

Columbia Yacht Club's Red Sky Night funds fight against blood cancer



Red Sky Night, a fundraiser organized by the Chicago sailing community, benefited the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society at the Columbia Yacht Club.

By **Candace Jordan** - Candid Candace

More than 200 guests, including many members of the sailing community, attended the 12th annual Red Sky Night, an Aug. 24 fundraiser benefiting the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society (LLS). Held at the Columbia Yacht Club aboard the anchored, vintage ship Abegweit, the event helped fund cancer research innovations, cutting-edge drug therapies and cures.

Partygoers enjoyed a reception on the afterdeck, where dark clouds and winds over 25 mph couldn't dim the crowd's enthusiasm. Tables were topped with brightly colored yellow oncidium orchids from Fragrant Design under a canopy of twinkling lights and multicolored Japanese lanterns.

Master of ceremonies Scott Saxe, LLS Volunteer of the Year, welcomed guests and praised the fundraising efforts of the Chicago boating community, calling it the "best in the world." "In the U.S. alone, we have more than 1.2 million people living with blood cancer, and that number is growing. ... Since our inception, LLS has invested over \$1 billion into research," he said. Survivors in

the audience were asked to stand and be recognized, and there was a moment of silence to honor those lost, both at sea and to cancer.

David Goodman conducted a live auction of one-of-a-kind experiences, which raised nearly \$50,000. Among the favorites were a blend-your-own bourbon session, a trip to New York that included a behind-the-scenes tour of Elle magazine's Fashion Vault and a weeklong sailing trip in the British Virgin Islands. A video created by HMS Media titled "I Will" reflected on Chicago's long history of tackling challenges with an "I Will" attitude that matches LLS' mission. In addition, her conducted the **"Fund the Fight" paddle raise which brought in nearly \$40,000.**

Red Sky Night was part of a series of on-the-water events, themed "Summer of Fun(d)," organized by the Chicago boating community to support LLS. In total, the charity series raised a record-breaking \$520,000 over the summer. The event was also the kickoff to the Leukemia Cup Regatta that has, since its inception in 1997, raised nearly \$5 million for the nonprofit.