

Little Black Book

BY SUZANNE HAMBLETON

In Madonna's famed song "Holiday," she sings, "...if we took a holiday, took some time to celebrate..."

Of course, you know the rest. I think that should be the theme song for the lucky few that get to live, work and party here on a daily basis, because that is just what I saw all over town during the busy holiday season. The celebration began for me when I went to pay tribute to history at the **Maritime Museum of Monterey**. The museum opened its doors to host a festive black tie gala. Honorary Chairman **Bert Cutino** teamed up with the **Marriott Executive Chef Willi Franz** to create a signature menu for the reception that was held in the Marriott's main ballroom.

Next, it was off to the sold-out members-only fashion show at **The Pebble Beach & Tennis Club**. I brought my good friend **Fran Gianino** with me to watch local ladies strut their stuff on the runway. Emcees **Denny LeVett** and **Sue Carota** did a fabulous job of highlighting the models' apparel, courtesy of various Pebble Beach retailers. The handmade jewelry used in the show was created by **Laurie and**

Lisa Designs, who were brought in by **Jenifee Bruce** of **Elan** (who I must thank for inviting me to such a wonderful event).

That same day, I made it out to the amazing **Meals on Wheels** benefit to see my good friends **Cameron Davi** and **Marci Bracco** completely outdo themselves with a stunning table display. You might remember that in my first installment of "Little Black Book" I went absolutely berserk over this same event. It pairs acclaimed chefs with volunteer table designers...the end result? An extraordinary benefit for Meals on Wheels. Cameron and Marci's table theme this year was an "outdoor elegant garden" that was completely lit by votive candles all placed in hand-painted (by super mommy Cameron with her little beauty Lauren) glass holders sprinkled with herbes de Provence from the kitchen

of Chef **Brandon Miller**. With the sounds of trickling water from a copious stone fountain placed next to the table, guests felt as if they were dining alfresco in the midst of perfectly manicured topiaries. I also could not help but notice the neighboring table created by **Wilkes Bashford's** own **Russell Clower**...He created a stunning design using a "Holiday in Venice" theme. Some of the phenomenal gastronomes participating this year were: **Wendy Brodie**, **Tene Shake**, **Terry Teplitzky**, the **Google Chefs**, and the new crew from **Daniel's Garden Bistro** in Carmel Valley.

Next, I got the chance to hang out for two days with my favorite '80's icon, and current "**American Idol**" host, **Paula Abdul**, as she came to get her white blood cells stored at BioBancUSA. She then hosted a party at The Beach and Tennis Club with the individuals at BioBancUSA and my good pal **Nathan Schulhof**, who some know as the inventor of the MP3 player. Ms. Abdul came with her beau, **J.T Torregiani**, who is best known for his successful restaurant endeavors in Los Angeles...some of



Suzanne Hambleton with "American Idol" host Paula Abdul at a BioBanc event at The Beach Club.

Photo: Tom O'Neal

which include **Les Deux**, **Ketchup**, **Geisha House** and **Dolce**.

Speaking of celebrations, in March I am going to have one of my own, when I marry my true love on the beautiful island of Hawaii. With my life heading toward matrimonial bliss and our new business endeavors together, I will be doing a great deal of traveling and won't have as much time to make it out to the social scene. It is with regret that I inform you that this will be my last "Little Black Book." I have made many new friends along the way and have enjoyed the numerous events I had the chance to attend. When I do make it to an event, I will have even better tales of my wedded life and our crazy travels together. Wishing *Carmel Magazine* readers a happy New Year full of laughter, success and great parties!