

Another "Night to Remember"

Theodore Roosevelt Sanctuary and Audubon Center Holds A *Bully!* Gala 2002

By Marilyn England

ON A CRISP MID SPRING evening, the Sanctuary held its fourth annual *Bully!* Gala dinner dance at the Nassau Country Club in Glen Cove. The theme of the celebration was "A Legacy of Conservation" in keeping with the Sanctuary's mission to connect people with the natural world, and to encourage their participation in its protection. Each year for the past four years, the sanctuary has chosen individuals to receive its Legacy of Conservation Award based on their contributions to the environment or their communities. This year's recipients of the award were Nancy Rauch Douzinas, Director of the Rauch Foundation, Tom and Sheila Lieber, and John "Jock" R. Miller, III. Each honoree received a beautiful crystal rendition of an eagle in flight, made possible through the generosity of Lenox.

Gala committee co-chair Roger Bahnik presented each honoree with the Legacy award. Nancy Rauch Douzinas was the first recipient. "As President of the Rauch Foundation, Dr. Douzinas has the responsibility of guiding her organization in its day-to-day operations. Under her leadership, the foundation has emerged as one of Long Island's champions of sustainable growth, drinking water, and habitat protection," said Mr. Bahnik. The Foundation also supports programs that benefit at-risk children and their families, an area that is aligned with the Sanctuary's increased efforts to provide natural science education and after school activities to children from under-served and minority communities. "These programs reflect a deep commitment to ensuring a healthy future for *all* of our children, a goal that is of primary importance to Audubon and the Sanctuary, as well," he added.

In presenting the award to Tom and Sheila Lieber, Mr. Bahnik noted that Tom had been a past President of the Sanctuary Board, and currently serves as an advisory Board Member. Both he and his wife, Sheila, have been staunch Sanctuary supporters for over ten years. During his tenure as President, Tom was instrumental in seeing that the Sanctuary's reintegration with Audubon went smoothly. Both he and Sheila have assisted in countless development projects and have brought in many new Sanctuary supporters. The Sanctuary has become something of a "second home" to each of their two children who have participated in Sanctuary activities since they were toddlers. "Tom and Sheila epitomize the kind of community involvement that is crucial to the survival of centers such as the Sanctuary. Their tireless efforts on behalf of the Sanctuary and

the values it stands for are the reason the Sanctuary continues to thrive," Mr. Bahnik stated. "We are lucky indeed to have them."

The Legacy award was then presented to John "Jock" R. Miller, III who has had a lifelong passion for nature, born he says, of his experiences on Long Island as a young boy. Mr. Miller ("Jock") majored in Biology and Ornithology in college, graduating with a degree in Zoology. While his career took him in a different direction, Mr. Miller indulges his love of the outdoors and Long Island through his leisure time activities, and volunteer work in the community. He has served on the Board of the Cold Spring Harbor Fish Hatchery and Aquarium, is a past President of the Cold Spring Harbor Whaling Museum and of the Huntington Arts Council. As an expert in the affirmative action/diversity recruitment field, Mr. Miller helps to provide career opportunities for women, minorities, and people with disabilities. "These are values that Audubon, and the Sanctuary strongly support, and we commend Mr. Miller for his achievements," said Mr. Bahnik.

Following the presentations, Audubon's President, John Flicker remarked that, centers such as Theodore Roosevelt Sanctuary are crucial to Audubon's "2020 Vision" goal of reaching one in four children nationwide with environmental education programs by the year 2020. "The Sanctuary's long history of educating children and families about the natural world are invaluable to helping us reach this goal," continued President Flicker.

Proceeds from the event help to grow the Sanctuary's education and research programs. As part of Audubon's "2020 Vision," the Sanctuary has been increasing its outreach, especially into minority and economically disadvantaged communities. Many children in these communities, as well as children in urban areas, have limited exposure to the natural world.

Sanctuary programs provide these children an opportunity to connect with nature in a way they might never have had, through interactive, hands on activities that make learning fun. Research projects such as creating and managing native grasslands for the benefit of birds and other wildlife, operating bird banding stations, and restoring habitat on Sanctuary grounds provide critical data on the state of our natural environment, but also illustrate ecological concepts to program participants.

The Gala provides a forum that helps the Sanctuary expand its influence in the important work of educating both today's and tomorrow's

environmental stewards, and for building relationships within the community that ensure our voice on behalf of conservation remains strong.

The Gala is only possible because of the commitment and hard work of community members who give of their time and talent by serving on the Gala Committee. This year's event was co-chaired by Roger Bahnik and Marian Minkin, who worked extraordinarily hard to ensure that every detail of the

event was perfect. Judging by the smiles all around, it was clear that they succeeded!

Theodore Roosevelt Sanctuary and Audubon Center is deeply grateful to the gala chairs and the entire committee for a beautiful evening, and for showing their support of Audubon's work. With such good friends, TRSAC is well on its way to meeting future challenges.



(Left to right) William Niarakis, past honoree, Marian Minkin, 2002 dinner co-chair, Marilyn England, director of TRSAC, Rodger Bahnik, 2002 dinner co-chair, Gloria Kruse, TRSAC board president, Edward Mohlenhoff, TRSAC board vice-president, (back row) John Flicker, National Audubon president, Thomas Lieber, 2002 honoree and board member, Nancy Rauch Douzinas, 2002 honoree, Sheila Lieber, 2002 honoree and John "Jock" R. Miller, III, 2002 honoree.

2002 Gala Awardees
Thomas and Sheila Lieber
(far left), Nancy Rauch
Douzinas (center) and
John "Jock" R. Miller, III.



Gala attendees
enjoy the reception.



(Left to right)
National Audubon
president John Flicker,
TRSAC director Marilyn
England, Dan Morris,
and Jane Swanson.