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Bret Michaels Provides The Dreamy Factor At Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation Gala

APRIL 4, 2011 9:30 AM · 0 COMMENTS

by JEANNE PREJEAN

The Dream Gala got off to a bit of a rough start on Saturday, March 26. First there was the predictable traffic jam around the Hilton Anatole because of market taking place in the neighborhood. Then it didn't help that in addition to the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation's gala, the Rockwall Women's League (500 people) and the Catholic Pro-Life (2,220 participants) event were also taking place at the Anatole. All of these elements coming together would have been challenging enough for guests trying to arrive, but then there was the black Mercedes. The usual two-lane drive in front of the Chantilly Ballroom was reduced to one due to the non-mobile Mercedes. As drivers muttered in wonderment why the dark thing was hogging the lane, the valets scrambled to make due. Perhaps it was a VIP's ride standing by for a quick getaway. Or maybe Mercedes was an event sponsor.

None of the above.

Seems the Mercedes' driver spilled her drink on the console and fried the car's high-tech system into a coma.

But the guests' arrival woes didn't stop there. No sooner had they entered the Anatole than the beautiful walls of white flimsy fabric and crystal beading started wavering thanks to a norther blowing through entry's doors. The towering walls toppled down two or three times, but Anatole catering staff was Johnny-on-the-spot to shore up and correct the situation.

After making it through these two tests, guests found a perfectly marvelous gala with guests ranging from seven to 77. (COMMENT: Everyone has experienced munchkins out of control. Think the extreme opposite at the Dream Gala. The underage guests were beautifully behaved and the elders should take bows for excellent parenting.)

JDRF CEO/President Jeffrey Brewer felt right at home. He should have, since he

MY SWEET CHARITY

This blog covers the people, organizations and activities that make the North Texas area unique thanks to philanthropic and nonprofit endeavors. We limit our coverage to only news that directly impacts the area, but we do it with an "honest but friendly" hand.

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Jeffrey Brewer

grew up in Dallas, attending Jesuit and SMU. After leaving town, he co-founded City Search in 1995 and then went on to co-found Overture Services in 1999.

Thanks to making a tidy profit off these two ventures, he was able to go into philanthropy. But Jeffrey's involvement in Juvenile Diabetes is far more than professional or philanthropic. His 16-year-old son, Sean, was diagnosed with type 1 diabetes in 2002.



Katherine and Deborah Brewer

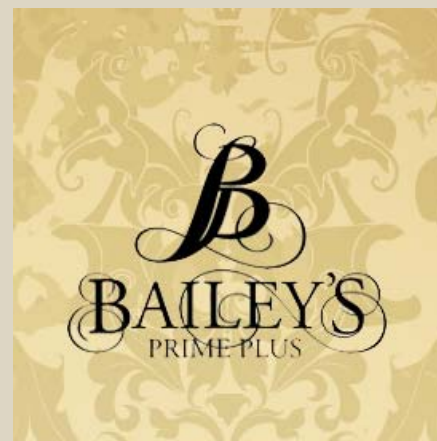
As Jeffrey was describing his goal of doubling JDRF's revenues within the next five years, his Australian-beauty wife Deborah told how they had met thanks to a joint venture project. But her days now are filled schlepping 7-year-old daughter Katherine to equine jumping events. According to Deborah, since Katherine started riding competitively, she has been scoring ribbons from the Hamptons to Florida. Alas, poor Katherine took a nasty fall resulting in a broken collarbone that will keep her out of competition for a bit. Not to worry. Katherine has big plans and nothing like a silly "oops!" is going to hold her back.



Sean Brewer

In the meantime, Sean was busy trying out the new electronic gizmo from BidPal. According to event organizers, the slim little blue auction device allows guest to bid on the silent auction items. Nothing new about that. Ah, but this one

would allow you to monitor and increase your bidding through the night from your table. Dream Gala was its debut.



