

Meet the Candidates

Welcome to our annual pre-election issue of the Court Circular! Here we present all the candidates for office, including Monarchs, Officers and Board Members. (Following the candidates for Monarch, we are presenting all the candidates in alphabetical order, regardless of office.)

We encourage every voting member to read

these statements completely, in order to make an informed decision when election time comes around. Please remember that these words are the opinions and views of the candidates themselves, and neither the Board of Directors of the ICNY nor the editorial staff of this newsletter take any credit, or responsibility, for them. Enjoy. Ed.



**Chet Cagle, aka Chet
Emperor Candidate**

Being elected Emperor of the Imperial Court of New York would be an honor and obligation that, as your representative, I would uphold with dedication, dignity and pride. In 1991, I became involved with the Court when my lover, Sal Galano, was elected Empress VI Saleen. During those first few years, I became very involved with both New York and out-of-town events.

The Board of Directors made me an honorary member in 1994 after Saleen's death because I wanted to continue my involvement with the Court, but due to personal health reasons was unable to attend many events. In early 1997, I returned to a full involvement with Court activities.

I bring many years of fundraising experience within the Court as well as community related fundraising. I am active, dependable, loyal, organized, visible, and always willing to help. For the past two years, I have been very involved with Court activities. Now, it is time to use my talents in the capacity as your Emperor.

As Emperor, I will continue to dedicate myself to the work of the ICNY and the International Court System. I want to be your representative, a representative that you can be proud of, a representative living with AIDS for ten years, who is ready to reign as Emperor and achieve enormous accomplishments.

As Emperor, there are many things that I intend to accomplish.

First, a unity within the Court where diversity is respected and inclusion is expected.

Second, recognizing that though we are so strong, because of our drag, transgender, transsexual, and lesbian community, we must find roles for men in the Court. Beside being escorts for beautiful royalty, our talents as performers, fundraisers, and leaders must be recognized and utilized.

Third, a strong liaison with the leather community that has expressed its profound interest in becoming involved in our events; as we

should be involved in their events.

Fourth, the Court should involve itself with more joint fundraisers for national events and organizations.

Fifth, I will work diligently to have sponsors of the Night of A Thousand Gowns where large donations are sought in exchange for journal advertising and tables at the ball. As an organization, we can raise so much more money for our beneficiaries. Some targeted sponsors could include pharmaceutical companies, doctors, philanthropists, and club promoters.

Sixth, I propose that members who perform at various fundraisers not be required to pay the admission price.

My final goal is for 1,000 tickets (gold and silver) to be sold for the ball in the year 2000.

Besides increasing the attendance at the ball, many cost cutting measures must be considered, in order to give a larger donation to our beneficiaries. For example, elimination of the Viennese Buffet would save around \$10,000. Reducing silver ticket prices would make our ball more financially feasible to a larger segment of our community, while increasing profits. These and other cost cutting measures should be investigated.

Thank you for considering my application for Emperor.

The Court Circular

The Official Newsletter
of the Imperial Court of New York



New York, NY 10003

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

To raise funds for Gay & Lesbian Community and social service organizations; to provide a safe, social environment for people with the same interest as those of the corporation; to create and promote positive Community awareness of the ideals of the Imperial Court System.

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The Executive Board of the Imperial Court of New York meets on the third Thursday of each month.

The General Membership meets on the first Wednesday of each month at The Center, 208 West 13th St. at 8:00pm.



**Joe Conigliaro,
aka Anne Tique
Empress Candidate**

It is with great pride that I stand before you as the candidate for the position of Empress XIII of the ICNY.

As a member of the ICNY for eight years, I have a long history with the Court. I joined the Court in 1990 starting out as Lady Josephine, and with hard work, commitment and participation, I have gradually moved up in rank to the position of Princess Royale Anne Tique.

As a loyal, royal subject I have seen the Court grow tremendously not only under the guidance of its Monarchs but also due to the talents, commitments and diversity of its members. Every time I look around at any Court function or Court appearance, or anywhere our presence has been made known, I am always amazed at the talent, creativity, time spent and the energy of our members. And that's what I want to represent as Empress.

