

OH WHAT A NIGHT!

June 22, 2003. Why was this night different than any other night? It was the evening of the First Annual Sarcoma Foundation of America Gala Benefit. It was the gathering of people who were not only imbued with dedication and commitment but love, joy and hope, as well. As a fund raising event the Gala was more than a success. It was our first such event and we raised more than \$185,000, but it was the spirit that filled the room that night that was most awe inspiring and which we believe is most significant for the future growth and success of our foundation.

In a few short months, beginning in February our outstanding and hard working Benefit Committee pulled out all stops to create a memorable affair at which we honored two distinguished guests: United States Senator Mark Pryor, a sarcoma survivor who received our "Leadership in Courage" award and Dr. George Demetri, Director, Center for Sarcoma and Bone Oncology, Dana-Farber Cancer Institute at Harvard, who received our "Nobility in Science" award. In accepting his award Senator Pryor spoke to us of his own travail and triumph and also promised our Foundation a voice in Congress for the support of programs for research aimed at the treatment and eradication of sarcoma. Dr. Demetri's speech was informative as well as inspirational. Dr. Demetri was instrumental in the development of the drug Gleevec which has been a major breakthrough in the treatment of GIST and he explained that because sarcoma gene abnormalities are relatively simple, research into the causes and cures of sarcoma might act as a catalyst or springboard towards finding the cure of other more complex cancers, such as breast, colon and prostate.

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*Shown above:
The Shriver family*

*Shown at left:
Lara Bianchi, Adam Tomei,
Elisa Delgado-Tomei*

**Sarcoma Foundation
of America
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Also in attendance were Jacob Press and Shahar Eidelman who had recently completed The Ride for Reid, a cross country bicycle ride from Los Angeles to Washington D.C. to raise awareness about sarcoma and money for research to treat and cure the disease. What truly touched everyone was the bicycle ride was done to honor the memory of their friend Reid Brecher who died last year at age 24 from sarcoma. Reid's parents were at the Gala to witness this tribute to their son.

We were also extremely pleased to have Liddy Shriver and her entire family with us that evening. Liddy is suffering from sarcoma. Her family is responsible for raising over \$72,000. for sarcoma research by coordinating a bicycle tour of Denmark. It was truly an honor to be among these and other courageous individuals who have been touched by sarcoma in one way or another and who have found in the foundation a sense of purpose, empowerment and hope.

As moving, touching and inspirational as the evening was, it was also exciting, joyful and most of all great fun. The magic of the event began with the venue: Laura Belle, which was dazzling. A 1930's style nightclub filled with beautiful flowers and gorgeous people. The food and wine were superb from the cocktail hour to the exquisite desserts and the entertainment headlined by John Pizzarelli and his wife Jessica Molesky was outstanding. It must also be said that the orchestra headed up by Paul Bernhardt had us all dancing well into the night. For Addie, and myself as chairpersons it was truly exhilarating and rewarding to be part of such a collaborative effort that resulted in such a huge success. We are truly gratified and humbled by the experience.

-Gary Tomei

*On behalf of Addie and Gary Tomei -Chairpersons
for the First Annual Sarcoma Foundation of America Gala-2003*