

Party on an island of pearls

Preservation Foundation of Palm Beach celebrates 30th anniversary at The Breakers.

Step aside, diamonds. This night was all about the pearls.

The Preservation Foundation marked its 30th annual dinner dance with an evening centered around the lustrous gem, the traditional symbol of the 30th anniversary.

The event took place March 2 at The Breakers and began in the Mediterranean Room, where stand-up cocktail tables and low sofa-style seating created a cocktail reception that was actually comfortable. Maybe it's just us, but those gleaming marble floors, high heels and a cheese puff in each hand

makes for some mighty swollen ankles by the time those doors to the ballroom swing open.

Then again, maybe it's the cheese puffs.

In a whimsical touch, a mermaid perched on a desert island of a pearly sand beach — or, to the unimaginative, silk cushions — with a silver palm tree, the symbol of the Preservation Foundation.

After cocktails, guests moved to the Venetian Ballroom, transformed by

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Story by Shannon Donnelly — Daily News Photos by Meghan McCarthy

PRESERVATION

Rubies stand out in sea of pearls

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Scott Snyder into a pearly jewel box with floor-to-ceiling draping, a carpeted floor and a blue-lighted glossy dance floor resembling a lagoon.

The tables were set with pearly gray linens and centered by a silver palm tree with pearl-encrusted coconuts “growing” from a silver pot filled with white orchids and mounds of faux pearl strands that magically roped themselves around the necks of a few of the ladies and passed for the real thing.

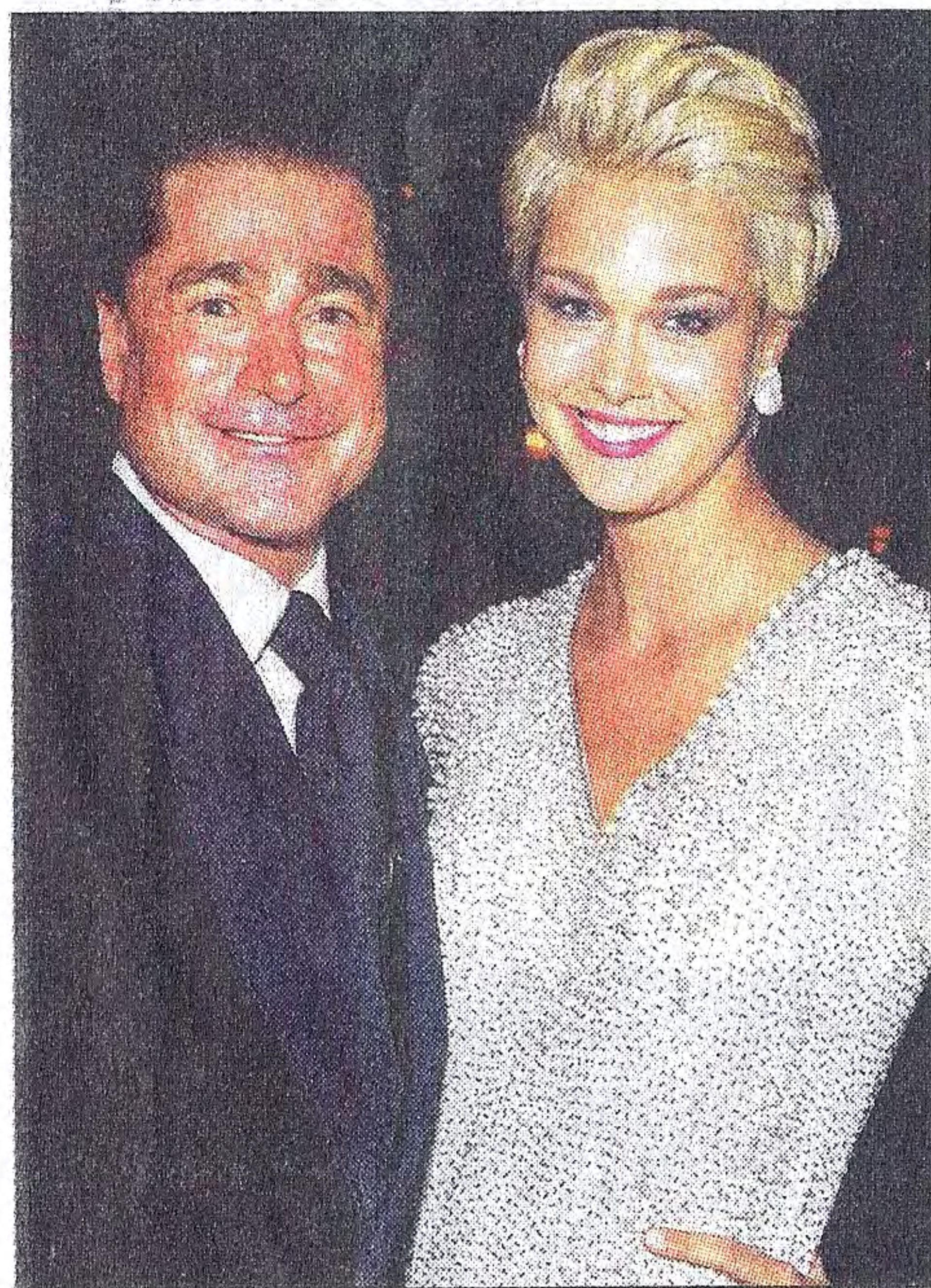
Except, that is, for **Katie Vecellio**, whose astounding necklace of blood-red rubies was hard to hide, even with marble-sized plastic pearls.

This dinner dance is one of the few that abides by the Rule of 100; that is, only 100 or fewer words may be spoken by anybody connected to the event. Combined, chairwoman **Darlene Jordan** and organization president **John Mashek** spoke about 10 — “Thanks for coming, thanks for your money, now let's dance.”

The evening continued with dinner, dessert, and, in keeping with the speakers' directives, dancing to the music of the Bob Hardwick Sound until the 375 guests wore a hole in that pearly carpet.

Darlene Jordan was chairwoman for the dinner dance. **Audrey Gruss**, **Michele Kessler**, **Tal-bott Maxey**, **Pauline Pitt**, **Hilary Geary Ross** and **Lesly Smith** were co-chairwomen.

Proceeds from the event, approximately \$1 million, are allocated the Preservation Foundation's advocacy initiatives, educational programs, architectural resources and cultural events.



Scott Snyder and Abigail Kuklis



Darlene Jordan and John Mashek