

Double Ds and Two Richies by Night

Kee*p Memory Alive*, the fund-raising arm of the **Lou Ruvo Alzheimer's Center**, is one of those rare events that receive the full support of everybody in its community. Not because people feel that they'll be put in good stead politically with those who run the organization—although that's part of it (let's be honest, why do you think folks like Goldman Sachs and Wells Fargo buy tables at some of these shindigs? Altruism?)—but because the cause it raises money for is something that is both tangible and real. Only a few years after Alzheimer's took my grandmother's lifelong best friend, it started right in on her sister, who's been struggling for years with the degenerative brain disease. Perhaps this is what contributed to this year's \$1,500-a-plate evening (entitled the *Carousel of Color*, in a tongue-in-cheek tribute to the evening's honoree, **Cirque du Soleil** founder **Guy Laliberté**) raising a whopping \$6 million (and that's 20 percent more than last year)! Event chairs **Donna Baldwin** and **Camille Ruvo** majestically held court at the Bellagio's new Spa Tower on February 12th, gliding gracefully among their multihued subjects, along with the evening's hosts, **Larry Ruvo**, **Bobby Baldwin**, **Maddy Graves** and **Kenny Epstein**.

Highlights of the evening included a series of tributes and speeches, remarkable for how not boring they were. Kudos especially to Larry Ruvo, for keeping his speech both interesting and brief: Bravo, sir! A portrait of Laliberté, by **Peter Max**, was presented to its subject by Bobby Baldwin; the live auction was led by our own **Robin Leach** with **Ed McMahon** on the assist and TV's favorite frantic hausfrau, **Teri Hatcher**, putting herself on the auction block to the highest bidder (that \$125,000 only bought you lunch, Mr. Davis!)

I think that the idea of insisting on colorful attire



Teri Hatcher and Guy Laliberté at the Bellagio Spa Tower for the Keep Memory Alive benefit, where Laliberté was guest of honor.

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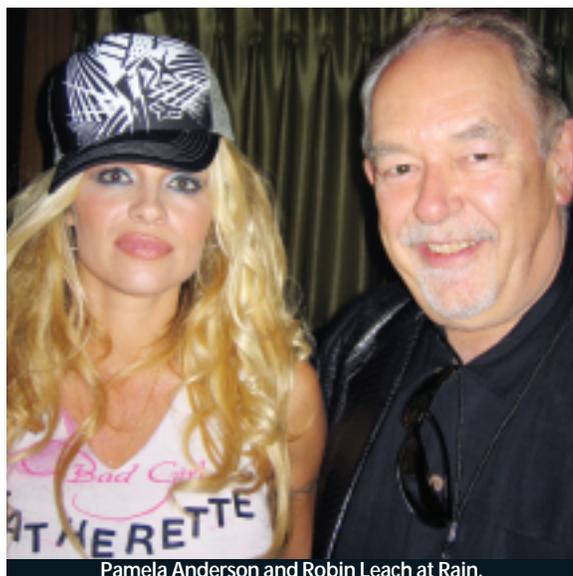
was an inspired decision on behalf of Mmes. Baldwin and Ruvo, forcing people (men included) to get out of their drab black and navy, and get into some fanciful (in some cases, brilliantly so) garb. That said, let me give some shouts out to some of the evening's best ensembles!

Claudia Barila, Laliberté's lovely lady fair, whose inner glow is just beginning to show (as those of us in the know have known for some time...), was wearing a charming dress in pink shantung with violet piping designed like a confectioner's dream, worn with a turquoise sweater wrapped with a thick silk bow just below the bust and a doubled-over strand of purple Mardi Gras beads. Forget about Joseph's coat of many colors! **Phyllis McGuire**'s sure to have at least a dozen that'll put that little biblical *shmatta* to shame—one of which she wore with a matching gown to this very event. The neckline of the dress was a plunging V enmeshed with golden hoops linked together chain mail-fashion (and knowing Phyllis as we do, one is left wondering if they're not of the 18-karat variety)! According to La McGuire, she had the outfit made for her more than four decades ago. And they say good *help* is hard to find...try finding quality like that on the rack!

