

Is there a **man** in the house?

Men dress as women and women as men during hilarious 'womanless beauty pageant' to benefit medical research.



Tim Shidal as Timbaleena Tutu – bring this young lady home to meet Mom and Dad and someone's gonna get arrested.



Ronny McNeill, as Rondella "Mama" Arden, the judge's choice, with borrowed sequined gowns, a beautiful wig and hands that could choke a horse.



Hee-Haw! Bill Clark gives a spot-on performance

Story and photos by MARK GILCHRIST

Having to live with Type-1 Diabetes is nothing to smile about, so it was a relief that an event on Oct. 3 to raise funds for the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation left the audience rolling in the aisles with laughter.

"Liberty Rides the Wave" brought 11 men to the Bowers Auditorium stage in a womanless beauty pageant that had everyone taking double-takes in double-time. (Experts estimate the spectacle set the Man's Movement back several decades, as these guys really put the "ea-u!" in beauty.)

Organized by Judy Gallant and Karen Stanley, the event took months to produce. It picked up steam when notable area men – apparently confident in their manhood – volunteered to don dresses, dance on their toes and reach the high notes.

WWAY television anchor Jon Evans was a courageous host amid the mayhem, addressing the scene with dignity and aplomb. Confusion reigned as genders were traded like penny stocks, and though men might be from Mars and women from Venus, some of these contestants were from a different planet.

Sheriff Chris Batten took the stage as "Sheriff Lacy Battenburg" prompting innocent audience members to reach for their cell phones, intent on jamming the 9-1-1 phone lines until help arrived.

Columbus Regional Healthcare System CEO Bill Clark looked so good in a straw hat that some thought Minnie Pearl had risen from the dead and forgot to shave her legs. There were duets and ballet dance acts that were truly excruciating, and a stage filled with bulging sequined dresses and high-heeled-shoes - if clothing could talk, these gowns would have begged for mercy.

Rick Simpson as Rixanne Thewinner brought tears to the eyes of those with good taste as he played "Pick up the Pieces" on his nose flute. Dr. David Martin as Dr. Martina Davida performed a ballet dance that was so memorable it will take some who watched it years of therapy to forget.

The 11 "contestants" competed in evening-gown and talent events, demonstrating all the grace of well-heeled debutantes being run over by large trucks. One can forgive every last one of these men for such missteps as forgetting to shave their armpits for the show, but c'mon, did there really have to be so much belching?

In all honesty, the event was a great time, and the guys brought down the house with their unique perspectives of femininity. One must have thought they had great courage to, well, expose themselves like that. But folks, that audience was packed with women and they all had their eyes glued to these jokers.

Through sponsorships, ticket sales and a fifty-fifty drawing, the event raised more than \$4,500 for the JDRE, and seeing how this organization will use the money in its mission to find a cure for type-1 diabetes, and seeing how a cure may really be in sight, all of this should give victims of diabetes, their families and their friends something to smile about.

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Would you let this lady handcuff you? Sheriff Chris Batten danced to "It's Raining Men" and deputies begged magistrates for restraining orders.



Submitted photo

"Village Persons," from left, Nisha Harris, Sonya Bianchini, Shara Stevens, Judy Gallant, Kari Cribb and Cindy Durden promote equal rights for women acting as men.



Fulton Wooten as Fultana Longstocking sings the delicate ballad "You Never Even Called me by my Name," giving people more than one reason to cry.



The stage at Bowers Auditorium is nearly brand new, and after Brian Nelson, as Blazin' Breanna Cabush, danced on it, the installers offered to tear it all out and start over.

Available for donation to JDRF
DVD movie of event: \$20 • CD photos: \$10
Call 641-4095

For more information on juvenile diabetes, visit www.jdrf.org.



From left, Fulton Wooten, Darian Tyler, Rick Simpson, Tim Shidal, Brian Nelson, Ronnie McNeill, Chris Batten, David Martin, Jonathan Hinson, Bill Clark and Michael Bianchini.