

Don Cagen Orchestra

Music Director

Rush-Presbyterian St. Luke's Fashion Show 1994 – 1999

1994

SKY

September 29, 1994

InStyle

**Sandy
Kagan**

Fashionably
speaking



The show, "Portrait Chicago," was the 68th presentation for Rush. Women's Board President Holly Madigan opened the afternoon with a celebration. In 1994, the board raised \$400,000 — a far cry from the first show in 1927, which raised \$32,000.

Fashion Show Chairman Peggy Crowe and the man of the hour, producer/director/set designer Skip Grisham, coordinated one of the best events yet.

The production was simple and

clean. You could see all the models on stage and the show moved along at record pace.

Making its first appearance was the Don Cagen Orchestra. His music was well-timed and the vocals — like those on "Monster Mash" — rivalled the original recordings.

And let us not forget the ladies who really make this show happen, the Women's Board. You never see them, but they are the crew who keep everything running smoothly backstage. They are the real stars.

PIONEER PRESS

Thursday, September 15, 1994

SRO

Call conductor **Don Cagen** of Evanston the lone arranger when he strikes up his 15-piece band

Wednesday for the Rush Presbyterian St. Luke's Medical Center fashion show at Medinah Temple. His ensemble is making its debut at this year's edition of the annual event, and he's been

arranging scores all summer. "Eighteen retailers sent me tapes of the music they wanted for their segment, and I'm recreating the sounds, from 'The Mambo Kings' to 'Aida,' " he said. Cagen's wife **Becky** will sing, as well as tenor **Frank Little**, director of the Music Center of the North Shore in Winnetka. He'll perform "A Time for Us" from Zeffirelli's "Romeo and Juliet," as his recently-wed daughter **Caroline Degenaars** glides onstage as a bride in the Marshall Field wedding scene finale.



Sunday Sun-Times

Rush Women's Gala Sparkles in Evening

1995

For the first time in 50 years, the Woman's Board of Rush-Presbyterian-St. Luke's Medical Center presented its largest and oldest ongoing charitable fashion show in the nighttime hours instead of at a 2 p.m. matinee.

"Rhythms of the Night" called for change—not only in the show hours, but in energy, format, music, clothes presentation, raffle drawing and wrap-up party—according to **Skip Grisham**, producer, director and set designer.

For starters, the board closed the street in front of the Medinah Temple, and entertained major donors and board members in a tent set up nearby, while members of the South Shore Drill Team and Performing Arts Ensemble did their thing.

Once inside, the Gallery 37 Latin Big Band performed until the lights dimmed and Woman's Board president **Nancy Friedeman**, show chair **Brenda Dick** and hospital president and CEO **Leo Henikoff** came onstage to greet and thank the audience.



MARY
CAMERON FREY

Musicians played different instruments during each act, illustrating just how many different rhythms of the night there are, and **Don Cagen** and his orchestra, vocalists **Robin Alexis, Sidney Barnes, Becky Cagen, Pennington McGee, Greg Parker, 78 Cents** and **Zora Young** added to the enjoyment of each segment.

Models never looked prettier, thanks to makeup provided by Guy Lento of Chanel and do's created by the Saks Fifth Avenue beauty salon.

All in all, the evening time slot did make it possible for more men to see their women onstage, and the theme gave the audience a marvelous opportunity to view the very best fall evening fashions from leading Chicago area retailers to the beat of some snappy music.

And best of all, the Woman's Board continued its proud tradition of supporting the work of Rush-Presbyterian-St. Luke's Medical Center, with the funds raised this year fulfilling a \$500,000 pledge to the Rush Alzheimer's Disease Center and the Alzheimer's Family Care Center.

COVER STORY

A PIONEER PRESS NEWSPAPER

October 19, 1995

Rush-Pres tries twilight time

The 1995 Rush-Presbyterian-St. Luke's Fashion Show was themed

"Rhythms of the Night." Not only was it held at 6:30 p.m. Sept. 27 — twilight time in autumn, but it was punctuated with drumbeats from start to finish.

The show was held in the early evening — a change from half a century of afternoon shows — in an attempt to induce men to attend. And dutiful dads and supportive spouses of the society models were in the audience. But balconies at the vast Medinah Temple were half empty, a signal that the large number of women who for decades made this event a girl's afternoon out were not eager to come downtown after sundown.

The show was lively in the extreme. The **Don Cagen Orchestra** provided the music — everything from rock to Strauss waltzes.

Accurate attendance figures were not available at press time, but funds from the event will be used to fulfill the Woman's Board \$500,000 pledge to the Rush Alzheimer's Disease Center and Family Care Center.

— Dorothy Andries

CHICAGO SUN-TIMES, WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 1995

Fashion

Fashionably later: Get set for one of the city's largest and oldest fashion fund-raisers—the 69th annual Rush-Presbyterian St. Luke's Medical Center show that this year will benefit Alzheimer's disease programs. Models will be outfitted for the 6:30 show by some of Chicago's top stores. Themed "Rhythms of the Night," it is being held at Medinah Temple at night, rather than midday, for the first time in 50 years.

