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March 22, 2011

<http://www.variety.com/article/VR1118034243>

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### **Fight Night charity event bows in Phoenix**

By JENNY PETERS

It was a Thrilla in the Desert on Saturday night, as Hollywood converged on Phoenix for Muhammad Ali's Celebrity Fight Night XVII. Familiar faces from Tinseltown packed the J. W. Marriott Desert Ridge Resort and Spa, along with a collection of the world's top athletes and richest people, and the money poured out like water to support Ali's fight against Parkinson's disease.

The night started early and ended late, as bejeweled Arizona socialites mixed it up first with Bo Derek, Kevin Sorbo, Frankie Muniz and Vern Troyer at a VIP cocktail party and silent auction, then moved into the sold-out ballroom for the six-hour extravaganza. A bald eagle flew across the room to start the show, Lee Greenwood sang and host Reba McEntire welcomed everyone from Gov. Jan Brewer and pro sports entrepreneur Jerry Colangelo to Bret Michaels and the night's honorees, including Halle Berry.

Kevin Costner and his band Modern West played a tune or two, then Billy Crystal got choked up introducing Ali, who walked onto the stage supported by his wife, Lonnie. When Berry took the stage, she commanded Ali, "Now be still! If I had just married Muhammad, I'd never have had any of the man problems I've had over the years!"

Jordan Sparks led the 10 "American Idol" finalists in a medley of Michael Jackson songs, and then the real craziness began, with the night's live auction. Where else can you see people bid \$400,000 for a dinner with Reba (twice, actually), or the same amount to have a meal with Crystal and Robert De Niro? Sharing a meal with Costner went for \$50K, with Michaels for \$200K and overall the night raised a whopping \$6.6 million, including one million from Parsons alone.

"People in L.A. don't give this kind of money," marveled Sinbad during a funny set that broke up the house.

The celebration raged on, as Costner and Modern West rocked the after-party into the wee hours of the morning.

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