

## Fitzgerald, Morton's score big with charitable fundraiser

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Morton's The Steakhouse is finalizing the numbers this week and expects to write a check for more than \$100,000 to a memorial fund named for Cardinal Larry Fitzgerald's late mother, Carol, that is dedicated to helping those affected by cancer and AIDS.

The money was netted from the Larry Fitzgerald and Friends Morton's Celebrity Waiter Night, a recent dinner party at Morton's in Scottsdale that had the Cardinals on a different kind of playing field.

Fitzgerald was running from table to table, greeting 200-plus guests at the private, \$250-per-person affair.

Meanwhile, more than a dozen of Fitzgerald's high profile teammates signed autographs, posed for photos and helped to serve up a four-course dinner and pour the wine. Fitzgerald signed every guests' printed menu.

Kurt Warner and Matt Leinart were seen passing plates of asparagus boats to attendees, with broccoli stacked up and down their arms. Beanie Wells smiled as he dished out the salads at Dr. Wayne Kuhl's table. "Pepper?" he asked, making his way around their table.

Even Coach Ken Whisenhunt donned an apron and turned waiter for the night. Darnell Dockett admitted the cuisine was tempting. "I ate half the food up before I was supposed to serve it," he joked.

Cardinals' president Michael Bidwill and his sister, Nicole Bidwill, Nicole's husband Larry and their friends were among the dinner guests. So were Sports 620 KTAR personalities Ron Wolfley and Paul Calvisi who emceed. The station teamed up with Morton's and Fitzgerald as one of the evening's hosts.

Dockett, Anquan Boldin and Antrel Rolle also traded in their Cardinals red and white for a Morton's black apron. Tables of silent auction items lined the bar area, boasting autographed memorabilia. And the live auction fetched \$16,000 each for two private dinners for six people at a later date at Morton's, with Larry Fitzgerald joining them for a course or two.

The delightfully noisy dining room turned quiet when Larry Fitzgerald Sr., a longtime sports editor for the Minnesota Spokesman-Recorder, took the podium. He fought back the tears as he spoke about his late wife, who died from breast cancer in 2003. Throughout her career as a Minnesota state worker, Carol Fitzgerald touched the lives of those affected by cancer and AIDS. The Carol Fitzgerald Memorial Foundation continues her work and supports the education of urban youth.

"She was a warrior in the community," the younger Larry said, adding that she was concerned about the well-being of others until her final moments. He also thanked his teammates for being a close-knit group and taking part in an event of such personal importance to him.