

Today I feel a bit like I did the day after my daughter's wedding: exhausted but exhilarated, barely able to comprehend all the blessings in the experience. The last two weekends at The Plaza have left me feeling this way.

First there was Banks and Shane, which was, let's face it, a baby boomer love fest. We traveled the past 35 years or so as if it were yesterday and, in our minds, we were once again thin and good looking. We began the evening with 150 reservations for a magnificent buffet cooked to perfection right outside the door by Pounders. Bartenders were on hand and the energy was palpable. I'm sure you've heard or read how good the concert was, so I won't bore you with that. All I know is I'm humming some great old songs these days and I just simply feel better.

On this past Friday night it was the Eatonton-Putnam Arts Foundation Board of Directors who hosted a gala dinner for our very generous supporters. We also got the first peak at the Old School Museum and I can barely begin to describe it. What the museum committee did in a modest amount of space is nothing short of spectacular. Not just a dull museum with a few artifacts, this museum tells a story about life here in years gone by. The museum opened to the public on Saturday and you must put it on your 'to do' list. Let me warn you, though: if you think you're going to stop by and take a quick tour of the place, you will be sadly mistaken. You'll be absorbed by it and time will fade away.

Our special evening included a private performance by the Celtic group, Mickle-a-Do, along with the enchanting dancers from The Drake School in Alpharetta. What a talented group of young woman, but little 7-yr old Anna Kate stole the show. We all just wanted to squeeze her, she was so adorable!

We then proceeded to the reception hall which had been transformed into a beautifully appointed restaurant with full wait staff and plated dinners. It, too, was a sumptuous meal that was meant as a 'thank you' to all those who give so much and work so hard all year. It was extremely important to me that all the members of our board of directors had the opportunity to be treated as guests too. I also seized the opportunity to share my 'state of the center' address, but I will save that for another time.

Now, if you're reading this and wishing you had been part of the fun, you've got an exclusive opportunity to do so on April 18. The reception hall will once again be transformed for a plated dinner catered by Cindy Lutini's Pasta for Life. (When I tell you that this meal will make your taste buds dance, trust me). Cindy's shop is out behind Sweet Kneads and it's there that she rolls her own pasta from scratch. The Italian dinner of appetizers, salad, cannelloni, dessert and a couple of glasses of wine would be plenty but, in between the courses, you will be treated to some of the world's most famous opera arias as performed live by members of Opera South. For some it will be a primer for Opera 101, but for others who know opera, it will be a chance to re-visit some of your favorite music. Reservations are limited so I suggest you call the ticket desk soon, especially since you can enjoy such a grand evening for only \$40 per person.

I think the common denominator for these events is the full experience it offers.....drinks, dinner, socializing and great entertainment. Having the full bar available seems to be a real hit. You can now buy \$5 drink tickets at our large events which will get you one mixed drink or one glass of wine or two beers. That's reasonable, isn't it? Count on more good times to come.

(Note to all my Banks & Shane groupies: Put August 22 on your calendar when we will get outside on the plaza to dance to the Swinging Medallions. I'll start working on dinner now).

See you at The Plaza!