

Gala 2010

The Woman's Board of the Alliance Française de Chicago Presents

Le Bal du Printemps

Le Bal du Printemps is a tremendous success!

On Saturday, May 8, 2010, the Woman's Board of the Alliance Française de Chicago, led by President Mary B. Babson and Gala Chair, Nancy L. Traylor, hosted its biennial fundraising gala, with this year's theme of Le Bal du Printemps, at the historic Chicago Hilton. More than 400 guests raised over \$560,000 in support of the educational and cultural programs of the Alliance.

Guests were welcomed by the Stanley Paul Strings lining the double staircases to the Normandie Lounge, where the cocktail hour was under the watchful eyes and movements of six mimes dressed in 18th century costumes. The silent auction, organized by Auction Chair Monica Hansen and Co-Chair Carole Crosby, offered over 100 items, featuring a wine tour of southern France, prize Bordeaux vintages, fine art and trips to Morocco and Paris.



At the dinner chime, guests entered the Belle Époque-style Grand Ballroom to see tall dogwood bouquets provided by Bukiety Florists, arranged in the center of each pink champagne-clothed table, with gold ballroom chairs awaiting their guests. During the four-course meal of foie gras, cucumber sorbet, perfect rack of lamb and a delicate apple feuilletée, a large screen flashed vintage scenes of famous actors and actresses in France. A brief live auction, conducted by Leslie Hindman, offered three exciting items: dinner for eight at the French Ambassador's residence in Washington, D.C.; a Van Cleef and Arpels necklace and bracelet from the Alhambra collection, one of the few available in the United States; and an Abercrombie & Kent cruise to the Galapagos, with dinner at the French Embassy in Quito, Ecuador. Guests were encouraged to use the pink feather plume gracing the back of their chairs as an auction paddle. After dinner, a short video presentation, narrated by Jack McCord, Executive Director of the Alliance Française de Chicago, about the Alliance's Educational Outreach Program led into a paddle raise auction to support this important partnership with Chicago Public Schools.

Dancing to the Stanley Paul Orchestra finished the evening, and party favors of fresh lavender in terra cotta pots provided by Craig Bergmann Landscape Design awaited guests upon their departure from a truly enchanting and memorable night.

The Versailles-inspired Hilton Grand Ballroom transformed into an enchanted spring evening by Bukiety Florists.



Guests greeted by mimes dressed in 18th century costume, entertained by Stanley Paul Strings.



Isabelle de la Vauvre, Women's Board, Hervé de la Vauvre, President of the Board of the Alliance Française, Mary Babson, Woman's Board President, and Nick Babson



Nancy Traylor, 2010 Gala Chair