

SOFO's 37th Annual Summer Gala Celebrated the Power of the Natural World in Bridgehampton

Fabien Cousteau, Bernadette Castro, Louise and Stephen Pesce, and Jean Shafiroff honored at Benefit supporting environmental education and conservation campaign

NEW YORK, NY, UNITED STATES, July 17, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The South Fork Natural History Museum and Nature Center, known as SOFO, held its 37th Annual Summer Gala Benefit at the museum in Bridgehampton, themed "Celebrate the Power of Our Natural World: Protecting Our Planet's Living Waters & Lands." The gala supported the South Fork Natural History Museum and Nature Center's environmental education, museum programming, conservation initiatives and community outreach, bringing together conservation leaders, philanthropists, civic supporters and Hamptons guests for one of the East End's signature summer benefits.

The 2026 honorees included Fabien Cousteau, renowned aquanaut, ocean conservationist and documentary filmmaker; Bernadette Castro, esteemed civic leader and environmental advocate; Louise and Stephen Pesce, devoted supporters of conservation and community initiatives; and Jean Shafiroff, advocate, philanthropist and humanitarian.

The evening began with a VIP cocktail reception, featuring a special tasting menu from acclaimed chefs, restaurants and beverage sponsors. The benefit party included dinner, presentation to



SOFO Logo



SOFO Board President Andy Sabin with honorees, Bernadette Castro, Fabien Cousteau, Jean Shafiroff, Louise and Stephen Pesce (Photo Credit: Lisa Tamburini)

the Honorees, a live auction led by special guest auctioneer Angela LaGreca and dancing.

Notable attendees at the opening night VIP reception included: Andy Sabin, Fabien Cousteau, Bernadette Castro, Louise and Stephen Pesce, Jean Shafiroff, Diane Aceti, Angela LaGreca, Jill Zarin, Bradford Rand, John Catsimatidis, Susan Rockefeller, Tommy John Schiavoni, Erica Noble & Ray Iwanowski, Kim and Greg Lippmann, Michael Ulica, Carl Safina, Barbara and Stan Arkin, Jesse Matsouka, Jessica Matsouka, Barbara and Steve Grapstein, Felicitas and Peer Kohl, and Ada Samuelsson.

The gala host committee included Erica Noble and Ray Iwanowski, Kim and Greg Lippmann, Mark Masone, Mirella Cameron-Riley, Susan and David Rockefeller, Samriti and Scott Seltzer, and Lisa Tamburini.

Participating names included Amagansett Wines & Spirits, Bell & Anchor, Channing Daughters Winery, East Hampton Grill, Events by Peter Ambrose, Golden Pear Cafe, Hampton Coffee Company, J.A. Baczewski Monopolowa Gin & Vodka, Kidd Squid Brewing Co., LALO Tequila, LDV at the Maidstone, Lobster Roll/LUNCH, Michael Cinque, Page Sag Harbor, Sen, Shellworks, Shippy's, Springs Tavern & Grill, Talkhouse Encore, The Palm Restaurant and Wölffer Estate Vineyard.

Gala sponsors included 2026 Hamptons Concours d'Elegance by Rand Luxury (providers of an Aston Martin on display from Aston Martin of Long Island), Decco by Party Up Productions, DG Creative Media, Dylan's Candy Bar, Evelyn Alexander Wildlife Rescue Center, Hampton Coffee Company, National Geographic – Lindblad Expeditions, Russell Mittermeier, Carl Safina & The Safina Center, Something Different Party Rental, Summerhill Landscape and Whitmores.



Andy Sabin (Photo Credit: PMC / Michael Ostuni)



Susan Rockefeller, Annabelle Schultz (Photo Credit: PMC / Michael Ostuni)

Media sponsors included Dan's Papers, Hamptons Magazine, The Express News Group and James Lane Post.

About The South Fork Natural History Museum and Nature Center:

The South Fork Natural History Museum and Nature Center is a family-friendly natural history museum in Bridgehampton dedicated to exploration, discovery, environmental education and conservation. Through museum exhibits, programs, field walks, marine education, citizen science and community initiatives, SOFO helps children, families and adults better understand and protect the natural world of the East End and beyond.

For further information, please visit: www.sofo.org
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Jean Shafiroff (Photo Credit: PMC / Michael Ostuni)

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