

DTC Gala Committee Meeting Review
January 8, 2008 – at 157 Church Street, New Haven, CT

In attendance: Joann Bilyard, Maureen David, Jacques Dickinson, Stephanie Ercegovic, Sue Frankenbach, Marie Green, Renee Luongo, Martha Luther, Michelle Mills, Maureen Moreau, Andy Rubenoff, Arlene Schwartz, Peter Schwartz, Nancy Smith

We welcomed a new committee member, Nancy Smith. Marie Green had invited her to join us, and we are delighted to have her on-board.

Gala update

Andy Rubenoff presented some initial decorating ideas for the Black and White Ball in Commons. Several committee members made suggestions and much discussion ensued about using an accent color. Teal was suggested – this would need to be introduced by a ribbon, tassel, napkin, etc, since there are no teal flowers (unless we go with silk flowers). No final decision was made. Linen and tableware that is black/white is easy and readily available. A checkerboard dance floor may cost several thousand dollars, depending on how large we want it. Tenting the ceiling was also discussed – Andy would like to try draping wide streamers to create a canopy-feeling. He will be testing these and other design ideas on Saturday March 1st at the New Haven Mayor's inaugural ball, the theme being black and white and being held in Commons! Andy invited any committee member who was interested to stop by the afternoon of the ball to see what he has done. He also suggested the decorating committee meet with him in the next month or so develop these ideas further.

Sue distributed sample menus for cocktails and dinner provided by University Catering Services. Initially the estimate for the cocktails and horsd'oeuvres seemed high, but Jacques pointed out that a lot of the liquor had been donated for the Gala in 2006. There was a general opinion that serving something different besides chicken was desirable. However, the cost of beef is high. The suggestion of having beef, chicken/fish and a vegetarian alternative was suggested, and also guests indicating their meal when they purchase their tickets. Sue will discuss all of this with Catherine Stebinger of Yale Catering, and get updated costs.

The Gala III (2006) budget, as well as the costs and profits for 2006 and 2005 Galas were discussed. The cost of putting the Gala on is very high, and concern was expressed for how much we may clear to donate to DTC for Gala 2008. Nancy Smith pointed out that the proceeds from the silent auction in 2006 basically covered the cost of dinner, which should motivate everyone to pursue silent auction donations!

An initial time line for Gala planning was distributed (it is attached to this email). Sue asked each member to let her know if she left anything out, or if certain tasks needed to be completed at a different time during the next eight months.

Silent Auction

A list of the top 25 silent auction items from 2006 items was discussed. Maureen David thoughtfully created a donor/item card and reminder calendar for each committee member. From the 2006 list, while there were items that did not sell, or meet the minimum bid, it appears that it may have had to do with the number of items, tight space for display and that most guests were involved in conversations which left little time to bid on the items. Arlene and Peter Schwartz mentioned some unique and interesting experiences they've had with silent auctions. Dr. Schwartz suggested offering a selection of interesting wines, as well as dinners prepared by chefs of well-known restaurants (local or regional). He also mentioned that as they arrived at one auction, his credit card was scanned, and he was given a sheet of USPC codes he and Arlene used on the bidding sheets! There was discussion about either making the cocktail portion of the evening longer, and keeping the auction open during dinner, with a "last call" to give guests another chance to bid. Tallying the top bids and processing the winners took a great deal of time in 2006, so all of these logistics need to be considered.

Maureen Moreau suggested inviting survivor artists to contribute their artwork – perhaps to be incorporated into the Gala evening – on display and part of the silent auction with a percentage of the sale to go to DTC – or a stand-alone exhibit/auction event to raise funds. She mentioned the Greater New Haven Arts Council was a good resource for spreading this kind of information to artists, who usually are happy for opportunities to display their work. While this may take a few years to gain momentum, everyone agreed this was a worthwhile idea to pursue. Dr. Schwartz mentioned he knew of two patients who were very accomplished artists whom we could contact.

DTC fundraising efforts

Sue reported that the DTC Annual Appeal 2007 has yielded \$10,000 in-hand, with a promised gift of \$2,000 more to come. All committee members received this mailing as a courtesy since this was a topic of discussion at previous meetings regarding the letterhead etc.

The new Discovery to Cure brochure was available in plexi counter display units for each committee member to take and distribute or place at an appropriate location (doctor office, beauty parlor, spa, etc.). Our thanks go to Jacques who shepherded this project from beginning to end, including paying the bill! Anyone who needs more brochures or display units should contact Sue.

These brochures will be mailed to former/current patients along with a cover letter inviting them to become involved in some way with Discovery to Cure including the Gala committee.

Stephanie reported that she is soon to finalize the plans with JPMorgan for a DTC fundraising effort directed to employees at Mothers Day.

Jacques reported that he hopes to schedule a meeting with a corporate client of his who would be a great underwriter or sponsor for DTC.

He also mentioned that Gil Mor had submitted several articles via Renee to be used as PR to get the DTC program in the news. As reported in November's meeting review, Minuteman Press's editor Lynette Gannon enthusiastically agreed to run pieces about Discovery to Cure.

Research and Clinical News

Dr. Peter Schwartz mentioned several new and promising directions the program is pursuing. In particular is a new physician, Dr. Alessandro Santine who comes to us from Arkansas (he is a native of Italy). He is working on a new compound to treat both ovarian and uterine cancers, as well as developing a therapeutic vaccine for cervical cancer. Officially, he will begin March 1st. Dr. Schwartz also mentioned an exciting collaboration with the PET (positron-emission tomography) department, as well as Dr. Joanne Weidhaas of the therapeutic radiology department.

The next DTC Gala Committee Meeting will be held Thursday, February 7 at 157 Church Street, New Haven. This was suggested and agreed to by all in attendance. Details will follow.