

VALLEY OF THE DOLLARS

BY NANCY SPILLAR

Don't call them four-eyes anymore. With this month's seventh annual Silicon Valley Charity Ball, the software set sheds its nerdy image. Sort of.

tured. The featured entertainer, comedienne Elayne Boosler, had just been secured. And Beemiller hadn't a clue as to what she'd be wearing on the big night.

Last year, the tall, attractive blonde, who could have afforded any gown of her choice from a well-known designer, instead commissioned an outfit from a local one, who created an ensemble with a hand-beaded bustier. That the designer was a Vietnamese immigrant turned computer engineer turned dress designer was probably more interesting to the night's techie guests than whether the outfit would land Beemiller on any best-dressed list. For what really counts in this boom town born of electronic integrated circuits (made from silicon wafers) is that the design drew upon imagination and computers. In a testament to both, the black-and-silver sheath worn last year by Beverley Hayes, who was on the organizing committee, had dozens of computer-keyboard buttons cascading down its front. The flap of her evening bag was an actual circuit board.

Welcome to Silicon Valley society, where inventiveness and energy are more highly prized than family names or inherited wealth; where community ties come from freeways and corporate affiliations rather than bloodlines and shared history;

where local leaders are more likely to be graduates of human-potential seminars than Ivy League schools. The sprawling computer capital, which encompasses everything south of San Francisco from Palo Alto to San Jose, only got its name in the early 1970s, when it was coined by a local journalist covering the region's burgeoning computer industry. Here, the techno-millionaires are themselves slightly newer than their custom-built houses. About the only thing that's entrenched are the oak trees dotting the hills. But as the area's largest fundraiser, the seven-year-old Silicon Valley Charity Ball is the most visible signal that an integrated social circuit is emerging.

Last year's guestlist of hard-driving doers included Bob Puette, president of Apple USA, and his wife J.P.; James C. Morgan, chairman and CEO of Applied Materials, Inc., and his wife, California State Senator Becky Morgan; Hewlett-Packard Company alumnus Bill Krause, now head of his own software-technology firm, and his wife Gay, a school principal; and Steve Zelencik, a senior vice-president at Advanced Micro Devices, Inc. In all, 3,000 members of the silicon set attended the ball, held at the San Jose McEnery Convention Center, the only place in town big enough for such a crowd.

"They treat it like a prom," says *San Jose Mercury News* style editor Mary Gottschalk, who good-naturedly describes the \$250- to \$500-a-plate party animals as a lot of "nerdy engineers who drink beer from the bottle." Arrival might be by limo or armored truck. Revelers might be wearing bubbling Lawrence Welk masks and jungle-print cummerbunds or recycled wedding dresses. One year a Carmen Miranda impersonator pelted guests with fruit. And where else, besides the prom, would anyone carry Silly String in her evening bag? Or scrawl "perfect buns—have a byte" on a Plexiglas centerpiece?

Besides the usual dining and dancing, tuxedoed men and their decked-out dates were treated last year to a video arcade with games from every manufacturer in the Val-

ley. By 2 A.M. plugs had to be pulled as women continued to hammer away on the Wacky Gator and men hooted it up on simulated road racers.

"These people in Silicon Valley are into flash, glitzy things," says ball founder Gerry Beemiller, an entrepreneur and the husband of Paulette Beemiller. "They love doing things. They don't want to sit down. They're not into ballroom dancing."

"It's not a ball like a Viennese ball," Paulette adds. "Maybe it should just be called a party."

While they raised \$600,000 for twenty-nine charities, last year's guests dined on "Silicon salad" (California field greens and sundried tomatoes) and filet mignon. Then Dana Carvey, of "Saturday Night Live," entertained the raucous crowd with customized humor. As one of his signature characters, Hans the fitness instructor, he chided the audience for making "little girly chips." He got the night's biggest howls as *Wayne's World* supernerd Garth Algar acting herky-jerky at a high school dance.

