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Owner of Shenanigans Trevor Hotchkin and Executive Director of IS183 Hope Sullivan



Hosts Lauren Joy, left, as Glinda, David Schecker as Wicked Witch's soldier and Vickie Bonnington as the Wicked Witch of the North.



Carrie Wright, left, and Lucie Cataldo attend the gala for the 25th anniversary of IS183.



Robin and Stan Gerber charmed the IS183 25th anniversary gala.



Costumed revelers enjoy the 25th anniversary for IS183.

COURTESY PHOTOS



IS183 Executive Director Hope Sullivan, left, Nancy Hoffmeier, center, and Regina Burgio, right, all dressed up at the 25th anniversary gala.



Todd Piaceti of Pittsfield showed up as Beetlejuice.



PHOTO BY BILL WRIGHT

OZ dinner co-host, IS183 Contemporary Circle member, and former IS183 Board member Vicki Bonnington.

Over the rainbow

Local art stars sparkle in the night for IS183 Art School's 25th anniversary gala

BY JANEL HARRISON
Special to *The Eagle*

PITTSFIELD — Under Hotel on North's glistening chandeliers, the annual IS183 Oz Gala commenced with an array of color, costume and personality on Saturday night. Administrators, faculty, honored guests and supporters came dressed to see the wizard and ready to party in Oz.

"This is the final event of our 25th anniversary celebration," Executive Director Hope Sullivan, donning a snake-charming turban, told the crowd. "And we have such a big fellowship of supporters to thank."

She added, "What we do at IS183" — the nonprofit art school of the Berkshires based in Stockbridge — "reflects the assets and creativity of the Berkshires in a celebration of art from all walks of life and community."

Hosting the event were Vickie Bonnington and David Schecker, Tracy and

Andy Foster, Robin and Stan Gerber, Lauren Joy, Julia Kaplan, and Carol and Bob Stegeman.

Checking reservations and assisting with coats at the door was registrar and office manager Peter Long and studio programs coordinator Cecilia Hirsch.

The band of guests exchanged hugs, warm smiles and complimentary gestures as they gathered in the candle-lit dining room.

Hors d'oeuvres were passed and Emerald City drinks were served. Raffle tickets were sold to win a trip for two to Australia, "The other OZ".

Everyone at the party had something to say.

Hosts Vickie Bonnington and David Schecker were donned in the attire of the Wicked Witch and her loyal soldier.

"This is one of my favorite events to attend," said Vickie Bonnington. "It's creativity on display!"

She added in her lavish green dress, "In designing

my costume I wanted to wear a dress that the wicked witch would wear to a dinner party."

Chairman of the board Andy Foster along with his wife and board member Tracy Foster were dressed as members of the Lollipop Guild and bounced around mingling from person to person in character.

"I feel privileged," said Philanthropist Julia Kaplan dressed as the Scarecrow. "To be one of the hosts of this dinner."

Marketing Associate Carrie Wright, dressed as The Mad Hatter said, "I love how this event goes completely over the top making the art school come alive!"

She stood with Associate Program Director and citizen of the Emerald City Lucie Castaldo who started at the school as a camper in 1999 and worked through college until she was offered her present position in 2012.

The clinking of glasses sounded as guests were seated at elaborately dressed

dinner tables where Executive Director Hope Sullivan thanked all supporters, one being Nancy Fitzpatrick, owner of the historic Red Lion Inn in Stockbridge for her instrumental assistance in founding the school.

Tracy Foster said, "On behalf of this 25th anniversary, there is no place like — click-click-click — IS183. The Shire has been transformed to Oz on steroids so get ready to dance your hearts over the rainbow to Oz!"

Supporter Cathy Deely showed her support and spirit for the Berkshires as she was adorned in all local makeup, jewelry and clothing.

At dinner, table favors included squares of festive chocolate from Chocolate Springs and a news article written by *The Eagle's* Jenn Smith celebrating the school's 25 years. In the article was a full color photograph of a 20-year-old student named Austin, who is legally blind, standing next to one of his creations. Aus-

tin's mentor — ceramics studio manager Jared Gelormino — dressed as the wizard's zany politician.

After dinner, guests sauntered across the street over to the Shire City Sanctuary for a dance party in Oz hosted by IS183 Art School and Berkshire Shenanigans where the colorful celebration went on into the wee hours of the night. People from all over the Berkshires and beyond showed in their spookiest and most original attire. More than 500 people attended.

Music was by DJ Hush and detailed light installations and projections were by Drew Suto and Joe Wheaton. There was a fire show of entertainment just outside the doors as you walk in as a preview to the light show inside. Guests were in awe upon walking through the doors or perhaps they were "over the rainbow."

Owner of Shenanigans Trevor Hotchkin stood in the upper balcony eyeing the dancing wall to wall crowd

of people and spoke of the start of his popular venue nine years ago.

There were two bars on the upper and lower floors, and an Oz mural turned into the perfect photo spot. Below, psychic readings were done with Darlene Baisley, intuitive counselor.

Guests danced under giant red-eyed flying monkeys and a witch flew above the heads of the crowd.

Michael Jackson's "Thriller" sounded as the creatures of the night gathered in for the sacred All Hollow's Eve dance.

But the true theme of the night was the multifaceted example of creativity in the Berkshires and how people thrive with art and full engagement in their craft.

"This is the kind of example," said IS183 chairman, Andy Foster, standing with his family, "of people of the Berkshires expressing their creativity."

"It's when you suddenly walk in and realize you're in your own hometown."