



The Birmingham News

Social Scene

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Social columnist

UA ALUMNI IN NEW YORK

Several Alabamians were in New York at a holiday party hosted by the Greater New York Chapter of the University of Alabama Alumni Association.

Edgar and Louise Welden and John and Caroline Abele of Mountain Brook were among more than 100 UA alumni enjoying the party at Cafe St. Bart's in midtown Manhattan.

Also spotted were UA President Robert Witt, Director of Athletics Mal Moore, Director of Alumni Affairs Pat Whetstone, Associate Director of Athletics for Development Ronny Robertson and Associate Director of Athletics for Major Gifts Jon Gilbert, all of Tuscaloosa, UA National Alumni Association President Melanie Chambliss with Bobby of Prattville, along with alumni and friends from New Jersey and Connecticut.

Several went home with auction prizes. Footballs and mini-helmets autographed by head football coach Nick Saban were won by Cheshire Webb ('99) and Russ Gambrell ('02.) Chris Hollinger ('92) won a basketball autographed by head coach Mark Gottfried, and Scot Meyer ('03) took home two tickets to a 2008 home football game donated by alumnus Heath Terry.

Ed Welden ('65) won the breakfast with Mal Moore at the Waldorf Astoria. Ed redeemed it the next morning at Oscar's. Ed and Louise also attended the 50th annual College Football Hall of Fame dinner the next night, Dec. 4, at the Waldorf.

New York chapter president Huston Stewart was elated with the alumni support. He said the New York alumni association has more than 1,700 alumni and friends in New York, New Jersey and Connecticut.

E-mail: jhaise@bhamnews.com SALUTE TO ISRAEL, JORDAN

The event: Birmingham International Center recently kicked off its 2007-08 celebration, which is spotlighting Israel and Jordan from November through May.

The scene: During the kickoff reception, BIC Executive Director Iris Gross of Shelby County likened what is going on in the Middle East to the civil rights movement in Birmingham. "The Middle East has faced conflict among its people, and measures - such as the signing of the 1994 peace treaty between the countries of Israel and Jordan - are being made to change misconceptions, foster reconciliation and create peace," Gross said.

With her were her husband, Bill Fullington, and son, Hank Gross.

Guests used music as a tool for greater cultural understanding. Dance instructor Donna Schiff of Mountain Brook led guests in dancing. Mike Watkins of Auburn played the oud, a beautiful stringed instrument hand-inlaid in Egypt, and the baglama saz; and Irondale's Mark Freeman played the doumbek. Robert Stewart of Irondale played the rigg and frame drum.

The guest of honor was Samer Naber, first secretary/political and legal officer for the Jordan embassy in Washington, D.C. Spotlight chairpeople are Andrew and Jeanna Westmoreland of Greystone. Andrew Westmoreland is Samford University's president, and Jeanna Westmoreland is the former chairwoman of the Arkansas State Board of Education. "We may discover that Birmingham will be able to play a role in building bridges in another part of the world," Andrew Westmoreland said.

The co-chairwoman of the Spotlight is Natalie Davis, a political science professor at Birmingham-Southern College who lives in Mountain Brook. Her husband, Jim, also was at the kickoff event.

More special guests enjoying food from the Pita Stop included Richard Friedman, executive director of the Birmingham Jewish Federation, with Cathy, and Sister Cities for Israel Chairman Dr. Richard Shepard of Altadena, with Winys.

Spotlight Committee members introduced included BIC Education Director Larry Hardin; Najwa Bateh of Vestavia Hills; Jennifer Walker-Journey of Homewood with Rick; Dr. Swaid Swaid of Vestavia Hills with Christy; Scotty Colson of Crestwood; Wade Black, Priscilla Hancock Cooper, Mike Froning, Gaynelle Jackson, Mohammed Tarawneh, Odessa Woolfolk and Sheri Krell of Birmingham; Joel Rotenstreich, Bill and Patricia Warren, Joyce Spielberger with Jeff, Eileen Kunzman and Anne Lamkin of Mountain Brook; Dr. Doug Tilt of Sylacauga; the Rev. Dr. Ruth Lamonte with Ed of Forest Park; and Firas Tarawneh of Hoover.

