



Barbara Jacobus and Kaki O'Neill (*Nothing But Blue Skies!*)



John Gerace and Father Paul Hritz (*Nothing But Blue Skies!*)



Michael Heaton with Sandy and Tom Sullivan (*Nothing But Blue Skies!*)



Pat Melaragno and Diane Kennedy (*Nothing But Blue Skies!*)

Malachí House

“Nothing But Blue Skies”

From its grassroots beginnings with a vision to provide a home for terminally ill indigent people, Malachi House this year celebrated its 20th benefit that came with an up to \$1 million matching funds pledge from Tom Sullivan, the brother of Malachi's founder, Kaki O'Neill.

That means “Nothing But Blue Skies,” for sure, the theme of the event at the House of Blues, where more than 300 people partied the night away. Benefit co-chairmen were Diane Kennedy, Pat Melaragno, Lucia Otto and John Sullivan, as well as Judy Burke who was not there on the night of her own birthday party. Dave Kasper's Soul Jazz Quartet entertained in the Cambridge Room, set up for the huge silent auction that included pledges to pay for basic necessities and comforts for residents and for scrump-

tious appetizers and drinks. Dinner stations opened later near the main stage where the program ensued, with introductions by John Sullivan and honorary chairman Michael Heaton, the Plain Dealer's Minister of Culture columnist.

“When the reasons and purpose are good, time doesn't matter,” said John Gerace of his 12 years volunteering as he accepted this year's Volunteer of the Year Award, named for Malachi House co-founder Father Paul Hritz.

The rest of the evening featured fabulous entertainment by the multi-talented Kristine Jackson and her band Basically Blue, whom Mr. Heaton called “the hottest band in town!” STORY AND PHOTOGRAPHS BY KATHRYN RIDDLE