

## Clinton Fundraiser a Huge Success

By Lee Borrowman



Hillary Clinton with Robert Shwartz, Joni Binder and children Jonah and Maia Shwartz

Photo provided

Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton mingled with one hundred and ten guests from Orinda and around the East Bay at the home of Joni Binder and Robert Shwartz on the evening of August 12. The event raised over \$200,000 for the Hillary for President Exploratory Campaign.

"Several of our guests had been on the fence before," said Binder, but they were completely won over. She (Clinton) is very warm and intelligent; I'm not sure how well that comes through in the media." According to Binder, Clinton spoke eloquently and answered questions about the situation in Iraq, education and healthcare reform, recognizing Orinda's Xenophon Therapeutic Riding Center as a wonderful example of an organization that is central to the type of optimum care we should be striving for as a nation (for more information on Xenophon go to <http://xenophontrc.org/blog/>).

Guests included Congresswoman Ellen Tauscher, who was escorted by former Safeway CEO David Bowlby, and her 16 year old daughter, Katherine. "Many people brought their pre-teen and teenage daughters," said Binder. "It was great to see. Senator Clinton is a wonderful role model and a source of inspiration for these girls." Also in attendance were Casa Orinda's Charlotte Guppy, Orinda School Board member Riki Sorenson, event co-hosts Steve Tidrick and Laurie Littlepage, and Tim and Leslie O'Brien. Leslie O'Brien grew up with the Clintons in Little Rock.

This was the first time Binder hosted an event of this kind in her home, and she describes it as a truly local effort. Attracting guests was a matter of calling friends

who called friends. Although she readily admits to being a bit nervous during the event, Binder says, "It was an amazing night!" In fact, the entire week was an adventure for the Shwartz/Binder family, which includes children Jonah and Maia. "The Secret Service was at our home all week long; they had earpieces and talked into their wrists. We had gardeners and landscapers, and a wonderful caterer, Orinda mom Susie LaCour of LaCour Gourmet; one of our bartenders was a local kid home from college who also works as a swim coach at Meadow." Just before the event began, everyone had to clear out for the bomb-sniffing dogs. Would she do it again? "Absolutely; for the right person," said Binder.

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