I am proud to be a part of the ICNY and my admiration goes to all who have participated in all fund raising endeavors; be it conventional or outrageous. As a member of the Court, I have always supported a strong balance of commitment and fun, and as your Empress this will continue.

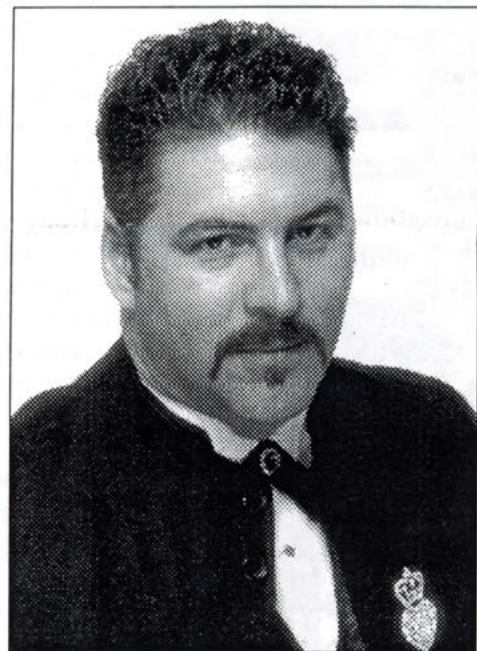
I have made many friends in the Court system and consider our New York Court my family. That's what it's all about: Family, friends, fun, fantasy and fund raising. I strongly believe in our Purpose, which I quote from the By-laws, "To raise funds for the gay and lesbian community and social service organizations; to pro-

vide a safe, social environment for the people with the same interests as those of the corporation; and to create and promote positive community awareness of the ideals of the Imperial Court System." I am prepared to be a highly visible Empress who will promote the Imperial Court System — a system with history and respect. I shall perform all duties and responsibilities that are required of me in the representation of the Imperial Court of New York, and I will represent the Court with the highest decorum and integrity.

I have decided to dedicate part of my life to carry on the tradition of showmanship, pageantry, glamour and dedicated, hard work. I encourage every member to work together within every reign and support our common goals which will benefit the Imperial Court System and the charity organizations we donate to.

In closing, as Empress I am ready to set my pace, break new ground, and forge straight ahead. I have many dreams and ideas that are ready to be fulfilled and challenges that will be met head on. It is time for me to add a little of my imagination to the creation that we call Empress; join together and create a unity with a strong Emperor, and work with and have fun with family and friends that we call the Imperial Court of New York.

I thank you all for your time and consideration, and continued support.



**Gary Cosgrove,
aka Gabriel Della Notte
Candidate for Emperor and
Board Member**

The honor of being elected Emperor of the Imperial Court of New York is a tremendous gift. One that holds several different meanings for me. First, to be entrusted with a position of this stature, from a majority of your peers, is a thrill beyond explanation! The membership bestows this honor because they believe in what you stand for and that you will uphold the position with the utmost dignity and commitment.

An Emperor should carry a persuasive voice throughout our community. That voice should be one of strength and pride. The reigning Monarchs, together, should also reach further outside the gay community to gather more commitment and support for our fight against AIDS and other life threatening diseases. As our membership grows into the new millennium, we must, as a Court, nurture our new members and sustain our older members. Together, we can become a force to be reckoned with, a fundraising powerhouse in the tri-state area. Never losing sight of who or what we are and why we have come together. No one is so mighty that they cannot learn from each and every member. If elected Emperor, I will always remain open-minded and teachable to new ideas and opinions.

Without our membership we are nothing. There is strength in numbers and I believe in 100% participation. It is a goal I have always strived for and some say it's impossible, nothing is impossible! I will continue to look for ways to get everyone involved. We all know that our membership has been divided of late, it is my hope to unify the Court, to work together and play together. Life as we know it is too short for such animosity. Our Court must rise to the occasion and fight for what we believe in.

The men of the Court are another top priority for me if elected Emperor. We have doubled in number and I want to bring out their talents, push them center stage to stand side by side with our fabulous drag queens! A tradition

started by Emperor Ron and Emperor Steven, I look forward to bringing my producing and fundraising skills to the forefront as Emperor of the ICNY. Forging new, innovative ideas to keep our membership interested and still raising funds for our charities. Another goal, which I have already started, as a Board Member is a development committee to solicit sponsors for NOATG. As we move closer to the year 2000, sponsorship will play a very important and vital role in funding our events.

