, a county supervisor who's retiring from political office, with Christiane D'Ambrosio.



Tom Jones was among guests at the Red, White, Blue & Orangewood ball held Saturday in Irvine.

■ Patriots support Orangewood Children's Foundation and honor William Steiner.

The event: Red, White, Blue & Orangewood, a star-spangled Orange Blossom Ball held Saturday at the Hyatt Regency Irvine. The patriotic party benefited the Orangewood Children's Foundation for the support and care of abused and neglected children.

Old Glory: The Fourth of July came early to the Hyatt, where 700 guests were greeted at a cocktail reception by Bill and Hillary Clinton look-alikes and the USC Trojan Marching Band playing rousing versions of patriotic tunes. In keeping with the request for patriotic black-tie attire, some men sported stars-and-stripes cummerbund sets with their tuxedos, and several women sported firecracker-red dresses. After dinner, Jacqueline Foster Showdance entertained the crowd with a song-and-dance revue.

Steiner saluted: Party planners chose the theme in honor of Orange County Supervisor William G. Steiner, who was instrumental in the development of Orangewood. "He's retiring from political office, and he's really Mr. Orangewood. It was his vision, and he made it happen," said Mary Hamilton, who chaired the event with her husband, Harry.

Said Steiner: "There's so much satisfaction when you turn a child's life around."

William Lyon, foundation board member, announced the establishment of a \$300,000 scholarship fund in Steiner's name

to enable children who have been to Orangewood to attend college or trade school.

By the numbers: Orangewood Children's Home in Orange opened in 1985 to provide emergency shelter for 236 abused children. Because of rising number of reported cases of abuse in Orange County (from 34,675 total cases in 1996 to 39,808 in 1997), the population frequently exceeds the home's capacity—to an average of 257 last year. This month, 292 children stayed at the shelter.

"No matter how many beds we build, we always need more," said Gene Howard, executive director of Orangewood. "Our greatest challenge is to find a way to decrease the population."

Quote: "If you look into the backgrounds of [abused] children, the most pervasive issue is abuse of drugs and alcohol by the parent," Howard said. "Until we deal with that problem, we can't expect to see a decline in abuse cases."

Faces: Dave Schafer, master of ceremonies; John and Merry Hagstad; Henry and Susan Samuel; Henry and Stacy Nicholas; Alan and Teri Hoops; Doug and Kristi DeCinces; Richard and Beth Gochmeyer; Eric and Shirley Peppys; and Dennis and Judy Sweeney.

Bottom line: The gala netted more than \$300,000 for the foundation. Proceeds will support the shelter and other services for abused and neglected children.

What's ahead: The Doug DeCinces Orangewood Golf Tournament on Sept. 28 at Strawberry Farms golf course, Irvine. Call (714) 741-9383.

—KATHRYN BOLD



Kristie and Rene Vega hit the dance floor. Eric Redd, left, performs with Showdance before a crowd of 700.