 **TACA**
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Friday, May 20, 7:00

**TACA Lexus Party
on the Green**

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Proceeds benefit TACA. In January TACA distributed \$1 million to Dallas-based performing arts organizations for the fourth consecutive year. [LEARN MORE →](#)



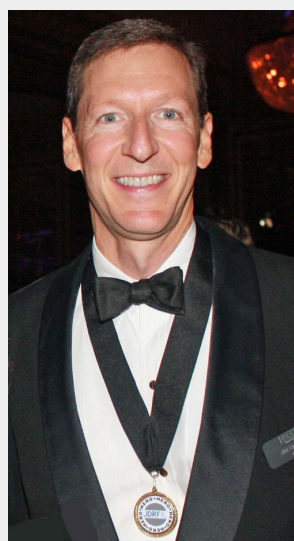
Rosi Hygate and Kim Gatlin

Another out-of-towner on the scene was LA-based **Rosi Hygate**, who was with **Kim Gatlin**. They've been busy working with the TV crew on *GCB*. . . Across the way was

Kim's daughter, **Lauren**, with dad **Rudy Gatlin**. . . Dr Pepper/Snapple Executive VP **Jim Baldwin** wore his JDRF Hero medallion with genuine pride. After all, Dr Pepper/Snapple not only was being honored as the 2011 Dream Gala Corporate Inspiration Award, it's been a key corporate sponsor of JDRF for more than a decade.



Lauren and Rudy Gatlin



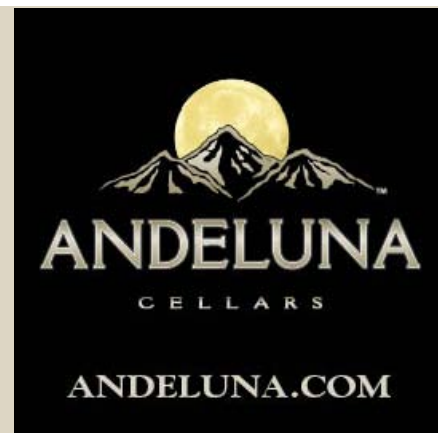
Jim Baldwin

According to the corporate plan, "It's their goal to provide a full range of products focused on reducing calories and smaller sizes and improving nutrition by 2015, as well as supporting local and national programs that encourage active lifestyles.

And speaking of calories, the

Dream Gala menu was not your typical dish descriptions. Each course had a breakdown of the carbohydrate content. This information made even those new to the battle with diabetes more aware of the need for healthy eating.

But the menu was just a smattering of what Gala Chairs Dr. **Arlene Jacobs** and **Allen Feltman** had in store. They had scored a major home run landing the true highlight of the evening for kids of most ages — 2011 Dream Gala



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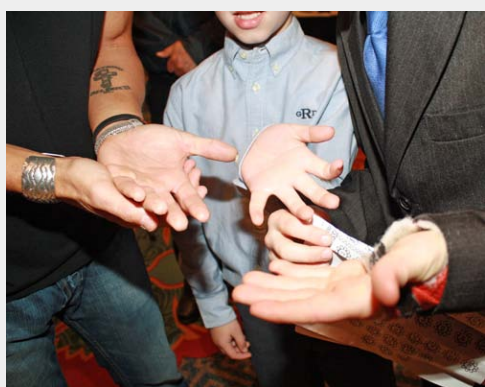
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Bret Michaels and the girls

Contagious Inspiration Award recipient **Bret Michaels**. Diagnosed with type 1 diabetes at the age of six, Bret arrived after most of the guests had entered the ballroom. But he was quickly surrounded



Comparing scars

by adoring fans with cellphones, cameras and smiles. Patiently and graciously, the rocker/*Celebrity Apprentice* winner handled practically every request. Just before he was introduced by KDFW-CH. 4's Steve Eagar into the ballroom, Bret told the crowd of fans, "I've got a few little scars there. We'll go in there and say 'hi' to everybody. We'll have a good time." Comparing the "scars" with youngsters, he admitted he has done "four injections a day for 42 years. I'm old-school!"

Then it was time to enter the Chantilly, but it was a slow entry. Everyone wanted to hug him, pat him on the back and thank him for putting diabetes in the spotlight. (You did know that he had his *Celebrity Apprentice* prize of \$250,000 given to the American Diabetes Association, didn't you?)



Bret Michaels being surrounded

Even after making it to his table near the stage, he was still surrounded. Despite the numerous politicos and local celebs in the audience, **Julianne Hough** on stage entertaining the 1,100 guests and **Gene Stallings** making the keynote speech, Bret was the one everyone wanted to meet and be photographed with.

As someone said, "Diabetes is a cruel disease, but Bret makes it seem cool."

April 2010

March 2010



Robyn Sanders and Bret Michaels

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