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'Hostages' Help Hospice

SUPPORTERS ADVANCE ARTS

By [Carin Schoppmeyer](#)

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Theater patrons took the opportunity to further arts education at TheatreSquared's fourth annual Gala for Education on Nov. 20. The approximately 175 backers filling Teatro Scarpino in Fayetteville helped raise \$40,000.

Educational offerings from the professional theater group feature student performances, professional training academies and teacher workshops.

The evening included dinner from Brick House Kitchen and a cabaret performance from Broadway actor Rob Sutton. Rob is a Mountain View native and a University of Arkansas graduate.

Artistic Director Bob Ford presented the organization's 2009 Premiere Award to Louise Schaper, saying the award was in recognition of "what you've given of yourself to our community."

Louise recently retired as executive director of the Fayetteville Public Library.

Next on stage for the group is Bob's new play, "Twas the Night," Dec. 10 through 27.

Co-chairmen for the event included Leslie and Ted Belden, Kerry Kotouc, Nancy and Jim Blair, Linda and Bob McMath, Terrye and Patric Brosh, Kristin Oliver, Denise and Hershey Garner, Lisa and Jeff Gearhart and Sara and Frank Sharp.

Top Secret Voyage 2009 was a hotbed of intrigue the evening of Nov. 21. The annual Circle of Life Hospice fundraiser at Fayetteville Town Center carried a spy theme throughout - complete with "hostages" being held for ransom by Dr. Evil.

The archetypal villain spoke to us via video and demanded a ransom (donations to the hospice organization) for the return of hostages that included Pat Walker, Frank Broyles, Lewis Epley, Dick Trammel, Circle of Life CEO Mary McKinney and Medical Director Dr. Steve Thomason.

Fortunately, the nearly 900 guests raised \$40,000 in 10 minutes for the safe return of our friends, contributing to the evening's total of approximately \$155,000.

Mary announced what she called "one of the most poorly kept secrets" - that the organization is officially embarking on a capital campaign to raise \$15 million in five years.

Expand the Circle will finish funding the Springdale expansion and allow the hospice to build a permanent location in Benton County.

Among those helping hospice were Shirley and Pete Esch, Joy Drummonds, Lynn and Joel Carver, Jeretta and Horace Hardwick, Terri and Bryan Rose, Virginia and Gene George and Gen and Frank Broyles.

Hand-crafted Christmas decorations, garden tools and embellishments, frozen casseroles and a dinner for 12 with celebrity gardener P. Allen Smith helped the Bentonville Garden Club raise \$20,000 on Monday.

The gardening group's annual holiday auction and luncheon drew a crowd of about 250 supporters to the Embassy Suites in Rogers.

The auction and luncheon is one of two fundraisers the organization holds each year to fund scholarships.

Katie Sozansky, a senior horticulture student at the University of Arkansas, received a \$3,000 scholarship at the luncheon.

Katie told us her professional plans include a focus on organic, sustainable fruit and vegetable gardening. She would especially like to work with a school district to establish its own gardens for students.

Ladies lunching for gardening green included Elaine Kerr, Celia Boon, Janet Hendren, Boyce Billingsley, Marilyn Bogle, Cynthia Coughlin and honorary club member P. Allen Smith.

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