

Fundraiser recognizes 'Jane Doe No More'



JEANNETTE JORDAN

There are so many worthwhile fundraisers during race season. But the one Monday at the home of Cathy and Elliott Masie could affect any one of us.

Jane Doe No More Inc. is a national nonprofit organization founded in January of this year. It is comprised of law enforcement, medical, legal and business executives, as well as victims' service professionals.

The organization was borne out of the experience of founder Donna Palomba, a sexual assault survivor. She appeared for the first time in a Dateline NBC special in April.

Palomba of Waterbury, Conn., has a strong connection to Saratoga Springs. Her daughter Sarah graduated in May from Skidmore College.

"I feel quite at home in Saratoga," Palomba said as she welcomed more than 50 guests and family members to a luncheon reception that was put together with help from Saratoga County District Attorney Jim Murphy and Chief of Police Ed Moore, in cooperation with the Masies.

Before Palomba met with the guests in the parlor adjacent to the dining room, where a silent auction was set up for bidding, guests were scattered. Some sat on the lovely back porch of the 1832 Greek revival home, built by John Clarke, a New York City seltzer salesman. Others gathered on the front porch and in the music room.

They perused silent auction items while sipping beverages and tasting a variety of hors d'oeuvres. Wrap sandwiches, fresh fruit and mini vanilla and chocolate cannolis also were served. Sandy Foster, co-owner of the Village Pizzeria in East Galway, catered.

Before guests received a personal tour of the Masies' home, they were invited into the parlor, where Palomba spoke about her experience and where her organization is headed.

Elliott Masie also took the



ED BURKE/The Saratogian

From left, Elliott Masie, Donna Palomba, Lindsey Ferguson, Saratoga County District Attorney James A. Murphy III, and Saratoga Springs Police Chief Ed Moore at a fundraiser for Jane Doe No More, a new nonprofit for survivors of sexual assault.

opportunity to welcome everyone, including Lindsey Ferguson of Saratoga Springs, who managed to escape an attack by the same perpetrator as Palomba's. Lindsey, now a freshman at Notre Dame where she is on the track team, came with her mom and dad, Chris and Gary Ferguson.

"There is no one with bigger hearts than the Masies to open their house during the height of the society season," said the district attorney as he introduced Palomba.

"Now this beautiful town has taken on even more meaning as I have had the privilege to work with the Honorable Jim Murphy, and Chief of Police Ed Moore," Palomba said. "Their swift action and excellent work is what finally led to putting a dangerous predator behind bars for a very long time. They both serve on our advisory board and the collabora-

tion has been terrific," she said.

"Lindsey (Ferguson), you are a role model for young women everywhere and I am proud of you," Palomba continued as she presented Ferguson with a "small" gift. "I was a victim of a horrific sexual assault in 1993. It was a terrifying experience compounded by the fact that the initial investigation was severely mishandled. The perpetrator was disguised, the crime scene was trampled on and there were no photographs, no fingerprints, nothing but DNA evidence.

"My case was finally turned over to a team of dedicated officers and miraculously, 11 years later, the perpetrator was identified by a DNA match. We live in an uncertain world in a very uncertain time," Palomba said. "All innocent victims of rape have a future and it is our responsibility as a society to allow them to

heal and give them the best chance for a full and healthy recovery."

Jane Doe No More has received 501c3 status as a charity from the IRS. JDNM netted more than \$2,300 at the luncheon, to help "shorten the time from crime to healing," said Nora Mason, executive director of JDNM.

"We begin in September with a think tank event to outline the training module for law enforcement first responders," Mason added later in an e-mail.

In the crowd were Palomba's parents Mary and Louis Cappella of Waterbury, Conn. "It was probably the worse thing that ever happened to our family, other than deaths. It was horrific," Mary said about her daughter's attack.

Some other guests included Palomba's aunt and uncle There-

sa and Ralph Cappella of Plymouth, Conn; Palomba's godmother Phyllis Carpentieri and her husband Pat of Watertown, Conn.; Joe Gugliotti of Waterbury, and his wife Debbie, sister of Sandy Foster; Jamie Gugliotti of Bristol, Conn., and her friend Guy Newman of Hartford, Conn.; and Santo and Lisa Sampino of Woodbury, Conn., and their son Andrew, who helped pass hors d'oeuvres.

Other faces in the crowd included the chief of police's wife Anne Moore (who took the original phone call that reported the attempted abduction of Lindsey Ferguson) and their daughter Kaileigh, who was a member of the SSHS track team with Lindsey; Ira Mickenberg, who has a home in Birch Run and teaches lawyers and public defenders nationally;

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