The crowd could laugh, knowing that Silicon Valley isn't so herky-jerky anymore. Indeed, this group of people—who may be more comfortable chatting with machines than interfacing with humans—is increasingly proving that it can go public. So crammed is today's social calendar that Walter Loewenstern Jr. (the L in ROLM Corporation) can no longer get by with just one tuxedo. "I've got about four or five in my closet," he says with a toothy smile, "just to keep from getting bored."

"It's incredible how often there are two or three things happening on the same night," says Brenna Bolger, owner of PRx Strategic Marketing Communications, a public relations and advertising firm that also publishes a community calendar. "The number of [charitable] events has doubled in the past five years."

Not only does that increase reflect the more adult concerns of the Valley's aging baby boomers, but it is suggestive of the growing number of groups who are eager to tap into the area's new wealth. Bolger has helped a long list of major corporations start

up philanthropic programs that assist everyone from the homeless to abused children. This outpouring is in stark contrast to the long-held prejudice among some outsiders that the Valley is home to the most tight-fisted of new **corporate chieftains**. "They think they deserve to keep it all, that they don't owe anyone anything because they made it all themselves," contends Michael S. Malone, author of *The Big Score: The Billion Dollar Story of Silicon Valley*. "But that is changing." As Gerry Beemiller puts it, "The Valley is maturing."

charitable offerings went to educational institutions and, for more than a few, to their own families. "There was a time when they never quite believed that they were wealthy," says McKenna. "They believed it could all vanish one day. Both success and failure in the Valley come overnight." But, he adds, "As these people become more comfortable with their positions and with their wealth, and as their wealth expands, they're getting involved in larger issues, in charity balls and other causes." "There's a certain amount of selfishness

ly's 200-acre ranch in Fremont, located 20 miles northeast of San Jose.

It was during a 1986 Christmas party at the Beemiller ranch that the Valley's charity ball took shape. Local legend has it that a guest went ballistic when the valet parking attendant returned his new import car splattered with mud from a steady rain. Steve Tedesco, now San Jose Chamber of Commerce president, found the scene a symbol of the Valley's misplaced values, and said so to Beemiller. In discussing ways to counterbalance the Valley's mate-



Many of Silicon Valley's pioneers come from humble, working-class backgrounds, often having made their fortunes from projects they started at home. Robert N. Noyce, who in 1959 filed the first patent for a practical integrated circuit, is a native of Iowa, where his father was a minister. "[Apple cofounder] Steve Jobs was adopted, and his dad was a machinist," says Regis McKenna, whose marketing consulting firm includes Apple among its **high-powered clients**. "Jerry Sanders [chairman and CEO of Advanced Micro Devices, Inc.] was raised on the South Side of Chicago. These people didn't come from wealth, and they didn't come here to create wealth. They came to work."

And when the windfall fortunes arrived, they kept right on working. The Honda might have been replaced with a Porsche or two, but the Grateful Dead T-shirt was still worn to the office. Their first tentative

when you're young," agrees the 49-year-old Gerry Beemiller. The Arizona State University math major came to the Valley in the early 1970s as a sales engineer. He later joined the ranks of manufacturer's representatives when he observed that they drove better cars. Not long after, when he founded I², Inc., a sales firm representing electronics companies, he was driving a red 308 GT Ferrari—and living in a house built to his own specifications.

In the early 1980s, Beemiller started a new family, and five years ago he sold I². The Ferrari has been replaced with a Dodge minivan, and his new company, Infant Advantage, has developed a baby cradle with a computer programmed to generate comforting motions and sounds. The family still lives in the 5,000-square-foot house Beemiller designed, which has been likened to a diamond set upside down in the ground. It crowns the fami-

rialistic streak, they came up with the idea of the ball. Beemiller himself kicked in \$20,000 for the first of the fundraisers, which was held in the spring of 1987. Each year since, the ball has grown in size and popularity. Yet the secret to its success may transcend charitable concerns.

"Beemiller made the ball a good time—and a **good networking opportunity**," says author Malone. "People in this town have to be able to justify having a good time. Leisure time has to include something hard, like skiing, to make it legitimate."

