



ELIZABETH'S SOCIAL CIRCUIT

WITH ELIZABETH HAMEL | e-mail: elizabeth@suntimes.com

Vampires, Farrell & mayor, oh my!

GALApalooza has star power along with creature comforts

I've never been a festival kind of gal. The crowds, heat, bugs, dirt and general feeling of claustrophobia have always kept me away. But Thursday's GALApalooza — the kickoff to Chicago's biggest music festival of the year, Lollapalooza at Grant Park — was just my kind of fest. With lounge seating in front of the Petrillo Music Shell, passed hors d'oeuvres, specialty cocktails from the open bar and only about 600 guests, you couldn't go wrong.

A casual clubwear-clad crowd of mostly young adults paid \$150 a ticket to attend (though more fortunate guests paid upward of \$1,500 to relax in cabanas). The six-hour event included intimate performances by local group **Hey Champ** and New York's critical darlings **Vampire Weekend** (who were declared 2008's best new band by Spin magazine). Lolla co-founder and creative mastermind **Perry Farrell** (who played Sunday at the fest with the original lineup of his band, Jane's Addiction) introduced the bands, calling Vampire Weekend "future Lollapalooza headliners who are interesting and groovy at the same time."

Not to be outshone, the best quote of the night came from Hey Champ's lead singer **Brian Fallon**, who said of the U.S. job market, "We heard Vampire Weekend went to Columbia and we went to Princeton. That means with these crazy times Ivy League grads are in bands and college dropouts are running our Fortune 500 companies!"

Mayor Daley attended the gala, stopping to take pictures with guests and partake in the night's festivities. Recent "Top Chef Masters" contestant and local chef **Graham Elliot** (who set up shop to feed the hungry masses later at Lollapalooza) had his photo snapped with Daley on his personal camera.

Proceeds from the event, about \$250,000, will go to the Parkways Foundation and its programs dedicated to improving and preserving the city's community parks. The majority of the funds raised by GALApalooza will go specifically to the Buckingham Fountain Restoration Project.



GALApalooza co-chairs Courtney Pitt (from left), Denise Ashurst and Stacey Reineking Sather.



Paul Fichter and Alison Krzys.



Rich and Noren Ungaretti.



Vampire Weekend rocked hard and quipped harder at GALApalooza.