SWEET (SEXY) CHARITY

DO GOOD, HAVE FUN, GET YOUR FLIRT ON!

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By DANA SCHUSTER

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WHAT'S that, you say? Your dating life's a desert and you've decided to focus instead on other things, like helping out people less fortunate than you? Nice excuse, but it doesn't have to be one or the other. Volunteering has its own rewards, but there's no harm in simultaneously spicing up your social calendar. Luckily, you live in a city that boasts plenty of charity groups to choose from, offering the under-30 crowd a vast array of functions where good deeds meet good fun.

Think Blue

The Cause: Think Blue, launched this past winter, encourages socially conscious young New Yorkers to get involved in Democratic politics.

The Events: Meet-and-greets with young candidates for the House and Senate from around the country; other events, such as free film screenings are sprinkled in. Donations go directly to the candidates (and are not tax-deductible). Ticket prices fall in the $50 range.

The eatS: Grass-fed, bought at Whole Foods

The Scene: The meet-and-greets are held in private homes (ones that tend to have wide, airy terraces and killer views of Central Park). The attendees' jobs are all over the map, in a good way, from law and fashion to computers and p.r.

"The idea was really to create a networking environment," says Think Blue board member Lindsay Nathan. "There was somebody at our last event who sells real estate, another person who's a news anchor on TV." The mingling is low-key (think classy house party), and "no one is drinking to get drunk," adds Eli Rubin, another board member. Even better? The decided lack of hedge fund types. "I don't feel like I'm walking into a trading floor," says Rubin. Think Blue recently celebrated Obama's big one-up with some Election Night stand-up, deejaying and plenty of good cheer.

Info: thinkblue.net

SoHo Synagogue

The Cause: TriBeCa's SoHo Synagogue, inaugurated in 2005 by Rabbi Dovi Scheiner and his wife, Esty, gives to a number of different charities, including SoHo Gives and Jewish Hearts for Africa. "Basically what we've realized over the three or four years we've been in existence is that we can channel that momentum towards making the world a better place," says Scheiner.

The Events: Loft parties, SoHo Gives benefits and an annual gala ($150-$225 for the gala).

The eatS: Kosher, natch

The Scene: Recent benefits have boasted nearly 2,000 Prada-clutch-toting and tux-wearing attendees (think less Jew-fro, more Japanese-straightened). While Rabbi Scheiner stresses that the synagogue's events are not singles mixers, gala host David Goldberg says, "The people that attend these events . . . yes, they're young, yes, they're successful, yes, they're hot." A red carpet and the sheer size of the event can make it somewhat daunting for those looking to snag a nice Jewish boy or girl to bring home to Mom, but the constant flow of bellinis and open kosher bar help to keep the edge off.

Info: theshs.org

Young Professionals' Council for Choice (YPCC)

The Cause: The YPCC, launched by NARAL Pro-Choice New York and the National Institute for Reproductive Health, raises awareness and funds to protect the right to choose.

The Events: Thursday-night cocktail parties (tickets are $30)

The eatS: Fresh and ready to serve

The Scene: People more concerned with swapping cell numbers than business cards. Well, what do you expect when drinks include Safe Sex on the Beach and My Choice Tai? The parties are hosted at spots like Bungalow 8, Runway and Nikki Beach Midtown, and the crowd is diverse enough that attendees (who tend to ditch work clothes for going-out attire) leave having increased their Facebook friend-count by five. As for the girl-guy ratio, don't think that the giveaways - which have included Hanky Panky thongs, chocolate, lip balm and copious amounts of condoms - mean the events skew female.

"I've been so, so pleased to see that we have tons of guys there," says Abby Sugrue, former YPCC coordinator and development associate at NARAL Pro-Choice New York. "I don't think there's anything sexier than a man who trusts a woman to make decisions regarding their health." Seems to be a common sentiment. Sugrue adds that at one party, "everyone was making out at the coat check line."

Info: ypccny.org

Boys' Club of New York Junior Committee

The Cause: The Boys' Club of New York, established in 1876, and reaches out to socially and economically troubled New York neighborhoods to help boys and young men build character, leadership and physical skills while fostering their academic promise.

The Events: The Junior Committee's Derby party ($150 a ticket)

The eatS: As red as the patrons' Nantucket shorts

The Scene: Although not quite a frat environment, expect "slightly elevated social drinking," says one benefit-goer of the Derby party. The event brings some Southern hospitality to the Manhattan social scene courtesy of mint juleps and themed attire. The crowd - young, preppy and financially secure, has a fair share of Ivy League grads. "Someone who would rather hang out in Williamsburg wouldn't necessarily be thrilled by the idea of spending $150 to hang out with people in seersucker," says one Derby attendee. Although the Boys' Club is a charity staple, this newish Derby party (this year's, held at the Maritime Hotel Cabanas, was its second annual) is bringing in some fresh-faced donors.

Info: bcny.org

Inner-City Scholarship Fund Junior Committee (ICSF)

The Cause: The ICSF works in conjunction with the Catholic schools of the Archdiocese of New York to help children in some of New York City's poorest neighborhoods receive quality education through mentoring, tutoring and cultural trips.

The Events: A variety of fund-raising and social functions, from dodge ball games to beer pong (prices vary from $15 to $45).

The eatS: Good, old-fashioned burgers

The Scene: "People sometime think it's only going to be a Catholic organization . . . but we have Protestants, Catholics, Jewish individuals on the committee," says Junior Committee social chair Lauren Crowley. The easygoing, low-pressure events are often held during the happy-hour zone, so people can "stop by for a half hour or an hour if they want," explains Jeff Friedman, a former ICSF Junior Committee executive co-chair.

A big push has been made to recruit younger members, and the prices help: This year's annual headlining soiree costs $45 per ticket and included an open bar (with top-shelf liquor), a raffle, silent auction and dancing.

Info: innercitysf.org

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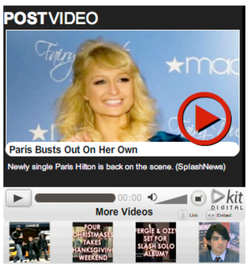

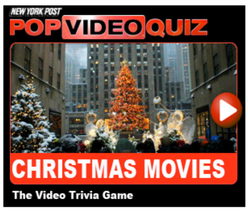

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