

THIS - THAT - AND THE OTHER

Senior Citizens Receive Christmas Love



Pamela Hart performed in the Boyd Vance Auditorium. She was accompanied by Dr. James Polk, Michael Stevens, and Brannen Temple, Jr. Photo by Shirley Hammond.

By Shirley A. Hammond
Special to The Villager

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Musical gifts and food-plenty were two ways that Austin's seniors were honored during this Christmas season. On Wednesday, Dec. 12, courtesy of the Austin Fire Department, about 400 seniors were served a luncheon at the Conley/Guerrero Activity Center at 808 Nile Street. Now retired firefighter Tim LaFuente started the event several years back when he was an active firefighter, and he still returns each year and cooks every morsel of food himself, according to a media advisory. On Thursday, The George Washington Carver Museum and Cultural Center hosted a Silver Bell Social in collaboration with the GWC Ambassadors, Inc. About 70 seniors were treated to the musical styling of Pamela Hart, with instrumentalists Dr. James Polk, Michael Stevens and

Brannen Temple accompanying. After the 2 hour performance, with Leon Roberts as emcee; a reception took place in the museum's main hall.

"I know they call you senior citizens, but many of you are faster than I am and get around more than I do," stated Hart before treating the crowd to a swing version of Rudolph, The Red-Nosed Reindeer.

In the first segment of her performance, Hart wore a sparkling white number with silver accents. The sparkling quality of her voice matched her attire. She accepted audience requests, and engaged them in her performance. Demonstrating her vocal variety, Hart rendered some selections with a little jazzy scat, a taste of bluesy melody, or some Cuban calypso samplings. She demonstrated a richly trilling tongue roll in one song.

Seasonal and other favorites were sang by the noted jazz vocalist, who re-

appeared after the intermission wearing a beige and black dress with a sheer spaghetti straps and a sheer maxi. She danced and side-stepped gracefully to the music although she was wearing a dazzling pair of matching black stilettos. Her radiant voice showed no signs of tiring; not even at the last selection touting Jesus's birth and man's redemption. She gave "O Holy Night," her own flavor and clearly owned the song as she showcased her effervescence and vocal range.

At the reception, she mingled with the crowd and ate some refreshments.

Hart has been active in the Women in Jazz Concerts, and has significant performance credits.

Dr. Beulah A. Jones, described Hart's voice as "very listenable." She said Hart came to her for voice coaching when she moved to Austin. Jones recalls that Hart already had what it took to be a stellar performer.

Commenting on Hart's workshops, gracious and giving ways as well as her artistic endeavors, Jones stated, "I've always admired her resourcefulness in the community. It has only made Austin a better place."

One example that she shared is the vocal performance workshops held by Hart. In addition to getting experience working with a professional musician, Jones noted, "She finds some way to artistically include everyone in the closing concert."

St. James Host 5K Run March 31st



120 challenge participants left to right, back row Ma'Keba Powell, Patricia Archer, Deborah Abbott, Brenda Herndon front row left to right Rev. Bobby Clemons, LaCurtis "X" Jones

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The Healthy Living bandwagon is passing through East Austin. If St. James Missionary Baptist Church, and health enthusiast Carl Williams have their way, a lot of people will jump on board. Or run. Or walk. Carl Williams is beating the drum, spreading the message that no one is invincible, and almost anyone could benefit from healthy lifestyle changes. A double transplantee, and cancer survivor, Williams questions, "Why wait 'til you have to get to this point?" He states that Rev. Bobby Clemons, Race Director for the upcoming marathon, asked for his involvement in the fund-raising aspect of the event three years ago. Clemons, along with St. James, has started a 120 day challenge, which leads up to their 1K and 5K Run on March 31, 2013. All proceeds will benefit The Alzheimer's Association.

The obesity crisis and other disproportionately medical problems in the African American community were the sparks for the run and the events leading up to it. According to the U.S. Center for Disease Control, 51% of African Americans have a higher prevalence of obesity when compared to whites. It is true of 21% of Hispanics.

