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Screening bash makes most of Oscar night

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Long Beach residents Joseph and Harriet Bennish walk the red carpet at the Art Theatre's Second Annual Oscar Party. (Stephen Carr)

LONG BEACH - Boyfriends Aaron Ball and Randall Christensen dressed in tuxedos and walked the red carpet Sunday for the Oscars.

They didn't attend the 83rd Annual Academy Awards. Instead they were ticket holders at the Art Theatre's second annual Oscar Party on Fourth Street.

The venerable movie theater hosted the screening party as a fundraiser for its neighbor, The Center Long Beach, which provides services to support, inform and connect the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender communities.

"Anytime you can wear a tuxedo is fun," said Ball, 41.

Added Christensen, 52: "It's more fun and glamorous to watch the Oscars here instead of being at home."

Ball and Christensen were among more than 100 guests who paid \$15 to \$20 to watch the pre-Oscar show and the ceremony live on the silver screen.

Admission included hors d'oeuvres served at the snack bar, and wines that won medals in last year's Long Beach Grand Cru competition.

Apart from Ball and Christensen, Keeli Tebeau dressed up and walked the theater's red carpet. Instead of formal wear, she pulled together an ensemble paying tribute to the film "Black Swan," complete with eye makeup, black tights and a plastic tiara.

"All the famous designers were taken - so I went with pieces from Dollar Tree, Big Lots

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and Kmart," said Tebeau of Long Beach.

Tebeau's fashion creativity was eligible for a best-dressed prize, a restaurant gift certificate.

All ticket holders for the event could enter contests to predict Oscar's best actor and actress, best supporting actor and actress and best picture. The five gift-bag prizes included DVDs, a lava lamp and gift certificates for clothing, restaurants and teeth whitening.

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