

Inaugural event more than a celebration

By TOM EVANS

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STAMFORD -- The inaugural night event on Friday, Jan. 15 will be more than just a celebration of Michael Pavia's election as the first Republican mayor in the city in 14 years.

Under the theme "Night of a Thousand Stars," the mayor and First Lady Maureen Pavia will use the event at the Palace Theater as a platform to promote the performing arts in Stamford -- a departure from the traditional ball-style party.

"We want to do something memorable and out of the ordinary to draw attention to the arts in Stamford," said Maureen Pavia, the chairperson of the event. "There is a significant artistic community here, and we're eager to shine the spotlight on it."

Maureen Pavia is an award-winning dancer and choreographer, and taught dance in the city for more than 20 years. She will be a featured dance professional in Curtain Call's "Dancing With The Stars" in May.

Night of a Thousand Stars is a black-tie optional event that features several local performing artists, and will be hosted by Pat Sasser, master of ceremonies.

Among the performers expected on Jan. 15: Singer Lauren Gulliver; Lou Lopez and dancers; Trinity Catholic Crusader Players; Husk Bhangra, a University of Connecticut dance troupe; Pender-Keady from the Academy of Irish Dancing; The Ballet School of Stamford, choreographed by artistic director Michael Vernon; The Stamford High School Madrigal Singers, directed by Gloria Sinaguglia; The Spring Harvest Ministries Gospel Choir; Singer Angie Blake; The Stamford Symphony; And dancers from "Dancing With The Stars," recently held at SUNY-Purchase in New York.

"The performing arts define a community in many ways," Maureen Pavia said. "And

supporting and encouraging the performing arts is at the center of my focus."

The performance begins at 8 p.m. Tickets will be \$75 per person for orchestra seats, \$65 for mezzanine seats and \$55 for the balcony.

Tickets to attend a post-celebration gathering, beginning at 10:30 p.m. at BUtterfield 8 restaurant and lounge, 112 Bedford St., will be available for \$30.

Ticket sales begin on Jan. 8 at the Palace Theater box office at 61 Atlantic St., and tickets can be bought by calling (203) 325-4466, or by visiting www.scalive.org.