

Cruise for a Cause 9 – September 6, 2007

Another fine September evening welcomed our ninth Cruise for a Cause, the fifth out of Oakville.

Prior to departure Oakville's MPP, Kevin Flynn was on hand to formally announce the \$99,000 grant we have received from the Ontario Trillium Foundation for the accessible docking facility on 16 Mile Creek. He was joined by Angela DiCintio and Gilmar Militar representing Trillium, and by Oakville's mayor, Rob Burton.

The OTF funding will cover the cost of the docking and boat storage facilities and go some way to providing accessible washrooms. We are hopeful that the Town will find room in its 2008 budget to assist with purchasing the washrooms or help out with the landscaping which will go a long way towards making the area hospitable to persons with disabilities.

The cruise was full to capacity as we headed westward towards Burlington, our guests having sampled the treats on the pier; hors d'oeuvres, sushi, and samosas provided by Julia's Ristorante, Nikko, and Coriander. Barefoot Wineries were aboard offering samples of their wine and a jazz band provided the music along with our resident DJ, Ian Smith.

This time last year we commented on the low number of guests in wheelchairs. We should have known better. This year they came out in force and we struggled with the seating plan on the lower deck. Not to worry guys and gals, we would like to have that challenge on every cruise! In fact, we had more people with disabilities on this cruise than ever before. So, it looks like word is finally getting around. Welcome aboard.

We were escorted out of Oakville harbour by members of the Wai Nui Outrigger Canoe Club, our partners in the effort to provide accessible recreational docking on 16 Mile Creek. Wendy Perkins, the Commodore, also supplied the Hawaiian garlands (leis) that you can see in the pictures opposite. Sadly, we didn't have time for a display of Hawaiian dancing or war chants but no doubt they will be evident on our dock at the start of the 2008 boating season.

Oakville's medical profession was represented by doctors and staff of the Oakville Health Centre. And there was a liberal (or conservative) sprinkling of Oakville Councillors on board. However, on-board consultations with either were strictly taboo!

Not that many of our guests could have found the time what with the wine sampling, the three-course meal, some decadent desserts and the silent auction to contend with. There is, however, a noticeable difference between the cruises out of Oakville and those from Port Credit. The Oakville folks tend to be more restrained and enjoy themselves quietly. But at the end of the cruise they frequently express their appreciation of having had "A Good Time" which is reassuring. This cruise was no exception.

So, a good night was had by all thanks to our sponsors, guests and volunteers, all of whom make the Cruise for a Cause a memorable and worthwhile event.

We look forward to organizing our 10th cruise and the challenge of putting on something really special. All suggestions would be most welcome.

Until then we would like to express our thanks and appreciation to all those who have contributed, one way or another, not only to the success of our cruises but also in helping us provide a little respite for persons with disabilities and enable them to take to the water. 2008 promises to be even better.

