Recap: Unite for HER Harvest Event—Empowering Women Impacted by Breast Cancer

There were definite noteworthy noshes of farm-to-table cuisine from the area’s finest chefs. Glasses overflowed with crafted beverages as catch-up conversations unfolded on this slightly chilled October evening. The thump-based sounds of the band played as elbow-rubbing and handshaking, well-dressed attendees tapped their toes to the beat. Cascading chandeliers and reflective panels of waterfall glass lit up the rustic-chic Phoenixville Foundry, which served as the show-stopping backdrop.

But on this night, it was the all-encompassing passionate commitment to Unite for HER that was the true star of the third annual Harvest Event. On this night, an exuberant and eclectic mix of guests, volunteers and who’s who of the food and drink communities combined talent, taste and testimony to create a smashing charity event like no other.

This particular charity had an inspirational beginning in 2004, when Unite for HER Founder Sue Weldon was diagnosed with breast cancer. She began searching for information on therapies that would complement the medical treatments she was receiving. What she discovered was a lack of easily accessible resources on topics including nutrition, acupuncture, massage, yoga, counseling and other ways for breast cancer patients to enhance their wellness and care for their emotional, spiritual and...
Since its establishment as a nonprofit organization in 2009, Unite for HER’s philosophy has been to bridge that gap for breast cancer patients, focusing on wellness initiatives that will positively impact their health as well as the health of all women and girls.

The Town Dish was privileged to watch the evening’s Unite for HER culinary celebration unfold with local and sustainable dishes from the area’s top restaurants, which included a comforting short-rib bolognese by Amani’s BYOB, an autumnal butternut squash soup from Roots Cafe, a refreshing fall salad with honey vinaigrette by Dave Magrogan’s Harvest Seasonal Grill and Wine Bar, a tantalizing chicken liver and onion croquette from Blackfish BYOB and sushi from Baia.

Continued creations included Pepperoncini Sotto’s butternut squash ravioli, crackers and warm crab dip from Cork and Cap/The Baker’s Table, lump crab cake pancakes by The Crazy Sofa and a seasonal butternut squash and duck risotto from chef David Cox of Four Dogs Tavern/Marshalton Inn, as well as dishes by Zavino and Grateful Plate.

Artisan cheeses were plated by the Lancaster Farm Fresh Co Op. A couple of reliable food trucks, including Street Food and The Sunflower Truck Stop, made a welcoming appearance at the entrance to the festivities inside.
Krissy Flynn, who served up mini chicken-salad BLTs as a participant of the successful collaboration of The Classic Diner, Rapidough Pizza Pies and Sovana Bistro, exclaimed, “We are so honored and humbled by this event. Sue Weldon is an amazing inspiration to so many women. Harvest is a classy event from the venue to the music, silent auction items and all of the wonderful chefs and vendors. The food and drinks provided were all unique and delicious in their own way. Most of all, hearing the stories from the woman affected by cancer that have been helped by this profound organization were encouraging to all in attendance here tonight.”

Brett Hulbert, executive chef of Kennett Square’s Portabellos Restaurant, mirrored the sentiment as he flipped delicate mushroom crepes. “We prioritize the events we will attend throughout the year. This is one organization that we are very passionate about. We are pleased and honored to be a part of Unite for HER this year.”

Pairing satisfying sips during the event were the likes of Burlap and Bean, Casali di Bibbiano, Korbel, Mionetto, Manatawny Still Works, Penns Woods Winery, Papa Smith’s Limoncello, Raymond Vineyards, Strongbow Ciders, Amstel, Grace Winery, Wilson Artisan Winery and the ever-present Victory Brewing Company.
Delectable desserts also satiated the collective sweet tooth of the crowd. Rave-worthy bites included Terrain Garden Cafe's almond cake, The Master's Baker's perfectly put together hazelnut chocolate flourless cake, frozen treats from D'Ascenzo's Gelato and Éclat Chocolate's eye-catching and mouth-watering green tea and roasted rice confections.

Powerhouse auction items consisted of a week's rental in a stunning Orlando condo, Disney park hopper passes, chefs' dinners, theater tickets and overstuffed wine baskets. Also bid-worthy were paintings by artist John Hannafin, Eagles tickets, jewelry, accessories and many generous gift cards. All were combined with ticket sales and donations to raise more than $100,000 for this worthy cause.

The sophisticated evening was a champion tribute to a true community achievement to support the empowerment of women to overcome the challenges associated with breast cancer with spirit, determination and grace.

Contributions to Unite for HER are always welcome. If you'd like to be a part of this exceptional organization, you can learn more or donate at the Unite for HER website.

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About Ed Williams

Ed is home-grown in West Chester and currently enjoys the area’s evolution into an eclectic hub of restaurants, shops, festivals, and happy hours. He will rarely turn down a good dry Manhattan and loves sarcasm, cooking, photojournalism, music, and good times with family and friends. He resides with his charming husband and their un-charming cat. Never underestimate the power of laughter.

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