

Publication: Northwest Arkansas Democrat-Gazette

Date: Sunday, July 31, 2005

Section: Northwest Profile

Page: 44

Fundraising party arrives at One Particular Harbor

— Cyd King

FAYETTEVILLE — The Ryan Gibson Foundation's ship came in at its One Particular Harbor fundraiser last weekend.

During the live auction, developer Gary Brandon outbid all others for a Takamine acoustic guitar donated by Joe Walsh and signed by The Eagles.

A red-faced Brandon gave \$22,000 for the guitar.

Afterward, he received a standing ovation and a round of congratulatory pats.

The tropical-theme party July 23 at the Fayetteville Town Center raked in about \$137,000 — almost double the previous year's proceeds. Most of what was raised will go toward finding a cure for leukemia.

Ryan Gibson, the foundation's namesake, died from complications following treatment for the disease.

Since then, his parents, Carol Lynn and Don Gibson, his brother, Derek, and a Pi Kappa Alpha fraternity brother, Scott "Hook" Harmeling of Dallas, have been busy raising money for leukemia research.

Harmeling is founder and president of the Ryan Gibson Foundation.

The group prides itself on giving big — \$100,000 so far, including a \$50,000 stipend to Dr. Patricia Yotnda and the Baylor College of Medicine in Houston. Yotnda spoke at the party about her plans for the money. Also that evening, the foundation awarded a \$40,000 grant to Dr. Jim Suen on behalf of the Arkansas Cancer Research Center in Little Rock.

More than 400 people attended the party. The entrance to the Town Center was decorated with ferns, tiki torches and banners of royal blue and red bearing the foundation's logo. Inside, palm trees, lots of leis and tropical centerpieces worked well to brighten the atmosphere. It was chaos as partygoers kept running back to the already-crowded silent auction to check their bids. Some took their aggressions to the dance floor and enjoyed the music of Oreo Blue.