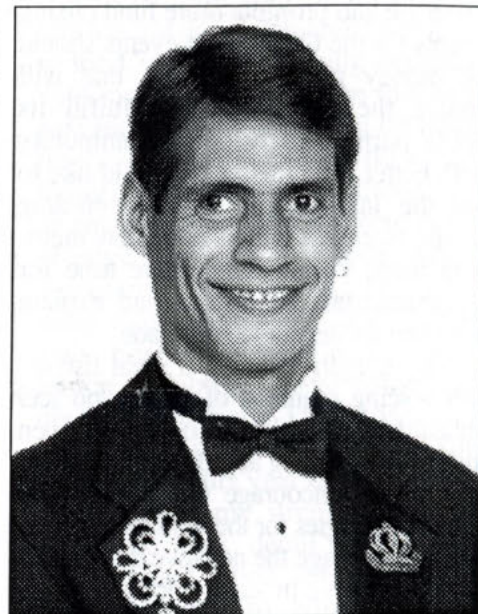
I would like to thank the College of Monarchs and my fellow Board Members for allowing me this opportunity to present myself as candidate for Emperor of the Imperial Court of New York and humbly look forward to serving each and every member with pride and dignity.



**John Capozuca,
aka Maria Fabrizia**
Candidate for Board Member

As a long-time member of the Court, I have served as Vice President under both Presidents Ching and Riggs, and I have been honored with Family status by TIM's Empress Billie Ann Miller and Empress Philomena. As a licensed psychologist in New York State, my charitable contributions include ongoing consultation to two of our past recipients of NOATG proceeds: The Callen-Lorde Community Health Center and the Gender

Identity Project of the Lesbian and Gay Community Services Center. As an experienced diplomat, I hope to bring a perspective to the Board comprising a knowledge of the past with a vision for our future.



**Eduardo Cartagena,
aka Eddie LaRosa**
*Candidate for Vice President and
Board Member*

A strong Board should be composed of dedicated individuals who respect each others' differences.

During my entire membership with the Imperial Court, I have attended all the general membership meetings, missing not one, and have also attended at least one benefit or social every month, along with four NOATGs and five out-of-town Balls. This devotion, honesty, loyalty, and willingness to work and listen to others fairly, along with the ability to compromise are the most valuable traits that I as a Board Member will contribute to the Court.

My goal will be to bring 23 years of active participation in the public life of the gay community, along with my many years of experience with GMHC, and the invaluable knowledge of event production and planned fund raising events to the ICNY. I will provide a commitment to the future as an active, reliable and dignified member with greater communication between the Board and the membership. I will also promote more harmony, love, understanding and communication among members and Officers of the Court. I

will work as hard as possible to do whatever job it takes to promote the well being of the Imperial Court now and in the next millennium. As a Board Member, I will encourage the strengthening of the Court's relationship with other fund raising organizations. I will use my expertise and promote more fund raising events for the Court. The events should be money making ventures that will enable the organization to fulfill its noble purpose to help our community with better fund raising. I would like to see the involvement of the non-drag (male) members and also the new members more visible; with more time for communication to discuss and explain why certain decisions are made.

My strength of being a great listener and voicing opinions of those who feel unheard will enable me to keep an open mind when looking at different issues and will always encourage the positive attitude and energies for the right job and naturally discourage the negative thoughts. I strongly believe in team work and not in selfish hypocrisy; nothing can be accomplished without it. I will give my time and talents through the years, whenever possible. I want to represent the new members by being the type of Board Member that can voice their opinions and ideas and not be afraid to work or to confront the issues that arise. I give you my ears if you let me be your voice.

I ask for your support and consideration for Board Member and hope you will allow me to represent you to the best of my capacity. Thank you for your consideration and may God bless you.

**Charles Ching,
aka Coco LaChine
Candidate for President**

As we welcome the 21st Century, it is with pride that I look back to what the ICNY has accomplished over the last twelve years. The Court, through everyone's dedication and hard work, has raised a significant amount of money for various community organizations. We have been able to stay true to our mission and our organization continues to thrive.