In an appeal to corporate image consciousness, Beemiller now gets the likes of Apple and Advanced Micro Devices to underwrite a share of the ball's expenses through their marketing and sales departments. For a \$27,500 donation each, ten companies are touted before their industry peers as "the Big 10 for the Ball."

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an additional benefit: priority consideration for membership in the old-line Farmington Country Club, which means neatly bypassing a four-year waiting list.

Not far from Farmington, the recent sale that had everyone buzzing was a lovely old 522-acre property called Cherry Hill, sold by the estate of Mrs. W.A. Rinehart, whose family has been prominent in Charlottesville since the turn of the century. Just 5 miles west of town, it was snapped up for \$7,375,000. Another historic dream estate, Midway, with 80-plus acres, is about a fifteen-minute drive from town in the heart of the western hunt country. The rambling five-bedroom house has fine period details, unobstructed views of the Blue Ridge Mountains and comes complete with a sixteen-stall horse barn and a five-room farmer's cottage. Midway is listed with McLean Faulconer Inc. at \$2,750,000.

Although these rich Virginia farms produce apples, peaches, hay and cattle, it's horse farms the region is known for—and the sight of red-jacketed riders moving across open fields. The area actually supports two hunt clubs: the venerable 200-member Keswick Hunt Club, formed in 1896, to the east, and the Farmington Hunt Club to the west. According to Jill Summers, master of the Farmington Hunt (and William Faulkner's daughter), the clubs are distinctions without a difference: "If you live west, you hunt with Farmington; if you live east, you hunt with Keswick. And many members belong to both."

The Keswick area of Charlottesville is very serious horse country indeed. The region is so horsey the local Episcopal church conducts a Blessing of the Hounds each year before the Thanksgiving hunt. Renowned Thoroughbred breeder Peggy Augustus produces winners at Old Keswick Farm; at Cismont Manor, Sallie Busch Wheeler, now president of the National Horse Show, turns out top show jumpers. Some of these farms, like Mr. and Mrs. Robert Coles' Cloverfields, have been in the family for generations. Yet movie director/writer Hugh H. Wilson and his wife, who recently purchased the exquisite Edgewood estate, have found a warm welcome and have no regrets about leaving California.

If a historic estate is your ideal, consider Auburn Hill, on the Rivanna River, also to the east but only 5 miles from town. The land was probably part of Jefferson's father's holdings, though the first recorded owner was Thomas Jefferson himself. Directly across from Shadwell, Jefferson's

birthplace, 72-acre Auburn Hill has a late-antebellum, ten-room house with Greek Revival detailing, as well as a guest cottage that was the original kitchen and slave quarters. McLean Faulconer Inc. lists the property at \$1,575,000.

To the south of town, along Route 20, lies Kluge country. Although the palatial estate built in the 1980s by Metromedia mogul John Kluge is now his ex-wife's residence, Kluge owns, under various companies, slightly less than 10,000 acres in the rural southern sector, which tends to have the most reasonably priced land in the county. For example, for just under \$3 million, one could acquire Stonehedge, a fertile 1,086-acre working farm estate 20 miles south of town. Barns, a riding arena and four tenant houses are scattered around the property. Two single-story wings were added after World War II to the original, two-story 1800 white-brick house. The property is listed with Frank Hardy, Inc., Realtors.

Northeast of Charlottesville, prices are slightly higher than in the south. Though decidedly rural, this quadrant has fine properties convenient to town. A find of a fixer-upper here is The Riggory, a charming, early Virginia clapboard farmhouse with an 1840 addition; it's habitable but in need of work. The Riggory sits on 30 acres of land and can be had for \$595,000 from Frank Hardy Inc., Realtors.

Right now, The Riggory awaits renovation—perhaps by a family dreaming of trading freeways for mockingbirds, penthouses for ponies. Charlottesville knows all about that. "The motion of my blood no longer keeps time with the tumult of the world. It leads me to seek for happiness in the lap and love of my family, in the society of my neighbors and books, in the wholesome occupations of my farms and my affairs, in an interest or affection in every bud that opens, every breath that blows around me. . . ." Homesick for Charlottesville, Thomas Jefferson wrote that to James Madison in 1793, when he was exhausted from his duties as Secretary of State. ■

The Agents to Call

Greg Baldwin Realty, Inc.,
(804) 979-5933.

