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Thursday, July 2, 2009

**Chuck Bennett: Society**

# Celebration helps put on soup at Capuchin Kitchen



At first glance, it looked like a regular Tigers baseball game at Comerica Park, when the Edmund T. Ahee Jewelry family presented their annual Capuchin Souper Summer Celebration. Further observation revealed that this crowd rapidly moving toward the admission gates -- ladies wearing sexy mini-dresses, guys in loosely tailored suits with open-collar shirts -- didn't come to see a game at all. They came to party.

For the 28th year, the Ahees have banded together to create this cool party for a great cause, with this year's event bringing out more than 7,000 guests. And to think, folks were impressed in the early 1980s when the inaugural celebration brought out 500 people, raising \$10,000 for Capuchin Kitchen, the human services organization that among other things, serves 2,000 hot meals daily to the needy. To date, the Ahees have raised more than \$5 million for the cause.

The June 13 party carried the Motown theme, turning Comerica Park into Hitsville USA. Live acts performed Motown songs on stages throughout the stadium, Motown celebrity impersonators mingled among the crowds, and Motown karaoke stations were set up throughout. There was a dazzling fireworks display in the center of the field, and the evening's highlight, a \$1 raffle that offered up amazing prizes, including jewelry from Mikimoto and Robert Coin, as well as watches from Rolex, Cartier and David Yurman.

There was no admission cost, and stadium food and cocktails were available for purchase. Most of the Ahee family was on hand, greeting guests as they arrived. In addition to the annual event, four years ago the Ahees established the Edmund T. Ahee Endowment Fund for Hunger to ensure long-term funding for the Capuchin Soup Kitchen ministry.

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