These are truly exciting times. However, with newfound recognition and success, there are new challenges. I invite everyone one to you to join hands as we venture towards



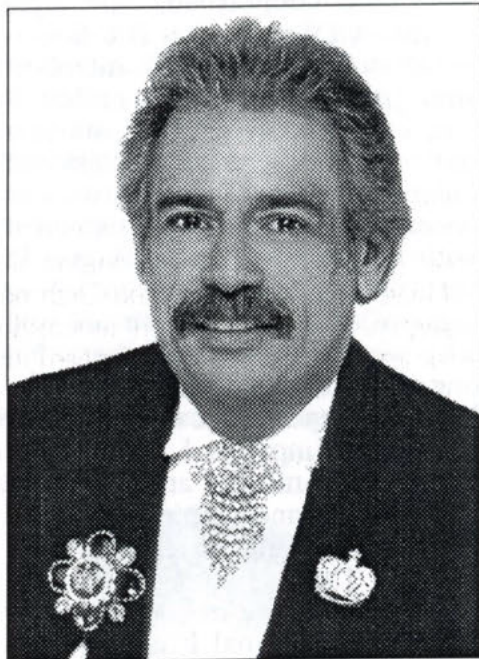
the new millennium. Let us leave old baggage behind and work even harder to help those that we are able to. AIDS/HIV remains a priority, so are social justices. As the Supreme Court hands down their decision in the Hawaiian Marriage case, there are many more laws being enacted to set us back. Violence against our community has not decreased despite inroads made in the media. This is the time to stick together and move forward. As our founder Jose aptly reminds us, "United we stand, divided they're going to get us one by one!"

I have had the privilege of being your President for many years. I believe my experience, dedication and passion will continue to be an asset as we mature as an organization. This position is a humbling one, when one reflects on the impact we as an organization have on our community. I would welcome that opportunity again.

**Tom DeConza,
aka Tomas
Candidate for Vice President**

My main reason for running for the office of Vice President of The Imperial Court of New York is my devotion to raising funds for AIDS organizations and our community. Having been both Emperor and a Board Member I have not lost sight of The Court's goal, raising funds and edu-

cating the public about our community. Working with many of The Court's members on various fundraisers within The Court and outside The Court has enabled me to raise thousands of dollars. Being able to work with people is an important part of the office of Vice President. The ability to devote time to the office is also very important. Working only 4 days gives me the time to handle the necessary paper work associated with the office. The ability to attend board and general membership meetings is also important. As member since 1994 I have missed only 2 membership meetings and 1 board meeting, also a necessary trait. My background as Statistician for 2 years and President for 8 years of the largest, and



most successful Gay and Lesbian bowling league in New York gives me the background needed for the office of Vice President. Updating the membership roster on a regular basis, is, I feel, very important. When individuals are honored by The Monarchs with titles and elevations, the roster should be updated and given to the membership. The accuracy of the roster should be a priority. Spelling of names, addresses and titles should be double checked to prevent errors. Fundraising, time, dedication, and background are traits needed for the office of Vice President and I feel that I have them. I hope you will consider my qualifications when voting for the office of Vice President.



**Joe Doyle,
aka Josephine Boner Parte
Candidate for Secretary and
Board Member**

My experience over the past year as the Secretary of the ICNY has deepened and broadened my awareness of the great potential that the Court has for benefitting the LGBT community. I have seen members of the Court present, promote and support an amazing variety of projects that forward our objectives. I have seen our membership give tirelessly of their time and talents to traditional and amazingly innovative events. The members of the Board of Directors receive the proposals for these events and are charged with evaluating their potential. For the past years, I have been supportive of our members as they prepared their proposals and have been able to support them in the Board deliberations. I will continue to do this with the added benefit of this year's experience.

I have worked closely with other Board members in planning the positive thrust that the ICNY has continued to pursue. I have participated in the Board's decision-making process regarding membership issues, NOATG planning, Jose Honors facilitation and the designation of beneficiaries for our donations.

Over the past year I have attended several out-of-town coronations within the Imperial Court circuit, and developed a close network of friends throughout the various cities. I have been a consistent active supporter of

many ICNY functions. I have been a performer in Court events as well as provided service at the door and back stage.

