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**White House evening noteworthy for musicians**

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It's not every day that local musicians perform at the White House, so you can imagine the excitement when an invitation from Bill and Hillary Clinton arrived inviting Jr. Cline and the Recliners to provide their brand of '60s rhythm and blues for dancing under the stars.

They were to follow a program titled "A Celebration of American Music" that would feature Ashford and Simpson, Patti Austin, Michael Bolton, Booker T & the MGs, Ruth Brown, Jon Hendricks, the Pointer Sisters and Lyle Lovett, who would be in attendance with his "Pretty Woman" wife, Julia Roberts.

When the big day came, the Recliners, Daryl Jr. Cline, Alana Shor, Greg Hardin, John Hurd, Mark Marella, Andy Shriver, Wayne Sulc, Bob Martin, Todd Butler, Zack Smith and Jeff Wagner, left Baltimore with Daryl's wife, Lynn Cline, John's wife, Pam Hurd, and Alana's husband, Barry Silverman. They arrived at the East Gate and were escorted to the South Lawn, where 1,000 guests waited in buses for the rain to stop and the show to go on.

According to Recliner songbird Alana, they walked ankle-deep in mud to the backstage dressing area where most of the stars were waiting. The original plan was that the Recliners would go on about 11 p.m., but the tribute went on so late, their gig was canceled.

They're hoping for another invite someday, but it wasn't a complete loss for Barry Silverman, who bumped into the president and shook his hand.

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Baltimore's loss will be Miami's gain when Mark Thompson, an events planner with Windows, Classic Catering People and Pier 500, takes off for Florida this week. According to Claudia Bismark, head of events at the Walters Art Gallery, Thompson has the best creative eye she's ever seen.

She discovered him in 1990 when he helped make her Elvis gala a great success. He also came up with the idea to turn the Meyerhoff Symphony Hall into an elegant dining hall for the BSO gala. Gene's Catering in Florida made him an offer he could not refuse. Thompson's creativity will be missed.

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October at the Merriweather Post Pavilion promises to be a spooktacular event. The Creep Festival opened yesterday and will run through Halloween.

Horror flick celebrities Linda "Exorcist" Blair, Gunnar "Leatherface" Hansen and Kane "Jason" Hodder will be there for autographs and photos at different times during the month. And there will be plenty of scary fun, games and also a "Kiddie Krypt."

Call (410) 730-2424 for dates and times. Tickets are \$12.50; children under 5 are admitted free.

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Just a reminder that the House With a Heart raffle takes place Oct. 15. A \$10 ticket gives you a chance to win a new \$165,000 single-family house in Carroll County. All money raised from the raffle helps feed Maryland's homeless people.

The drawing will take place at 11 a.m. at the home in Furnace Hills. Tickets are available at the offices of O'Connor, Piper and Flynn, Household Bank, Kmart and Metro/Basics food stores.

Around town

I spotted Cal Ripken Jr. having lunch at Harbor Court Hotel's Brighton Cafe recently. I have no idea who was with him, but I did know the two women who walked over to his table and asked for his autograph. Susan Gauvey, a Venable Baetjer & Howard partner, and Laura Black, Attorneys Per Diem founder, said the O's most famous player was most gracious.

Check out Mike Gimbel, Baltimore County's director of substance abuse. He's finally cut off his '60s hairdo and looks like a totally different person.