Questions for Roberto Vigilucci

Q: Why La Jolla, why now?

I asked myself, 'why not?' After growing Vigilucci's Restaurant Group in North County, the next step was to begin growing the group in southern San Diego. Everyone knows the prestige of La Jolla so we were honored to be able to bring our Restaurant Group to this area.

Q: What is the single most challenging aspect of opening a restaurant?

There are several challenges to opening a restaurant, from putting together the interior design to creating an enticing, authentic Italian menu. I would have to say the most challenging thing is building a good team, although we've been very lucky with the team we've created.

Q: If you could snap your fingers and have it done, what might you add, subtract or improve in La Jolla?

Nothing really. We're very proud of Seafood, Steak & Chop House in La Jolla. Although, an ocean view would be nice.

Q: If you hosted a dinner party for eight, whom (living or deceased) would you invite?

My family: my mom; my wife, Jaydeen; my grandfather; my father; my son, Blake; my stepfather, Sergio; my dog, Sparky; and Alex Pedrazzani, the vice president of Vigilucci's Restaurant Group.

Q: What are you currently reading?

"Setting the Table" by Danny Meyer.

Q: Who or what inspires you?

I love this industry. I love the food, wine, travel and trying something new.

Q: If you could eat only one dish for the rest of your life, what would it be?

This is an impossible question ... pizza.

Q: What do you do for fun?

Travel.

Q: Describe your greatest accomplishment.

SEE QUESTIONS, PAGE B10
Adrian Gonzalez launches Foundation during dinner

By Nicole Reino

On Aug. 27, a handful of the San Diego Padres put their Major League Baseball jobs on hold to moonlight as chefs, waiters and bartenders at Acqua Al 2 downtown.

Kevin Kourmanoff took orders. Clay Hensley poured cocktails and Heath Bell worked the line—all in the name of charity.

Padres first baseman Adrian Gonzalez and his wife, Betsy Gonzalez, launched their family foundation at the event. The Adrian & Betsy Gonzalez Foundation was established to empower underprivileged youth through athletics, education and health.

The money raised during the event was given to a children's autism research and care charity, a cause close to the family of Martin Gonzalez, Acqua Al 2 owner and chef.

Adrian was the honorary chef for the evening. Dressed in whites, he manned the stove and prepared more than 100 guests a five-course dinner.

A live auction included items such as sports memorabilia and vacation packages. The players also signed autographs.

The night was capped by the Padres’ stellar performance of “YMCA.”

Among the evening’s attendees: Acqua Al 2 owner/chef Martin Gonzalez and his wife, Cecilia Gonzalez; Isaac Levy, Loraine Levy and Mateo Levy; Dr. Juan Pablo Eng and Patty Eng; Enrique Perez and Martha Perez; Peter Carney and Tammy Carney; and Alba Lourdes and David Gonzalez.

Nicole Reino is the lifestyles editor of the La Jolla Light.

Adrian Gonzalez and Heath Bell tried their hands at gourmet food.

Adrian Gonzalez and Heath Bell

Kevin Kourmanoff took a break on the job.

Adrian Gonzalez signed autographs.

Several of the players performed the “YMCA.”

Acqua Al 2 owner Martin Gonzalez with his wife, Cecilia.

Peter and Tammy Carney.
Enrique and Martha Perez with Adrian Gonzalez's parents, Alba Lourdes and David Gonzalez (right).

The live auction included items such as sports memorabilia.

Brian Wahlstrom entertained guests.

Owner Martin Gonzalez mingled with the guests.

Martin Gonzalez introduced the Padres.
Liquid Nation Ball
- Fundraiser for the Surf Industry Manufacturers Association Humanitarian Fund
- 7:30 p.m. Sept. 5
- At the La Jolla home of Fernando and Vicky Aguerre
- More information: www.liquid-nation.com

Athenaeum Goes Bananas: Caribbean Calypso
- Supporting the Athenaeum Music & Arts Library
- 6:30 p.m. Sept. 5
- Athenaeum Music & Arts Library
- 1008 Wall St., La Jolla

MCASD’s Monte Carlo Does Dallas
- Raising money for the museum’s education and exhibition programs
- 6:30 p.m. Sept. 6
- MCASD La Jolla
- 700 Prospect St., La Jolla
- More information: (858) 454-3541, ext. 121, www.mcasd.org

The Neurosciences Institute's Minding the Arts
- Raising funds for The Neurosciences Institute's performing arts program
- 3:30 p.m. Sept. 14
- The Neurosciences Institute
- 10640 John Jay Hopkins Drive
- More information: (858) 626-2022, www.nsi.edu

The Globe Gala
- The Old Globe's premier fundraising event featuring silent and live auctions
- 5 p.m. Sept. 20
- The Old Globe’s Copley Plaza
- 1363 Old Globe Way

Multicultural Asian Professionals' Taste of Asia
- MAP, the House of China, the House of India, and others host a food-tasting event to benefit multiple charity foundations
- Sept. 27
- International Cottages at Balboa Park
- More information: (619) 318-9227

Moon Over Morocco Gala
- Benefiting the La Jolla Playhouse
- 7 p.m. Oct. 24
- Joan and Irwin Jacobs Center for La Jolla Playhouse
- 2910 La Jolla Village Drive, La Jolla

La Jolla Institute for Allergy & Immunology's Gala Celebration
- Proceeds will benefit juvenile diabetes and cancer research
- 6 p.m. Nov. 1
- Del Mar Country Club
- 6001 Clubhouse Drive, Rancho Santa Fe
- More information: (858) 752-6542, www.liai.org