

Baralls receive Humanitarian Award

BY LISA SMITH-OVERTON
ReminderNews

Mount Carmel Hall in East Hartford was alight with the luck of the Irish on Sunday, March 16. However, the majority of that luck seemed to be with Herb and Regina Barall, as the First District Democratic Committee bestowed numerous accolades and awards on the dynamic couple – most notably the 2008 Humanitarian Award – at its St. Patrick's Day Dinner.

Herb and Regina (better known as Reggie) are well-known and extremely active members of the community. Herb Barall, a Harvard Law School graduate and retired judge, and his wife Reggie, a University of Hartford alumna certified to teach grades 9-12, formed the Circle of Life Arts for All, Inc., a non-profit organization that engages the young and the old in the graceful art of ballroom dance. Together, the couple operates the Circle of Life dance studio located on the ground floor of the East Hartford Cultural Community Center and offer lessons in such dances as the Argentine Tango and Waltz.

Yet, it is the couple's dedication to the people in the community they love and their tireless efforts to create safe and fun avenues that allow children and teens to channel their energy toward the positive that makes the Baralls such recognized local figures.

The guest list at the Democratic Committee dinner included state Attorney General Richard Blumenthal, state Comptroller Nancy Wyman and Secretary of the State Susan Bysiewicz. Representatives Chris Stone, Henry Genga, and Gary LeBeau presented citation after citation to the Baralls, and Mayor Melody Currey also expressed the same sentiments that had been echoed throughout the night as she presented a citation from the town.

Also on hand to award a congressional citation was U.S. Rep. John Larson. It was Patricia Begley, chair of the First District Democratic Committee, who delivered the 2008 Humanitarian Award.

The Baralls' son Doug, who followed in the footsteps of his father in the field of law, spoke succinctly but emotionally of the pride, love and admiration he possesses for his parents. As the award citations piled high, Reggie Barall joked, "We're going to need a separate room for all these awards!"

LeBeau summed up the success of the Baralls best, as he quoted the lyrics of the Frank Sinatra song, "Young at Heart:" "And if you should survive to 105/Look at all you'll derive out of being alive/Then here is the best part/You have a head start/If you are among the very young at heart."



Herb (right) and Regina Barall look on as Bud Salemi, chair of the East Hartford Democratic Committee, reads one of numerous citations awarded to the couple on March 16. Photos by Lisa Smith-Overton.



(l-r) State Comptroller Nancy Wyman, Herb and Regina Barall, state Attorney General Richard Blumenthal, and the Baralls' daughter and son Maria and Doug.



U.S. Rep. John Larson expressed his admiration for the Baralls' work.