

Holiday Party

By Emperor Tomás

The Imperial Court annual holiday party was held at the beautiful ballroom at 24 Fifth. Guests were greeted by Princess Bella and Duke Robert who were collecting tickets. With a four hour open bar, the passing of a variety of hors d'oeuvres and a bountiful assortment of cold platters including poached salmon, fresh fruits, assorted cheeses and Italian antipasto, pleasant bartenders and waiters, a festive time was had by all.

The room was filled with royalty: Emperor V Ron, Emperor VI Steven, Emperor VII Tomás, Empress I Sybil, Empress VII Coco La Chine, Empress IX Philomena, Empress X Ran-Dee, Empress XI Gianna, and our beloved reigning Monarchs, T.M.I.S.M. Emperor VIII William and Empress XII Panzi. Visiting Monarch Empress VI Jazzmine Taylor of Rhode Island was made Empress XII-1/2 of New York. The attendance of more than 75 court members and friends filled the room with conversation, gossiping and socializing. The raffle with prizes valued at more than \$1000

was donated by Aunt B, The Duchess, Baron Angelo, Grand Duke Bobsie, Emperor Tomás, Princess Bella, Duke Robert and Princess DaisyMae. Thanks to the selling techniques of Marchioness Freeta Chews, Marchioness Angela Mercy and Princess DaisyMae over \$200 was raised.

As the tension built court members gathered in the main ballroom to hear elevations given by our reigning Monarchs. Those brought to their knees (for elevations) were: Viscountess Mitzi, Viscountess Veronica La Vie en Rose, Viscountess Morgan Stevens, Countess Fanny Fondu, Count Craig, Countess Viva Sexx, Marquess Eric, Marchioness Billy Little, Duke Matthius, Duchess Jacqueline Jonee, Duchess Witt Repartee, Prince Bobsie, Prince Robert, Princess Aunt B, Prince Eddie LaRosa, Prince Ron, Princess Royale Gefil Tefish and Princess Royale Rusty Carter. Many thanks to all my volunteers that helped with the evening's festivities and to all The Court members in attendance.*

Meet the New Members...

by Marchionesses Angela Mercy &
Freeta Chews

As you know, all courtiers are encouraged to take some time to reach out and get to know our new members. Well, I guarantee you will want to make time to chat with Lord John, (John DeMarco), a truly fascinating fellow. We caught up with him one evening as he was addressing over fifty business letters - by hand; (he likes the personal touch!) A native New Yorker born and bred in Brooklyn, John relocated to New Jersey some twenty-eight years ago. He is a Pace University alumnus and has also studied singing at Julliard, where he must have learned something because he became the lead singer of the *Dimensions*, a 60's boy group that had a number one hit single, *Over the Rainbow*...(no

relation, honey!) Later, his vocal ability took him to Paris to sing with the Folies Bergère, a gig he held for three years, before spending the next year and a half with the Folies in Las Vegas.

These days John is a successful real estate broker. Having sold more than 300 homes over the last ten years, John takes credit for helping establish the large Lesbian and Gay community that exists in the town he now calls home, Plainfield, New Jersey. "Many professionals have bought out here," he boasts, "...doctors, lawyers...government officials," (...but come now, John, there must be a hairdresser in there somewhere!)

John and his partner Alan, who are celebrating thirty years together, reside in a lovely 5-bedroom Tudor mansion in the charming and, dare we say, exclusive Sleepy Hollow section of Plainfield. Sharing these comfortable digs are John's mom and the couple's 13 year old son Jason who has been

with them since he was six. They also maintain a beauty of a bayside bungalow in Cherry Grove, Fire Island as a summertime retreat. Mixing business with pleasure, John and Alan also collect and deal in antiques and have a shop of their own in Morristown. Sounds like a full plate, heh? Not for John. He's not one for futzing and putzing; he is a mover who becomes easily bored. His solution - get involved! Having sat on numerous boards in the past, John is currently on the Board of Trustees to the Papermill Theatre. He is also the Founder and President Emeritus of the AIDS Benefit Committee of New Jersey, a fund raising organization akin to our own. Their annual gala will be a dinner and auction on March 6th in Westfield.

Small wonder that John took an interest in the ICNY. Not only does he enjoy working for, and giving back to our community, he just happens to possess an enduring passion for drag queens. He had "heard things" about the Court

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 orga-
nizations; 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 second
Wednesday of each month.*

*The General Membership meets on the
first Wednesday of each month at
The Center, 1 Little West 12th St.
at 8:00pm.*

over the years, not all of them glowing (it's true girl, we do have detractors out there), but as he familiarized himself with our organization he witnessed the hard work that is done and realized how much we help people. This inspired him to lend his talents and expertise in support of our cause and John joined the Imperial Court last October. Wasting no time, he volunteered as co-chair of the raffle and silent auction committee for this year's NOTG. John has also planned his first out-of-town coronation trip to San Francisco.



