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# Community Advocate



## Evening of Giving raises \$32,500 for Marlborough shelter



(l to r) Matthew Simoneau, Evening of Giving committee member; Susan Gentili, director of continuum of care and services, SMOC; Bob Kays, Evening of Giving committee chair; and Ivette Mesmar, Evening of Giving food committee chair

Photo/submitted

Thursday, February 26th, 2015

Marlborough – Friends of Roland’s House, a group that supports the Marlborough-Hudson emergency homeless shelter, recently announced that \$32,500 was raised at the 25<sup>th</sup> Evening of Giving held Dec. 4 at the Best Western Royal Plaza Hotel.

Roland’s House, located on Mechanics Street, is a temporary shelter serving up to 18 men and women. Its operations are supervised by the South Middlesex Opportunity Council’s (SMOC) continuum of housing and services through the Common Ground Resource Center.

Bob Kays, chair of the Evening of Giving Committee since its inception, presented a check to Susan Gentili, director of continuum of care and services for the SMOC.

“Roland’s House is extremely fortunate to have local residents who continue to support this special event, including all who contributed toiletries and personal items through

donation boxes set up in schools, banks, and other businesses throughout the city,” Kays said.

Added Gentili: “In the 25-year history, this event has raised over \$750,000 to support the operation of this important community resource.”

The majority of those who go to the shelter are in recovery from drug and alcohol abuse. This supportive environment is made possible by the dedicated staff, some of who have worked there since the shelter opened and have their own personal stories of recovery to share.

“During the past 25 years, the staff at Roland’s House has helped thousands of people transition from hopelessness to housing,” Gentili noted. “The program, with the critical support from the community has provided the tools and connections that people need to rebuild their self-esteem and self-sufficiency.”

According to Gentili, in addition to safe shelter, guests receive comprehensive case management and referrals to local resources.

“Over 50 percent of the guests moved from the shelter into SMOC sober housing where they continue to receive supportive services as needed,” she said.

Committee members thanked local restaurants and hotels for their contributions to the event, including the Assabet Valley Technical High School Culinary Department, Bella Cakes, Best Western Plaza Hotel, Buffet Way, Checkerboards Restaurant and Bar, Chez Siam, China Garden, Courtyard by Marriott, Dino’s Trattoria, Embassy Suites, Firefly’s, Fish Restaurant, Halfway Café, Horseshoe Pub, Kennedy’s Market, Kennedy’s Pub, Ken’s Foods, LongHorn Steakhouse, Marlborough Country Club, Marlboro House of Pizza, Olive Garden, Price Chopper, Starbuck’s, Trombetta’s Creamery, Vin Bin, Welly’s, Wildwood Steakhouse, the Wayside Inn and Zarape Mexican Restaurant.

A special thank you was extended to the members of the Marlborough Junior Woman’s Club, who staffed the coat room, and to DJs Steve Woodard and Matt Ruffing for providing the music.