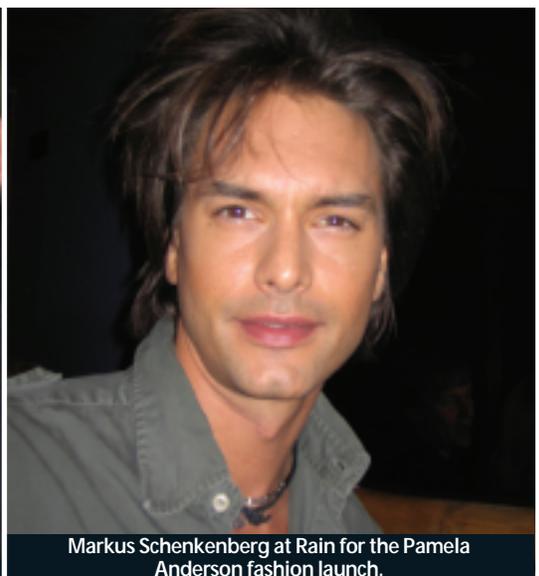
No ball is complete without a princess, and with father Larry helming the evening, it's only fitting that his statuesque beauty of a daughter, **Dom Pérignon**'s ever-altruistic brand ambassador **Nicole Ruvo**, be so crowned. The always gracious Nicole fit the glass slipper perfectly in her silken gown of intertwined layers of dyed crimson, pinks and gold, with a braided strap running over her left shoulder and diagonally across her back. **Susan Molasky** is one of those singular women who cast a stately air over any room she enters, and the evening of February 12th was no different. She was dressed simply but regally in pure maharani grandeur in a silk blouse worn off her left shoulder in bright aqua with metallic gold embroidery and bright paisley flowers in vibrant fuchsia, canary, violet, tangerine and navy, with an ivory pashmina draped over her left shoulder and an elegantly tailored pair of trousers.

My choice for best jewelry should be no bolt from the blue to anyone who knows **Claudine Williams**. Mrs. Williams never ceases to amaze (or momentarily blind) with her high-wattage rocks, as befits an individual who was the first this and the first that (I'd get carpal tunnel if I listed them all). Far more important is that she's always been a really great lady who's incredibly altruistic and supports more causes than you can shake a charitable stick at! My choice of best accessory was a tie: Williams and **Kitty Rodman**. Their accessories? Each other (i.e. your best friend, never leave home without her)! You can have a great time, you can eat as much as you want, you don't have to worry about loosening your belt after dinner and you can gossip about how ridiculous everyone else in the room looks after they've had too much to drink and are teetering around in their high heels, trying to reapply their eyeliner or returning between courses after a quickie in the Ladies' Lounge!

Also looking great, whether enjoying the cuisine April 2005



Pamela Anderson and Robin Leach at Rain.



Markus Schenkemberg at Rain for the Pamela Anderson fashion launch.

DIVA LAS VEGAS



Chris Masterson, Nicholas Gonzalez and Shannon Elizabeth at Light's third-anniversary poker tournament.



Nicolette Sheridan at Bellagio.

of Jean-Georges Vongerichten, Wolfgang Puck, Jean-Philippe Maury and Martin Heierling, throwing back the choice vintages provided by Southern Wine & Spirits and Dom Pérignon, or sweating to the God-we're-getting-oldies during the "Brickhouse" madness that ensued once **Lionel Richie** took the stage for a brief but surprisingly lively concert: **Lovee Arum** sporting a gorgeous diamond butterfly resting laterally on a velvet choker; **Dena duBoef**, looking stunning in a jewel-toned green **Mandalay** dress; **Dr. Parvin Modaber Jacobs** was a violet vision in her own design; while globetrotting powerhouse attorney **David Chesnoff** shook his groove thang onstage.

Rounding out the colorful coterie of carousers at the carousel, **Trina** and **Andrew Pascal**, **Dr. Miriam** and **Sheldon Adelson**, **Harry Morton**, **Shannon DuPont** and **Cory McCormack**, **Desmona Desmond**, **Robert Frey**, **Heather** and **Todd duBoef**, **Mike Davis**, **Laurence Hallier** and **Andrew Sasson** (whose donation of one of their Panorama Towers condos was



Laura Prepon at Bellagio.

Big boobs and a sex tape do not give one the right to spout off at the mouth whenever one likes (otherwise, I'd run right out and make a sex tape)! But enough about Pam's politics.

snatched up at auction by **Tony Marnell** for \$425,000), **Andy Masi**, **Sean Christie**, **Nancy Housels**, **Wendy Plaster**, **Senator John Ensign** and **Debbie** and **Terry Lanni**, and the guy behind **Raymond Weil** and **Tao** (talk about diversifying your portfolio; how 'bout a little moo-goo-what-time-ya-got?), **Benny Shabtai**. Even Wynn Resorts' **Billy Richardson, Jr.**, showed up (albeit a little on the casual side) to share a quick cocktail with his friend, **Nicole**.