McLean Faulconer Inc.,
(804) 295-1131.

Frank Hardy, Inc., Realtors,
(804) 296-0134.

Royer & McGavock Ltd. Realtors,
(804) 293-6131.

The ball is not the Valley's only nod to a more traditional social order. Karen Loewenstern, wife of ROLM's Walter, used the cachet of her name to bring ballet to San Jose. She had seen her first professional ballet while visiting her husband-to-be in Washington, D.C. Upon their return to the Bay Area, the couple subscribed to San Francisco Ballet, but it wasn't long before they found the 50-mile ride to performances a chore. And for her part, Mrs. Loewenstern knew that she "could not have gotten onto San Francisco Ballet's board, let alone been its chairman, unless I'd given them a lot of money."

So in 1983 she formed a ballet board in San Jose and was handily elected its chairman. One of the first people she approached to help underwrite a production of *The Nutcracker* by the visiting Cleveland Ballet was Apple cofounder Steve Wozniak, or "The Woz," as he is fondly known. It turned out that Silicon Valley's most flamboyant wunderkind "was a big fan of my husband's company. He said he had a ROLM poster hanging on the wall of his garage while he built the first Apple," says Mrs. Loewenstern. "I explained to him that we had an opera, a symphony, a civic light opera and a repertory company, but no dance." Wozniak rose to the occasion.

When it came to establishing a company, local arts organizations were also more than willing to offer whatever they could. "I represented the high-tech companies they wanted to get to," she says of the mutually beneficial relationship. Rather than start from scratch, they decided to share another city's troupe, which led to the formation of the San Jose Cleveland Ballet.

Wozniak has remained one of the ballet's most devoted supporters. Besides committing to an annual contribution of at least \$200,000 for the first three seasons, he has been known to toss in a little extra now and then. When Wozniak was told that the hometown stage was too small to duplicate the production of *Romeo and Juliet* he'd enjoyed in Cleveland, it was as if he'd been challenged to a civic duel. Soon, he coughed up \$1 million to renovate the San Jose Center for the Performing Arts.

Now in its seventh season, the ballet company is about to experience a milestone: the loss of its chairman. The Loewensterns are planning to move to their new home outside of Vail, Colorado, later this year, and a search committee is sizing up what has become a formidable

pool of local contenders for the post.

The community's cultural transformation has been helped along by the impressive redevelopment of downtown San Jose as well. Under the late-1980s leadership of Mayor Tom McEnery, for whom the convention center is named, the city began referring to itself as the capital of the Silicon Valley. Then it gave people a reason to believe the claim by giving them a place to go. The redeveloped area is anchored by the Fairmont Hotel and Plaza Park, where operas and festivals are held. Within walking distance are the new convention center,

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the renovated performing arts center, the new San Jose Hilton, the growing San Jose Museum of Art, the Tech Museum of Innovation, the Children's Discovery Museum (with major funding from kid-crazy Wozniak), the lovingly restored St. Joseph's Cathedral and a smart assortment of restaurants and shops.

Large-scale entertaining downtown has come a long way, as well. Major events such as the charity ball that are held in the McEnery Center are stuck, by San Jose city contract, with the facility's frankly institutional food service. But the Fairmont Hotel raised standards several notches when it opened in downtown San Jose in 1987. Last spring's Anna Karenina Ball, the baller's annual themed fundraiser, was held there. This year the baller's Rainforest Gala was to be staged at the newly opened San Jose Hilton. Gone are the days when Karen Loewenstern routinely flew in a caterer from Beverly Hills for important ballet functions.

In another sign of the community's social ripening, downtown now features the first private club aimed at techies. The 14,000-square-foot Silicon Valley Capital Club takes up the entire top floor of the seventeen-story Fairmont Plaza office tower and offers one of the few and finest panoramic views of the Valley. Whereas meeting at the club formerly meant getting together for a rigorous workout, here members come sole-

ly to dine and do business in the rarefied air. "There were those who said these people weren't clubbable," manager Chris Simpson says, surveying the crowded lavender-and-mauve Bay View Lounge with satisfaction. Membership in the Capital Club, which opened in November 1990, now stands at more than 900, Simpson notes, as he watches a dust devil dance at the edge of downtown. "San Jose has grown up, and this is one of the elements."

