'Heart and Handshakes' unites judges, lawyers

NIGHT COURT: Many Oakland County judges left their elevated benches and "disrobed" to attend the second annual "Heart and Handshakes" benefit Feb. 12 at St. George's Cultural Center in Bloomfield Hills.

The Merchant of Vino wine and viand-tasting fund-raiser looked like the set of "L.A. Law" and "Night Court" all rolled into one. Local lawyers, judges and Indian chiefs gathered to raise funds and sip the bubbly for the Oakland County's Settlement Center. The settlement (mediation) center is a dispute-resolution clearinghouse where small claims can be settled with only a $12 filing fee. The center handles neighborhood disputes, landlord/tenant disputes, consumer/merchant problems, small claims and claims involving money or personal property.

Legal leader Henry Baskin and radio legend Bob Allison were honorary chairs of the evening. Baskin prompted his fellow constituents to bid on the silent-auction items donated by nearly 100 local merchants. No one objected. Items included a "Heartbeat of America" satin jacket, a trip to London and three furs donated by Dittrich Furs. Spotted modeling the black fur-lined trench coach was six-foot six-inch Circuit Court Judge David Breck. The Public Service Projects Committee of the Oakland Bar Association (sponsors of the evening) wanted someone with high visibility to model the androgenous coat.

Other judges supporting the settlement center were the Hon. Edward Sosnick, Hon. Deborah G. Tyner, Hon. Joan E. Young, Hon. Susan Moiseev and Hon. Jessica Cooper. Judge Tyner remarked to Judge Cooper (both wearing little black suits), *"I almost wore that suit tonight."*

Rubbing elbows with the judges and engaged in auction-bidding battles were legal beagles Jay Cunningham and Bob Carson, Molly Forward (director of the settlement center) making a fashion statement wearing a tuxedo and multi-colored tie and cummerbund, board of trustee member Maggie Allesee; Chairman of the Board of Trustees Lois Ryan, Sen. Michael Bouchard, Gerie Hughes, Diane Dietle from Baskin and Feldstein, Jim Alexander, blond beauty Sandra Plezia with husband chairman of the evening Ryan Hussayni, and Q-95 cutie Colleen Burcar with husband Brian Becker.

Members of the Host Committee included Richard and Diane Aginian, the Hon. Edward and Beverly Avadenka, Robert Gillette, J.J. Johnson, Paul and Sue Nilac, Thomas Schellenberg, and Suzy and Carl von Ende.

The Valentine "Hearts and Handshakes" theme was heartwarming at Juliette's center stage cuisine table. Red and pink roses, large silver punch bowls filled with fresh strawberries, heart-shaped breads, assorted tortes, cheeses, rolls, breads, fruits, chocolates and caviar graced the table and satisfied the appetites of the wine-tasting and bidding guests.

The Jonnas' other key fundraising events are the SOS Feed the Hungry at the Rattlesnake on March 30 and the Sarah Fisher Home fundraiser June 7.

"We wanted to have karaoke singing, too," noted Diane Dietle, "but it wasn't approved." Perhaps next year, Diane.

MOTOWN REVIEW: "I've always wanted to sing with the Pips, Temptations or Vandellas," quipped Radisson Plaza General Manager Tom Padgett at the Martha Reeves Valentine's Day concert and afterglow, which help to benefit Detroit's Motown Museum.

Esther Gordy and Barbara Rose Collins were among special audience guests at the Martha Reeves and the Vandellas concert at the hotel at Southfield's Town Center.

More than 600 partygoers attended the ballroom bash where Martha tuned up her pipes and belted out such '60s favorites as "Heat Wave," "Dancin' in the Streets," "Jimmy Mack" and "Nowhere to Run (nowhere to hide, baby)."

And what's in store for the Motown Martha? Fritz Snyder of the B-52's is producing an album with Reeves (whom he acknowledges as a significant influence in his music). Phil Collins and Don Was. The B-52 rocker has a phenomenal collection of all the Motown classics that even Martha doesn't own.

Reeves also will perform March 4 in New York in an off-Broadway musical called "Return to the Planet Earth," with Bo Didley and Joe Cocker.

Reeves' works 40 weeks a year around the country but dreams of putting together an authentic Motown revue in the Motor City, where tourists can experience the Motown sounds of the '60s. Her favorite time is when the music starts. "I live music, dream it, and my dreams have come true with it," Reeves says.

