

By Caroline Phillips, Ottawa Citizen January 28, 2013 11:03 AM

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From left, figure skating talents Elvis Stojko with his wife, Gladys Orozco, Nancy Kerrigan, event host Elizabeth Manley, Joannie Rochette and Shawn Sawyer at the Elizabeth Manley & Friends Gala held at the Brookstreet Hotel in Kanata on Friday, Jan. 25, 2013, in support of D.I.F.D. and the Youth Services Bureau of Ottawa.

Photograph by: Caroline Phillips

OTTAWA — Some of the biggest names in figure skating came together over the weekend to help their pal and fellow icon, Elizabeth Manley, raise funds and awareness for teen mental health.

Elvis Stojko, Nancy Kerrigan and Joannie Rochette were among the Olympic medallists seen arriving at the Brookstreet Hotel Friday to attend a winter wonderland-themed gala, held on the eve of their ice show at Scotiabank Place. At Stojko's side was his attractive wife, Mexican figure skater Gladys Orozco.

"I'm so excited," Manley told Around Town of her inaugural event. "I keep joking I'm giving birth, that this is my child. This is my first Elizabeth Manley & Friends."

The gala and ice show were in support of Royal Ottawa's D.I.F.D. (Do It For Daron) campaign and the Youth Services Bureau to address teen mental health issues, with which Manley struggled in her own youth.

It took zero arm-twisting for the lovable Liz to recruit her friends. "It really warmed my heart that skaters of this calibre instantly said, 'I'm there,'" said Manley.

Present were reigning national pairs champs Eric Radford and Meagan Duhamel and former national skater Shawn Sawyer, seen posing for photos with girls from the Gloucester Skating Club. They were cloaked in wintry white for their roles as greeters.

The frosty theme continued in the ballroom, which event decorator Sharon Bosley House elegantly adorned with all-white candles, feathers, satins and clear-beaded garlands.

Sighted was Kanata South Coun. Allan Hubley, who lost his teenaged son, Jamie, to suicide in 2011. Jamie had skated with the Glen Cairn Skating Club. Six of its members performed in Saturday's ice show and were treated, along with their coach, to a night at the gala by ScotiaMcLeod's Wally MacDonell and his wife, Cathy.

BACK IN TIME

I may be too young for hot flashes but not for Flashbacks, the name of the vintage fashion show held Saturday at St. Matthias Anglican Church in honour of its 125th birthday.

Attendees filled the pews as volunteer models posed on the makeshift catwalk in outfits ranging from the 1880s until present day. Afterward, there was a

reception.

The MC was retired CBC host Don Newman, honorary chair of the diocesan/parish GIFT (Growing in Faith Together) five-year campaign.

Newman came out on stage wearing a white sport coat and a pink carnation while the Marty Robbins tune about that very same attire was played by pianist Deirdre Piper. Between fashion sets, Newman touched on the major developments that've taken place over the past 125 years at St. Matthias, located on Parkdale Avenue, as well as in Ottawa and beyond.

Present for the event were Anglican Bishop John Chapman and his wife, Catherine (dressed from the flapper era), along with Rev. Joan Riding and lead organizers Gaye Moffett and Julia Brady.

25 YEARS OF ARTS ...

All that glitters is not just gold. It's silver, too. For such was the lustrous colour worn by Ottawa Art Gallery director Alexandra Badzak and her staff as they celebrated their Silver Jubilee with 300 of their closest friends Thursday at Arts Court.

Mayor Jim Watson, who arrived with Rideau-Vanier Coun. Mathieu Fleury, delivered an impassioned speech. He got the crowd so fired up while defending the importance of arts funding that he almost forgot to present a plaque to the OAG in honour of its 25th anniversary. "What's an event with Jim Watson without a plaque, ladies and gentleman," he self-mocked.

This fall, the mayor is hosting a gala to raise funds and awareness for the planned expansion and renovation of Arts Court, which will lead to greater elbow room for the OAG. Watson is also behind a new one-day arts and cultural exposition to be held at City Hall.

Other dignitaries included Ottawa-Vanier Liberal MPP Madeleine Meilleur and Ottawa-Orléans Conservative MP Royal Galipeau. He donned a beret, but it was less about looking artsy and more about protecting his head as it heals from skin cancer surgery.

Also seen were U.S. Ambassador David Jacobson and his wife, Julie, who've been accumulating a collection of Canadian art. They own two paintings by Philip Craig, who was among the artists in attendance, and have four paintings on loan from the OAG's Firestone Collection.

... AND 25 YEARS OF HELPING KIDS

Even Wednesday's record cold snap couldn't upstage the Children's Aid Foundation of Ottawa (CAFO) 25th anniversary breakfast.

Some 250 early risers gathered at Château Laurier Hotel to celebrate the good work the foundation has been doing for some of the most vulnerable kids in our community. For example, it's provided \$1.5 million in bursaries to 577 youth in the care of CAS (Children's Aid Society) so that they can achieve their dream of post-secondary education.

Mayor Jim Watson was there to proclaim the day Children's Aid Foundation of Ottawa Day. Attendees included police chief Charles Bordeleau and deputy chiefs Ed Keeley and Gilles Larochelle while Senator Vern White served as event champion. He told the room how his 31-year policing career exposed him to the challenging work done by front-line CAS workers, whose efforts go largely unrecognized.

On hand were CAS Ottawa executive director Barbara MacKinnon, CAFO's executive director, Cheryl Burwash, and board chair, Jonathan Bodden; and Michael Sangster from presenting sponsor Telus.

CITY BUILDER OF THE YEAR

Around Town dropped into City Hall to see Joseph Cull, a popular fitness instructor with seniors and community volunteer, receive his Mayor's City Builder Award on Wednesday.

I first met Cull, a native of the Ottawa Valley farming community of Douglas, in 2009 when he lip-synched, in drag, a Chicago musical number at a Crichton Cultural Community Centre fundraiser. He toned it down for the City Hall folks but did belt out part of his acceptance speech to the theme song from Evita.

His spouse, Ian Engelberg, hosted a reception afterward.

I'll be back next week with coverage of Saturday's CCLA (County of Carleton Law Association) 125th anniversary bash.

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