

"Dreams" all true at W-H gala event



Photo by Michael Brangwynne

The Harry Fix Trio set the mood and setting for the evening by supplying some easy listening jazz for the start of the event.

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WHITMAN - It was a night for fun, funds, and, of course, food.

The Whitman-Hanson Education Foundation's second annual Making Dreams Come True gala event last Saturday night at the Halifax Country Club.

Juanita Brunelle and Dianne Nicol greeted guests, who could bid on a table of 15 live auction items including autographed Dice-K memorabilia, a brunch for 10 at the Olde Hitching Post Restaurant and a Westport Rivers Winery tour and tasting for 10 with supplied transportation.

Another table held 27 silent auction items, including autographed sports memorabilia, a Foxwoods Casino package and Newbury Street makeover. There also was the raffle ticket and raffle items that included numerous gift bag items.

The Harry Fix Trio played soft, easy-going music. Tables of eight were set very nicely with floral centerpieces donated by Hanson Florist, Inc.

The night started out with hors d'oeuvres, a full bar, and a beer and wine station sponsored by main sponsor Mutual Bank.

Dinner included vegetable soup, spinach salad, hot dinner rolls, stuffed chicken with gravy, string beans, rice, coffee, and vanilla ice cream covered with strawberries.

After dinner, Paul Nicol spoke about last year's event earnings of \$15,000 and numerous grants secured by the foundation.

"All the great programs were funded because of last year's event," he said.

The foundation, he said, doesn't want to pick and choose grants because "every grant makes a difference." He added that the foundation is "trying to do the best things possible with your money."

A video the events the organization sponsored last year, including clips of parents and teachers talking about how beneficial this organization is to the students. Foundation volunteers and members also talked about how good it was to get the grants out to the eight different schools in the Whitman Hanson School District.

"We got good reactions from the movie and hope it will help get event-matching donations from companies in the area," Nicol said.

He said he hopes to accomplish that by getting the local cable station to play the movie.

School committee Chair Paul Hayes served as auctioneer. Only two items did not meet the minimum bid requirement - a signed Taylor Hicks American Idol picture and a signed Johnny Depp "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory" photo.

DJ John Kelly then played music for dancers, while other guests put in their silent auction bids.

Bob Hayes then announced the silent auction and raffle winners.

"We are very grateful for all the support here today and hope that with the money raised we can fund many more grants and keep up the success of the organization," said Michael Kryzanek, chairman of the foundation.

Nicol was happy about the night.

"The turnout was a little bit below expectations but the raffle and auctions went well," he said.

In all, 130 companies donated something "and that is great," Nicol said.

Gift bags, including coupons and small gifts were given out to all guests before they left.