A little known fact is that John is certainly no stranger to beads and feathers. We had the distinct and rare privilege of viewing an astounding portfolio of photographs of Mr. D. from back in the day. Well, my dears - to use the vernacular - the girl was FIERCE! Back then it was not about designer knockoffs; strictly high drag, and John, as Gina La Fantasia (pronounced "fon-ta-SEE-ah"... that's Italian!) could put any Vegas showgirl to shame. Gina was first runner-up in the very first Miss Fire Island contest. John reminisced about one of the many drag balls he attended. Gina's costume was such that she had to ride in an open car, then enter the building up a back stairwell and through the balcony because her fan which opened behind her like a peacock's tail wouldn't fit through the front door. At full-open the fan rose eleven feet in the air and spread sixteen feet wide.

Though we couldn't pin him down as to any "aspirations to monarchy," perhaps a better question would be, if and when John decides to run, will it be for Emperor...or Empress?*

Meet Joni Plotkin

by Duke Mattius

"Hello, can I help you?" The first words you hear when calling the Ball hotline, 1-

800-848-5806. Who's that on the line? Harvey Fierstein? Brenda Vaccaro? No, it's our own court member, Joni Plotkin. The voice comes courtesy of Lucky Strikes - no filters.

Joni, also known as Baroness Penn Parker, joined the Court in 1997 at the urging of her friends Gary Greene and Louis Valentin. In her words, she thought "it would be a hoot". She also wanted the ability to vote because every time there was an election she read every bio and had strong opinions on each candidate. She knew many members of the Court and wanted to be involved in the activities of her friends.

Baroness Penn Parker is currently Secretary to our reigning monarchs Panzi and William. She is also the co-chair of the tickets committee for the upcoming Ball in March, her second go-around with this responsibility. She loves the job because she can talk to people all over the country, compare notes on what each one is wearing, and give tips of where to go when they get to New York. She relishes the opportunity to meet each person she speaks with on the hotline and will probably do so. By the way, talking on the phone is one of Joni's favorite pasttimes so the position fits her well.

Born and raised in Brooklyn, Joni has always been an independent person. She attended Brooklyn College and worked as an underwriter for insurance companies. Joni is currently single but not due to a lack of prospects. She has had many offers but declined each one. As she says, "You have to kiss a lot of frogs before you meet a prince". Joni also makes it clear that while she has no significant other in her life, no one could take the place of her "boys". She is currently the full-time caregiver of her mother who is 82 years old. The rumors of her throwing her mother in front of a bus are strongly exaggerated. It was a shopping cart and her mother is doing fine.

When asked what she enjoys most about the Court, her answer is simple. "I love, love, love the people. There is no pretense or plastic people. Everyone is real". She enjoys the socializing as well as the charitable work that the Court provides on a regular basis. Joni sincerely feels the Court is an extension of her family. Being a straight, Jewish woman from Brooklyn, she feels most gratified

to be accepted and loved by the Court members. She has attended three Balls, the Gay Pride Parade, the Garden Party, as well as a number of other events sponsored by the Court.

Joni loves to shop, to talk, movies and the theatre. She collects shopping bags and currently has a collection of over 2000. If you have any unique designer bags, she's waiting to hear from you. She loves sample size goods and hotel toiletries. Joni would have been a comedienne if she could have gotten over her lack of confidence because she loves the stage. Maybe future events in the Court will permit her to live her fantasy. Who knows?

And for your own good, don't ever call her a "Fag Hag". She hates that term and considers it offensive to both she and her friends. She simply sees her boys as her family where she is like the mother, sister, aunt or friend you always wanted. Who could ask for more from a relationship?

If you see Joni at a meeting or a function, go up and say hello. I guarantee you will get a warm reception and a big hug. She just wants to share her love with everyone! Aren't we lucky!!!*

Pasta Dinner! Avanti! Tutti Mangia!



Buon Giorno! This-a Mama Bella Mattarrazza welcoming alla everybody' to a Pasta Dinner on Domenica, February 7 at 4 p.m. She's-a nice-a changa pace — we mangia lotsa pasta with deliziosa home-a made-a sauce by mio amico Clem Palompelli, and dolce desserts by mio compare Walter Beyer, and nica meat-a balls-a by mio nephew Tomas DeConza — tre nice-a Italiano bambini. Con salada, y vino et soft-a drinks-a! Tutto deliziosa!

Please join Emperor William and Empress Panzi with their hostess Mama Bella at 217 East 67th Street . . . Sunday, February 7th, 4 p.m, for delicious food, music and fun. . . \$20.00 per person, payable at the door, to benefit the Tijuana AIDS Project . . . Come in character, or come dressed to drip red sauce on yourself, but COME!*

"Irma Vep" Theatre Trip Planned

By Philomena

On March 6, the Imperial Court is planning a trip to the wonderful new production of *The Mystery of Irma Vep*. Fashioned after a Victorian "penny-dreadful" novel, with great style and economy of actors, the original production was a popular success for the Ridiculous Theatrical Company in 1984. Written by and originally starring Charles Ludlum, it now features his longtime partner, Everett Quinton, and "a glistening mound of wigs," according to New York Magazine. The Ridiculous Theatrical Company was founded in 1970, and immediately began attracting attention for their use of imaginative, gender-non-specific casting and cross-dressing. They were truly groundbreaking, and their productions over the years of *Galas*, *Camille*, *Dr. Jekyll* and *Mr. Hyde* and *Twelfth Night* have attracted mainstream, as well as downtown audiences. Whether you are an old fan, or are looking for a new experience in theatre, *Irma Vep* will not disappoint!

