



STAFF PHOTOS: CHRISTINA BARANY

Patricia Deason and David Nelson react to the winning bid on a vacation package and the jacket that Nelson designed for the DIFFA/ Dallas Upsidedown Jacket Collection.

High-dollar Denim Fights AIDS

DIFFA jacket collection raises money at extravaganza

By Kristiana Heap
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In true DIFFA fashion, the recent Upsidedown jacket collection gala was a no-holds-barred extravaganza.

There were ensembles trimmed in marabou feathers. There were men dressed as women who looked better than most ladies, and there was a beauty pageant winner singing show tunes.

And in honor of the "Upsidedown" theme, party guests ate dessert first.

"We dedicated this entire year to planning an event that would make you all go crazy," Jacket Collection chairman Jeffrey Horn told the crowd at the Hilton Anatole. "But more importantly, spend a lot of money."

At the heart of the March 31 event was the jacket collection, a stunning array of couture created from, of all things, Arizona jean jackets.

Dozens of jackets from big names like Kenneth Cole, St.



A model shows off a jacket by Del Shores on the runway of the Upsidedown DIFFA/Dallas Collection auction.

John, and Carmen Marc Valvo were offered in the silent auction, alongside intricate pieces from local artisans, including Terri Ives, Nicolas Villalba, and Rhonda Sargent Chambers.

Although the total funds raised at the event promise to

be impressive, at press time the only figures available were for the live auction items.

The eight jackets and accompanying packages that were offered during the live auction raised more than \$107,000 for local AIDS service organizations supported by DIFFA/Dallas.

The highest-earning live auction item was a "Spanish Acquisition" package created by Geoffrey Henning for J.C. Penney Co. that included a jacket-turned-dress and a two-week vacation to Mallorca, Spain.

A "Not Exactly Roughing It" package, which included a trip to the Bachelor Springs community in Colorado, two VIP tickets to "Dancing with the Stars," and a jacket created by David Nelson, was purchased for \$22,000.

Near the runway where models sported the jackets, an empty table was filled with lit candles in memory of people

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