

Karen Carter Richards Celebrates What the New Fifty Looks Like!

Written by Forward Times Staff
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FABULOUS AT FIFTY!

If you were not at The Fabulous Groovey Grill Mansion , Third Ward, Tx., on the first day of October, don't fret; I'm here to tell you all about it! Houston Forward Times' CEO/Publisher Karen Carter Richards, was surrounded by family, friends and colleagues as she celebrated her "50th" birthday! And when I tell you we partied, we partied!!!!!! Karen's theme for the party was "Glitz, Glamour and Diamonds", and that's exactly what it was. There were guests there that have been her friends since day care, junior high and high school. Her adult children Jesse Frazier, II and Chelsea Blanco, traveled in from Louisiana to attend.

Our gracious host, Atty. Walter Strickland, owner of that fabulous, historic, mansion, as well as an established real estate mogul throughout the Third Ward community, let us come in and turn the mansion into a blinged out affair! The tables were all draped with black overlays covered with white table satin linens. The centerpieces were crystal baguette cut rounds atop silver plates, with tea lights illuminating at the centers, surrounded by assorted roses petals of red, pink and white. There were actually over 10 pounds of rose petals! There were rose petals on the tables, around the cakes, on the red carpet that greeted guests as they exited their vehicles, on the bar tables, on the patio tables, I actually think I dreamed of rose petals Saturday night, phew!

Karen entered the room wearing a BCBGMAXAZRIA black crepe fitted, V-neck dress, looking like a million dollar bill, giving everybody a glance of what the "New 50" looks like. Thanks to Terry Rambin and Rochelle Griffin, our dedicated sales ladies at TOOTSIE'S, for hooking a girl up!! She accented her dress with high heeled, satin, Badgley Mischka sling backs. She wore some of those infamous Basketball Wives earrings, custom made just for her! All accessories personally picked out by yours truly, of course.

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If you were dieting that day, you didn't that night. The evenings' menu included grilled Chicken pasta, quesadillas, bone-in chicken wings, spicy meatballs, soft bread buns, assorted fruits presented on skewers and watermelon wedges. Then, there was a midnight gumbo, catered by our own, Forward Times Food Editor, Carolyn Shelton, who traveled from Lake Charles, Louisiana to present the birthday girl with a special dish. A beautiful silver punch bowls held yummy iced tea. A special thanks goes out to Bruce, Casey and the entire wait staff that tirelessly served the guests. This party featured a birthday cake from Cakes by Alice, the paper's long time custom cake caterer. That cake and a display of cake balls, by CakePop Delacacies, by Aroncia Smith, were beautifully displayed on a bed of roses and candles, with the birthday girl actually blowing out her candles. But with yours truly on the staff, you know it went way over the top. What would I mean by that?

Her second cake was a 4-tier, custom-designed cake made Bella Cibo, Specialty Bakery. The cake's theme- Glitz, Glamour, and Bling! So it was only fitting that the cake displayed black and silver boa feathers, silver bling trimmings, silver lace, rhinestones, and to top it off—a silver, strappy, brand new Christian Louboutin (red bottoms) 6-inch sandal on top. Guests initially thought the cake was imitation, they also thought the shoe was plastic, until she was presented with the matching shoe , and realized this was a birthday present. The cake was real indeed, featuring a top layer of Italian cream cheese, second and fourth layers of red velvet and a third layer of butter cream, ooh la la, I been in cake heaven ever since. The icings were made of cream cheese for the red velvet layers and white icing for the butter cream layer. The entire cake was airbrushed with a pearlized glaze containing edible glitter!

The house rocked all night as DJ Rickie Mosley played old skool music mixed in with a little hip hop and a pinch of rap music as the night grew to a close. The bar area served any type of drink you desired, and that area never grew scarce. There was also a self serve Margarita Machine out on the back patio deck that keep it's own group of fans close. The birthday girl received proclamations from the City of Houston, and State Representative Sheila Jackson Lee's office. She was serenaded by her daughter Chelsea Blanco with a rendition of "Wind Beneath My Wings", that brought her to tears. Her son Jesse and childhood friend, yours truly, also serenaded her with Happy Birthday.

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Karen wishes to extend her sincere thanks to all who participated in making this a monumental day for her, Grace Boateng, Jacqueline Lawson, Ernestine Dixon, Patsy Hunter, Carolyn Shelton and Judy Foston. Special thanks to Elegant Valet Service, for a spectacular job.

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