Black Tie & Burgers party gets it all right

By Patt Dirol
Correspondent

Stepping on the floor, a delight in the time of COVID-19 demands, a game plan beyond the usual PPE rules. Event chair Melissa Montoya and her committee had it right for this year's Black Tie & Burgers gala that raised a record $250,000 for the 84-year-old Boys & Girls Club of Pasadena.

Along with masks and proof of vaccination, Montoya's fine-tuning included "sticker shock" aka the dispensing of small stickers for guests to wear to indicate their level of comfort with physical contact. Green signaled that hugs and handshakes were OK. Yellow meant talk to me, but air hugs/hugs only please. Red meant "happy to be here, but let's keep our distance.

The crowd of more than 250 didn't seem to mind comfortable. That's because everyone is happy to be together, and it's a great evening for the club," Montoya said.

The garden of Connie Holguin's beautiful 124-year-old Pasadena home was the setting for the "Passport to Paris" theme which has fancied the same format - burgers & fries, bubbly & beer, a lively silent and live auction - since its inception 14 years ago.

Boys & Girls Club CEO Lisa Cuvier noted that their work right now is above the 30%. "Helping kids recover from academic loss, Recharge their favorite physical activities and Rebuild their college and career pathways," said Cuvier. "This includes going deeper, which means how we think about our programs and our relationships with kids and families."

LA VERNE

Bridge linking Fairplex planned

Walkway will allow passengers of light-rail trains to safely access fairgrounds from station

By Javier Rojas

Plans for a pedestrian bridge connecting future light-rail passengers in La Verne to the Fairplex in Pomona are taking shape.

While still early in the design process, the proposed 110-foot-long, 17-foot-wide steel bridge would start at Arrow Highway and E Street in La Verne and carry pedestrians above six lanes of traffic before they reach the Fairplex. The bridge, which is made up of a steel truss and spiral staircase connecting them to the northern edge of the Fairplex campus.

"Our main goal with this project is to ensure that La Verne residents and visitors to our community have a safe path of travel in this already busy area," Mayor Tim Hepburn said.

"The Fairplex community is growing and, in addition to the bridge assisting with the increased foot traffic that will result from the future L-LINE station, it will help create a more unified and connected region."

The La Metro L-Line, formerly the Gold Line, is currently under construction from Glendora to Pomona. The 9.2-mile extension is set to be completed by 2022.

The L-Line station in La Verne will be located north of Arrow Highway and east of E Street, between the University of La Verne and Fairplex. Entrance to the station will be from both E Street and White Avenue, as well as from the parking facility.

"To design and build the pedestrian bridge, La Verne and Pomona need a joint agreement," Hepburn said.

PANDEMIC

L.A. County reports 916 new virus cases, 10 deaths on Sunday

By City News Service

Los Angeles County reported 916 new coronavirus cases and 10 additional deaths associated with the virus Sunday, though some numbers may reflect an undercount because of lag in weekend reporting.

Sunday's update brought the county's overall totals to 1,484,105 cases and 26,189 deaths since the pandemic began, according to the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health. The rolling seven-day average positivity rate was 0.9% for the period ending Sunday.

The number of people hospitalized with COVID-19 in the county dropped from 614 Saturday to 510, continuing a downward trend. There were 171 patients in intensive care, up from 170 the day before.

Los Angeles County providers, meanwhile, have begun offering COVID-19 vaccine boost shots to those who previously received any of the three vaccinations in circulation.

Dr. Bredele P. Wahlenberg, director of the LACC and Director of the Central Public Health Laboratory, reported the findings.

"We've seen a significant increase in cases in recent weeks, especially among younger individuals," Wahlenberg said. "This increase is concerning and highlights the need for continued vaccination efforts to protect the community from COVID-19."

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SENIOR LIVING

Seniors decry age bias in health care

By Judith Graham
Kaiser Health News

Joanne Whitney, 84, a retired associate clinical professor of pharmacy at the UC San Francisco, said she often feels depri-vated when interacting with healthcare providers.

"There was the time several years ago when she told an emergency room doctor that the antibiotic he prescribed wouldn't cure the kind of urinary tract infection she had. She wouldn't listen, even when she mentioned her professional credentials. She asked to see someone else, to no avail.

"I was ignored and finally I gave up," said White- ncy, who has survived lung cancer and cancer of the uterus and depends on a special catheter to drain urine from her bladder. (An outpatient renal service later changed the prescription.)

Then, earlier this year, Whitney invaded the same emergency room, screaming in pain, with another urinary tract infection and a severe anal fissure. When she asked for Dilaudid, a powerful narcotic that had helped her before, a young physician told her, "We don't give out opioids to people who seek them. Let's just see what Tylenol does.

"Whitney said her pain continued unabated for eight hours, "I think the fact I was a woman of 84, alone, was important," she said. "When older people come in like that, they don't get the same level of commitment to do something to rectify the situation. It's like, 'Oh, here's an old person with pain. Well, that happens a lot to older people.'"

Whitney's experiences speak to a systemic problem in healthcare settings, a long-running problem that's set- ting new standards during the coronavirus pandemic, which has killed more than half a million Americans age 65 and older.

Again underscores when people face stereotypes, prejudice or discrimina-tion because of their age.

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The benchmark event, which raised more than $3 million for L.A. Phil's Learning programs, began with the red-carpet arrival of celebs including Skylar Astin, Angela Bassett, Beck, Lake Bell, Frank Gehry, Herbie Hancock, Helen Hunt, Retta, Michelle Rodriguez, and Lena Waithe. They were joined by L.A. Mayor Eric Garcetti, Dudamel and his wife, Maria Valverde, L.A. Phil Board Chair Thomas Beckmen and his wife, Judith, Gala Chairs Gregory Adams, David Bohnett, Jane B. Eisner, Lisa Field, Jenny Miller Goff, Carol Colburn Grigor, Antonia Hernandez, Barbara and Dave Meline, Diane and David Paul, Barbara and Jay Rasulo, Ann Romus, Deanie and Jay Stain, Alvy Williamson and L.A. Phil CEO Chad Smith, along with more than 450 gala patrons.

Dudamel opened the program with the world premiere of "Kauyumari" by Gabriel Ortiz. This new work launched Ortiz's one-year curatorship of the Pan-American Music Initiative (PAM), focusing on music found across the Americas that will run throughout the season. The musical menu also featured pianist Seong-Jin Cho performing the first movement of Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto No.1 and singer-songwriter Cynthia Erivo performing a medley of songs including "Somewhere" from "Westside Story," "Feeling Good" and "Don't Let it Rain on My Parade." The concert closed with a knock-your-socks-off performance of the last movement from Mahler's first symphony, the same symphony that Dudamel started his directorship of the L.A. Phil in 2009.

The post-concert supper was held across the street on the Jerry Moss Plaza at the Music Center, where mirrored tables held floral centerpieces in fuchsia, turquoise and gold. Susan Peniger from Levy, the new food and beverage partner for the Music Center, created the cuisine accompanied by wines from Winc. Some night owls partied on into the night to the sounds of Liquid Blue. Quite a night!