

## Robert Wagner Book Signing 2008

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Camelot Theatres Palm Springs

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Story and photos by Pat Krause

The Camelot Theatres in Palm Springs hosted a book signing by well-known actor Robert Wagner, Sat., Dec. 13, 2008. Wagner's book, "Pieces of My Heart," has made the New York Times Top Sellers list. This fabulous actor has spent nearly 60 years in show business. This autobiography tells of his life starting as a young man and his many love affairs during his career.

He started the afternoon with a Q&A that was emceed by KPSI News Talk 920's Stan Layne. The Palm Springs SunUp Rotary Club sponsored the event. Wagner told of when he was a young boy about 10 or 12 and met Cary Grant, Randolph Scott, Fred Astaire and Clark Gable playing golf at the Bel-Air Country Club in Los Angeles. He said at that time he wanted to be like them and be in the movies.

The book tells of some painful times in his life, such as when his wife Natalie Wood died in a drowning accident in 1981. They were actually married twice. He dated her when she was just 18. They married but divorced later. They met again in Palm Springs and were remarried. Wagner said he had everything, but in an instant his whole life changed when she died. Friends and family helped him through this ordeal and work was what kept him going. Actress Stephanie Powers lost the love of her life, William Holden, a few weeks earlier, so they helped each other to move on with their lives.

Layne asked Wagner questions about the women in his life and what actors had been instrumental in his career. Wagner told of his four-year affair with Barbara Stanwyck. He was 22 and she was much older. It was kept a secret, as the age difference was not acceptable to the public at the time. She was a fabulous woman and also helped him in his career. He mentioned some of the other women in his early career such as Joan Crawford and Yvonne De Carlo. His friendship with Elizabeth Taylor has continued for years and he considers her one of the greatest movie actresses of all time.

He was discussing his book with his current wife, Jill St. John, and a friend. They mentioned that it must be hard to go back and tell about your life; that it must be like taking out pieces of your heart, and that is how the book got its title.

Wagner has had a long history of being in Palm Springs. He was here many years ago and mentioned that much of his hit TV show, "Hart to Hart," was filmed here. His mother-in-law started the People Helping People charity in Palm Springs. He thinks Rozene Supple (shown at right with her husband, Ric, and Camelot Theatres general manager Jason Bruecks), co-owner of the Camelot Theaters, actually babysat him when they lived here.

Layne asked him about several actors and what they were to him. Spencer Tracy, Clark Gable and many others mentored him and got him started in movies. Wagner said they were like a father to him. He said one of the reasons he wrote the book was to give credit to those that helped him with his career.

He said that he is doing what he wants to do in life and has been extremely blessed. He likes doing TV sitcoms and is currently producing a couple movies and will star in one of them. He may also have a TV show in the works.

He talked of many things in the book but it would not be fair to tell all, as this is a "must read" book.

Special thanks to Camelot Theatres and the Palm Springs SunUp Rotary Club for making this event happen.

For more Pat Krause photos of Robert Wagner's book signing, [click here](#).

For more information about Camelot Theatres, [click here](#).

For more information about Robert Wagner, [click here](#).

For more information about KPSI Newstalk radio, [click here](#).

For more information about Stan Layne, [click here](#).

For more information about the Palm Springs SunUp Rotary Club, [click here](#).