



Out and About

Sunday, August 20, 2006

Burning River Fest at Whiskey Island

Natural wonder: An estimated 5,000 pedestrians, bicyclists and car-poolers descended on Wendy Park at Whiskey Island -- where the Cuyahoga River meets Lake Erie -- on Aug. 12 for the sixth annual Burning River Festival, where wind and solar power kept the beer cold and the food hot. Festival organizer Rebecca Bendlak said money raised -- a hoped-for \$100,000 -- will go toward forwarding the mission of the Wendy Park Foundation. Their mission: to develop and restore the natural environment of the park to "national park" standards of excellence, among many other green causes, such as one day connecting Wendy Park to the Towpath Trail.

Political clout: Cleveland City Councilman Matt Zone, whose Ward 17 encompasses the historic property, made a case for saving the park. "It's a great place to enjoy Cleveland," he said. In June, Zone also held a party at this idyllic locale for his 25th reunion from St. Edward High School.

Green is in: Festivalgoers enjoyed a lazy, yet informative day full of entertainment, sailing demonstrations, tours on the boat Holiday around the Coast Guard station, a sandcastle-building contest, a water show from the Cleveland Fire Boat and green programs from dozens of vendors. The \$7 admission price seemed just right.

Neighborhood connection: Event sponsor Great Lakes Brewing Co. brought its dog and pony show: the fatty wagon, vat mobile and semi truck all run on recycled oil products. Other neighborhood faces in the crowd included PluggedinCleveland.com guy Dave Stack, Cool Clevelander Thomas Mulready, volunteers Tylangela Smith and Matthew Burell. -- Story and photos by Kathleen Murphy Colan, Special to The Plain Dealer

Human Fund Geezeroo VIP Party at Cain Park

Gray and proud: A near-sellout crowd at Cain Park for the Geezeroo Concert featuring Pure Prairie League, Poco, New Riders of the Purple Sage and Chris Hillman on Aug. 13 helped raise \$40,000 for local charity the Human Fund. The Human Fund, established by Andy Rayburn -- a self-proclaimed geezer at 51 -- supports arts education programs for underserved children in Cleveland.

VIP scene: Serious supporters ponied up \$250 a ticket to party in style at a private reception in Cain Park's Colonnade Pavilion where house caterer Raintree served drinks and dinner in casual yet high-class style. About 150 guests bustled back and forth from their front-row seats to the Colonnade to mingle and reminisce about the good old days.

Dedication: Board member and party co-chair Steve Lindseth worked the lunch crowd at Bravo restaurant at Eton, Chagrin Boulevard during the week before the event to help sell tickets. "He called me every time he sold one," said Andrea Wedren, Human Fund executive director.

In the crowd: Marcie Goodman, Christine Bluso, Cindy Barber, Barry Gabel, Katie and Wayne Impullitti, Michael Norman, Jim and Nancy Kaufman, Matt and Deborah Crawford, James Lloyd and Nicole Naso and Herman Fontenot.

Overheard: "This is our music. Let the kids have their own."

-- Story and photos by Kathleen Murphy Colan, Special to The Plain Dealer

The Barrington Napa Classic 2006/Western Reserve Historical Society benefit

Luxe for lots: Luxury was the keyword at the Barrington Napa Classic 2006 on Aug. 12. A sellout crowd of more than 400 enjoyed fine wines, delicious food, classic luxury cars, music and fireworks -- all for a good

cause, the Western Reserve Historical Society.

On the menu: More than 60 wines from all over the world. Opus One, from the Robert Mondavi Vineyards at \$160 a bottle, was a favorite with this glamorous crowd. There was plenty of dining to go with wining -- stations included beef tenderloin, pasta, lamb chops and a Seafood Extravaganza, featuring fresh shrimp, crab, sushi and rare tuna. And don't even get PDQ started about the fabulous chocolate fountain station.

Entertainment options: Guests could ride in 25 luxury classic cars from the Western Reserve Historical Society. Fireworks, presented by Fred Baker Audi, capped the evening.

-- Lois K. Weissberg, Special to The Plain Dealer

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