NEW PARISH PRESIDENT WELCOMED IN STYLE

More than 500 guests passed through lighted arches lining the walkway into an elegantly decorated Salmen-Fritchie House in Slidell on Monday to attend the by-invitation-only President's Ball, the conclusion to daylong activities for newly-sworn-in Parish President Kevin Davis and Parish Council members.

Guests entering the black-tie event through a security checkpoint were presented with an acrylic paperweight memento emblazoned with the parish seal and Davis' signature.

Outdoors, giant tents covered many of the tables set for 10, with still more tables arranged around the spacious lawn. Beneath the tent area, buffet lines, a bar and a dance floor greeted guests with the music of Witness.

An ice-carved Grecian column inside the tent area served as a pedestal for a massive vase of fresh flowers, one of numerous flower arrangements by Keeth Buckley of Grandiflora in Covington.

Indoors, the Mel Rogers jazz trio played from a second-floor balcony overlooking a giant ice carving of the parish seal, which served as a focal point in the hallway leading to more guest tables in adjoining rooms. Dawson List of Ice Dragons carved both ice sculptures.

The menu offered by Frederic's Catering of Slidell featured two steamship roast carving stations, a sushi bar, miniature beef Wellington, sesame chicken, shrimp and eggplant casserole, seafood gumbo, chicken and artichoke soup, assorted canapés, and dips and pastries from Zoe's in Mandeville.

Lisa Clement was the Inaugural Ball chairwoman, and Davis' wife, Maria Davis, planned the day's events as Inaugural Day chairwoman.

Congressman David Vitter pledged his assistance to Davis "with whatever I can do to help. St. Tammany is very fortunate to have Kevin Davis as its parish president as they move into the new millennium."

Former Lt. Gov. Jimmy Fitzmorris rushed to the event from Baton Rouge, where earlier in the day he had sworn in John Hainkel Jr., R-New Orleans, as the new Senate president.

Among those attending the ball were St. Tammany Parish District Attorney Walter Reed and his wife, Shawn; Parish Council members Floyd Glass and his wife, June; Russell Fitzmorris and his wife, Norma; James "Red" Thompson and his wife, Sally; Pat Brister and her husband, Joe; Bruce Authement and his wife, Julie; Joe Impastato and his wife, Leonette; Chris Canulet and his wife, Kimberly; Barry Bagert and his wife, Gerry; Henry Billiot and his wife, Melanie; Steve Stefancik and his wife, Margaret; Irma Cry and her husband, George; Joe "Coach" Thomas and his wife, Arlene; and T.J. Smith.

Among those also on hand for the gala were 22nd Judicial District Court Judges Martin Coady, Reggie Badeaux, Don Fendlason, Larry Green, Elaine Guilhot and Patricia Hedges; Mary and Ralph Fontcuberta; Louise Seidler; Robert, Anita and Susie Torres; Lisa and Bruce Clement; Mark Summers; Chris and Angie Jean; Laura Stuart; Randy Stuart; Louis Ingram; Reed Ingram; David and Vicki Reed; David Cry; Judy and C.J. Dunaway; Judy and Bruce Olivier; Col. Glenn and Brenda Farrar; Sarah Vermeulen; Joe Stefancik; Robert "Red" Schwab; Sharon and Dan DeBlanc; Judy Gourgues; Brenda and John Case; parish Tourist and Convention Commission Executive Director Hyatt Hood and his wife, Angela; Arlene Smith; St. Tammany Parish Assessor Patricia Schwarz Core; Slidell City Court Judge Gary Dragon and his wife, Cathy; Covington City Councilman Jerry Coner, Matt Faust and Lonnie Boykins; Slidell City Councilman Lionel Washington and his wife, Becky; parish Zoning Commission Chairman Emile Lombard and his wife, Arlene; Richard "Dick" Blossman and his wife, Lynn.

Also, Lin and Nancy Barthelemy; Ken and Julie Mathieu; St. Tammany Parish Coroner-elect Peter Galvan and his wife, Allison; Covington Mayor Keith Villere and his wife, Carol; Mandeville Mayor Eddie Price and his wife, Sally; Sammy Caruso; St. Tammany Parish Clerk of Court Malise Prieto; Slidell City Councilman Jack Cerny and his wife, Grace; Slidell City Councilman Landon Cusimano, Warren and Joyce Hahn; Marie Hammons; schools superintendent Lenny Monteleone, Robyn and Ron Thibodeaux; Martha Goodson; Alex and Jackie Goodson; John Dussouy; Cathy and Allen Little; Terry Maddox and Lisa Pratt; Vernell and A.J. Guilhot; Audry and John Pasqua and Monica Gates.

Also, Kirk Soileau; Louis Provenza; Linda Calahan; Regional Planning Commission Executive Director John Le Bourgeois; Kumar and Marsha Amarani; Shelby and Marija Lasalle; Rhonda and Mike Pike; Sal Impastato; St. Tammany Home Builders Association President David Champagne and his wife, Nancy; the Rev. Don Cottrill; John and Dici Yemelos; Allan Cartier; Clay and Shirley Davis; Cheryl and Rob Bechtel; and St. Tammany Association of Retarded Citizens Executive Director Dianne Baham.