

## Hearst Castle Adventure: Bid on E-bay Wins Dream Night

By Kathe Tanner, October 6, 2009

In a two-day extravaganza that included a sleepover for two, Jay and Dana Hagan were joined by eight other people for a pool swim in 64-degree water, cocktails and hors d'oeuvres on the terrace, a billiards game and dinner in a guest-house — all at Hearst Castle.

"I've waited my whole life to do this!" Julie Hagan, the hosts' sister-in-law, said Sunday as she climbed out of the pool. She was 4 years old when she and her family visited the Castle, and "the only things I remember were the pools, because I couldn't swim in them. Now I can call my mother and tell her I finally did it!"

The group also went on a customized four-hour Castle tour, including the chance to ring the carillon bells, all as part of a Friends of Hearst Castle adventure the Hagans won in a 2008 E-bay auction. The Marin County couple paid \$27,266.

This was the first time a member of the public paid to have a Castle sleep-over, and the first time in at least 50 years that someone was allowed to spend the night, other than a Hearst family member or Castle guide.

The Friends group will use the Hagans' bid to help Castle officials pay for public education and to conserve antiquities, artifacts and artworks, such as the ongoing restoration of the Billiard Room ceiling.

Carol Schreiber, Friends executive director, said costs for the Hagans' adventure were kept low because many goods and services were donated or discounted. So more of the bid will go toward Castle causes.

About midnight Sunday, Jay and Dana Hagan strolled though the chilly rose garden under a harvest moon, then retired to the Castle's South Wing, Room 10.

**Internationally known decorator Barclay Butera recently accessorized the room for the visit, using pieces from the Hearst Castle Collection.** Other areas of the State Parks monument were off-limits, monitored by motion sensors.

The couple, both born and raised in California, are interested in the state's history, Jay Hagan said. "This was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. There's nothing else like the Castle. It's an icon of California Americana. And the money goes to such a good cause."

On Monday, after a castle breakfast catered by Charlie Paladin Wayne, the Hagans joined their guests on a wine tour by limousine, hosted by the Paso Robles Wine Country Alliance, and had a catered dinner at Cottontail Creek Ranch in Cayucos, where the others had spent Sunday night.