"We decided there was an audience we were neglecting unintentionally," says publicity co-chairwoman Malou Rawls, "so we thought we would see how this worked." And she says sponsoring retailers are "thrilled" at the chance to show their goods to a larger, more

diverse evening audience.

Among the new show twists: musician **Dan Cagen** incorporating the "rhythm" theme, including genres from blues to drum-and-bugle sounds. And Chanel national makeup director **Guy Lento** is arriving from New York to create onstage looks for Rush's models, using Chanel's hot "Vamp" shades.



Chicago Tribune

Tempo

It's all for show

By Teresa Wiltz

TRIBUNE STAFF WRITER

So where else will you find Sugar Rautbord on stage, dripping with Cartier diamonds, shaking her groove thing and doing the Swim?

Or two "magic carpets" driven by Shriners decked out in genie gear, escorting a posse of tykes sporting Oilly fashions?

There are just some things that are absolutely unique to Rush-Presbyterian-St. Luke's annual fashion show, which is, at 71, the oldest ongoing fashion show in the country. This year, WBBM-TV power couple Mary Ann Childers and Jay Levine hosted the 90-minute "Nightlights" show, with the Don Cagen Orchestra providing musical accompaniment—and even a rap artist of sorts.

Sure, the show, directed by Skip Grisham, is a society orgy, with the who's who of Chicago checking in for a quick turn on the catwalk. But beyond the social cachet associated with the show, beyond the trick lighting, beyond the dancers leaping and turning, beyond the celebrity models, beyond the *haute couture*, the fashion show is really about raising money. Big money—more than \$8 million since its inception.

Which is why roughly 3,500 folks showed up Wednesday for an evening filled with hoopla, snazzy lighting and marathon modeling. The set, also designed by Grisham, was simple, with a rotating backdrop featuring dreamy skyline shots of nighttime Chicago by Victor Skrebneski.

Grammy Award-nominated vocalist Alicia Bridges opened the show crooning her disco anthem, "I Love the Nightlife," while a chorus of dancers stole a few steps from John Travolta in "Saturday Night Fever."

1997

Six luminaries, fashions draw much applause

From beginning to end, the 71st Rush-Presbyterian-St. Luke's Fashion Show at Medinah Temple provided guests with a glittering, fast-moving spectacle of music, clothes, jewels and attractive people doing the strangest things onstage at the Medinah Temple.

This could be the very best show producer/director **Skip Grisham** has orchestrated to date, and he made much of its title, "Nightlights," using flashlights, candles atop models' heads, revolving spotlights on the floor of the stage and even strings of lights wrapped around models' bodies under designer Yolanda Lorente's diaphanous gowns.

Furs from Saks Fifth Avenue and McElroy were interspersed with Nordstrom's presentation of Armani's fall line and a personal appearance by **Mark Heister** with his stunning evening clothes.



Mary Frey
Society Columnist

Just before Marshall Field's bridal scene closed the show, as it has for the past 71 years, the segments featuring **Sonia Rykiel's** evening clothes and designer **Yolanda Lorente's** hand-painted silks won the "people's choice awards" as indicated by the applause.

Able and attractive co-hosts **Mary Ann Childers** and **Jay Levine** moved things along smoothly, helped by the music of **Don Cagen** and lively dancers in several numbers.



Society's A-List Puts On a Fashion Show

FOR CHICAGO'S RICH AND FAMOUS, THE FUN ACTUALLY began 72 years ago when two society matrons, who happened to serve on the women's board of the hospital, attended a fashion show in Paris. On their return, they decided their husbands would pay to see them model the latest European collections—and a Chicago tradition was born. Today, the Rush-Presbyterian-St. Luke's event is the oldest and longest continuously running charity fashion show in the nation—and currently the only one of its kind, because it features no professional models, just amateurs, who are called "mannequins." It's always a big draw: About 3,000 tickets (\$15 for nosebleed seats to \$100 for the front mezzanine) are sold every year. "It's a people-watching paradise," says one observer. "People come to see who's onstage, who's *not* onstage, and who's wearing what in the audience."

Frankly, it's more spectacle than fashion show. Over the decades, the event has evolved into a 90-minute theatrical production with a schmaltz factor that could rival the Rockettes. There's the 16-piece Don Cagen Orchestra. And spotlights.