"The Mystery of Irma Vep," at the Westside Theatre, 407 West 43rd Street, 10 p.m. curtain. Tickets \$40.00. Contact Tony Fiscina (212-229-1434) for ticket reservations.*

Make-Up Party

By Vicountess Clover Honey



For many cross-dressers, the act of transformation is just as fun and exciting as the presentation of the final result. That is just one of the reasons why ICNY's

Glamour Workshop held in December and given by Michael Fulk, Princess Royale Victoria Weston, was such a success. Victoria is not only a veteran performer who is well known in NYC's cabaret and Drag scene, but is a professional freelance makeup artist as well.

Everyone benefited from her expertise as she shared beauty secrets, gave out makeup tips, and helped the "girls" who attended decide what works. What's the right shade - the right color? How should I apply this to my face? As most of us know, the answers to these questions are crucial in determining if one would end up looking like a dream or a dog. Robert Sorell, Grand Duchess Swana Swarovski, was also on hand and helped with techniques



on concealing eyebrows and applying foundation.

The "Beauty School Drop-Ins" not only gave each other facial makeovers but also experimented with new hair-dos as they enjoyed trying on an



entourage of wigs in a variety of colors and styles, supplied by Victoria. She also supplied a camera since no make-over is a success without "Before" and "After" pictures. By following on a philosophy that focuses on the positive, only the "After" pictures were submitted to the Court Circular Editor.

"Thank you ever so" to Victoria and Swana for this fun and helpful event and congratulations to Victoria for her recently receiving the 1998 award for "Best Performer" from the original Beaux Arts Society.*



"Le Drag...Haut"

There is something about the term "French Cuisine" that always evokes a reaction in people. Some are positive, some negative. For Carol, a vision of an anorexic sized portion of some artfully decorated miniature fowl at astronomical prices, tends to make her shudder when I mention going out to a French restaurant.

For that reason, it took a year after Babs first went to Chez Suzette for dinner with some of the "Jersey Girls" that Carol finally agreed to eat there. She had to be "noodged" several times, and she finally agreed only because we went to see Rose Levine's Female Impersonation show at *Don't Tell Mama's*, only a half a block away on Restaurant Row.

There is a rustic, yet cozy ambiance, with country French paintings decorating this openly Gay friendly little country bistro on Manhattan's west side. The owners, Gerard and Jeanette welcome all, especially Drag Queens and transgendered ladies!

For starters, we enjoyed both the house salad and the house paté which was smooth and flavorful. On a prior visit we sampled artichoke hearts which were good. We did have a bit of a problem refraining from the crusty thick French bread, which was good and tasty!

There are always interesting daily specials, but we stayed with some of the regular entrees on the menu. The duck a l'orange was served crisp as requested. The veal cordon bleu was tender and cheesy smooth and tasty. The shrimp scampi, swimming in garlic was as good, though not noteworthy.

For dessert, we only sampled the "standard" varieties. The rum cake and "house" fruit tarte were very good. The creme caramel was a disappointment in

Keep in Touch!

Deadline for the next issue of the Newsletter is February 20th. Please submit articles either on diskette or via e-mail in ASCII (text) format only. We can scan photos or incorporate graphic files. Call me at 212/208-1691 or 212/989-8113 if you have a submission or questions. You can e-mail the articles to **ICNYDAISY@AOL.COM**

Thank you! Michael Weyand, Editor

that it was merely a custard and not something thick and chewy and as good as it looked!

Normally we are a bit reluctant to order desserts, for we have to watch the waist line for the next ball or formal, but with their prix fixe dinner being an additional \$6 more than the a la carte prices, if you order an appetizer and a beverage the dessert is free...so we couldn't pass up a bargain! The recommended dress is casual, but that doesn't mean you can't dress up and be recognized. You will be welcome, so the owners assure us. In the time we last visited Chez Suzette, one of the local transgender groups had held a Holiday party there and they told us they were very

satisfied with the food and service. They are closed on Mondays, and the owners have told us they would love to host a Court function any Monday!

Prices are moderate for the area, the prix fix dinners starting at \$18.95. They advertise real food, and they deliver on their promise. When you bring their advertisement in HX and Next magazines which offers a 10% discount, dinner there becomes a real good deal, a "bon marche"!

Chez Suzette

675B Ninth Ave.

(Bet 46th and 47th Sts.) New York, NY
(212)581-9717 (800)-371-9475

Major credit Cards

Reservations Suggested*

UP COMING EVENTS

Pasta Dinner

Sunday February 7, 1999

217 East 67th Street

"The Mystery of Irma Vep" Theater Party

March 6, 1999

Westside Theater, 407 West 43rd Street

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