

RSVP on MDI

A great gala for people on a 'Mission'

By Nan Lincoln
rlincoln@mdistandard.com

Oh my, what a weekend it was! It began with a lavish gala and award ceremony for the Maine Sea Coast Mission at the ever-so-elegant Bar Harbor Club on Friday evening.

I know I say it every year, but this is truly one of my favorite events of the summer.

The Maine Sea Coast Mission is a fine organization that in this troubling economy has an even more vital role to play in our coastal and island communities. There's the EdCil! Program that gives kids the incentive and inspiration to stick with school; a medical, practical and spiritual outreach service that includes helping with heating and home repair needs, and the enormous and hugely appreciated effort to make Christmas a joyful event in the homes of hundreds of coastal Maine homes.

The highlight of the evening was the Sunbeam awards, which recognize some truly exceptional people in our extended community.

This year it was Ralph Stanley whom just about everyone on Mount Desert Island knows, for his work as a traditional boatbuilder, as an invaluable historical resource and mentor, and as a fiddler about town.

The other honoree, Winter Harbor philanthropist Edith Dixon, does so much for the arts, education and the livelihood of her Maine community through her support of the Sea Coast Mission, Schoodic Research and Education Center

(SERC) the Grand Auditorium, Maine Coast Memorial Hospital, and a number of other worthy causes.

And last but not least I love this event, because just about everyone rises to the occasion and dresses up. Per usual, it was one swell looking crowd this year.

And also per usual, standouts were petite- and pretty Ellen Dohmen and her adorable husband Bill. Ellen was wearing a purple strapless silk top over a black pencil skirt. I don't know if it's genes or she works hard at it, but a woman over 40 baring her shoulders and arms is a risk and for Ellen it really pays off. Bill complemented her nicely in a purple-checked shirt and brilliant paisley tie.

Another winning couple was new College of the Atlantic president and wife Darren and Karen Collins - he in a beige linen jacket she in a nice little black dress and both looking like it wasn't that long ago since they graduated from college themselves. Mr. Collins is a 1992 COA grad and has returned to Bar Harbor to lead his alma mater to greater glory.

The most attractive duo of friends I found as I prowled around the patio before dinner was Seal Harbor summer resident Debra Andrews, in a V-necked black cocktail dress, and her friend Alyne Gettone a visiting professor at COA. Alyne also wore basic black with a gorgeous bright salmon shrug sweater that made her skin glow. Debra is one of those milky skinned blonds who wisely stays out of the sun, and together these two looked like opposing queens in a very classy



PHOTO COURTESY OF NAN LINCOLN

New College of the Atlantic president Darren Collins and his wife Karen Collins attended this year's Sunbeam awards.

dress set.

Ellie Buchanan, of Southwest Harbor always looks classy, too, and tonight especially so in pale green and gold silk with a fabulous chunky crystal necklace she found in Naples, Fla. where she winters. Carol Reiff also looked great in a lime silk jacket and a quartz and gold necklace. It was great to chat a bit with Sally Crock, looking very fine in a hibiscus pink jacket and black slacks. I caught a glimpse of former Sharks coach Lenny Demuro, too, but never got a chance to say hi.

Another old acquaintance, or might I say, acquaintance of old, I was pleased to see was Malcolm Hughes, who introduced me to his new wife Lydia Barnes-Hughes. Lydia was

wearing a darling pendant necklace of a gold frog clutching a diamond that she said had been her grandmother's.

Anne Napier was also wearing some eye-catching vintage family 'bling' with a sparkling suite of necklace, bracelet and earrings.

Wearing my favorite bowties of the evening were Haywood May of Bernard and Bob Stevens of Addison. But Bill Buchanan really has to have the best straight tie collection in the east. Last year he sported a pink one with little newspaper readers rampant, and tonight it was a brilliant yellow and blue affair.

Speaking of tall, handsome fellows, Roberto Gonzales of the Seal Cove Auto Museum looked dashing in a white-and-

green striped shirt under a blue blazer. Jim Blanchard was looking as tanned, tall and slim as ever escorting the lovely Eileen Holberg who was, as ever, elegant, she was wearing a lacy red chartrreuse blouse under a smoky gray scalloped jacket handsomely accessorized by an exotic gold and lapis Egyptian collar necklace.

And speaking of exotic is it possible that Audrey Park is the most beautiful dentist in Maine if not on the whole eastern seaboard? It would have been hard for anyone else to claim that title at this gala, as she looked so stunning in a pink, gray and brown-patterned bias-cut sheath.

In his dinner address, Mission director Rev. Scott Planting mentioned how nice it was to see so many young people among the gala-goers, and I concur. It was an observation that bodes well for the future of this fine organization and brightened the room with youth and beauty. Representing that trend in grand fashion were Sarah Catanese of Trenton in a form-fitting black cocktail dress, Jack Frost of Ellsworth in the ubiquitous blue sports coat and slak trousers, and Bobbi Joe Thornton of Hancock in a fetching floral frock.

At dinner (which was a delicious surf and turf combo of beef filet and crabmeat-stuffed sole), I was pleased to be sitting next to Glenn Tucker who owns a couple of businesses in Bar Harbor, now, but was at one time a newspaperman.

All in all about 300 people attended this gala to applaud the honorees and help raise about \$140,000 for the Mission and its important programs.