

Willamette Heritage Center at the Mill's 'A Very Good Year'

By Mary Louise VanNatta

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The Willamette Heritage Center at the Mill had a very good year with a fabulous year-end event. Hundreds of history buffs came out to sample excellent hors d'oeuvres and to celebrate the center's successful partnership of the Mission Mill Museum and the Marion County Historical Society.

I was pleasantly surprised to see my childhood dentist, Dr. John Griffith, and longtime family friend, Cindy Day.

With high heels, I opted for the elevator to the third-floor spinning room. We were greeted by WHC Executive Director Peter Booth, who always keeps me informed about the happenings as the center. His wife, Dana Booth, was there to help.

My table hosts, Cheryl and Tom Clark, suggested I visit with Faith Black, who was celebrating a special birthday soon. She would be 104 in December. Black loves to weave, which is part of her connection with the mill.

The event was designed to be social, and it was fun to forgo a structured dinner for a chance to sample appetizers and desserts from a wide variety of caterers. I met Darlene Dryden and her daughter Lisa Dryden of Special Occasions Catering. They helped me pick out the perfect dessert. Guest Michelle Vlatch-Ing visited with Leslie and Daryl Gossack of Loustic Catering.

The event featured an auction assisted by Leslie Zeigen in a festive crown. If you bought bead necklaces, you could play "heads and tails" to win a beautiful, silver-bark patterned Pendleton blanket. During the game, I sat with Richard and Debra Pine, Willie Richardson and Gwen Carr. Pine made it quite far, heading up to the front but choosing tails instead of heads to lose the last round.

The WHC wants to be the major regional history museum and to be the place local residents want to first bring their guests. They look forward to another good year with the installation of many new exhibits in 2012, including "Willamette Women," "Women of Grand Ronde," "The Art and History of Kimono in Oregon" and "FiberArts."

To join in the learning, call (503) 585-7012 or go to WillametteHeritage.org.



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Michelle Vlatch-Ing visits with caterer Leslie Gossack of Loustic Catering at Willamette Heritage Center at the Mill's "A Very Good Year."

Invite me to your event at OutandAboutSJ@live.com or follow me at twitter.com/PRSalem. See you on Sundays.