A position on the Board of Directors of the ICNY requires a commitment of time and energy as well as the exercise of those skills particular to one's assignment. My year as ICNY Secretary has shown that I have delivered that commitment and expended that energy. I hope that you will support me to continue my service to the Court and community in the coming year. Thank you for your consideration.



**Mike Fulk,
aka Victoria Weston
Candidate for Vice President**

First and foremost I have always maintained inclusion is the best policy. Nurture and support the incoming members as well as those who we've grown to know and love. Again this year I am happy to see more men, lesbians, and straights coming into our ranks. I can't help but feel a small sense of accomplishment in that. Also I feel that through diversity we find creativity. Through acceptance of differences and reveling in our commonality we find strength.

This past year has been a true blessing for me. Serving as Vice President and Membership Chair has put me in touch with so many new and returning members. It has been a joy serving you. I have come to know a few more

of the membership that I, up to this point had not had the opportunity to get to know. I have met and seen so much growth from the new members coming up in the ranks and I have felt a great sense of purpose through this past year.

This term on your Board of Directors has not only been about my giving to the Court. I am taking something with me, too. I am aware that in the past some have found me a bit hard to reach. This has nothing to do with my liking everyone, but even though I am an entertainer and can preform in front of large numbers of people, when it comes to the "one to one," I have been more than a little shy and guarded. This position has allowed me to loosen up a little bit and come out of my shell a bit more. I thank you all for the opportunity of reaping this small reward from this year of service.

As always, my strengths are: willingness to work, detail friendly, computer literate, good listener, honesty, loyalty, ability to admit mistakes/being wrong, and voicing opinions of those who feel unheard. My drive and positive attitude were and are right for the job.

Some day in the future I would like to represent you as Empress. Vice President is giving me the skills, greater knowledge of our organization and further preparing me for that honor, if and when it should happen.

Let me put in print that for me, Mike Fulk, aka Victoria Weston, this job is not about a soap box for my own agenda. I don't require this position to get a spotlight. My work provides that. I am here to do the work and stick up for the membership and insure that all are heard and welcome. This is why I think I am the right choice for membership chair and Vice President for my second term of 1998-9. With me, what you see is what you get. If you ask me a question, be prepared for a truthful, heartfelt, to your face answer. For I will say nothing behind your back I would not say to your face. I will try as hard as possible to do whatever job is set before me and always work towards the good of the ICNY as a whole, and it's survival as a fun, unified, FABULOUS bunch of fundraising folks!



**Thom Hansen,
aka Panzi**

Candidate for Board Member

As reigning Empress of the ICNY, I am currently serving on the Board of Directors. My term will expire on March 27, 1999 — the night of the Coronation of our next Monarchs. I am very involved, and would like to continue serving through the year. I feel that my input in closing out the year and beginning the next year would be valuable to the Board and the new Monarchs. I am therefore applying to serve a half term from March to September. I am especially interested in seeing the "close of business" for the Ball, which often continues into the early summer. My additional qualifications to hold office include having majored in accounting at Pace University, and founding a successful real estate management company. I am presently the owner of a retail business, and I was the Executive Director of CRI (AIDS research organization). I have served on the boards of directors of many non-profit organizations in the capacity of president, vice president, treasurer, secretary, membership chair and board member.

**Michael Barret Jones,
aka Wittl Repartee
*Candidate for Secretary and
Board Member***

Prior to joining the Court, I attend-

ed 1997's Out-of-Town Show. Since joining last October I have attended 14 events, performed at 11 events, and worked 13 other events. I was invited to join the Court's Public Relations Committee and work on day to day PR and help build a larger plan for a growing PR Campaign, both for general image and Night of A Thousand Gowns. Recently, I have also been asked to begin working on development projects for the Court. Many of these tasks will be facilitated and improved if I sit on the Board of Directors. I have served on the Board of the Gay Activists Alliance in Morris County, and I currently work with the following organizations: The New Jersey Theatre Group (Board Member), Jersey Arts Marketers, an off-shoot of the New Jersey State Council on the Arts, Rahway Center Partnership Marketing and Promotions Committee. Work with these groups demands creative and critical thinking about mar-



keting strategies as well as other organizational tasks. I have a natural love of public relations, and am truly an asset at any cocktail party (no snickers, please!) In the year that I have been in the Court, I hope that I have managed to share a smile and a laugh with everyone at least once. I believe that my skills as a writer and marketer can help to implement the Court's work and bring our organization to a wider audience.



