

Standing on guard for our bay

Kaz Novak, the Hamilton Spectator



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Doug Feaver was performing at the Royal Hamilton Yacht Club Friday night and, from the you-learn-something-new-every-day file, he revealed the secret of how to tell who's Canadian when you're vacationing in Jamaica. Or anywhere for that matter.

Feaver went da dat da da da dadda da, to the tune of the old Hockey Night In Canada theme. Hearing this, he said, all the Canadians will instantly turn around. On the beach. In the airport. Wherever. The most fiercely Canadian among them will smile and give back the next few notes.

Of course, everyone in the room laughed knowingly.

Another refrain that defines us as Canadians is the fanfare of our magnificent geography, and among our most splendid gifts in this regard is our abundance of inland waters, and don't we know this in Hamilton.

And so, to our topic. One of the highlights on Hamilton's January social calendar every year is the Bay Area Restoration Council's wine-tasting/silent auction gala fundraiser.

The Bay Area Restoration Council is a community not-for-profit group that assesses and promotes cleanup projects for the Hamilton Harbour and its watershed and leads community efforts to restore and protect those bodies of water.

The gala was held, appropriately, at the Royal Hamilton Yacht Club and it was one of the best ever, with a full house turnout, lots of great items and art works on auction, and several sampling tables -- wine, martinis, beer and cheese.

Aside from Feaver and harpist Ruth Sutherland (they're two-thirds of Scantily Plaid) doing an excellent turn on the entertainment stage, there were greetings from Mayor Fred Eisenberger and city councilor/ radio host/environmentalist Bob Bratina was MC.

In the crowd were many familiars and notables, including Mary Ellen Scanlon from the Ministry of the Environment; Joanne Parrott from Environment Canada; Ken Hall from the Giant's Rib (escarpment) organization; BARC founder Anne Redish and Ken Redish; sailor and member of McMaster's board of governors Don Green; Martin Keller of the Ministry of the Environment; Steve Miazga of the Hamilton Conservation Authority; Frank Harrison of U.S. Steel; Susan West of the Trillium Foundation; Werner Plessl of the Hamilton Waterfront Trust; and Royal Hamilton Yacht Club Commodore Russell Perry.

Several artists were in attendance as well, including Lindsay Holton, Sylvia Simpson, Rod Paget and David McLaughlin.

Of course, BARC executive and staff were there -- executive director Jim Hudson, communications coordinator Lainie Tessier, and program manager Kelly Pike.

Drinks and food were provided by PMA Canada of Oakville (wine and martinis), Steam Whistle Brewery, My Dog Joe Coffeehouse in Westdale, and Cheese Shoppe on Locke.

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