But some things—fashion, for one—are changing at a slower pace. While I. Magnin, Nordstrom and Saks Fifth Avenue expand their collections of evening wear prior to big events in the area, women here have more money than time to shop. J.P. Puette, whose husband is the head of Apple, wore the same dress two years in a row to the Silicon Valley Ball. "People are not going to shop for a month to find something that's just right to wear," says PRx's Brenna Bolger. "If you're lucky, you get somebody to call you up when something comes in. This is not the fashion capital of the world."

Here, currency on the party circuit has more to do with what you know about MacIntosh than McFadden. "It's necessary to understand which companies are doing well and which are not, because it comes up in conversation," says Bolger. "Silicon Valley is all about high energy and what's going on—what company is getting funding from what venture capitalist, who's doing deals with Apple or IBM."

Few, apparently, consider this a chore. "I'm a gear head, I admit it," J.P. Puette confesses with a rich laugh. Puette, who is a volunteer computer teacher at a public middle school, was in computer sales when she met her husband Bob. "I find it all very interesting—if you didn't, you could get stuck in some really boring conversations around here."

As the high-voltage Valley society continues to mature, though, they'll be discussing a lot more than bytes amid the former apricot and plum orchards. "I think it's an absolutely marvelous opportunity we have to shape a twenty-first-century kind of community," says Gerry Beemiller. "There's so much new wealth and such a high education level here. So we have what it takes to work toward solving some of the regional and community problems—and at the same time play together. The Silicon Valley Ball is just a little part of that, but it's going to grow. And the future is going to be even more interesting." ■

the Epiphany, we got married and the Möbius strip got completed.

Hank is very loving and generous, and he works very hard. He's the president of the Henry Luce Foundation, which is the forty-third in the country in terms of assets, and he's an outside director of Time Warner—there's just been a cutback in the board and Hank was one of the ten outside directors whom they retained. He's like the Energizer Bunny—he goes to all these events, everything, endless events. Norris Church, who's married to Norman Mailer, did a portrait of Hank a few years ago, and we had the unveiling at the Sign of the Dove. Remember? You were there. That painting is a perpetual compliment because everyone looks at it and then looks at Hank and says, "Oh Hank, but you look *younger* than that, and *thinner* and your hair is *darker!*" But Norris got the essence. Hank loves it. It's in our dining room in New York.

STEVEN M.L. ARONSON: You mentioned that Hank was Bill Hurt's stepfather. LEILA HADLEY LUCE: Yes, Bill Hurt is a former stepson of my husband. I went with Hank's mother to see Bill in *Hurly Burly*. And he was at Hank's stepmother's funeral—Clare Boothe Luce. Bill Hurt is very, very, very egocentric but I will say this on his behalf—he pitches up at funerals. Hank is wonderful with his stepchildren. Bill Hurt was so influenced by Hank that he was thinking of becoming a minister.

SMLA: Why? Hank isn't a minister. LHL: No, but he would have been a marvelous one. He's an Elder at Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church in New York, and in the summer he goes to church every single Sunday at St. John's on Fishers Island—he's a vestryman there.

So anyway, I had my son Kippy—Arthur T. Hadley III—when I was 19. And after Groton and Yale and Tulane, he became an astronaut candidate at the Johnson Space Center in Houston, but he flunked out on motion sickness. No, not motion sickness, lack-of-gravity sickness—he couldn't take a no-gravity situation. The girl he married, Beverly, was studying motion sickness there. He's now a colonel in the army, and a medical doctor and the commander of the army hospital at Fort Leavenworth in Kansas. And Beverly runs HOUND—Hadley's Obedience University for Non-compliant Dogs.

Well, I got divorced when I was 20. Arthur returned from the army in May 1946, and we realized right away that it wasn't going to work, so in August I went