Reeves also will be working the *Universal Amphitheater with* Chubby Checker and the Turtles, celebrating their 25th anniversary.

"Real love was instilled by '60s music. I traveled with Mary Wells, Smokey Robinson, the Supremes, Contours, Temptations, Marvelettes, Marvin Gaye, Spinners and little Stevie Wonder, all together in one Greyhound bus to 94 cities in 94 days. That was real love."

Reeves' love-of-her-life is her son Eric and two grandbabies, Loren (whom she claims will be the first black woman president or Miss America) and Eric Jr. Reeves spent 12 years in Los Angeles and has returned to Detroit, promising she is here to stay.

Spotted in the crowd was ravishing redhead Rhonda Verona, with First of Michigan mortgage originator Danny Grimberg, Michelle Valentine, and Carol Powell from Classique Boutique.

IMPORTANT UPCOMING EVENTS:

BAL POLONAIS IX: His Excellency Most Rev. Adam Maida, Archbishop of Detroit; the Hon. John M. Engler and Michelle Engler; Dr. David DiChiera, general director of the Michigan Opera Theatre and Karen VanderKloot DiChiera will be the honorary chairmen and chairwomen of the ninth annual Bal Polonais on Saturday, Feb. 22, at the Detroit Athletic Club.

The Bal Polonais heralds royal court pagentry and a spectacular presentation of debutantes. The black-tie gala dinner-dance will benefit the MOT production of the Polish opera "King Roger" and the Detroit Institute of Arts.

social eyes

Denise Lucas

VFW honors its winners

Among those honored by the VFW are: (left) Jacqueline Urbanczyk, junior script writer winner; Julia Kim, voice of democracy winners; Lea Strickfaden , Farmington Hills fire fighter of the year; Bonnie Scott, Farmington Hills police officer of the year and Pati Putt, voice of democracy winner.

Brodhead-Farmington Hills Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 2269 and ladies auxiliary conducted its 10th annual awards banquet Saturday, Feb. 8.

The yearly banquet honors the Farmington Hills firefighter and police officer of the year. It also recognizes high school students who've won the voice of democracy writing contest and a middle school student who won the junior script writers contest.

Lea M. Strickfaden was named Farmington Hills fire fighter of the year. Bonnie Scott was recognized as Farmington Hills police officer of the year.

Voice of democracy winners included Julia Kim of Mercy High School, Ellen Goldenstein of Harrison High School, Pati Putt of North Farmington High School and Alicia Rancillo of Farmington High School. Jacqueline Urbanczyk of Beahan Middle School won the junior script writing contest.

Representing the state VFW at the banquet were: Ted Hetherington, department surgeon; Ferne Jack, department auxiliary president; Fred Collet, 5th district VFW comander; Norma King, 5th district VFW auxiliary president; Don Kingerski, Oakland County Council VFW junior vice commander and Sadie Pavlovic, president, Oakland County council VFW auxiliary.

Representing state and local goverment at the banquet were: Richard Marinucci, Farmington Hills fire chief; William Dwyer, Farmington Hills chief of police, state Rep. Jan Dolan, R-Farmington Hills; Nancy Bates, Farmington Hills mayor pro tem and Aldo Vagnozzi, Farmington Hills council member.

Peter Kulbab and Ann Collett of the the VFW post chaired the banquet.

Fox honored for achievements

Continued from Page 1

town's first settlers, Arthur Power, was a conductor for the underground railroad. She points to two entries in Nathan Power's diary in 1859 and 1860 that mention the railroad.

He mentions taking three barrels of flour to an anti-slavery convention in Jackson. Fox believes he had three passengers, not barrels of flour. "Did he go alone? Did he return alone? I think not," she said.

Local legend has long pointed out the Philbrick Tavern as a station. Fox suspects that Lapham's Corner, a house on Eight Mile at Farmington Road, was another stop as well as possibly a house that stood at Eight Mile and Meadowbrook in Novi.

Fox's appearance at the Rosa L. Gragg Educational and Civic Club was preceded by a stint last fall as a tour guide for a group from the Pontiac NAACP and the Detroit Association of Black Women's Clubs. She led the group through Farmington's underground railroad sites.

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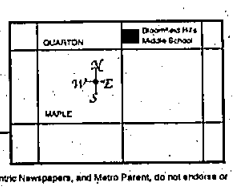

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