

Invitations fuel the alms race

Charity events strive to make impressions with bigger, splashier mailings.

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Social types hoping to raise money for their favorite charities know they have only a few minutes to catch a patron's eye and pocketbook. Big, splashy, oversize, theme-related invitations are critical to instantly capturing attention, particularly when mailboxes overflow with

invites spring and fall.

When Riddle Memorial Hospital's Man O' War Ball committee began planning its April 16 party in December, they decided to do something other than the stuffy event it had become.

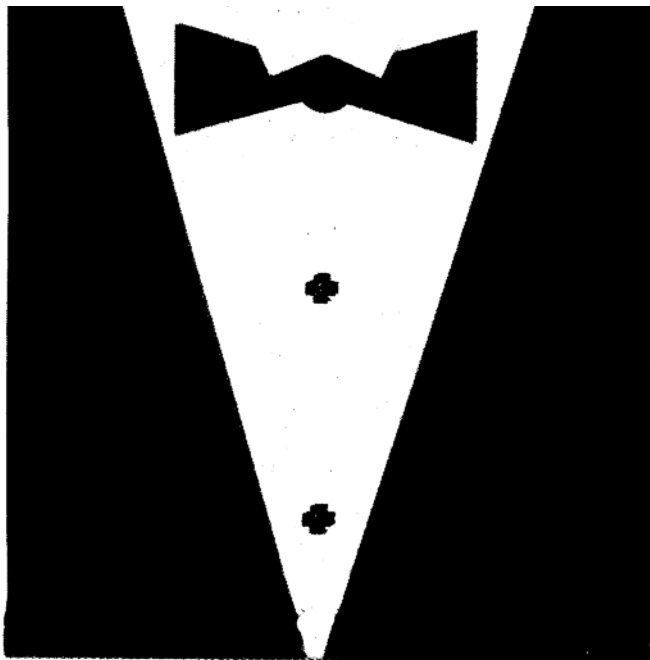
"It's been the same forever," said Cathy Granger,

foundation board chair. "We said, 'Let's do something different.' "

To breathe new life into the ball and attract new people, the committee decided to add a magic theme to the 46th annual event and woo potential guests with an eye-catching enticement.

They asked Kathy Todd at Todd Design, who attends the ball yearly, to create a unique, elegant piece - something besides the stodgy, weddinglike invitation sent in the past.

Several months ago, 2,500 ball subscribers received an oversize, tri-folded, black-and-white mailing portraying a tuxedo. The shirt's "R" buttons hinted at beneficiary Riddle, and the scripted "Join us for a Magical Evening" clued



A tuxedo with "R's" on the buttons and text about a magical evening on the new-look invitations indicate a change of pace for Riddle Memorial Hospital's Man O' War Ball.