**Bill LaMonica,
aka Billie Ann Miller
*Candidate for Treasurer and
Board Member***

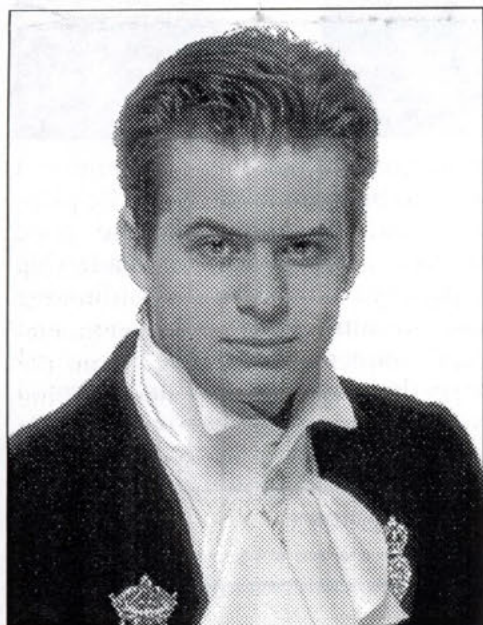
My qualifications speak for themselves: 22 years of being Treasurer for two gay and lesbian oriented organizations, plus being Treasurer for the ICNY for the last seven years. I bring to the Board my years of experience in the gay and lesbian community and my fundraising ability, as well as my mature knowledge of the gay needs for guidance and direction. My having a seat on the Board also gives the feeling to the members that seniors are important to recognize and vital to a well-rounded Board. Thank you. Peace and love.

**Damien Ross
*Candidate for Board Member***

Hear ye! Hear ye! I've made my decision to run as a member of the Board of Directors of the ICNY. My reasons for doing so are pure and simple. When I first joined the ICNY back in 1996, I believed I found a place in the community, in our community. A place to express myself and my abilities in the fight against AIDS and other life-threatening diseases. I threw myself into it with full force. I attended every function and event. I performed in anything and everything. I wanted to be an exam-

ple of what the male members of this Court was capable of, and when I was eager enough, I even joined several committees and even co-chaired a few events. Pretty good, huh? Well, I thought so, but as time went on I began to wonder if I was doing enough. I started thinking, "There's got to be more I can do."

I have grown to love our Court over the past couple of years, as do most of us. But unlike some members who feel simply attending monthly meetings is enough, I feel there is always room for improvement. I believe that until we tap all our resources, at our disposal, then we cannot continue to grow as a Court. It is time we take a look inward at what



more can we give, what more can we do! Not only as individuals, but as a group. How dare we spend our energies arguing over petty issues, when we should be fighting, together, the greater problems at hand.

I applaud all that we've done to help others. Although the ICNY has raised thousands and thousands of dollars for charity and other organizations, I have to ask, is that enough? Some of my favorite events I've participated in are those that raise no money at all. Simply sharing ourselves with others. I would love to do that much more often. I want to establish a volunteer program within the Court to help other groups and organizations, not only through donations, but by offering our time, our efforts, and most importantly ourselves. Not

everyone is a performer, nor can everyone pull together an event. I believe there is room for everyone, and I don't mean just working "back stage" either. Let's face it, it's not easy to find your place in the Court — I know — I've been there. Perhaps with the cooperation of everyone, this is something we can do on a regular basis. Every month, every week? It can and should work. Who knows, maybe we can increase our presence and popularity within our community. God knows we could certainly use it. And in the end we would let people know we aren't just in it for ourselves, like others may think. I promise you, I can — that together we can. All I ask is that you believe in me and support me. I know I'm young, but more than capable. I'm eager and determined. My decision to run for the Board is not based on ego nor self-promotion, it is based on honesty and hope. I want you to believe in me, that's all I ask. Believe in hard work. Believe in good will. Believe in happiness. Believe in love. Believe in us. Believe in ME!

