



<http://www.dallasnews.com/sharedcontent/dws/bus/columnists/chall/stories/011610dnbushallsider.4ad27a.html>

Ebby Halliday's 100th birthday bashes will benefit causes near and dear to her heart

January 15, 2011

Ebby Halliday hates to squander an opportunity. So she's using her 100th birthday to help cure blindness and save the next generation.

Dallas' Queen Mum of real estate is asking her multitude of well-wishers to support two causes: the Foundation Fighting Blindness and the Horatio Alger Association of Distinguished Americans Inc.

She's been diagnosed with macular degeneration and was a 2005 inductee of Horatio Alger.

The first official birthday bash on Feb. 23 benefiting Fighting Blindness will be a "roast and toast" emceed by radio legend Ron Chapman at the Hilton Anatole.

Chapman doesn't know who will have the gumption to cast even good-natured aspersions on Ebby, but he figures her buddies T. Boone Pickens and H. Ross Perot will give it their best.

"She reflects everything that is Texas' can-do spirit," Chapman says. "If Ebby were a building, she would be protected by the historical preservation league."

Tony Orlando will provide the entertainment. So far, more than a \$500,000 has been pledged.

The second blowout will take place on her birthday, March 9 – a gala dinner and concert at the Meyerson Symphony Center. International tenor Mario Frangoulis will perform with the Dallas Symphony Orchestra. Organizers hope to raise \$1 million for the Horatio Alger scholarship fund, which focuses on at-risk kids.

Scholarship money raised here will stay here, which was important to Ebby.

"I grew up on a farm and learned to make my own living at age 14. I graduated from high school the year that every bank in America closed. Bread lines were forming in cities. So I certainly qualified as needy."

Honorary chairs are Laura and George W. Bush.

Four other events will pay tribute to her, and there will be a half-dozen private gatherings of close friends and family.