



Deborah Covino, a real "heart" throb, offers hisses to Gail De Martini, left, and Janet Hamilton.

CYNTHIA ROBINS CYN CITY



Eligible but slippery S.F. bachelors

PARI LIVERMORE loves being married. In fact, she has made it her life's work to see that every nice woman she meets (she thinks they're all nice) should be married. She even throws eligible men at women she particularly likes at the rate of one per week to

make sure that somebody gets married. Just call her the Dolly Levi of San Francisco. (Or is it Marryin' Sam-antha?).

To hustle things along a little, she concocted the black-tie equivalent to Sadie Hawkins Day 13 years ago called the Red and White Ball. This year's ball came early in the year, closer to Valentine's Day than Christmas. So the red and white theme seemed very apt. And just in case anybody missed the whole romantic bent, there were candy hearts and cut-out cupids all over the grand ballroom at the St. Francis Thursday night. (Incidentally, Livermore keeps track of her successes: In the past 13 years, she's married off 103 couples. Whether they stayed married or not is another question.)

Each year, the ball's proceeds go to some worthy charity. The year Gail De Martini twisted Pari's arm to donate the gate to the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation, they raked in \$100,000. "It's got to be more now," said De Martini, dressed in a skin-tight scarlet Gibson-Palermo classic. So this year, the Children's Garden will make a nice little bundle, and single guys (some of them permanently so) will fill up their little black books for another year.

The Red and White Ball is an elegant way to network. "I always meet the neatest women here," said one attractive blonde who gazed at some of the men and sighed. With recognition. "San Francisco is a city of serial daters," said Susan Klum, standing in a



EXAMINER PHOTOS BY CRAIG LEE

Breaking into appropriate romantic songs at the drop of a petal was "Rosita," Christina Jaqua.

long line of equally beautiful females waiting to have their fortunes told. "This is my fourth year at this party. You just go through all of these men."

Not just anybody gets invited to the Red and White Ball. It's half men and half women — about 1,000 in all. And those who are invited have to pass muster. "You have to know somebody to get invited, to make sure that everybody is decent. No rapists, right?" said committee member Linda Kittlitz. "There is a committee of men and a committee of women who screen the candidates. And there is this rule: You have to come alone. It's the one place where a woman can get all dolled up and not feel bad that she doesn't have a date."

However, some people are foolish enough to bring dates — sort of like carrying a sandwich to a banquet. Sometimes with disastrous results. A few years ago, one woman brought a guy with her who went home with her best friend.

The thing is, the women are a whole lot more appealing than the men. "Of course," laughed Kittlitz. "What do you think?" The women keep getting younger and shapelier, and the men. . . . Well, they're recognizable. Professional bachelors.

Lounge lizards who hang at Harry's and Essex Club. The usual suspects, just a little older and a little grayer, trolling the crowd of sequined beauties like sharks, never stopping except to feed or schmooze. Never to commit. And all with that hare-in-the-headlights look on their faces that acres of babe-i-tude gives one. So many women. So little time.

Meanwhile, the Red and White is probably one of the best-organized bashes around. They've got the catering thing down. The food from different S.F. restaurants goes way beyond crackers and

cheese. Although, from the looks of some of these women, a martini olive would have popped their zippers. Lotsa flesh, kids. Lotsa flesh.

Still you gotta hand it to those brave and dauntless females, putting themselves out there year after year, knowing that they're going to see the same old, same old.

Although, sometimes, you might get a winner. If he's young enough. Like this adorable guy, probably 33, chatting up an attractive woman, who had the best pick-up line I've ever heard:

"Can I buy you something? A car, maybe."