"I have a very intense concern when it comes to health care. I have a high interest when it comes to a healthy eating lifestyle," stated Williams. The 65 year old shared that he takes 40-50 pills a day, and will have to for the rest of his life.

On Every Tuesday and Thursday leading up to the run, people are meeting at St. James in the South parking lot to warm-up and walk at 6:00pm. The church, located at 3417 E. MLK Jr. Blvd, is also the site for a Zumba Class on Mondays and Thursdays at 7pm, and Saturdays at 10am.

The church office serves as a resource for health matters, and affordable care.

Clemons said they had 22 participants in the 120 day challenge last year, and hope for a greater number this year. He said he wants the community to become aware of health welfare, and essential personal lifestyle changes. He reported that participants receive new shoes from Luke's Locker and a free membership with the YMCA as an incentive for being involved in the challenge.

"This is the longest race on the East Side of Austin," said Clemons. The run is in its 6th year. Registration on the church website opened up in early December. Besides registering, Clemons said he

hopes people will spread the word about the opportunity, share the statistics and convey that everyone needs to take care of themselves.

Funds raised will benefit The Alzheimer's Association. Williams is someone who is all-too familiar with the disease. He explained that he knows Alzheimer's to be a major health issue today. The couple next door to him have Alzheimer's, and they are also his in-laws. His mother, who is in a nursing home, also has it.

He said one of the hardest things he endures is watching these three go through the disease process. Seeing how it affects them daily, and watching the quality of their lives decline also troubles him. As their self-awareness, privacy and identities are lost to the disease, he feels disheartened. "They start to lose their memory," he said. This comes with a loss in the quality of their relationships. He has noticed that their loss of independence is a real blow to them. "They fight terribly hard for that."

Some of the funds will go to the local association, and some will benefit research and development; which includes the quest to find a cure.

Interested parties can visit the church website at stjamescmbc.org and click on the 5K Run link.

Girl Scouts Accepting Nominations for Women of Distinction

The Girl Scouts of Central Texas is now accepting nominations for their Women of Distinction event in the greater Austin area. The deadline for submitting nominations is **January 17**.

The coveted award honors women who have distinguished themselves as outstanding members of their community and who can serve as role models to all Girl Scouts, girls and adults alike. This 2013 event is set for April 24th.

"Women of Distinction events allow Girl Scouts to formally recognize women who illustrate the values of Girl Scouting: courage, confidence and character," says Kirsten Billhardt, Board Chair for the Girl Scouts of Central Texas. "Their accomplishments motivate volunteers to remain committed to our girls' futures and inspire girls to set and achieve ambitious goals.

Together this is how we build strong communities."

Central Texans are strongly encouraged to nominate women leaders from their community as Women of Distinction. Past honorees have excelled in the areas of business, education, government, communications, health care, sports, volunteer services, multicultural activities, and Girl Scouting.

Nomination forms can be completed online at www.gsctx.org or downloaded as a PDF from the website. Forms are also available in all Girl Scouts of Central Texas offices. To request forms by mail, call (800)733-0011. Completed nomination forms should be returned to the Austin Girl Scouts office at 12012 Park Thirty-Five Circle, 78753.

For more information about Women of Distinction events, visit www.gsctx.org or call Pam Hollingsworth at

(512)490-2386 or email at pamh@gsctx.org.

Girl Scouts of Central Texas serves more than 22,000 girls in grades K-12 and over 13,000 adult volunteers in 46 Central Texas counties. Headquartered in Austin, Girl Scouts of Central Texas has program centers in Brownwood, Bryan, Killeen, San Angelo and Waco. Through outcomes-based leadership opportunities, girls discover their own potential, connect with others and take action to improve their communities. Girl Scouting offers an array of fun, educational programs focusing on fine arts, science and technology, math, the environment, community service and life skills.

Girl Scouts lead with courage, confidence and character, to make the world a better place. For more information, visit www.gsctx.org.

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