

# AUDREY'S SOCIETY WHIRL

By Audrey J. Bernard, Society Editor



## HCCI hosts '11th Jamboree! Soulful Extravaganza' on the Hudson

On a blistering Thursday evening, August 18, 2016, some 300 guests boarded the magnificent Hornblower Infinity yacht moored at Pier 40 on the lower West Side to attend the Harlem Congregations for Community Improvement, Inc. (HCCI) 11th Jamboree! A Soulful Extravaganza on the Hudson featuring a phenomenal performance by the one and only Soul Singer-In-Chief Howard Hewett, formerly of the feel-good group, Shalamar, who literally *rocked* the boat! Attendees braved sweltering temperatures waiting to board the vessel, which set sail at 7pm on the Hudson, returning to the dock at 10pm. Hewett was well worth the wait giving a sensuous performance that resonated long after guests departed the yacht.

Once aboard the luxurious yacht guests enjoyed a fun-filled time including an all-you-can-eat buffet and dancing to pulsating sounds spun by DJ Kevin Gould. After Rev. Shepherd Lee, Sr. blessed the food, dinner was served. HCCI spoiled guests as each table had its own server who assisted guests in food and bar service (stocked with premium libations), eliminating long wait lines.

From the main deck, host and comedian Mike Troy AKA Brooklyn Mike, kicked off the evening's program and had guests laughing out loud with his humor, followed by Hewett's astounding performance — dressed from head to toe in black — that had the yacht swaying from side-to-side as guests sang along with the sexy R&B soul singer. "This was my first year participating and I had an amazing time," said Luc Josaphat, a managing director at Harlem United. "The energy on the yacht was really warm and friendly. It was a great introduction to HCCI. I look forward to learning more, and attending the next Jamboree!"

Those sentiments were similarly expressed by HCCI Chairman Rev. Charles A. Curtis, Ed. D., Senior Pastor, Mt. Oliver Baptist Church, in his warm welcoming remarks. "The Jamboree affords our residents to contribute to HCCI, while having a really, really good time," he said. "This event helps to encourage a sense of commitment and connection to HCCI, among community residents. It's a wonderful celebration!"

Highlights from the program included joyful greetings from HCCI President & CEO Malcolm A. Punter; HCCI First Vice Chair Joan O. Dawson, Ph.D.; Bradhurst Merchants Association (BMA) President La Chena Clark; HCCI Small Business Initiative Rev. Dr. Charles Butler, director, Equitable Development; and Harlem Community Development Corporation (HCDC) President Curtis L. Archer. During the program Rev. Butler, Punter and Archer accepted a check for \$52,000 on



Ambiance: View outside yacht



HCDC staff Rose Jeffrey, R. Andrea Anderson, Victoria Gordon, Jeanette Cole-Williams, Marcus Browne, Elaine Caesar, Curtis Archer, Ernestine Bell Temple (Assemblyman Herman Denny Farrell's chief of staff), Barbara Payos, Tom Lunke



Rev. Dr. Charles Butler, Malcolm A. Punter and Curtis Archer display check for \$52,000 given to HCCI by HCDC to support HCCI Programs



HCCI Board Members (l-r) Malcolm A. Punter, Dr. Charles A. Curtis, Ed.D., Joan O. Dawson, Ph.D., Rev. Shepherd Lee, Sr., Virginia Montague and Anne-Marie Hendrickson, Deputy Commissioner, HPD



Guests enjoy delicious all-you-can-eat buffet



Ambiance: View inside yacht



Howard Hewett performs



Curtis L. Archer, Karen Murray Archer



Carlisa Brown Simons, Howard Hewett, Moikgantsi Kgama



Malcolm A. Punter, HCCI Partner Craig Livingston (Exact Capital)



Malcolm A. Punter, Aarian Punter



Dr. Veronica McLymont, Audrey J. Bernard



Jamboree guests jammin' on dance floor



Staff from Jamboree sponsor, Total Restoration Inc.



Host Mike Troy, Howard Hewett



Howard Hewett, Aarian Punter, Malcolm A. Punter

behalf of HCCI from HCDC to support HCCI programs.

Proceeds from the Jamboree will benefit HCCI Computer Clubhouse and HCCI Small Business Initiative. To celebrate local businesses, the Jamboree program listed all 60 members of BMA in the evening program. "HCCI founded and incubated the BMA. Now that we are a fully independent nonprofit organization, HCCI has remained our biggest supporter," stated Clark. "We are proud to be represented on this year's Jamboree, and to be a part of HCCI's 30-year legacy."

It takes the generosity of many sponsors to pull off an

event of this magnitude. HCCI wishes to thank this year's sponsors: Harlem Community Development Corporation, Chase Bank, Community Preservation Corporation, New York Life; Total Restoration, Inc., Winn Companies, Chocolat, New York Mortgage Coalition, Prestige Management, Tender Tots Exact Capital, Tender Tots Childcare Center, Ariva, New York Business Solutions, The Walker Firm, and Camber Property Group. HCCI also extends special thanks to Jamboree Committee Chairs Joan O. Dawson, Ph.D. and George H. Weldon and Committee Members Malcolm

A. Punter, Carlisa Brown Simons (HCCI vice president, corporate relations), Moikgantsi Kgama (HCCI communications director) and Sheila Sturks.

"One of the main reasons we host this event is to experience fellowship with our community residents and partners. This year, Curtis Archer, President of HCDC, presented us with a check for \$52,000 to demonstrate their commitment to our work," said Punter. "The Jamboree is always a fun and fruitful affair! We look forward to many more!" (Photo Credits: Isseu Diouf Campbell, Terrence Jennings, MacDonald Layne)

### About HCCI

HCCI is a diverse interfaith consortium of interfaith congregations established to revitalize the physical, economic, cultural, and spiritual conditions of the Harlem community. HCCI has made a substantial impact on the social and living conditions prevalent in Harlem by developing low to moderate income housing; creating supportive health and human service facilities and programs; providing commercial development opportunities to local businesses; and expanding cultural programs.