



## STUDIO 117: Retro disco at Sunrise Foundation fete

The view from the balcony, above, at the Sunrise Theatre Foundation's Studio 117 gala fundraiser. Above: John and Karen Hening. Near right: Jenna and James Taylor, Valencia and Chris Cichorek. Inset right: Elton John, aka Connor Stottlemire. Below right: Don Rinelli and Sharon Engle. Below left: Angel Tomayo of the Fred Astaire Studio.



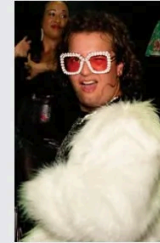
PHOTO COURTESY OF MARIANN KETCHAM

The Sunrise Theatre Foundation's annual themed fundraiser took place on Aug. 3, and attendees were transported back to New York City in 1979 as the Foundation Board transformed the theater into the famous dance and celebrity club Studio 54 (or, in this case, Studio 117 – the theater's address on 2nd Street).

Participants were able to enjoy a display of exotic cars before they were greeted at the velvet ropes of the theater's entrance by bouncers, who "selected" who would be let in. Once inside, the sights and sounds of the disco beat lured folks into the theater's main stage which was transformed into a large dance floor and bar. Music was provided by DJ extraordinaire Jay Barwick, with assistance from Ocean 97.1's legendary Hamp Elliot as the guest emcee. Celebrity look-alikes Andy Warhol, Elton John, Dolly Parton and others from StageFright Academy mingled through the crowd the entire night. Dancers from Fred Astaire Studios in Port St Lucie led the crowd in dance lessons to sharp-

en their disco dancing skills, while aerialists from Florida Aerial Dance and Circus performed dazzling aerial dances from the rafters of the Theatre.

The BlackBox Theatre and the Friends Lounge were transformed into VIP areas, where guests were treated to culinary delights from True Roots Catering, Happy Garden Café, and Havana George Café. The night was capped off with a silent auction featuring guitars and other items autographed by legendary artists who performed at the Sunrise Theatre during the 2023/24 season. The proceeds of this event will help support the foundation's mission of providing access to performances at the Sunrise Theatre to children of the Treasure Coast and to assist with various capital projects for the Theatre.



For more information on the Foundation and how you can help and donate, visit [sunrisetheatrefoundation.com](http://sunrisetheatrefoundation.com).

— BY CHRIS CICHOREK/CONTRIBUTED



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