Meanwhile, **MAGIC** has become a cycle of same faces, different places. So it takes something really fantabulous to get me up off my plump rump (especially with the weather we'd been having) and out mingling among the throngs of looky-loos. Well, one such event happened (thank goddess) involving **Pamela Anderson** and some of my friends from New York: Downtown's delightful darlings *de la mode*—**Heatherette!** On February 16th, as a finale to this season's **MAGIC**, Pam unveiled her new fashion collection with a heart-thumping, stage-humping, hip-bumping show at **Rain** at the **Palms** featuring such celebrity models as sex-change superstar and **David LaChapelle** muse **Amanda Lepore**, Heatherette's in-house diva **Aimee Phillips**, **America's Next Top Model** judge **Janice Dickinson** (isn't she their version

of **American Idol**'s **Simon Cowell**?), that koo-koo-cachoo friend of the highly teased hair-hat and shimmer-tights, Miami nightlife hostess **Elaine Lancaster**, legendary male model **Markus Schenkenberg**, NBA great **Dennis Rodman**, and on the local front, local drag legend, **Larry Edwards** (*à la Tina Turner*), and a number of girls from some of the area's finer gentlemen's cabarets. All this was overseen by Miss Anderson from her skybox, while Heatherette's co-founders/creative directors, **Richie Rich** and **Traver Rains**, ran things downstairs, both before and behind the curtain. According to Heatherette's always animated **Rich**, "We customized her new **Hot Sexy Bitch** line, Heatherette-style!" While the collection is Anderson's own, "she wanted to snazz it up for the runway show, so she sent us in to razzle-dazzle the stuff with rhinestones, airbrushing and pompoms!"

Also present at *l'affaire gai* (you probably think I meant the gala affair, but then you'd be mistaken) were Anderson's boyfriend *du soir*, **Stephen Dorff** (loves ya, Pams, but I swear you change boyfriends faster than I can whip out these columns!), **PETA**'s **Dan Mathews** and **LaChapelle**, the three of whom, according to Mr. Mathews, were waiting with Rodman and Anderson "as elevator after elevator went by, filled to capacity. After 10 cars came and went, one finally stopped with two people inside, but one of the women was wearing a fur coat. 'Going down?' the woman asked, to which Pam replied, 'Yes, but not with you, lady. Get rid of the fur.'"

Now, c'mon. Are we really at the point where we're taking lessons in etiquette and style from Pamela Anderson? This is akin to **Paris Hilton** being brought on to be headmistress at **Le Rosey** or **Farmington!** You don't hear me refusing to get on an elevator while proffering declarations of "Ditch the trophy wife, buddy!", or "Lose the double-Ds, sister!", or even "Try using a mirror when applying the kohl pencil, madam—and while you're at it, remember that a little Shalimar goes a *very long way!*" Of course not! That'd be absurd (much as I would love to have done so on more than one occasion).

Big boobs and a sex tape do not give one the right to spout off at the mouth whenever one likes (otherwise, I'd run right out and make a sex tape)! But enough about Pam's politics. Her clothes are cute (if you work the pole, whether at home or on the job), and definitely for the type of girl who wears clear heels (if you're a fan of **Chris Rock**, this should've made you laugh out loud). As for Heatherette, they rocked on, and the show was a blast, as usual (their shows in New York are always among the most fierce and colorful, not to mention most well-attended and enthusiastically reviewed). I wish them *guddorakku* (good luck) and much *seikouri* (success) in their new Japanese ventures. And for those of you wondering about that infectious track that opened the show to all that hoopla, you were hearing a preview of "Fashionista"—the soon-to-be-released dance-rap by one of my favorites, New York's breathtakingly talented **Jimmy James**.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY MICHAEL SHULMAN, EXCEPT TOP RIGHT: DENISE TRUSCELLO.



Michael Vartan at Bellagio for the Light poker tournament.

Finally, to wrap up with another fun-filled, celebrity-packed event, I turn once again to that happy Brit with the sunshine personality who never ceases to put a hitch in my giddy-up, Andrew Sasson of **Light**, who—along with his fellow *garçons de la lumière*, Masi, Christie, and **Jake Saady**—was neck-deep in A-listers who had come to help him celebrate Light's third anniversary on March 5th. Good Lord, Andrew—you've been here for three years? Yikes! First there was Saturday afternoon's poker tournament featuring the likes of **Tobey** and **Leo** (natch) and **Lukas Haas**, as well as fledgling producer **Laura Prepon** (*That '70s Show*) whose new poker show, *E! Hollywood Hold'em*, is currently in post-production, along with boyfriend **Chris Masterson** (*Malcolm in the Middle*), **Nicholas Gonzalez** (*The O.C.*, *Law & Order: SVU*)—who won a \$25,000 seat at the *World Poker Tour* Championship in April at Bellagio for unseating the legendary **Doyle Brunson**—and **Shannon Elizabeth** (*Cursed*). Then there was *Entourage*'s **Adrian Grenier**, **Kevin Connolly**, **Jerry Ferrara** and **Kevin Dillon**, as well as *Desperate Housewives*' **Nicolette Sheridan** and her new fiancé, **Niklaus Soderblom**. Finally there were **Michael Vartan** (*Alias*) and Bellagio big-shot **Bill McBeath**.

