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# community

## Hot! Hot! Hot!

Red Dress 2011 sizzles with more intimate "Red Hot" party

BY RYAN J. PRADO

As you read this, scores of Portland's vintage clothing shops have begun the annual, though likely unannounced, process of rescuing countless crimson ensembles from the greedy maw of the garbage bin. Men and women alike roam the dress hangers of boutiques, window shopping for rosy hues and high heels. Fabric stores are in red alert. The culmination of these phenomena can mean only one thing: The Red Dress Party is back, and this time, it's hotter than ever before.

Now in its 11th year, Red Dress—held Saturday, April 16—is getting "Red Hot," graduating from 2010's spooky "Redrum" theme, and merging a sense of the sweet and spicy that veteran Red Dressers have always held dear. As if by some osmosis, this year's theme has been a fitting metaphor for ticket sales, too. That's right, these red-hot little numbers are going fast.

"It is the quickest tickets have sold," explains Brent Echols, Red Dress Party board president. "We kind of retooled a little bit this year and backed up in terms of the number of tickets we were selling."

Attendance numbers over the last five years have put the nonprofit party—which since 2001 has raised \$182,000 for area LGBTQ equality, advocacy and educational organizations—squarely on the roster of high-profile annual soirées. The event has consistently topped 1,000 attendees, even hitting nearly 2,000 partiers in 2008. But Echols reports that the Red Dress board opted to scale back the 2011 festivities in an effort to revisit a more intimate Red Dress experience. Just 1,000 tickets have been made available this year.

"The party has been very large and has been

a wonderful experience, but we wanted to bring the experience back to some of the previous parties we had, like at the Meow Meow Club and BodyVox, which were a little bit smaller venues with nice compartmentalized rooms and dance floors so you could have different experiences at the same party."

The move has had some folks in the community seeing red at what would appear a decrease in funds raised compared to years past. Echols says that though there will be fewer partygoers in attendance, the Red Dress donations are not in danger of dipping below their standards. VIP tickets remain the same price,

"I want people to come out, have a great time and follow through with their volunteer efforts throughout the year."

-BRENT ECHOLS,  
RDP BOARD PRESIDENT

though general admission has increased slightly.

"Our goal this year is to actually be a little bit more aggressive with how we spend money, so we can give the same amount," explains Echols. "[With] every volunteer organization that's doing a party like this, cost is always

an issue, and we're trying to be very careful. The goal is to not reduce what we give away but to spend our money maybe a little bit more wisely."

This year's venue sticks with the unfinished warehouse ambiance via roomy real estate at 535 NW 10th Avenue in the Pearl District. Attendees can expect the space to have two very distinct dance floor options—one merging the sweet candy vibe of red hots in what Echols calls the "red hot fire and sexy room," another taking on more of a laid-back lounge.

Entertainment comes by way of DJs Scotty D, Tronic and Adam West, with 2010 board president Brian Wilson handling emcee duties. Additionally, catering by local eateries the likes of Café Nell, Little T American

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