



MARSHA POLIER GROSSMAN

Kyra Oliver (left) reminisces about the loss of her son Hayes with close friend Jenni Lee Crocker.

## WHAT'S HAPPENING

# Event aids SIDS education

### A James Bond-themed ball raises money for the Hayes Foundation

BY MARSHA P. GROSSMAN  
Special Correspondent

The Country Club of Virginia was the site May 15 for the eighth annual Hayes Foundation State of the Art Ball, a black-tie fundraiser themed this year around "Bond, James Bond, Baby" and "Casino Royale."

Funds raised support the foundation's This Side Up campaign, which partners nationally with hospitals and other health organizations to educate parents and caregivers about sudden infant death syndrome — the No. 1 cause of death of infants less than a year old.

Within days of her son Hayes' death from SIDS in 2002, Kyra Oliver set up the foundation in his memory, determined to do whatever she could to help ensure that no family experience such loss in the future. Since then, the organization has raised more than a half-million dollars for SIDS research and distributed thousands of "This Side Up" onesies to raise awareness of the importance of placing babies on their backs to sleep, lessening the chance of SIDS.



Ukrop's Dress Express President John Carrico sizes up a This Side Up onesie with the help of Kyra Oliver, founder and executive director of the Hayes Foundation.

The onesies are created by Ukrop's Dress Express. Its president and CEO, John Carrico, served as honorary chairman of the ball.

"Just in recent weeks, we've implemented — via hospital educators — a This Side Up survey to be given to prospective parents prior to prenatal classes to help us gauge their awareness and understanding of SIDS," Oliver said. "Information gleaned from this study will be used as support material when we apply for grants."

During the ball, funds were raised from silent and live auctions as well as the casino tables. A formal sit-down dinner and music by the Rosetta Stone rounded out the evening

for the 210 attendees.

Lead sponsors were Ukrop's Dress Express and Sands Anderson, which combined with other community supporters, ticket sales and the efforts of many volunteers to raise \$110,000.

"The greatest achievement of the Hayes Foundation and our gala is the education in the community," said board member Jenni Lee Crocker. "More families now know how their babies should sleep, and we take pride in the fact that we are bettering the statistics every day for babies in our community."

• Marsha Polier Grossman is a Chesterfield County freelance photographer. She can be contacted at tuda2@comcast.net.