Later that evening, birthday boy **Kevin Connolly** (even though Light's the one that's only just turned three, Kevin's the one who looks as though he still gets carded) was joined at **Caramel** and **Light** for the continuation of the festivities (including the cutting of a cake) by girlfriend **Nicky Hilton**. Others who arrived in time to walk the red carpet included Light regular **Owen Wilson**, **Bill Maher** and an assortment of **Wayanses**—truly a star-crossed affair. *Bonne anniversaire*, Light (and mazel tov, Andrew—you've earned it)! ♣

THREE OF MY FAVORITE THINGS

Quite possibly one of the last true watering holes of the Las Vegas local, Piero's has withstood the test of time, the change of scenery (of Strip and strippers alike), and the coming of Viagra! If you go there a few times over the course of a week (in addition to raising your cholesterol), you're likely to encounter such big hitters as George Maloof, Phyllis McGuire, Clint Holmes, Bernie Yuman, Wayne Newton, and Steve Lawrence and Eydie Gormé. Why? In addition to impeccable service—the management and wait-staff actually remember your name, your likes and your dislikes—they've got a wine list that could sprain your rotator cuff, and they make a fabulous *osso bucco* and a phenomenal chicken *cordons bleu*. And when it comes to fine dining, isn't that really what it's all about?

The American Heritage Dictionary (fourth edition) defines "class" as "elegance of style, taste and manner." And rightly so! After receiving a gift, being invited as somebody's guest to an opening, a dinner, or even just an afternoon of lunch and shopping, nothing takes the place of a well-worded note of thanks on personalized cards (demonstrating that it's a regular practice, not merely a seldom-walked path).

One of my true indulgences is to opt for "Dragon" cards from Cartier, the French jewelers and stationers, with my name embossed on heavy card stock in raised, gold-gilt lettering, and my address printed to match on corresponding envelopes lined in metallic gold paper. They are quite decadent, I'll admit, but well worth the cost, as anyone who's ever been on the receiving end will attest!

More and more, Las Vegasans are becoming a well-traveled bunch. Knowing that I keep abreast of where the wild things are (as well as where they sleep, eat, mingle, tryst, hide out, shop, relax, et cetera), I've become deluged by my fellow

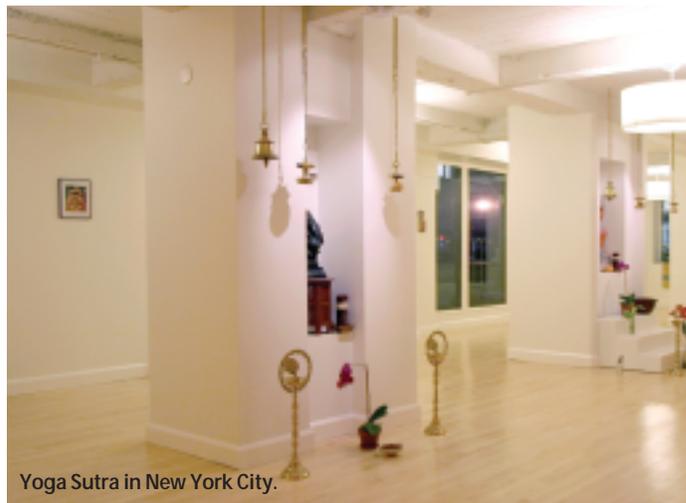


Custom Cartier notecard—when Hallmark just won't do.

Las Vegasans, asking where they should go while on their travels.

I'm thrilled to pass along word of New York's Yoga Sutra—the perfect place for happening Las Vegasans on the go to practice their Downward-facing Dog and Cosmic Dancer poses. It's in a gorgeous building that has been a landmark on the corner of Fifth Avenue and 42nd Street since it was built, by the Astor family, in 1916.

Taking its cues from Indian Vastu temple architecture, the resulting venue is a museum-worthy facility with awe-inspiring views of the New York Public Library and Bryant Park. Yoga Sutra's central space has 90-year-old marble floors, and the three practice rooms radiate around the central space in a mandala configuration. The paintings and artifacts at Yoga Sutra were purchased in Mysore, South India, lending a truly authentic air to the 7,400-square-foot, persimmon- and saffron-colored facility. An overwhelming sense of calm comes over you upon entering Yoga Sutra, and you cannot help taking it with you as you leave, and passing it on to those you meet on the street. *Namaste!* —M.S.



Yoga Sutra in New York City.

WHERE TO FIND THEM:

Piero's Restaurant
355 Convention Center Drive;
telephone 702-369-2305 or go to
pieroscuisine.com.

Cartier
3570 South Las Vegas Boulevard;
telephone 702-733-6652 or go to
cartier.com.

Yoga Sutra
501 Fifth Avenue, second floor,
New York, NY 10017; telephone
212-490-1443 or go to
yogasutranyc.com.