

# CHICAGO'S TOP 100 EVENTS

## Benefits



**1. Green Tie Ball** Held in support of Chicago Gateway Green's mission of beautifying area roadways, this ball draws the largest crowd of the season. Around 3,000 guests take part in charitable gaming, live entertainment, and tastings from dozens of area restaurants. Last year's event raked in \$500,000.

**2. After School Matters Gala** The 2008 gala made a splash with its unconventional venue: an under-construction runway at O'Hare airport. Some 2,400 guests browsed a youth art auction and raised \$3.5 million for after-school programs. The 2009 fundraiser for Maggie Daley's pet charity will take place in September.

**3. Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation's Chance of a Lifetime Gala** The most extensive silent auction in Chicago (500 lots, with everything from restaurant packages to trips) is the focus of this 2,000-guest event, which in 2008 raised \$2.6 million and featured singer Steve Winwood. The 2009 incarnation is set for December 12.

**4. Chicago Urban League Golden Fellowship Dinner** Major players in the city's political, corporate, and social circles attend this annual event, where past guests have included Barack Obama and Johnson Publishing Company's Linda Johnson Rice. In 2008, the evening drew 2,000 guests and raised \$1.9 million for the civil-rights organization. This year's dinner is set for November 7.

**5. American Cancer Society Discovery Ball** Charlie Trotter designed the cocktails for the 2008 ball, which raised \$2.1 million and featured acrobats and a performance by jazz icon Herbie Hancock. This year's event is set to take place at the Civic Opera House on April 25; some 1,000 guests are expected.

**6. Children's Memorial Hospital Children's Ball** In 2008, the 50th anniversary ball for 1,200 was held at the Hilton Chicago. (See page 40.) The Medical Research Institute Council's 2009 event on December 12 will build on the momentum of excitement generated by a new hospital building currently under construction in Streeterville.

**7. Lincoln Park Zoo Ball** A midsummer bash that inspires attendees to dress in their animal-print best, the 2008 ball drew 1,040 guests and raised \$1 million for one of the nation's few remaining free zoos. The 2009 ball will take place on zoo grounds on July 10 with a "Spots and Stripes Forever" theme.



Ellen DeGeneres and a Make-a-Wish recipient

**8. Make-a-Wish Foundation's Wish Ball** Ellen DeGeneres kept the crowd in stitches at the 2008 Wish Ball, which raked in \$900,000 for the Make-a-Wish Foundation. The 2009 benefit for terminally ill children will be held May 2 at Union Station and is expected to draw 1,000 guests.

**9. Breast Cancer Network of Strength Gala** With the theme "Strength in Numbers," the 2008 gala raised \$900,000 for breast cancer research. Some 1,000 guests attended the event, which took place at the Fairmont Chicago and featured Dreamworks C.E.O. Jeffrey Katzenberg as honorary chairman.

**10. Shedd Aquarium's Close Encounters Gala** A crowd of 1,000 at the 2008 benefit enjoyed dinner among Shedd's exotic-fish tanks and cocktails on a terrace overlooking the skyline. The black-tie event raised \$1 million. The 2009 gala will take place June 27.

**11. Ronald McDonald House's Big Mac Under Glass Gala** In 2008, the gala raked in \$300,000 for the Ronald McDonald House Charities of Chicagoland and Northwest Indiana. This year's May 2 event at the Palmer House Hilton will have a "Sweet Home Chicago" theme and some 1,000 guests.



**12. M.S.I. Columbian Ball** The 2008 ball, a fund-raiser for the Museum of Science and Industry, raised roughly \$1.6 million. TV personality Bill Kurtis led a live auction, and magician Bob Higa performed dinnertime tricks. (See page 48.) The 2009 event will take place in October.

**13. The Field Museum Gala** The Field Museum's largest annual event, this gala drew 650 guests in 2008 and raised \$900,000 with an Aztec theme. This year's event will take place October 17 and feature a diamond theme.

**14. Chicago Botanic Garden's Harvest Ball** The Chicago Botanic Garden is at the height of its end-of-summer splendor for the annual Harvest Ball. Some 600 guests will gather on September 26 for this year's event, expected to raise \$400,000.

**15. Boys & Girls Clubs Summer Ball** "Oh, What a Night" is the theme of the 2009 Boys & Girls Clubs Summer Ball, a society-set staple scheduled to take place June 5 at the Museum of Science and Industry. Event organizers expect to see 600 guests and hope to raise more than \$1 million.

**16. Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum's Butterfly Ball** Pastel and floral-print ball gowns make their first appearance of spring at this ball. In 2008 the soiree featured a "Living Green in Chicago" theme and drew 700 guests to raise \$1.5 million. The 2009 event, scheduled for May 1, will celebrate the museum's 10th anniversary.

**17. American Heart Association's Heart Ball** Some 700 guests attended the 2008 ball, which helped raise \$1.3 million for the American Heart Association. The 2009 event will overtake the Palmer House Hilton on April 18, and will feature a "Hope Is Where the Heart Is" theme.

**18. Brookfield Zoo Whirl** More than 700 guests attended the 2008 event, which decked the zoo in peacock-inspired decor and pulled in \$1.4 million for the Chicago Zoological Society. This year's event, scheduled for April 25, will feature a "Diamonds of the Wild" theme.

**19. Alzheimer's Association's Rita Hayworth Gala** Chaired by Hayworth's daughter Princess Yasmin Aga Khan, the 2009 gala will take place at the Hilton Chicago on May 9. With the theme "An Evening in Monte Carlo," the event is expected to draw more than 600 guests and raise \$1 million.

**20. Cystic Fibrosis Foundation's Grand Chef's Gala** This year's gala, a fund-raiser for the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, took place January 30 at the Fairmont Chicago. The evening featured hors d'oeuvres and desserts from 40 local chefs, drew 720 guests, and raised about \$500,000.

**21. Children's Place Association Once Upon a Time Benefit Gala** On April 4, close to 600 guests are expected to attend the Children's Place Association benefit at Union Station. This year's "Passport to the World" event is expected to raise \$450,000.

**22. Hedge Funds Care Open Your Heart to the Children Benefit** Some 500 hedge-fund industry professionals attended last year's benefit, which took place in Millennium Park and raised \$850,000 for Hedge Funds Care. This year's event will take place at the Chicago Cultural Center on May 20.

**23. Heartland Alliance's Art Against AIDS** The Junior Board of the Heartland Alliance hosted the 2009 Art