

It's not over yet

BY JENNIFER CAMPBELL, FREELANCE FEBRUARY 21, 2010

Still feeling the luuvv Montreal?! Sure hope so, cuz Social Notes rides the crimson wave again today (or la vague d'amour as lawyer Nathalie Gagnon, president of today's first ball committee, so eloquently put it).

Bal Ste. Romantique: Over the past five years, many Valentines balls have graced this page. All impressive and worthy of good word estate. Today, we add another: the Quebec Youth Foundation's award-winning St. Valentine's Ball, at choice destination, Le Parquet.

For those of you actually reading the column (and not just skimming the bold-faced print for recognizable names, shame on you!), the "award-winning" reference was not lost. As it shouldn't be, because this very special fundraiser is a major award-winner. In 2008, it received the Canadian Event Industry's prestigious Star Award for the best fundraising event in Canada.

Given the grandeur of this season's offering, that designation makes perfect sense. Conservus (the company behind the ball's execution) left no detail to chance. Exactitude was king (and queen). From the exquisitely embossed doily invitations to the carefully arranged monochromatic Louis XVI settees with pops of pink, the theme (romanticism) was as pervasive as it was pretty.

Just ask the 355 finely turned out guests who couldn't help but surrender to the overwhelming beauty, greeted as they were by a bewigged lady and gentleman of the imperial court whose irrepressible charm and spirit set the tone for the night. (Indeed, fun was a second theme, thanks in large part to the Roch Fournier auction, entertainment by Florence K. and rocking raffle prizes).

And re "les patrons:" The ball's 7th edition (elegantly emceed by Normand Brathwaite and Brigitte Bédard) could easily have received a "peeps prize," too. The room was powerfull, rampant with corporate, cultural and political royals including: Mr. Hollywood Nord Michel Trudel; Joanne Vincent and Claude (Rink) Rousseau, president of the Quebec Remparts; RSM Richter Chamberland's Stephen Rosenhek (attending with wife Helene Lussier) and Mathieu Gauvin (with Henriette Angers); former Quebec health minister Philippe Couillard; Suburban publisher Michael Sochaczewski with wife Karen; Bellus Health president/CEO Roberto (Hottie) Bellini; WSBG's Bernard Stotland (president of JGH Foundation); and of course, the committee that could (and did!) court the extraordinary: foundation president Paul Gaulin, president/

CEO of Induspac, attending with Michelle Charron;

finance chairperson André Morrissette, partner/

chairperson of the BCF law firm with Geneviève Desmarais; foundation GM Régent Aubertin; Conservus powerhouse Paule Labelle with wine sponsor Carlos (Café) Ferreira; RBC Royal Bank's

Luc Bisailon (with wife Lyne Desrochers); and finally, treasured honouree, Tony Loffreda, executive vice-president of commercial banking at RBC Royal Bank, (with wife Angelina). In his moving address, Loffreda thanked everyone for helping to raise a whopping \$400,000 for the foundation, which is dedicated to investing in Quebec's most important resource: our children.

Also riding la vague: West Island Palliative Care Residence's (WIPCR) 11th annual St. Valentine's Gala, Fantasy in Pink. More than 500 bedecked, bejeweled, bedazzled invitees (including honoree Ken Dryden, honorary president John DiGenova, Alouette Anthony Calvillo, and boxer Otis Grant) descended upon Château Vaudreuil's pavilion for an unforgettable evening of gastronomy, entertainment, and dancing emceed by CJAD anchormaster Andrew Carter and MNA Yolande James. The fab fête raised a cool \$250,000 for the hospice, which provides special care for terminally ill residents. Hitting all The Right (Love) Notes: Sandra Wilson's 5th Bizet-Broadway benefit for St. John's Ambulance was yet another re-sound-ing success. High profile guests (including Paul Desmarais Sr., wife Jacqueline and Cornelia and Alexis Nihon) couldn't help but applaud the superb talent, eats, schmooze, and yes, fun.

AHEPA of a Good Time: was had by all at AHEPA Family's 11th Annual Valentines Ball, which raised \$30,000 for Giant Steps and Shriners Hospital.

Special Shout Out To: Nikki Yanofsky who recently signed on as ambassador for the Children's Wish Foundation. Prodigy, pretty and nice.

Do point peepers at: Crazy/Sexy/Awkward, a witty new comedy for television co-created by (and starring) another magnificently talented Montrealer, Jamie Elman.

So that's the (love) story. Tune in next week when we trade hearts for masks. The glam dram continues.

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