

## Fred Lee's Social network

By Fred Lee, The Province January 4, 2014

**TOP PARTIES OF 2013** As we begin 2014, here's my annual list of the past year's scene-stealers and best and brightest. And what a fabulous 2013 it was, with charities the biggest winners at some of the city's most noteworthy parties. Thousands of revellers and gala-goers ensured Vanhattan is indeed a caring, compassionate and fun city.

**GRAND OLE OPERA** k.d. lang headlined James Wright's Vancouver Opera Overture Gala in May, one of the most buzzed-about parties of the arts season. Guests enjoyed a spectacular Four Seasons catered dinner served on the Queen Elizabeth Theatre stage. Proceeds contributed to the opera's full recovery from an accumulated deficit.

**TOP MONEY GETTER** For the second year in a row, the B.C. Cancer Foundation's Inspiration Gala, chaired in 2013 by Deborah Roitberg, left, and Jane Hungerford, was the highest-grossing fundraiser in Vancouver. The November gala raised \$2.3 million for lung cancer research at the B.C. Cancer Agency.

**GALA WITH HEART** From left, Sing City's Laura Lang, Darelle Odo and Brice Luther had much to sing about at May's Heart & Stroke Foundation's Heart of Gold \$750,000 benefit, always a golden must-attend affair.

**BEST POP-UP** From left, Tyson Villeneuve, David Hawksworth, Chad Clark and Jordan Kallman fronted Vancouver's sophomore edition of Diner en Blanc in August. More than 2,500 white-clad partygoers gathered on the east side of False Creek for the three-hour, French-inspired, flash-mob fete.

**FIGHT CLUB** In April, Hollyburn Country Club hosted one of the year's most unusual gala dinners. Former B.C. Lion Sean Millington squared off with heavyweight Martin Dupasquier in an amateur bout that headlined the Athletics for Kids gala, helping kids and families access sports and recreation.

**BEST PERIOD PARTY** Thrifty Foods' Megan Du Preez was period perfect in February for the Downton Abbey do in Victoria celebrating the \$52-million renovation of the Oak Bay Beach Hotel.

**BEST DANCE PARTY** A night at the Roxy! Vancouver house band Dr. Strangelove - from left, Rich Sera, Peter Barone, Kelly Brock, Kevin Coles, Sarah Johns and Andre Kunkel - marked their 20th anniversary at the venerable Granville Street cabaret in January.

**FLOWER POWER** Paladin Security chief Ashley Cooper escorted his wife, committee member Julie, to the Daffodil Ball in April. The former Miss Vancouver convinced finance minister Mike de Jong to gift \$1 million, almost doubling the Canadian Cancer Society's haul to \$2.1 million.

**BIG CATCH** Delta Land development president Bruce Langereis landed singer Jann Arden to perform at West Coast Fishing Club's kickoff party at Hotel Georgia in August. The fishing derby off Haida Gwaii netted \$1.17 million for the Canucks Autism Network.

**FEAST OF FORTUNE** The God of Fortune - Royal Pacific Realty's Richard Cheung - bestowed health, happiness and prosperity to Tapestry Foundation gala-goers in February. A record-breaking \$522,000 was raised from the multi-course dinner for Mount Saint Joseph's Rapid Access Breast Clinic.

**LARGER THAN LIFE** In June, Lorne Segal, right, chaired the \$2.1-million Coast Mental Health Gala fundraiser in honour of his parents, Joe and Rosalie Segal. The spectacular tribute in three musical acts drew 1,500 business titans, power players and community builders - the largest gathering of the year - to the Convention Centre.

**BEST HOUSE PARTY** Spurred on by the goal of raising \$1 million for local charities, acclaimed author Jackie Collins stepped up and auctioned off a character in her next book at Jacqui Cohen's sellout \$1,500-a-ticket Face the World Gala house party in June.

## PARTY OF THE YEAR

Casey Wright, 13, who received treatment for a brain tumour at B.C. Children's Hospital, was ringmaster at the circus-themed Crystal Ball in November, the biggest party of the year. The who's-who of Vancouver helped raise \$2 million to conclude the five-year, \$200-million campaign to build a new kids' hospital.

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