

"Ovation" Succeeds with the Help of A Generous Community

By Jane Barry, The Greater Saint John Community Foundation

If you've ever looked at a poster advertising some event chances are there is a row or more of logos along some part of it announcing and recognizing the generosity of sponsors who made it possible. Next time you see one it would be worth a second glance because it's such community-minded individuals, businesses and institutions which make things happen and give so many causes the wherewithal to succeed. As a funder of community charitable causes, the Greater Saint John Community Foundation is keenly aware that many charities spend a large proportion of their time and energy planning fundraisers, which are critical to their very existence. In the slowed economy of today, it takes even more effort to secure partnerships with key supporters, making them all that much more appreciated.

So with last weekend's Ovation, it is timely to say a huge thank you to over 57 sponsors of cash and in kind donations who, along with generous contributors of over 110 auction items, some valued in the thousands of dollars, made the event such a success. Some even offered without being asked. More than seventy individuals and groups kindly donated their talent for the evening, helping keep the event's budget to a bare minimum. The Foundation went solo, not receiving any support from governments or Saint John 225. The entire evening gala will channel all proceeds to the Foundation's endowment funds which in turn, will generate income year after year to local charitable causes. Volunteer Chair Penny Milligan set the pace with personal commitments of time, energy and resources. She was matched by a team of over thirty volunteers who were similarly generous.

"Ovation" attracted over 700 guests to celebrate community anniversaries, arts & culture and benefit the charities supported by the Greater Saint John Community Foundation. Their attendance and support were key elements and greatly valued. Foundation Chair Cheryl M.G. Robertson expressed her satisfaction with the turnout noting that by organizing such a community celebration, it offered an opportunity for Greater Saint John to unite and come together in a positive and celebratory climax to the 2010 year. Some generous sponsors kindly provided tickets which they wished earmarked for those who might not have the financial means to attend otherwise.

Without the initial support of the Saint John Port Authority, the unique venue would not have been possible. Creating a stage in the Marco Polo Cruise Terminal and other infrastructure fell to the experts at Sancton Access. Any event needs good publicity and the Telegraph Journal, along with PULSE Communications, have been exceptional as sponsors. Fine food is an key attraction at an event and the Delta Brunswick, which has already excelled as a national community supporter, came through in spades. Amazing prizes always add cache and with the help of W. Smith & Company, Fine Jewellers and realtor Katherine Bacon the bar was set high. Kudos are in order for JD Irving Ltd., AVW TelAV and Desjardins Financial, along with all the generous sponsors who numbered some fifty-seven in total. Over one hundred thirty donors of art, goods and services impressed the Ovation Committee. To live in a community where such generosity abounds is refreshing for us all.



Some guests at Ovation helped celebrate milestone birthdays of Saint John and Rothesay by singing Happy Birthday. From left are Senator John Wallace, MLA Carl Killen, MLA Trevor Holder, MLA Dorothy Shepherd, St. Martins Mayor James Huttges, Quispamsis Mayor Murray Driscoll, Rothesay Mayor Bill Bishop, Grand Bay-Westfield Mayor Grace Losier, Hampton Mayor Ken Chorley, Elizabeth Nicholas, Lt. Gov. Graydon Nicholas and Saint John Councillor Chris Titus.

Photo: Peter Walsh/Telegraph-Journal



Community Profile is a weekly column highlighting community causes and work done by non-profit organizations in the Greater Saint John area. It is contributed by Jane Barry, Executive Director of The Greater Saint John Community Foundation. Contact the Foundation at sjfoundation@nb.aibn.com, 506-672-8880. To view other Community profiles, visit www.saint-john-foundation.nb.ca