

# The Stamford Times

## Stamford residents honored at Bartlett Arboretum Gala

### Staff Report

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STAMFORD -- The Gala at the Arboretum officially kicked off a new era at the Bartlett Arboretum & Gardens, 151 Brookdale Road in Stamford.

The event was held to celebrate the opening of the 8,500-square-foot Silver Educational Center and to honor the key benefactors, Vivienne and Richard Silver. The Silver Educational Center, named after Richard's parents, Jacob and Shirley Silver, will be the catalyst for the Arboretum's expanded children's and adult education programs.

A crowd of nearly 500 people, including U.S. Sen. Richard Blumenthal, the Honorable Lowell Weicker, Mayor Michael Pavia, U.S. Rep. Jim Himes, state Sen. Bob Duff, Daniel C. Esty, commissioner of the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP), the Honorable John Lahey, president of Quinnipiac University, and many other corporate and political leaders were in attendance.

Following presentations of citations and accolades for the Silvers and their contributions specifically to the Children's Education Programs at the Bartlett Arboretum, the guests were entertained by a live auction led by Jeff Maynard and music by local 17-year-old singer E. J. Couloucoundis. The entertainment highlight of the evening was a 90-minute live performance by The Midtown Men, four of the original Tony Award-winning cast of Jersey Boys, who rocked the crowd with selections from their recently released album, "Sixties Hits."

The Silvers' interest in the Arboretum grew from a desire to help the underserved children of Stamford.

"We realized through our involvement in other charity and outreach activities that underserved children in our city had very little that was beautiful in their lives," they said. "We wanted to help change that."

About five years ago, the Silvers established a scholarship that allowed underserved children in Stamford to attend the Arboretum's summer day camp program. The Silvers also knew that thousands of second-grade students were able to fulfill their Botany requirements through the Science Odyssey programs underwritten by the Arboretum. However, the Arboretum did not have adequate facilities to conduct these classes.

"The plans were there, there was funding from the State of Connecticut and from the City of Stamford," they said. "We were happy to be able to provide the additional funds needed to get things started."

The Silver Educational Center reflects the Silver's support of education for children and adults, as stewards of the environment. The Arboretum will now be able to expand its Science Odyssey programs to all fourth-grade students in Stamford.

Richard Silver is the senior partner of the law firm of Silver Golub & Teitell. He has been listed in Best Lawyers in America for the past 20 years. He is past president of the Connecticut Trial Lawyers Association and currently chairs its Medical Malpractice Committee. He was president of the American Board of Trial Advocates and has been published in many journals including the Connecticut Law Tribune. He has taught trial practice at Yale University and at Quinnipiac University. He has also taught many seminars for the Connecticut Trial Lawyers Association. Silver was recently elected to serve on the Board of Trustees of Quinnipiac University. He also serves on the advisory board, School of Medicine of Quinnipiac University.

Vivienne Silver has been director of development, director of public relations and managed a capital campaign for several of Stamford's non-profit organizations. She also taught advanced placement French and English and developed new curricula in area high schools, including Wilton and Fairfield. She also served on the board of directors and executive committee of St. Luke's LifeWorks, a regional social service agency. She currently serves on the advisory board of the Bartlett Arboretum & Gardens.

Silver received his undergraduate degree from the University of Pennsylvania, his law degree from the University of Virginia, and an honorary doctorate from Quinnipiac University. Mrs. Silver is a graduate of Middlebury College, where she received a Master of Arts degree in French literature and theater. She also studied at the Sorbonne in Paris, France. The Silvers have two married children and three grandsons.

Proceeds from the season's major fundraising event at the Bartlett Arboretum will be used to furnish the Silver Educational Center and enhance the children's and adult nature education programs and expand the botanical collections and library at the Bartlett Arboretum & Gardens.

For more information, go online to [www.bartlettarboretum.org](http://www.bartlettarboretum.org) or call (203) 322-6971.