BIC plans to provide educational programs, country spotlights and services to Alabama and international communities. For more information, go to www.birminghaminternationalcenter.com or call 252-7652.

More spotted: Ukraine native Peter Kirchikov and state Rep. Greg Canfield of Vestavia Hills; Saban Ali Duzgun of Turkey; Monier Emaish of Greystone; Ben Youssef and Tunisian native Lamia Zayzafoon, Lori Siegelman Sallie Creel and Tamara Harris Johnson of Hoover; state Rep. Roderick Scott and Carol Kennedy of Fairfield; Bettina Byrd-Giles of Westchester with James Edward Giles; Bruce McClelland and James and Yvonne Turner of College Hills; Alva Love of Enon Ridge; Mike Perez and Daryl Perkins of Center Point; Renee Carter of Crestwood; BIC Board member Mark Jackson with Allison and June and Jim Griffin of north Shelby; Jo Dee Lake of Helena; Linda Flaherty-Goldsmith of Forest Park; Dagmar Rick, Virginia Loftin and Kristy Parker of Southside; Lauren Herb and Jeanette Brabston of South Highlands; Howard and Julia Boehm-McKay, Mary Lynne and Eli Capiluto and Charlie Haines of Crestline; Cheryl Edwards and Bonnie Fountain of Shelby County; Lori and BIC board member Jesse Hernandez of Pelham; William Cabaniss, former US Ambassador to the Czech Republic, with Catherine, Gail and Jeffrey Bayer, Mabry Rogers, Susan Swartz, Mountain Brook Mayor Terry Oden with Sandra, John and Sheryl Kimerling and Jacque Shaia, all of Mountain Brook; Cameron Vowell of Redmont; Sharon Evans of Homewood; and Matt Hunter, Leigh Hutson, Gerald Johnson, Jan Kent, BIC Board member Bruce Larson, Jerry LaSuer, Judge Helen Shores Lee, Betty Morrison and Chandra Smith of Birmingham. THE COCKTAIL HOUR

The event: Montevallo Main Street Players' cast call for A.R. Gurney's comedy "The Cocktail Hour."

The scene: George Scott of Helena and Bruce McClanahan of Montevallo are searching for two women and men. They want them to play the leading roles in the comedy performed by the Montevallo Main Street Players Feb. 22-24 at Parnell Memorial Library Theatre.

"The late Mary Frances Tipton, a chief benefactor of the Parnell Memorial Library Theatre and one of the most active members of the Montevallo Main Street Players through the years, had much wanted MMSP to produce this particular play," board member Norman McMillan recalls.

The play takes place in the mid-1970s. The plot revolves around John, a playwright, who has come back to the family home in upstate New York to get approval for the play he's written about his wealthy family. Pandemonium ensues with John's dad wanting nothing to do with it, and his sister complaining about her small role, leaving mom with the task of trying to keep everyone happy.

Auditions are set for 3 p.m. Jan. 6 at the Parnell Memorial Library, 277 Park Road in Montevallo. Producer Bruce McClanahan and director George Scott need a man and woman 60 years old or older and another man and woman 30-50 years old. Younger actors may play to age.

MMSP officers will be elected at the annual meeting and party that night. For more information about the auditions, call George Scott at 616-4421. TOY DRIVE

The event: Toy drive today through Wednesday benefiting the Children's Hospital hematology and oncology department.

The scene: Riviera Fitness Centers Inc. is holding its first toy drive. Anyone donating a new toy of any value will receive two one-week passes to Riviera Fitness Center valued at \$50 each.

"We hope to make this an annual event," said Tracy Childress, owner of the centers. "Hopefully, we're going to put some smiles on a lot of kids' faces."

