

TOWN TALK

# Medium super-natural stars lunch on the lawn at Cubitt's home

**MALCOLM PARRY**  
VANCOUVER SUN



**PRESENT TENTS:** American actress Patricia Arquette flew from Haiti recently to lunch on David Cubitt and wife Julia Molnar's tented Shaughnessy lawn. Cubitt has played opposite Arquette for six years on the supernatural-drama TV series *Medium*. Molnar owns the Isola Bella children's clothing store here.

Arquette's focus is to provide clean, safe, sustainable communities for children and families enduring harsh conditions in Haiti's post-earthquake tent camps. Her Give Love Foundation ([www.givelove.org](http://www.givelove.org)) urges friends, colleagues, politicians, scientists and others to fund container homes, sanitation facilities, gardens and practical fuels. Lunch over, donorguests strolled indoors to hear Spirit of The West singer John Mann's "unplugged" recital in the Cubitt-Molnar living room.

**DUST THEN NUGGETS:** Caterer Laura Archangeli gave the Unite With Art gala a prophetic start Thursday by serving chocolate-covered grapes sprinkled with gold dust. Alison Lawton, who chairs the beneficiary, UNICEF Canada's Unite for Children, Unite against AIDS division, then donated \$100,000 and challenged art-auction attendees to match it. Four promptly put up \$25,000 each. Unite With Art executive director Julie Lee said the function, which was hosted free of charge at Maynards Auctioneers' Main-off-Second facility, eventually grossed \$427,000. Previous galas reportedly took in \$190,000 and \$276,000. Now-Toronto-based actress Tara Spencer-Nairn M.Ced with the verve she always showed here.



Julie Molnar (left) and husband David Cubitt welcomed his *Medium* TV-series co-star Patricia Arquette to a fundraising lunch in their garden.

**Y HIGH:** Many were honoured when YWCA Vancouver's Women of Distinction Awards banquet packed the Bayshore Hotel's ballroom this week. Style and ceremony aside, the organization's less glamorous but more vital role of aiding distinctly needy women and children remained. As attendees tucked into salmon filet, triple-chocolate mousse cake and Ganton & Larsen Prospect wines, CEO Janet Austin and board chair Verna Magee-Shepherd said the YWCA served 57,000 clients at 30 locales last year on a budget of \$17 million. Current commitments include a \$13-million housing project in Surrey, with six of its 36

units slotted for women leaving violence, and a \$12-million, 30-unit facility for Coquitlam. Also new to Surrey will be a hitherto-Vancouver-only program to help Grade 7 students transition to high school.

**LETTER PARFAIT:** French consul-general Alexandre Garcia presented his nation's green-and-white Chevalier des Arts et des Lettres medal to Emily Carr University president Ron Burnett Thursday. Speaking in English and flawless French, British-born Burnett praised France for a cultural-diversity policy that was endorsed by 93 nations "and is at the heart of my career." Regarding his present gig, "I have learned more at



YWCA board chair Verna Magee-Shepherd (left) and CEO Janet Austin greeted guests at the Women of Distinction Awards gala.

Emily Carr than I thought possible 14 years ago," Burnett said.

**VIVA ITALIA!** Italian consul-general Francesco de Conno was busy Thursday, too. With historian-wife Yukiko, he fronted National Day celebrations at the Grandview-and-Slocan Italian Cultural Centre. Although not sporting the cockaded hat of honour-guard carabinieri police, three attendees still looked spiffy in Canadian dress uniforms. They were Macao-born, Hong Kong-raised Lieutenant-Colonel Romano Acconci, Colonel Bryan Gagne, the newly appointed Canadian 39 Brigade Group commander, and Vancouver Chief Constable Jim Chu. Earlier in their careers, Acconci and Gagne each commanded the city-based B. C. Regiment.

**WELCOME BACK, CARTER:** Alessandro Vianello returned from St. Andrews, Scotland recently to be chef at Prestons restaurant in West Pender Street's new Coast Coal Harbour Hotel. If he cooked calamari for the Scots as well as he does here, there's likely been a sharp



Simone Osborne (left), here with choir leader Diane Loomer, will give a concert at Vancouver Academy of Music Sunday.



Julie Lee organized, Tara Spencer-Nairn M.Ced and Alison Lawton chaired and gave \$100,000 to the Unite With Art UNICEF benefit.



At Prestons restaurant's opening, back-from-Scotland Alessandro Vianello (left) was welcomed by fellow chef Mike Carter.

drop in haggis. Vianello was greeted by pal and former Refinery kitchen boss Mike Carter, whose hard-boiled papa, J. Bob Carter, was no stranger to hot water here a generation ago. The seemingly unrambunctious son said he's weighing offers for chef and front-of-house jobs.

**NINETEENTH HOLE:** Relieved to have played the

Musqueam course without a soaking Thursday, participants in the 23rd-annual Women's Media Golf Classic repaired to the Century Plaza hotel and raised a reported \$85,000 for the Pacific Autism Family Centre.

**EVER HIGHER:** Those who heard soprano Simone Osborne sing *O Mio Babbino Caro* at a 2006 Christmas concert in UBC president Stephen Toope and Paula Rosen's living room figured she was going places.

The Icelandic-Persian 20-year-old mesmerized attendees with sizzling eyes, gyrating hips and Renee Fleming-like trills during the 15-second high B that ends Puccini's song.

And she is going places. Next season, it'll be Carnegie Hall. Sunday, it'll be Kitsilano Point's Koerner Recital Hall, where the UBC opera graduate will star in the \$50-ticket *Elegant Evening of Song* concert to help fund Vancouver Women's Musical Society scholarships and bursaries.

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