**Robert Sorrell,
aka Swana Swarovski**

Candidate for Board Member

Anyone who is aware of my long association with the Court understands that I have always believed in the potentials inherent within it. I believe



that the Court is more successful on some levels than on others and have decided to participate at Board level to contribute a higher standard of aspirations and to address the sometimes negative aspects of Court life.

I feel that as a healthy person I am very lucky and have an obligation to contribute back to my community.



**Philip Stoehr,
aka Philomena**

*Candidate for President and
Board Member*

Having served as Monarch for one term, as Secretary of the Court for five years, (serving under three different Presidents), and for one additional year as an elected Board Member, I feel that I have the experience, background and temperament needed to fulfill the job of President. I believe that I have a good knowledge of the roles of both the Monarchs and the Board Members, and the symbiotic relationship between the two. The Board Members are there to do an important job, but the largest part of the job is the ability to discuss matters rationally, and sometimes agree to disagree amiably; and to believe that in the democratic process, the will of the majority must rule. I believe that I can be a voice of reason in the decision-making process, with the ability to identify the meaningful and dismiss the superfluous, and encourage fair compromise, while still validating people's feelings and opinions. I

would welcome the opportunity to serve the Court in a new capacity.



**Domenico Tolipani,
aka Tedi de Bare**
*Candidate for Vice President and
Board Member*

One of my goals as a member of the Board would be to bring the voices of the general membership to the Board. Listening to members and bringing their concerns to the Board should be one of the major responsibilities of the Vice President/Membership Chair. The Board's decisions should represent the entire membership, not the whims of a select few. As a member of the Board, I will make myself available to the membership and promise to bring their ideas and concerns to the Board.

As the millennium approaches and the numbers grow, it is important that our visibility and effectiveness also grow. The 1998 NOATG was one of the best Balls we have ever had — but there is always room for improvement. We must find a way to increase the contributions we generate from this event, whether it be from anonymous underwriters or corporate sponsors.

If the membership feels I am qualified to represent them, it would be a privilege and an honor to serve on the Board of such a worthy organization, the ICNY. The only promise I can make is that I will work as hard as I can to make sure that our organization continues successfully into the twenty-

first century. My record of attending both general membership and Board meetings since joining the Court show that I have a true commitment to this organization.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

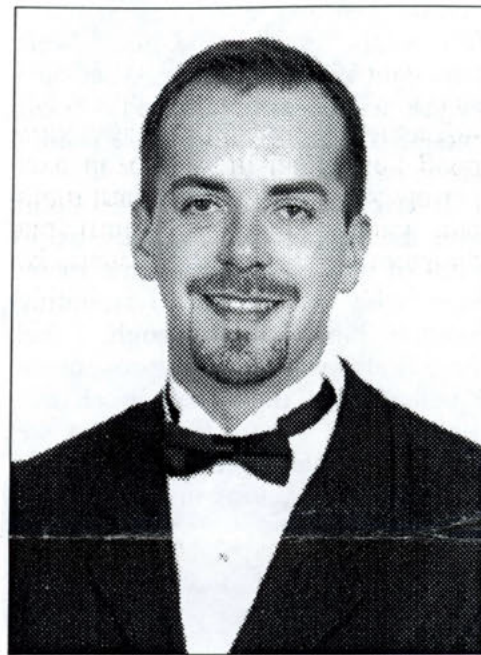
Oliver von Birkenwaldau
Candidate for Board Member

When my spouse, Duane Alexander, and I first became acquainted with the Court over three years ago, we thought becoming members would be a fun, social way to do something for the community while forcing us to take some time off from our busy work schedules.

Needless to say, Duane and I did not have a realistic view of the inner workings of the Court. The picture from the inside was much different than the one we had from the Ball and the other events we had attended. The creative styles and flair hid the amount of time and work involved in the events produced by this organization in support of the peoples of the metropolitan community. I was not prepared for this and I initially hesitated in committing time from an already over-burdened schedule.

But we discovered something else about the Court as well: We found friends and we found a welcoming community.

As the Court has given so much to Duane and myself, I find myself wanting to give back to the Court and



to its goals of building community. I want to be more involved in the planning and execution of these good works. I bring years of leadership experience in managing, coordinating and training staff personnel and intern trainees. I feel that the skills I have developed in facilitating good work relationships and in organization would be an asset to the Court as we continue to grow and move into the next century.

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