

# south florida ALBUM

FUNDRAISERS • CELEBRATIONS • PARTIES • CORPORATE EVENTS

## Fourth annual Haute Tea benefits the Diabetes Research Institute

Decked out in the hottest haute couture, from feathers to pearls and fringes too, hundreds of fashion-forward ladies and a few gents sauntered to the posh St. Regis Bal Harbour Hotel to celebrate the roaring 20s-themed fourth annual Haute Tea to benefit the Diabetes Research Institute at the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine. Many of Miami's social set came to pay tribute to a true woman of style and substance, Miami philanthropist Sandra Levy, who was honored at the lunch affair, which raised funds for research for a cure.

Event co-chairs Jillian Posner and Dr. Stacy Chimento of the Young Society of Love and Hope kicked off the afternoon of Gatsby, high fashion and tea with a red carpet and champagne reception. Patrons took turns in the black and white photo booth, sipped cool libations from the Bloody Mary bar and, of course, toasted with the bubbly. The 20s-themed soiree was emceed by WSVN-TV news anchor and Deco Drive co-host Lynn Martinez.

During the reception and start of the program, special guest judges Hollywood actress and star of the hit TV show "Graceland" Sopa Akiko and South Florida fashion influencers Stephanie Hill of the The Style Bungalow and Erika Thomas of Blah Blah Blonde browsed the Astor ballroom for the best hats, headbands and fascinators of the day for the annual hat contest. But before the winners were announced, guests enjoyed a live auction for exclusive getaways and VIP TV show tickets. DRI



Event chair Jillian Posner, Lynn Martinez, event chair Dr. Stacy Chimento and honoree Sandra Levy at the annual Haute Tea to benefit the Diabetes Research Institute.

supporter Arianna Lamosa, whose daughter has type 1 diabetes, made a heartfelt speech and shared their story with the audience.

During the formal sit-down, five-star luncheon and tea, models showed off different stylish looks thanks to Neiman Marcus Bal Harbour. After the designer presentation, Michelle Rubell introduced the day's honoree with a heartwarming speech and called her good friend International Chairman Linda Gibb and her mother, National Chairman Kathy Simkins, from the Love and Hope Committee, to present Sandra Levy, who serves as the Executive Chairman of the Love and Hope Committee, with an award for her decades of dedication to the DRI to help find a cure for diabetes.

To end the lovely afternoon, emcee Martinez turned it over to the special guest judges, who got on stage to announce the following winners of the hat contest: Gabriella Wimmer for Hat-to-Heel (best head to toe look), Stacy Gibb for The Bees-Knees (best headwear that fit the 1920s theme) and Sherri Fox for Haute Couture (best custom-made headwear).

**TICKLING THE IVORY**  
Commissioner Jeannett Slesnick and husband Don, former Coral Gables Mayor, hosted a private so-



Jeannett Slesnick, Steinway President Ron Losby and Dranoff Board President Gabriele Fiorentino at the soiree.

lon concert at the Steinway Gallery in Coral Gables to celebrate the opening of Dranoff 2 Piano Foundation's 29th season. Steinway artist Per Tengstrand and his wife and piano duo partner, Shan-Shan Sun, dazzled more than 100 of the community's business leaders, music patrons and international consular representatives with a program that was both challenging and charming: Ravel, Lutoslawski, Alfvén and Milhaud. Steinway America President Ron Losby attended the event, as well as Steinway artist Tao Lin, who honored his conservatory friend Shan-Shan with a surprise visit.

**CORPORATE ALL THE WAY**  
Business leaders and notables from our backyard flocked to the eighth annual Pérez Art Museum



The Whited and Rubino families at the Imagination Ball at the Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts of Miami-Dade County.



Jorge Perez, Jane Wooldridge and Leann Standish at PAMM Corporate Luncheon.

Miami (PAMM) Corporate Luncheon, presented by South Motors Automotive Group and Starr Events. The boldface crowd were treated to an afternoon of art, networking and cuisine. PAMM Corporate Honors were awarded to the legacy of R. Kirk Landon with a memorial gift in his name to the museum's education programs. Three of South Florida's top corporate collections, BNY Mellon, Greenberg Traurig and Bacardi were highlighted during the afternoon, and in the spirit of corporate philanthropy, BNY Mellon announced a gift of art to the museum's permanent collection. The painting, Mel Bochner's Dead Reckoning, was on view nearly 30 years ago at the Center for Fine Arts, PAMM's predecessor, during the traveling exhibition Mel Bochner: 1973-1985.

**IMAGINE**  
The social season set sail with galas galore, designer luncheons and, yes, even a ball fit for kids! Love it! Yes sirree, kiddies of all ages headed to the Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts of Miami-Dade County as the Arsht Families, a volunteer committee of parents committed to supporting children's access to the performing arts at the Arsht Center, presented the second Imagination Ball as part of its momentous 10th anniversary season. WOW, I can't believe it has been a decade already!  
What better way to celebrate than with a sold-out children's gala and fundraiser, co-chaired by Rebecca Whited and family and Katharine Rubino and family. The festive afternoon ball featured a circus-themed day of

interactive activities, dancing, child-friendly meals complete with wild dessert displays by BRAVA! Can you imagine it? Around 500 families and children were dazzled by aerial and balancing acts by members of the Wallendas and Cristiani families, in addition to a jaw-dropping live performance by America's Got Talent finalist and superstar teen magician Collins Key. Who could miss the dancing renditions to the current fav hit "Watch Me (Whip/Nae Nae)" on the Lynn Wolfson stage of the Ziff Ballet Opera House.

Proceeds from the Imagination Ball will be used to enhance and expand the Arsht Center's Arts Education and Community Engagement programs Rock Odyssey, Jazz Roots: Sound Check, AileyCamp Miami and more. The Center's Arts Education initiatives reach more than 30,000 Miami-Dade schoolchildren every year. This success of Sunday's Imagination Ball is an example of the Arsht Center's ongoing commitment to support the educational programming and artistic events for all students in our community. Way to go!

**STEPH SEZ:** If you want your social item in my column, please email me at stephsez@hotmail.com.