

Newport Harbor alumni entertained

The inaugural "Lights Up" performance and fundraiser May 15 showcased artists from Newport Harbor High School's past and present. The high-energy performance entertained the crowd in the campus' sparkling rebuilt Robert B. Wentz Theater.

Newport Harbor alumnus **Deb Marley**, class of '91, directed a production that included talent in drama, music, voice and dance.

A highlight of the



B.W. Cook
The Crowd

performance was the musical participation of the 28-piece Newport Harbor High School Midshipmen Jazz Band.

In a revival number dating to the 1940s, the band was joined by dancers **Cat Boettner** and **Kami Kurisu** for a performance that raised the energy level of the entire audience.

Twenty drama students performed highlights from Stephen Sondheim's "Into The Woods."

The production had major significance because it was the last musical play performed in the old theater before it was demolished, as well as the first play performed in the new theater.

Also on hand was **Gregg Schwenk**, Newport Harbor High School class of '86, who is co-founder and chief executive of the Newport Beach Film Festival.

Schwenk joined actor **Anthony Zerbe**, class of '54, in sharing memories of participating in the drama department at the high school during their respective four years at



LIGHTS UP: Karl Fuller, Kary Fuller, "Lights Up" co-chairwoman, Lisa Gels, "Lights Up" co-chairwoman and Al Gels enjoy themselves at a successful "Lights Up" post-theater party at the Environmental Nature Center.

Newport Harbor.

Felicity Claire, class of '01, came to the crowd via video from New York City where she performs in the show "Mamma Mia" at the Winter Garden Theatre.

After the show guests were shuttled down 16th Street to the Environmental Nature Center for dinner catered by Jay's Catering, a silent and live auction, and a performance by a Newport Harbor High School 70s-era band called "Kings Road."

Band members returning for the reunion were **Jeff Bitetti**, '78, **Terry Cline**, '74, **Ross Harris**, '73, **Jim Helfrich**, '76, and **John Ferraro**, '73, who just happens to be the drummer for Barry Manilow and Boz Scaggs. Another high school musician who made it to the top was **Terry Lawless**, friend of the Harbor boys. Lawless plays keyboard, saxophone and flute and tours with U2.

The "Lights Up" evening

was co-chaired by **Kary Fuller** and **Lisa Gels**, board members of the Newport Harbor Educational Foundation.

In the crowd were **Sandra and Don Ayres**, **Molly and John Calder**, **Evan and Tom Corkett**, **Kelly and Stuart Cooper**, president of the Newport Harbor Educational Foundation **Carol Franzen** and her husband, **Mark Franzen**, the super-talented Broadway to Newport transplant, **Linda Giannini**, who served as a script consultant for the performance with her husband **Val Giannini**, **Kathy and Bunker Hill**, master of ceremonies for the evening **Steven Johnston**, **Lisa and Bill Johnston**, and **Diana Long**, executive director of the Educational Foundation, with her husband, **Bob Long**.

Also supporting Newport Harbor High School were Hollywood music composer **Phil Marshall**, **Ann and Scott Ramser**,



SCHOOL PRIDE: Junior Hayley Williams was one of three students who volunteered to paint a painting of the bell tower and then donated it to the silent auction that followed "Lights Up."

Annette Tauber and **Carrie Young**. Educators in the crowd included Principal **Michael Vossen**, **Jodi Weitzman**, **Jim Newkirk**, **Dennis O'Hern**, **Joe Robinson**, **Julie**



JAZZ HOT: Freshman **Cat Boettner** tap dances to the Newport Harbor High School Midshipmen Jazz Band during the "Lights Up" show.



PLAY ON: Kings Road Band members **Terry Lawless**, **Jim Helfrich** and **Jeff Bitetti**.

Simmons and **Scott Smith**.

The evening raised a most impressive \$50,000, which will support

numerous programs at the local high school.

THE CROWD runs Thursdays and Saturdays.