Project chairwoman Erica Caldwell of Adamsville, general manager of the Forestdale center, said toys collected will be presented to Children's Hospital Dec. 21 by "Santa Claus" Jim Savage of Forestdale and his "elf," Ashley King of Adamsville.

Toy drop-off points are all Riviera Fitness Centers: Center Point - 2304 Center Point Road; Midfield - 161 Bessemer Super Highway; Homewood - 372 Palisades Blvd.; Forestdale - 963 Forestdale Blvd.; and Vestavia Hills - 1360 Montgomery Highway.

Call 290-0000 for center directions and hours. For more information, call Erica Caldwell at 259-3332 or 798-0098. WINE DINNER

The event: Margi Ingram's annual wine dinner at Park Tower.

The scene: One of the most anticipated holiday parties in Highland Park is Margi's dinner.

Red poinsettias were everywhere in the party rooms. The Christmas flowers were bright accents to the white-covered tables centered with colorful miniature gift packages.

The buffet feast included wine with turkey and dressing, sweet potatoes, fresh green beans, cranberry sauce, heavenly hash and an assortment of desserts.

Spotted: Margi's "elves" Sally Tuttle, Jim Wise and Shruti Goel, along with Kate Jackson, Patty Crocker, Pat Blalock, Louise McGough, Carolyn Vigelante, Emily Swift, Elizabeth Swift, Martina Robison, Bill Jenkins, Karen and Jim Lewis, Tippee Coley, Joyce Jacobson, Dr. Jack Geer, Pat and Lee Holum, Carol Cheraskin, Cecile Sundock, Horace Hulse, Tim Walker, Annie Laurie Middlebrooks, Stephen Schaeffer, Richard Dabney, J.W. Elkins, Erskine Elkins, Penney Hughes, Cathy Woodman, Cary Hass, Evelyn Bischoff, Janice Bischoff, Carol Mitchell, Joanna and Bill Boyd, Vickie and Bob Barnes, Susan Parker, Edna Alosi, Arlene Armstrong, Terri Smith and Martha Weber. CHRISTMAS TREES

The event: Greystone Garden Club celebrated with Christmas trees this December. The scene: First, the club presented a flocked Christmas tree donated by Pike Nursery for the club's scholarship fundraiser to club member SueVaughn Hicks.

Fundraising chairwoman Nita Yarbrough made the presentation, assisted by Dalton Holladay, members Ann Capps and Lollie Burg, Pike's assistant manager Michelle Sperzel and club supporters Connie Spates and Kim Stanley.

The club presented another tree, a decorated "Fit for Life" tree, and other Christmas decorations to St. Vincent's Spa 119. Accepting were the spa's manager, Phil Holmes, and Bonnie Ganser. Making the presentation were Greystone members Maxine Norwood and Carolyn LaGroue on behalf of all of the club members who contributed decorations and helped decorate Spa 119. HUEYTOWN HOBBY CLUB

The event: November luncheon at Hueytown Library.

The scene: Betsy Simpson introduced guest speaker Dr. Pat Terry, a nutrition and dietetics professor at Samford University. She discussed her new book, "Made for Paradise," a plan for healthy eating, physical activity and rest based on biblical Scriptures.

President Frances Gilmore welcomed Donna Moses back into club membership. They joined members in selecting Daisy's Place as the club Christmas project. The shelter helps women who have recovered from

addictions get back into the workplace.

Ruth Cale, Judy Owens and Phoebe Cochran were hosts for the buffet luncheon, centering the tables with Thanksgiving decorations which several people took home as door prizes. Parties, club news and charitable events make news that your neighbors in Jefferson and Shelby counties want to know about. Social items promoting an event and digital photos and information describing just-completed events for "Social Scene" should be e-mailed to: jhaise@bhamnews.com or mailed to: Judy Haise, The Birmingham News, P.O. Box 2553, Birmingham 35202. Items should be received at least 10 days prior to publication, which is every Wednesday and Friday. Please type or neatly print all names of people and the communities where they live. Also include a cell or phone number where you can be reached during the day.

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