1998

Tempo

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 1999 ■ SECTION 5

Rush extravaganza turns up music

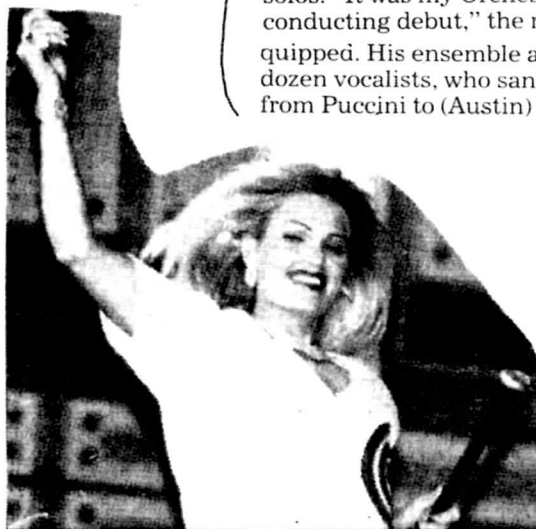
By Wendy Navratil
TRIBUNE STAFF WRITER

Tigers and mares have been known to accessorize models in past Rush-Presbyterian-St. Luke's Fashion Shows at the Medinah Temple, and the beasts hardly seemed out of place in an arena that had seen so many circuses come and go.

But in the 73rd annual extravaganza Tuesday evening, any ferocity was left to a pooch the size of Toto, and any purring to such divas as Lynne Jordan and former Miss America Kate Shindle. After 53 years at the Medinah Temple, the venerable Chicago event moved to the renovated Symphony Center, ruling out some of the wilder antics of yore.

Live music, always a signature component of the nation's largest and oldest continuous fashion show, naturally gained emphasis this year. The "Symphony of Style" featured the Don Cagen Orchestra as well as tenors Rodrick Dixon and Alberto Mizrahi, violinist Rachel Barton and actress-vocalist Hollis Resnik—reprising Patsy Cline's "Crazy"—among others.

In all, 19 retailers dressed more than 150 socialites and celebrities. The benefit event, presented by the Woman's Board of the Rush-Presbyterian-St. Luke's Medical Center and emceed by Mary Ann Childers and Jay Levine, raised about \$500,000 last year and was expected to bring in about the same again.



Home run

Sonia, Cub Sammy Sosa's wife, was among the Rush-Presbyterian-St. Luke's show-stealers.

By ANN GERBER
Associate Editor

Skyline

September 30, 1999

Cub slugger Sammy Sosa's beautiful blond wife, Sonia; 1998 Miss America Kate Shindle; gorgeous TV anchor Cheryl Burton led the parade of memorable models who stole the Rush-Presbyterian-St. Luke's fashion show. Cheered by 2,500 at the Symphony Center, the style extravaganza netted \$500,000 for research to the women's board of the medical center. Show biz musical numbers with Don Cagen's Orchestra added polish and drama to the latest clothes offered by: Cartier, Chacok, Chanel, Escada, FAO Schwartz, Forest Shop, Marshall Field's, Maximilian Furs at Bloomingdale's, McElroy Furs, Nordstrom, Oilily, Penny's From Heaven, Saks Fifth Avenue, Tiffany and Ultimo. Good show!

COVER STORY

Rush-Pres Show gets new venue

The 73rd annual fashion show, held the evening of Sept. 24 to benefit Rush-Presbyterian-St. Luke's Medical Center, had a new venue this year — Symphony Center at 220 S. Michigan Ave. in Chicago. It was in sharp contrast to Medinah Temple, where the show had been held for 53 years and the building enabled the members of the Woman's Board to host the show, the cast party, patron party and dinner all under one roof.

Skip Grisham, the show's veteran producer, director and set designer, couldn't resist paying tribute to the new location — the home of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra — by putting more emphasis on the music.

The Don Cagen Orchestra, expanded to 30 for the occasion, provided live music for the show — and Cagen even got in a few trumpet solos. "It was my Orchestra Hall conducting debut," the music man quipped. His ensemble also featured a dozen vocalists, who sang everything from Puccini to (Austin) Powers.



Cheryl Burton wears a gown from the Lake Forest Shop.

A capacity crowd of more than 2,500 guests saw the designer clothing from upscale retailers modeled by women, children and men from the area's prominent families, as well as by celebrities, such as Lt. Gov. Corinne Wood, Sun-Times columnist Bill Zwecker, and artist Ed Paschke of Evanston.

The show raised more than \$500,000 for the Woman's Board Research Unit in the Robert H. and Terri Cohn Research Building, scheduled to open in spring of 2000.

Lerner — September 23, 1999

SEXIEST MODEL in the Rush-Presbyterian-St. Luke's fashion show was TV anchor and curvy beaut Cheryl Burton, who danced and recharged enough batteries to light up any future ComEd failures. An unflappable puppy and violinist Rachel Barton were other stars at this annual style parade held at Symphony Center. Unfortunately, the clothes were humdrum and the lighting irritatingly uneven. Cleverest segment was for Saks Fur Salon with eight women depicting divas like Cher, Maria Callas and Carol Channing in ego-inspired cameos. Don Cagen's orchestra and the professional singers who belted out appropriate songs were memorable, as was 1998 Miss America Kate Shindle. Mayor Richard Daley and Maggie were present to see kids Nora and Patrick model. Mary Ann Childers and Jay Levine were classy emcees.